

Carroll County Times "Carroll's Yesteryears" Articles

"New Year's Traditions"

Carroll County Times article for 2 January 1994

By Joe Getty

Happy New Year to all!

"January, bleak and drear,
First arrival of the year,
Month of all months most contrary
Sweet and bitter January."

Community correspondents from throughout the county sent their New Year's greetings and recorded local celebrations in turn-of-the-century newspapers. Traditional New Year's celebrations in Carroll County included church services, weddings, family reunions, theme parties and dances. The excerpts below present a sampling of past Carroll County celebrations:

Manchester Items: New Year's day was not very generally observed in our town, the callers were few and far between, the evening was improved by services in the Reformed Church by Rev. Wm .Rupp assisted by Rev. G. Sill, being the first of the series of services during the week of Prayer, alternately in the Reformed and Lutheran churches. The Star Band of Beckleysville, passed through our town on New Year's Day to a wedding near Melrose and in the evening made matters lively about the Washington House, with some of their selections. American Sentinel, January 8, 1881.

Local (Westminster) Items: The New Year, 1898, was greeted in Westminster by the firing of guns and pistols, the ringing of bells and the screaming of steam whistles. The usual "watch meeting" was held at the Methodist churches. New Year's Day was cold and blustery, few people were on the streets and business was nearly suspended. . . . Watch-Night Service: The Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor of the Methodist Protestant Church held a very impressive watch-night service on New Year's Eve, which was largely attended. The service was in charge of the "Lookout Committee" and the program included appropriate hymns, the reading of a Psalm in concert, prayer by the pastor, Rev. W. R. Graham, D.D., and by the president of the society, Mr. George Mather. A very earnest talk was given by the pastor, which was followed by a solemn consecration service, beginning with the recital of the pledge by the society and closing with silent prayer. The consecration hymn of the society was sung just as the bells were ringing in the new year. This service has been followed during the week by an observance of the world's week of prayer, the society holding a short prayer service preceding the regular church service and beginning promptly at 7:15 p.m. The society has begun the new year with a determination to live up to their motto and do earnest work "for Christ and the Church," and gladly welcome all young people to their services every Sunday evening at 6:30 o'clock. American Sentinel, January 8, 1898.

Hampstead Items: The Band of Hope held their 1st anniversary on New Year's Eve. There was a well-delivered recitation from Master Benjamin Stansbury, concert recitations and singing by other members of this important organization. Miss Nellie Horn, of Baltimore, also recited and sang two solos. The children were trained by Mrs. B. Frank Stansbury and Mrs. Rev. T. M. West. Mrs. West meets them every Sunday afternoon for temperance instruction . American Sentinel, January 5, 1889.

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Wedding Bells: As the many friends of Mr. Clinton Thomas, of Cranberry Valley, and Miss Ida May Everhart, of Bachman's Valley, wished them a Happy new Year on last Lord's Day, it was with a double application, nuptial, as well as general. New Year's Day, 1899, to them marked the beginning of their married life, as well as the beginning of a new year. The ceremony was performed at 1 P.M. by Rev. C. M. Eyster, of Manchester, at the home of the bride's parents, Mr. and Mrs. William H. Everhart. Mr. Herbert M. Sterner and Miss Cora E. Leese acted as groomsman and bridesmaid. The bride was beautifully gowned in a dress of straw-colored Henrietta cloth, with lace and satin trimming, while the groom wore the conventional black. A sumptuous wedding dinner was served after the ceremony. A large circle of friends wishes this promising young couple many years of wedded bliss and prosperity. The bride is the organist of the Bachman Valley Lutheran congregation and the groom a prominent bass singer, so that the general hope of the community is that life's years may be to them one long song of harmony and success. Among the presents, generosity and good judgment placed lamps, table and bed linen, china, glass and silverware, table cutlery, etc. *American Sentinel*, January 7, 1899.

Family Reunion: The home of Mr. and Mrs. Nelson A. Brown, in Silver Run Valley, was the scene of a happy family reunion on New Year's Day. Games, conversation, vocal and instrumental music were enjoyed during the day. *Democratic Advocate*, January 5, 1912.

A Surprise Party: On January 1, a surprise was given to Mr. and Mrs. Amos Sentz, it being their 49th wedding anniversary, by their children. At noon all were invited to the dining room where they were served refreshments. Many useful presents were received. *Democratic Advocate*, January 5, 1912.

