

Great Buys

Bunch of gratitude

Mother's Day is still the biggest day of the year for florists, writes **Victoria Hannaford**

MOTHER'S DAY has always provided a focal point for florist Barbara Pollak.

Her parents, Fred and Claire Pollak bought Pearsons Florist shop in Bondi Junction 42 years ago, and opened their doors just a few days before Mother's Day in 1969.

"I was very young, and as with all small businesses, we lived above the shop. My siblings and I were all involved with everything from day one. Even the first Mother's Day, we were all helping and doing our bit."

While Pearsons has expanded over the years to include several retail outlets and a floristry school, Barbara says the essence of the event remains the same for the business.

"Mother's Day was by far the biggest day for florists 40 years ago, but Valentine's Day has slowly crept up in popularity," she says.

"But it's still our busiest single day of the year. We do a lot of preparation and try to source really beautiful product, and what's great now is the variety — beautiful sweet peas, hyacinths and really delicate flowers."

In the early days of their family business, Barbara says their access to blooms was limited.

"The biggest difference with Mother's Day now is the variety of flowers. When we started you used to have one or two types of foliage, and the flowers were carnations, chrysanthemums, gladioli and roses.

"In those first few years we had all our chrysanthemums grown by a hobby farmer in Dural, and we used to buy his whole crop every Mother's Day."

Barbara has lots of great memories from the early days of her family's business.

"One of my first jobs was to



Family affair: Barbara Pollak and her son Ned at her Pearsons Florist shop

Picture: John Fotiadis

stomp on the garbage bins — which sounds really terrible, but it was all flowers and foliage — and I used to have to sweep up and spruik outside the shop on Mother's Day.

"I remember my dad being so tired — he'd be up for days, visiting farms and making sure all the product was there. He was so exhausted he'd fall asleep in the van outside the shop."

is hoping to pass on a passion for floristry to her son Ned, 5.

"He loves being in the shop, and he's very hands-on. My two brothers, my dad and a nephew are in our business, so hopefully there will be a place for Ned."

"I'm trying to teach him the power of giving flowers — I make him take them to all the mums he visits and his teachers. I'm hoping he gets used to that act of giving,"

Create a beautiful flower arrangement at home

Barbara's concept is to use traditional Mother's Day flowers from 40 years ago, but present them with a fresh twist — so what was once traditional is again beautiful through new eyes.



Step 1: Trim the stem of the cordyline leaves. They are very malleable so will easily drape inside the vase. Add water gently.



Step 2: Place your foliage in the vase to create a grid to feed your flowers through. These are clusters of philodendron leaves, but you could use viburnum or camellia, which have lovely glassy leaves.



Step 3: Clean the leaves off the stems of the flowers before you start. Then gently thread your flowers through, placing the largest and tallest bloom centre top and grading them in a slight dome.



Step 4: You can repeat the theme down the centre of your luncheon table with different flowers and foliage in each vase.

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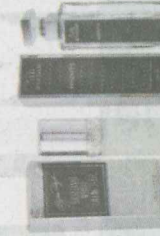
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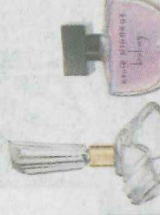
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