

# Frog Day

*Story written by Lois Caswell*

Most curly haired little girls about four would generally love kittens or puppies, and I think I did, but apparently I was also pretty crazy about frogs. As the story goes, one day I asked my Mom if there was a groundhog day, why wasn't there a "frog day." I don't remember her answer, but obviously she didn't let it go.

I was a lucky little girl with a Grandpa Lang that lived on the farm about 300 miles away in Iowa. Grandpa Newt was a dreamer to say the least and had tried all kinds of things in his lifetime from gold panning in Colorado to teaching school and most everything else in between before he settled down with Grandma and farmed in Iowa. The farm they lived on had all kinds of farm animals, even gold fish in the watering tank the cows got their drinks out of. They milked Guernsey cows that were a kind of gold color and very gentle and we milked them by hand on three legged milk stools that were very tippy. The cats always waited for us to squirt milk at them when we were finishing. We separated their milk in the summer kitchen and got the best foam to eat. The cream went in the cream can to be sold and we were left with the skim milk. Grandma always saved some really good whole milk and some cream for us to put on our cereal.

Grandpa loved to fish so much that he built a pond across the road. It was amazing with a little bridge; all kinds of weeping willow trees planted around it and yes lots of frogs croaking around the pond. It even smelled like a pond, so musty, yet sweet. It was the best thing to go there and fish. It was just the best time to fish with Grandpa Newt there, and I'm guessing that is where I learned to like frogs.

Low and behold on April 1 that year I got five or six post cards with drawings of Frogs in various poses that said, "Happy Frog Day." Mom had told Grandpa who decided there just has to be a "Frog Day" so he got a few of his friends to send cards that year in honor of the day.

Each year after that, there would be cards, little frogs in various sizes and shapes arriving on April 1, until many of Grandpa's friends began celebrating it with him, and started sending him frogs of various sizes and shapes. Eventually, he had literally hundreds of frogs. Folks would find frogs from all over the United States they would send to him, and pass the story on as well. The Muscatine Journal in Muscatine, Iowa did a big article on him, and had a photo of Grandpa and all his frogs.

When Grandpa passed, Grandma returned some of the frogs to those that gave them to him, but three big boxes of them became mine. I had them all on display for a while, but eventually got tired of dusting them and put them in boxes again. Now that I have grandkids, I think it is time to renew the celebration of Frog Day and keep Grandpa Newt's special humor going. So every April 1st remember to wish someone special to you a . . .

**HAPPY FROG DAY!**