

Holiday Traditions

With the holidays approaching, we'll soon be in the midst of following our family traditions. Whether simple or involved, sacred or bawdy, old or new, traditions are a way we do things; a family's etiquette for an event, situation, or in this case, a holiday. Old traditions reflect a picture of your ancestors, their countries of origin, cultures and times; while new traditions - those breaks with traditions you think you've made that have become traditions themselves - reflect today's cultural environment. Why not blend the new and the old to produce a reflection of your entire family, contemporary and ancestral? Here are a few easy, stress free ideas.

Make it a holiday tradition to display your family heritage albums, family tree charts, and ancestral memorabilia. Even displaying a few photographs of ancestors will create an awareness among your family visitors of their heritage. Displaying these reminders gives a nostalgic feel to your rooms and encourages conversations among family and friends that could reveal surprising new information about your family and ancestors.

Create a new tradition by incorporating something from an ancestor's culture or time period into your own holiday celebrations, such as a particular food, activity or decoration your ancestor might have used as part of their holidays. It won't take much research on the Internet or in your local library to find something fun, festive and easy. Keep it small and simple if you want the tradition to survive. For example, if your ancestors were Scandinavian, you may want to bring into your traditions "First Stepping", a holiday practice in which a senior member of the family ceremoniously takes the first step into the house (or living room if you want to adapt it to modern life) officially bringing in Christmas or the New Year.

Many people include a letter with their holiday card updating family and loved ones on their children or household. Why not include in your update new family history information you found in the past year. People always enjoy hearing about their heritage. Even if the rest of your family doesn't share your zeal for the research, they'll certainly enjoy and take pride in the information.

Also consider using the newsletter as a means of updating the larger, extended family. If a member of each family branch provides facts or updates about their branch, it won't be a lot of work. Be sure to exchange new addresses of those who have moved away, and include recent births, marriages, graduations and deaths.

Holiday Traditions

We appreciate old traditions from our ancestral lands but why not make an intentional effort to bring your own community's culture into your holidays as a matter of tradition? Living in Ohio, our family enjoys candy buckeyes - chocolate and peanut butter candies fashioned to resemble the buckeye (a nut from a tree common in Ohio) - and we were surprised to learn that people from other parts of the country are unfamiliar with the buckeye - candy or otherwise. We've made sure to make buckeyes a tradition so future generations will not only enjoy the delicious treat but also experience a bit of Ohio no matter where they make their home.

And perhaps just as important as practicing the tradition itself is to make sure to share with your children and loved ones the meaning or history of your traditions. This will insure that as your traditions are handed down, and will continue to link your family's past with its present.

Thank you for downloading and reading this article. If you enjoyed this article, please forward it to a friend. Thanks.

Your Family Legacy

“Discover the past, capture the present, preserve for the future.”

<http://www.webYFL.com/>

Visit our catalog to see these great archival products:

Post Bound Scrapbook Albums

<http://www.webyfl.com/scrapbook-albums.html>

Scrapbook Paper

<http://www.webyfl.com/scrapbook-paper.html>

Archival Boxes

<http://www.webyfl.com/archival-boxes.html>