

Do you know the history behind Valentine's Day, this day of lovers ?

February has long been celebrated as a month of romance, and we really love it here at **Castlewood House**. It marks our reopening for a new season, with lots of new adventures and lots of new faces, and of course lots of old friends.

But did you know that Valentine's Day as we know it in modern times still contains some of the symbols and vestiges of both ancient Roman and Christian tradition?

Valentine's Day itself is a very old tradition and thought to have originated in Roman times. The Romans had a festival called Lupercalia held in the middle of February, which officially heralded the start of Spring. At this festival boys would draw girls names out of a box as prospective wives !

But who was St. Valentine ?

There are a few schools of thought. One account from the 1400's described Valentine as a Roman temple priest, who was beheaded near Rome by Emperor Claudius, for helping Christian couples to marry. Another theory is that Emperor Claudius beheaded two men both named Valentine on February 14th, in the 3rd century AD. Their martyrdom was honoured by the Catholic Church with the celebration of St. Valentine's Day.

St Valentine is the patron saint of engaged couples, lovers and happy marriages, but it is a little known fact is that he is also the patron saint of beekeepers and epilepsy, as well as the plague!

In 1375 Chaucer wrote of the coming Spring, and of birds and humans on Valentine's Day:

*" For this was seynt Valentyne's Day,  
When every foul cometh there to choose his mate"*

Valentine's Day is a tradition that we continue to treasure, and we would love to help you make yours special.

We have a lovely Valentines Package this year in conjunction with our colleagues in Skellig

Chocolates which is a family owned business based in Ballinskelligs in Kerry. ***Visit this page to learn more....***

**Happy Valentine's Day - Helen & Brian.**