

A Forgotten Art – Letter Writing ©

By Connie J. Schlosberg

I ruffled through my roll top oak desk searching for stationary paper to write a letter to my nephew. He's going to Europe – acting as an ambassador – on a school trip. His school requested family members to write notes to the students to keep them from getting homesick.

My search ended up empty. No pretty paper with torn edges or stamped print upon it. Nothing close. Plain 8 ½ x 11 marshmallow white paper; some sticky note pads, and lined composition style books. I realized that letter writing is a dead art.

No one spends time writing letters anymore. We draft emails, jot down notes, and type on a word processor. However, we don't write letters anymore. When was the last time you wrote one? I can't think when I last sat down with a pen and paper and sent someone a wonderful discourse on parchment.

Writing emails and posting notes on gummed candy-colored scraps are part of the culture now. With this, we have become sloppy and untamed. How many emails have you received with misspellings and half-thoughts? I'm sure I'm guilty of composing a few.

Writing letters with a glorious felt pen creates you to think, ponder a little. What will I say? If you make a mistake, you crumple the paper and start over. Each word, every verb, every noun, you think some more. You spend a little time putting your thoughts first in mind, then on a paper. It's methodical. You choose words according to your emotions. Is it a love letter? Perhaps you pour over heart warmed words. Is it an angry letter? Maybe you choose verbiage of petulance.

Each painstaking move accounts for everything you are. You wouldn't want a letter to reflect the wrong feelings. An email is hurried through you can't hit the send button quick enough or oops – too quick – and then it's gone. Gone forever with no looking back. A conversation devoid of your personality. No loopy y's or g's. Hearts for dots upon the i's.

Receiving a handwritten letter in your mail box is like receiving a present. It's a mere presence makes you think. What is it? Who sent it? What's it about? The careful open tears of the envelope holds your found treasure.