

Mary Lou Hopeless Love Of Past Valentine Days

by Bob Funk
Emerald Columnist

The coming of Valentine's Day always brings to mind the old days of courtship and romance which we knew back in grade school. In that near-forgotten era, we were hopelessly in love with a maiden named Mary Lou, who was a dazzling brunette with a red plaid hair-ribbon. Love had its obstacles. There was a sort of set of Canons of Male Conduct quietly observed in grade school, which forbade giving attention to one's own true love beyond more than a frustrated nod now and then.

So we carried on conversations with everyone but Mary Lou, and burned with a low green light whenever she smiled on any other fourth-grade swain. We were in love with Mary Lou during the third, fourth, and fifth grades, but the fire burned brightest in the fourth; and it is during that year that we like to remember her. The romance ended when she was put in a different section of the sixth grade than we were; geographically separated by the distance from 6-A (Miss Peggy Palmer) to 6-B (Mr. Herman Lust), the thing between us died.



But we were talking about Valentine's Day before all this sentiment forced its way in. On Valentine's day you could, in a very slight way, give some show of affection to your chosen lady. This you did by giving her a Valentine. The degree of esteem was measured by the size of your offering. A very large, very red Valentine declared that there was an affair of the heart in somewhat aimless progress.

We bought Valentines for several weeks before the big day. The more daring of the lads in the fourth bought "joke" Valentines, most of which went to a young lady named Geraldine, who was, for some reason we have now forgotten, considered to be a great wit. But for the most part, our choices were of a more gentle type.

The Valentines were placed in the Valentine Box, which was stationed at some prominent place in the room. The box in itself was a thing of considerable importance. One year we were Chairman of the Committee for Decorating the Valentine Box (appointed by Florence Green, home-room president; and we hope that the mention of this past honor doesn't fall into a class with name-dropping). There was considerably bitter controversy among the committee members as to how the box should be decorated; and our attempts at arbitration only incurred the lasting enmity of one lady who thereafter referred to us cuttingly as "straw boss."

On Valentine's Day itself hearts were high. On this day,

new romances began; unexpected followers mailed in their bids; old flames quietly died. Two of the most august of our number (we think that they went through some training similar to that of the Vestal Virgins, but our memory may have failed again here) opened the box, and distributed the billet-doux.

Valentine technique varied. There were some politically inclined persons who gave medium-sized Valentines (signifying platonic interest only) to everyone in the room. Everyone gave a Valentine to the teacher. A certain blonde named Jo Ann Flagel always got unanimous returns from the male electorate. Geraldine, of course, received the joke trade; and, playing it to the hilt, of uttered indignant gasps as she opened each lurid treasure signed "Guess Who." Guess Who was usually convulsed halfway down row three, and not really so difficult to identify as one might imagine.

And Mary Lou, whose hair-ribbon was adrenalin for our then young heart, would receive our large contribution (and others: she wasn't too bad-looking, really by fourth-grade standards).

Valentines from girls were somewhat different. Girls sent smaller ones. If you got one at all, you were on first base, maybe second. If you got a large one, you were home. During the fourth grade we got a large one from Mary Lou, and it was not just signed Mary Lou; it was signed, "Your Friend, Mary Lou" which was ever so much better. We were ecstatic. Later in the day she thanked us politely for our Valentine. We thanked her for hers. We have never quite forgiven whoever chose to put her in 6-B instead of 6-A.

This romance had only one other outward manifestation. That spring, during the May Day Fete (this was not a Communist affair; it was the grade school approach to the fiesta, and everyone felt abandoned and reckless in a fourth-grade way), the entire home room was out on the lawn, playing "Go in and out the window," with Miss Kathryn Lynch singing. When the part came around which went "Go Kneel before your lover," everyone always went to kneel before someone who was well known NOT to be their lover. You chose your sister, if you were lucky enough to have one in the fourth grade.

Upon this one occasion we crossed the line which divides discretion from willy-nilly, devil-may-care, and knelt, dustily, before Mary Lou. Several persons giggled. There were murmured comments. It couldn't have been more sensational if it had been Ingrid Bergman hying herself off with Mr. Rossellini. The game went on, somehow; but it had been the high point of the romance, and after that there was a slow decline. It was, as the lyricist puts it, too hot not to cool down.



Bittner To Speak On Modern Music

"A Survey of Contemporary Music" is the subject of a lecture to be given by F. W. Bittner, instructor of music theory, Tuesday at 7 p. m.

The concert lecture will be held in the Peter Howard listening room and is sponsored by the recorded music committee, according to Martha Spatz, chairman.

Assistants Needed For Art Workshop

Students interested in assisting with the program and arrangements for the different phases of the Creative Arts workshop have been asked to call Valerie Cowls, chairman.

Sponsored annually by the Student Union, the spring term event is designed to present the best of student creative art work. Last year's workshop featured music, poems, a play, a short story, modern dances, a student art exhibit and a literature exhibit, all by students.

Students interested in the particular aspects of the program should contact Miss Cowls at Kappa Gamma. Petitions for committee members will be called for at a later date.

"Sergeant York," starring Gary Cooper, will be shown in the Student Union ballroom, Sunday at 2:30 and 5:00 p.m. This 1941 academy award winning movie is the story of a conscientious objector who believes it is wrong to kill.

Admission price is 30 cents and is sponsored by the SU movie committee, according to Pamela Rabens, publicity chairman.

Don Parr, senior in speech, will be the master of ceremonies for the Friday at 4 program to be held at 4 p.m. today in the Student Union fishbowl.

Entertainment will consist of the Beta quartet, Vocalist Bill Veach, Pianist Clarissa Berning and Pantomimist Darlene Empey.

Summer Jobs Open

Information concerning a limited number of summer jobs is now available at the student employment office, according to Shirley Sylvester, manager of the office. More information should be available soon, she said.

Application blanks for work at Lassen National Park and information about service station employment in Yellowstone National Park can be obtained at the office. Two different Girl Scout organizations in California and Washington are recruiting camp counselors through the office.

... Campus Briefs ...

The YWCA senior cabinet worship commission has announced plans to sponsor a worship discussion at 9:30 a. m. Sunday in Gerlinger hall. Scheduled to last for an hour, the place of worship on the campus will be discussed, Chairman Rose Warner has announced.

Representatives from the Portland office of the California Packing Co. will be on campus Monday to interview students graduating in accounting. Students interested in seeing the representatives should contact the graduate placement office in Emerald hall.

Application blanks must be filed by Tuesday with the secretary of the architecture school for the Ellen M. Pennel tuition scholarships for spring term.

Today at 5 p.m. is the deadline for petitioning for chairmanships for the WRA carnival to be staged February 26, according to Kay Partch and Sylvia Wingard, general co-chairmen. Petitions may be turned in at the SU petition box on the third floor of the Student Union or at Alpha Phi.

All Emerald staff members (reporters, copy desk, night staff, ad side and sports staff) are invited to the Emerald birthday party at 4 p.m. today in the Shack, according to Editor Elsie Schiller. Refreshments will be served.

The photo club will meet at 1:30 p. m. Saturday in the Tom Taylor lounge of the Student Union. All of those interested in helping to form the group should call Russ Walker at the YMCA office in the Student Union.

An exhibition of work done by former students of the drawing and painting departments of the school of architecture and allied arts is now being held through Feb. 28, in the art school gallery. Exhibition hours are 9 a. m. to 10 p. m. daily, and 2 to 10 p. m. Sundays.

Architectural movies, "Jerusalem, the Holy City" and "Islam," will be shown at 9 and 11 a. m. Friday in Architecture 138.

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