

## *Carroll County Times "Carroll's Yesteryears" Articles*

Carroll's Yesteryears  
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Parties, sports, visits filled summer days  
by Joe Getty

The Carroll County newspapers of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century show that summertime was a lively season in this region. The column by correspondents in the local communities show a wide range of leisure and recreational activities were enjoyed by the residents of Carroll County as well as tourists to this region.

Some of the entertainments described are different from today's pastimes. Tournaments were popular with medieval costumes and the winner of the jousting tournament had the honor of selecting and crowning the queen for an evening dance. Our communities also hosted "fete Champetres" where a public outdoor meeting space would be decorated with lights and a musical and dramatic entertainment would be presented.

Other pastimes were similar to ours but were carried out in a different fashion. Instead of watching baseball on the television set, our forebears spent Sunday afternoons at the local ballfield cheering on the home team as it battled a team from the neighboring town.

Tennis became popular in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and it was not unusual for a property owner to convert a level section of his yard into a grass tennis court. The photograph of the court at the Herbert Baile Getty farm east of New Windsor shows this arrangement as well as the Victorian style clothing found on local tennis courts. Croquet parties were also popular events at local houses.

Occasionally, local newspapers document the Victorian-era fad of a "night-blooming cereus party." The flower of this plant only blooms one night of the year, and friends would be invited over for the occasion. The *Democratic Advocate* of August 1, 1891, describes the following:

**NIGHT BLOOMING CEREUS PARTY – A NOVEL SIGHT** A number of friends assembled at the residence of Mr. Granville T. Hering near Sandyville Friday evening of last week to witness the opening of the night blooming cereus. About 7 o'clock the buds commenced to burst and gradually expanded until 10 o'clock when they were fully developed into four beautiful blooms 10 inches in diameter. As day began to dawn the beautiful flowers drooped their heads and withered. The evening was past by the company with music and recitation which were finely rendered. Those who took part

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were Mrs. William J. King, Jr., Miss Fanny D. Harrison, Miss Grace King of Baltimore, Miss W. Bradley Hering, Miss Jenny C. Hering, Miss Margie G. Hering, Mr. W. Bradley Hering and Mr. John A. Hering of Sandyville. The enjoyable evening was presided over with grace and dignity by the hostess, Mrs. Granville T. Hering.

An enjoyable afternoon might also be spent by Carroll County residents traveling by horse and buggy to tour the battlefield sites at Gettysburg. Not only do the local newspapers in the research library at the historical society document many such outings, but also the photograph collection contains many mementoes of local residents captured by the commercial photographers at the battlefield.

The newspapers indicate, however, that every trip was enjoyable. The October 22, 1892 edition of the *Carroll News*, published in Union Bridge, provides this example:

A disastrous termination to a Pleasure Party. What might have proved a sad affair occurred to a pleasure party from this vicinity at Gettysburg on Sunday last. Messrs. Bradley Stitely, Oliver Williams, Ursher Pittenger, Grant Crouse and Chas. Gernand, of near town, and Harry C. Garber, of Baltimore, accompanied by the Misses Smith of New Oxford, Pa., and Misses Fanny Ecker, Berty Bond, Fanny Morningstar and Maggie Bond, visited the battlefield. When descending Culp's Hill, Mr. Garber's horse became frightened from some cause, kicked the front end of the buggy out and dashed off the road down a steep embankment and striking a tree completely wrecking the vehicle. Mr. G. and Miss Bond were thrown out with great force, Garber striking the tree and Miss B. falling under the horse. The only wonder is that they were not instantly killed, but strange to relate both escaped with a few cuts and bruises. Miss Bond was greatly prostrated by the shock, but after receiving medical attention and taking an hour's rest, Mr. G. procured another team and all started homeward, not so much the worse for the experience and feeling thankful it had not resulted more seriously. Miss Maggie was able to resume her duties at the postoffice on Monday.

*Photo credit: Courtesy of Joe Getty*

*Photo caption: A late 19<sup>th</sup> century photograph shows summertime tennis at the Herbert Baile Getty farm east of New Windsor.*