



PAST PRESIDENT'S NEWSLETTER

New Year Traditions

What are your "New Year" Traditions? Do you celebrate like your parents or grandparents did? Have you modified their way of doing things to suit your style? Here are a few ways our ancestors celebrated the ringing in of the "New Year" that are still around today.

- Make New Year's Resolutions It is believed that the Babylonians were the first to make New Year's resolutions, and people all over the world have been breaking them ever since.
- Keep New Year's Resolutions
- Decorate a New Year's tree
- Dress up for the big celebration to ring in the new year
- Spread lots of sparkles and streamers
- Take a hint from your heritage: In Scotland, New Year's Eve, or Hogmanay, as they call the last day of the year, is a bigger deal than Christmas "Auld Lang Syne" is a Scottish song, after all. The massive party goes on for days and incorporates age-old acts, such as first-footing: It's considered good luck to have a tall, dark haired man enter the home for the first time after midnight—bearing auspicious gifts of course (coal, shortbread, salt, and whiskey are common) and he must leave with an equally auspicious gift.
- Germany has Bleigiesesen, a "lead-pouring" custom, and the Irish apparently bang bread against the walls to beat off bad luck. You could also coordinate your undies to your hopes for the year (red for love, yellow for happiness, green or gold for wealth and white for peace)—a Latin American or Mexican custom. In Ecuador, as soon as the clock strikes midnight, families will head outside to burn a newspaper-stuffed scarecrow. It represents anything bad that happened in the year, and burning it is meant to scare away any negativity in the new year. Start calling your Christmas tree a New Year's tree, as they do in Russia. Dive into icy waters like in Konstanz, Germany, or similarly, participate in a Canadian-inspired Polar Bear Plunge.
- Probably the most famous tradition in the United States is the dropping of the New Year ball in Times Square, New York City, at 11:59 p.m. Thousands gather to watch the ball make its one-minute descent, arriving exactly at midnight. The tradition first began in 1907. The original ball was made of iron and wood; the current ball is made of Waterford Crystal, weighs 1,070 pounds, and is six feet in diameter
- Eat traditional "New Year's" food. Different cultures consider certain foods to be fortuitous for the New Year, especially when eaten right as the clock strikes 12. In Chili, it is lentils, while in Spain, it's 12 white grapes, representing the twelve months of the new year. In case you needed any excuse to indulge in donuts and pretzels, several cultures believe ring-shaped foods represent coming full circle. And on New Year's Day, the traditional Southern spread consists of black-eyed peas and collard greens (symbols for wealth—coins and green folding money, respectively), ham or pork (for prosperity), and cornbread (for gold). Others

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The new year stands before us, like a chapter in a book, waiting to be written. We can help write that story by setting goals.

~Melody Beattie

New Year Traditions....

- believe that serving pork and sauerkraut bring good luck as the source of the pork “roots forward” as compared to the turkey, who scratches backward, bringing not so good luck. The Irish enjoy pastries called bannocks. In India and Pakistan, rice promises prosperity. Apples dipped in honey are a [Rosh Hashanah](#) (Jewish New Year) tradition. In Swiss homes, dollops of whipped cream, symbolizing the richness of the year to come, are dropped on the floors—and allowed to remain there!
- Toast with a traditional drink. Champagne has become the drink of choice for New Year's Eve, but in the past, your ancestors might have clinked coupes filled with *Wassail*, a special cider-like punch with English origins, a "hot pint," the Scottish spin, or mulled wine, Holland's traditional bubbly drink, instead of the bubbly beverage.
- There's a longstanding tradition of starting the New Year off with a bang. Only, instead of shooting guns, as was common in the American colonies, some blew noise horns, rang bells and set off fireworks (a Chinese New Year custom).
- In the past, the gift giving season didn't stop at Christmas. Handing out gilded coins or nuts was an old Roman ritual, reports *The Old Farmer's Almanac*, but you could also give eggs for fertility, a Persian practice. Just as in their first-footing tradition, the Scottish apparently also traded shortbread, coal, and silverware, while Egyptians' specialty was earthenware flasks.
- Turn over a new leaf. The dawn of a new year is an opportune time to take stock of your life.
- Jews who observe Rosh Hashanah make time for personal introspection and prayer, as well as visiting graves.
- Christian churches hold “watch-night” services, a custom that began in 1770 at Old St. Georges Methodist Church in Philadelphia.
- The practice of making New Year's resolutions, said to have begun with the Babylonians as early as 2600 B.C., is another way to reflect on the past and plan ahead.
- Countdown and kiss at midnight. Sure people still do this, but the reasoning behind it is still important: "Kiss the person you hope to keep kissing," as the saying goes.
- Sing “Auld Lang Syne”

NEW YEAR'S FOLKLORE

Some customs and beliefs are simply passed down through the ages. Here are some favorite age-old sayings and proverbs.

- *On New Year's Eve, kiss the person you hope to keep kissing.*
- *If New Year's Eve night wind blow south, It betokeneth warmth and growth.*

News.....

- *For abundance in the new year, fill your pockets and cupboards today.*
 - *If the old year goes out like a lion, the new year will come in like a lamb.*
 - *Begin the new year square with every man. [i.e., pay your debts!]* –Robert B. Thomas, founder of *The Old Farmer's Almanac*
- So, whether we resolve to return borrowed farm equipment (as did the Babylonians) or drop a few pounds, we're tapping into an ancient and powerful longing for a fresh start!



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NEWS.....



Happy Holidays



thankful & blessed



Left: PP Robert Knippenburg and Brute checking out Midland's recently delivered, 4 Guys, 3500 gallon Tanker, purchased with Assistance to Firefighter Grant funds.

"All of us every single year- we're a different person. I don't think we're the same person all our lives."

-Steven Spielberg

Birthdays

<i>Patricia Counts</i>	<i>February 1</i>
<i>Mariam Shirkey</i>	<i>February 2</i>
<i>Harry Hetz</i>	<i>February 5</i>
<i>Stephan Cox</i>	<i>February</i>
	<i>5</i>
<i>Peggy Zembower</i>	<i>February 9</i>
<i>JoAnn Shimer</i>	<i>February 19</i>

Anniversaries

Roger & Joy Steger
February 10
Leone & John Gatton
February 14

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