Miss Elderdice Entertains: Miss Dorothy Elderdice gave a very enjoyable New Year's party at her home on College Hill, last Monday evening. The young people discussed the chief follies of which they had been guilty during the past year, and wrote out resolutions for each other to follow for 1912. During the evening delicious refreshments were served. The guests included: Misses - Esther and Irene Kauffman, Olive Pennell, Grace Steele, Marguerite Stem, Edith Brown; Messrs - Roberts Greenfield, George Brown, Roscoe Douglass and Mr. Suratt. *Democratic Advocate*, January 5, 1912.

Euchre Party: Miss Kitty Roberts gave a very pleasant and progressive euchre party, at the residence of her father, Hon. Charles B. Roberts, on Wednesday night, in honor of her guest and friend, Miss Belle Brady, of Harrisburg. The party sat until 10:30 when refreshments were served, after which the evening was spent in dancing. Those present were Misses Belle Brady, of Harrisburg, Pa.; Misses Kitty and Nannie Roberts, Mary Thayer, Joe Mathias, Mamie and Lizzie Irwin, Eva Blanchard, Julia McKellip, of Westminster; Bettie and Gussie Shriver, of Avondale; Messrs. W. R. C. Neale, C. V. Dugan, Arthur Smith, J. E. Lynch, F. Neal Parke, J. H. Dugan, Wm. H. Thomas, Smith Reifsnider, Brook Irwin, J. H. Cunningham, J. Brundige, C. T. Reifsnider, Jr., Geo. J. Parke. The first prizes were won by Miss Belle Brady and W. R. C. Neale; the booby prizes by Miss Nannie Roberts and Charles T. Reifsnider, Jr. *American Sentinel*, January 5, 1889.

New Year's Cotillon: The New Year's Meeting of the Assembly and Cotillon club which was held at the main-Court Inn last Saturday night was a brilliant affair. The ball room was beautifully decorated with Christmas greens, holly and poinsettias, and "1912 Welcome," in large gilt letters, met each eye upon entering the room. Many handsome gowns were also in evidence. Dancing began promptly at 9 and ended at 12, and during that period supper was served. The German was led by Robert G. Aldridge of Annapolis. Among those present were: Mrs. Fairfax, Mrs. A. A. Wilson, Mrs. Wm. H. Thomas, Mrs. John M. Roberts, Mrs. Fred D. Miller, Mr. and Mrs. Geo. Parke, Jr.; Messrs. Guy W. Steele and J. Milton Reifsnider; Misses - Lina F. Reese, Eleanor C. M. Thomas, Elizabeth Roberts, Alice and Harriet Miller,

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Dorothy Albaugh, 'Frances G. Seabrook, Gladys Vanderford, Eleanor Fouke, Agnes fink, Caroline and Sue Billingslea, Marie Baile of New Windsor; Grace Neidig of Frederick; Marfan Graves, of Norfolk, Va.; Eleanor Myer, of Baltimore; Messrs. - Charles O. Clemson, Howard L. Benson, William G. Simpson, E. DeWitt Simpson, c. Roberts Thomas, Smith Billingslea, Francis Reese, Russell Shaeffer, Carroll Shunk, Dr. Edgar Slagle, Charles Roberts, Sloane Roberts, George H. Preston, Lawrence W. Wroth, and John G. Murray,, Jr., of Baltimore; L Earle Simpson, of Annapolis; W. W. Anderson of Danburg, Ga.; Thomas S. Englar, of Medford; J. Eugene Gammon, of Marfanna, Fla; Levering Tyson, of New York; Chas. Todd, of Walkersville and Mack Rouzer, of Union Bridge. The next dance of the Assembly will be held on the evening of January 27, and will be a leap-year dance. Democratic Advocate, January 5, 1912.

Linwood Items: The coincidence of the first day of the year and the first day of the seek coming together occurred six years ago and will not occur again until 1922. In the mean time the girls will have three times three hundred and sixty six days in which to let their feelings be known and to go forth conquering and to conquer. Union Bridge Pilot, January 6, 1911.

Settlement Day: With the mercantile world January 1st is settlement day. The printer buys and makes bills which must be paid. January, therefore, is a special time to call and pay the printer. "Don't you forget it." Please give us a call. If the subscriber wishes the printer or editor a happy new year, to show it you can do it best by giving him his money. Go and pay for your paper a year in advance, and pay up all back-standing bills. The ready cash makes the printer happy. American Sentinel, January 8, 1881.

Taylorsville Items: Masqueraders made use of the holidays by going three times a day (in short all day and all night. . . . Some of our people witnessed the killing of the big hog at Wm. Bowers' Saturday last (New Year's Eve). The weight being 690 lbs. . . . Again we start on the New Year, we should all hold brighter hopes of the future, and make some good resolutions. Union Bridge Pilot, January 6, 1911.

Photo Caption: [None]