

A LOVE as SWEET as PIE

Some babies are discovered under cabbage leaves while we all know the stork brings little bundles too. There are probably other ways but I am not for sure about any of those except for my own arrival.

Me? I came about via a cherry pie. That's right...a cherry pie. As far as I know, I might possibly hold the title for that being the most unique way.

As always, it often helps to have a back story. Do let me share mine.

When my mother was a young woman, her first teaching position began in a one-room rural school about 30 miles from her parental home. She took room and board with a family since it was not viewed as acceptable at the time for single women to live alone. This was in the late 1930's.

Mother was quite happy with her accommodations because the family was large with three of the girls in proximity to Mother's age. It so happened that one of the girls was "keeping company", a vintage term used then for dating, with a fellow from a neighboring town.

This aforementioned beau had a younger brother and he asked the younger one if he wanted to go along on an evening when he was "going courting." The school was having a Pie Supper. In those days, that tended to be a popular event. The goal was to raise money for the school. It also doubled as a social festivity for the community. Usually there was a program presented by the school children and that drew even more people.

At a Pie Supper, men bid on the ladies' contributed pies. They could buy any one they wanted if they outbid someone else. Then, when they made their purchase, they got to sit with the baker and have conversation with her as they enjoyed the pie.

Naturally, the older brother was going to buy the pie that the girl "he was sweet on" had made. His younger brother wasn't "sparking", another old term for dating, with anyone at the time. The highlight of the pie supper was always The Teacher's Pie. A big fuss was made over hers.

Younger brother hadn't bid on any pie yet at that point and I suppose he was getting hungry. It was announced the teacher's pie was cherry and that was his favorite. Miss Martha, the teacher, held her pie high in the air. He looked at the teacher and he looked at the pie. I wonder if his stomach didn't growl and his heart didn't go pitty-pat.

He began to bid. No one there knew him and the men decided to have fun running up the bid. It grew higher and higher but he didn't back down. Probably by that time he was, without a doubt, showing off a bit. Determination prevailed. I learned a number of years later that he had paid a utterly ridiculous amount for one cherry pie.

And that, folks, is how my poppa met my momma. Serendipity at its finest.

Epilogue: Mother, through the years, made many a cherry pie. I can remember, when growing up, Daddy would take the first bite, smile a bit of a flirty smile, get a twinkle in his eye, and say, "Mighty fine pie, Miss Martha, mighty fine pie." I'm sure special memories were evoked for them both as the beginning of their love story.