

## Marking Moments

Your newsletter from the M&S Archive

March-April 2020 - Notes for Carers

Spring is in the air and the days are getting longer. It's the time of year that we celebrate new beginnings and the festival of Easter. In this issue we'll look at Easter traditions and Spring.

### **From the Archive**

These notes give more information on the archive images, as well as some example questions to help start conversation and inspire memories. The images could be used as part of a reminiscence session either with a group or one-to-one.

#### Spring Poem, 1946

This poem was published in 'Forces Bulletin', an M&S staff magazine. The Bulletin was printed by Head Office, and sent to all members of staff who were serving in the Armed Forces, regardless of where they were stationed. It contained news from home, letters from demobbed soldiers and information on business developments. The poem was written during the first Spring after the war ended in September 1945.

Do you have a favourite poem? The poem mentions dandelions, celandines, violets and daisies, you could try writing a poem about flowers and plants.

#### Leaflet for Spring Hats, 1949

Staff at M&S were given lots of training to help them when serving customers. This leaflet gives information on the different styles of hat sold at M&S in 1949. Although the wearing of women's hats had declined in popularity after the war, many customers still liked to buy a hat for the new season.

On what occasion might you wear a hat today?

## From the Archive - continued

Advert for Hats, 1953

Spring was a busy time for the M&S Millinery Department when many customers would come in to refresh their wardrobe. Easter is traditionally a time when new clothes were bought and worn, particularly for church services. The Easter bonnet represents this same tradition. Today primary school children often make Easter bonnets decorated with flowers, eggs, chicks and rabbits.

Did you ever buy a new hat or outfit at Easter? Which is your favourite hat in this advert?

Easter Fair, 1954

This photograph shows Blackburn's Easter Fair which took place on the street outside M&S. The Easter Fair is still held every year in the town, although it has expanded into a nearby park. Visitors to the fair could have a go on the coconut shy, or try to win a goldfish by throwing a ping-pong ball into a bowl, and there were stalls selling candy floss, toffee apples and ice-cream.

What is your favourite fairground ride? Did you ever win a goldfish in a plastic bag?

Chocolate Easter Egg, 1971

This chocolate egg was originally bought in M&S in 1934. It was handed down through the family until this girl was photographed with it in 1971. The tradition of giving eggs as gifts at Easter goes back hundreds of years. In some traditions eggs were prohibited during Lent, and so were a treat to be eaten only at Easter. Chocolate eggs were first popularised by the Victorians, and today around 80 million Easter eggs are sold every year in Britain.

Do you like chocolate? Do you take part in Lent?

## From the Archive - continued

Easter Food, 1975

This photograph shows some of the Easter foods sold at M&S in 1975. Customers could also buy hot cross buns and everything they needed for a traditional Easter dinner of roast lamb with all the trimmings. In some European countries it's common to serve pretzels in the Lent period before Easter Sunday. Pretzels are made without egg, butter or milk - historically foods that were avoided during Lent.

Do you enjoy baking or cooking? What is your favourite food to eat on a special occasion?

Cake Labels, 1984

These three labels are from cakes and buns that would be popular at Easter. Hot cross buns are customarily eaten on Good Friday, though now they are popular throughout the whole of Easter. The origins of hot cross buns can be traced back to the 12th century, when an Anglican monk baked the buns and marked them with a cross in honour of Good Friday. Traditionally, if you split a hot cross bun with a friend and say 'Half for you and half for me, between us two shall goodwill be' - the friendship will last a long time.

Which would you choose to eat from these three packets? Do you prefer your hot cross buns toasted or untoasted?

Easter Eggs, 2016

These Easter eggs in coloured foil are perfect for an egg hunt. Easter egg hunts were popularised in the 17th century when dyed and decorated eggs would be hidden around the house and garden for children to find. Today chocolate eggs are commonly used.

## This Month In...

Jack Kelsey, 1955

Goalkeeper Jack Kelsey visited Marble Arch M&S to buy his winter underwear in March 1955. As well as playing for Arsenal for 12 years, Kelsey first played for Wales in 1954 and won 41 caps. He was Wales' keeper in the 1958 World Cup until they were knocked out by winners Brazil.

Kelsey is buying Botany Wool underwear. Botany was fine, soft wool from the Merino sheep. Originally the word only applied to wool from sheep reared on Botany Bay in Australia, though by the 1950s the term Botany was used for Merino regardless of where it came from.

Did you ever buy anything made from Botany Wool? Have you ever visited Marble Arch in London?

HRH Princess Margaret, 1971

Princess Margaret visited M&S Head Office in Baker Street, and the Marble Arch store in 1971. She was accompanied by her lady-in-waiting and together they were shown the newest fashions and food ranges. She visited the staff dining room and lounge and was said to be impressed by the lunch menu!

Princess Margaret was born in 1930, six years later her uncle King Edward VIII abdicated and her father became King George VI. She married Antony Armstrong-Jones in 1960 and had two children.

In the 1970s it was known that members of the Royal family shopped at M&S - Princess Anne and the Duchess of Kent were both spotted buying St Michael clothing. In 1932 Queen Mary was given a tour of M&S in Oxford Street!

Have you ever spotted a member of the Royal family? Where is your favourite place to shop?

## **This Month In...**

Founding of the RAF, 1918

The RAF was founded on 1st April 1918. Twenty years on, the M&S connection began when M&S Chairman Simon Marks, son of founder Michael Marks, helped to establish the Air Defence Cadets Corps, which later became the RAF Air Cadets.

By the end of WWII, almost 100,000 cadets had gone on to join the RAF. Simon maintained his interest in what became the RAF Air Cadets throughout his life, even sponsoring the 'Simon Marks Cup' which was awarded to the Cadets' National Boxing Champion each year in the 1940s.

Have you or your family ever been in the military?

## **Have a Go...**

The wordsearch includes Spring and Easter related words - some words run backwards and some go diagonally.

The quiz could be used individually or with a group. You could plan a small prize for the person who gets the most right answers, or encourage participants to work in groups.