

Carroll County Times "Carroll's Yesteryears" Articles

Carroll's Yesteryears
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Alms House ceremony made for patriotic Fourth
By Joe Getty

Fourth of July traditions in Carroll County have included patriotic celebrations and community activities with bands, parades, flags and fire crackers. A good example of a patriotic tribute occurred at a 1918 ceremony when George W. Albaugh donated a flag and flagpole to the county Alms House:

"Flag Raising at the County Home

"A very interesting service was held at the County Home on Sunday afternoon in the presence of a large number of people from Westminster and vicinity. The occasion was the presentation and raising of a beautiful American Flag, the gift of the Junior Order. The Boy Scout Band furnished the music and gave a Concert which was greatly enjoyed. After singing "America" by the audience, prayer was offered by one of the inmates of the home and the flag was accepted by Mr. B. F. Stansbury, of the Board of County Commissioners. As the Band played the Star Spangled Banner the flag was raised by Miss Mary B. Shellman and John H. Milton a veteran of the Civil War.

"Four little boys Masters Joseph and Caleb Matthias, Henry Kimmey and Ned Shriver, in soldier and sailor suits then gave the salute and recited the pledge to the flag. Mr. H. P. Gorsuch gave a very patriotic talk and the Band closed the exercises with music. The pole, which stands 48 feet above the ground was donated by Mr. George W. Albaugh.

"The flag was put in charge of one of the inmates who will see to raising and lowering at sunrise and sunset each day, and who seems very proud of the charge. The Steward, Mr. Lambert, took great interest in the preparation of and planting of the pole, and made every one feel welcome at the exercises on Sunday." – *Union Bridge Pilot*, July 5, 1918.

The celebrations of 100 years ago were marked by a large parade in Union Bridge and the presentation of a flag to the public school. At Hampstead, a large party was hosted by Dr. D. A. Cox to celebrate his birthday as well as the Fourth of July.

Businesses and residences throughout Carroll County were decorated for the 4th of July. Entertainments included local baseball games and fireworks displays at private homes and farms. Like today, many families gathered together to celebrate the holiday or to go on outings such as train excursions to Pen-Mar park.

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In some communities, it was the tradition to begin celebration at midnight and continue with community events throughout the day as this report from 1893 in Manchester illustrates:

“The 117th anniversary of our National Independence was creditably observed by our people on Tuesday last. The day was ushered in at midnight, when the drum corps and band marched through the town and treated the sleeping inhabitants to some stirring music, while all along the line many explosives were fired as a reminder of what might be expected during the day. The day dawned beautiful, bright and pleasant. The rain on Monday evening had laid the dust and cooled the atmosphere. Our people were early astir, and young America, with his explosives, etc., was upon the scene making all the noise possible, as if feeling that it was his day and no one had the right to dictate or restrain. The business places were closed and citizens generally donned their holiday attire and got in readiness for what the day would bring forth. The Junior Order of Mechanics had monopolized the day for their benefit and the people came out to encourage and aid them. At 10 a.m., the members of the order and Sunday School children formed in procession under the oak tree and headed by the band marched to Main Street and thence to the I.O.O.F. Hall, where the exercises of the morning were held. At 2 p.m., the band again marched through the town, which was a signal that the afternoon amusements would begin and brought quite a crowd to the Hall, where the wheeling matches were indulged in to the amusement of all. Mr. Harry Wareheim took the first prize. Other amusements followed and held the crowd until evening.” – *American Sentinel*, July 8, 1893.

Photo credit: Historical Society of Carroll County

Photo caption: Harry Kimmey is shown around the time of a 1918 Westminster flag ceremony, in which he participated.