

If Mugs Could Talk

By Terri White

There's nothing like a hot cup of coffee, especially on pleasant mornings on my screened-in back porch. Settled in my comfy Adirondack chair, surrounded by greenery and serenaded by a chorus of neighborhood birds. The good life.

Then there's coffee with friends – on my back porch, of course. Or maybe at Mug on the Square or after a tasty lunch at one of our new eateries on the square. Take your pick. Friendship warmed by an inviting cup of Joe. The good life.

Years ago we purchased a new set of dishes which came with mugs instead of the old-fashioned cups and saucers - no one wants those anymore. Later in my travels, I began purchasing mugs depicting the themes of our vacation spots. Those stir memories. However, the ones most dear to me are those carefully chosen with me in mind – some from students, others from friends and family. If mugs could talk, they would weave a tale of love.

Take the Mothers' Day mug with a newborn grandson's footprint stamped on it. Priceless. At only a year old, that same child zipped over to me while we played on the floor and plastered a juicy kiss on my cheek. Then dashed away. Since he has never been overly affectionate, I treasure that moment.

Fast forward to Grandparents' Day at his school. When my birthday arrived a couple months after, I received a mug featuring pictures of him and his brother with me, their Mimi - all beaming. Both those mugs remind me of the joys of grandparenting.

During a season of mentoring a young woman, I received a “best teacher ever” mug. Another, branded “born to teach” from a dear friend who has since passed away, floods me with sweet memories of long conversations and laughter shared. Each reminds me that teaching others leaves my fingerprints on their lives and theirs on mine, as well.

The handmade mug from my daughter. That was a bittersweet season of life. Six months after she had given her baby up for adoption, Mothers’ Day slapped her in the face, a stark reminder of her heart-wrenching choice. Nevertheless, in the midst of her sorrow, she carved out time in her busy schedule to make a one-of-a-kind mug at a pottery shop for me. My “I Love Mom” mug, now 15-years old, is a priceless reminder of her sacrifice and love.

The faded print on my “life is still special together” mug depicts a couple, arms around each other facing a long path. In the early days of our marriage when money was tight, my husband thoughtfully chose this mug for an anniversary gift. After 43 years of marriage, life is still special together. I’m a lucky girl.

Assorted other mugs are stashed in my cupboard, each with a memory of the gift-giver – friends, family, and students that showered me with kindness with a simple mug.

The student who visited a NYC bookstore told his mom that he must give THIS mug to Mrs. White. Of course, there are the Valentine mugs students have given me that hugged bits of enticing candy or my “sister” mug from my one-and-only sister.

A grandson in NYC, his first trip away from family, brought me a colorful mug decked with NYC and those flowered mugs from friends who know that I

love to be surrounded with beauty. They're all there, nestled in my cupboard, waiting to be filled with warm goodness.

As I write this, I'm sipping coffee from my jazzy New Orleans mug on a pleasant fall afternoon. That trip with friends, filled with stimulating experiences, ended one week before the 2020 covid quarantine hit in March. Whew! We made it home just in time.

So here's to relationships warmed by a mug of java and the memories that accompany them. May you be blessed with a cupboardful. The good life.