

Keith's Corner/McGill News

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New Year's Fireworks in McGill

Just in case you hadn't noticed yet, another year has shot past us. They seem to be picking up more and more speed each year. Next week at this time it will be 2020. Now is a good time to start making those resolutions that you will break . Years ago I finally figured out a way to never break a resolution. It is very simple, just don't make one.

As a very young McGill townsite creature, I don't remember anything but Christmas. We were probably sound asleep when the New Year was rung in. The parents might have tried to awaken us from a deep sleep, but, after exhausting ourselves playing with our toys, that would be impossible.

Kennecott would have the shift steam whistle on the powerhouse blast in the New Year. Then all over town it sounded like a real war was going on. It seemed like everyone over the age of 9 was out by their house blasting away with whatever firearm they had. My brother and Dad and I liked to shoot 3 shots with our 12 gauge shotguns and then a couple of rounds with our 30-06 deer rifles. We stood under the eave of the house to protect us from the falling BBs of the neighbors shotguns. Then it was quiet. Guess it was like a cease fire lull after a large Battle in some far off war. During WWII we fired only one or two rounds as ammo was hard to get if at all. No one was ever wounded or killed in our "battle".

As we grew older, it was a time for house parties and a chance to mingle with those formerly dreaded beings, called girls. By some miracle they had changed and now ere fun to be around. Life is a strange journey.

When we reached that old age of 21 the house parties usually morphed into a better party at a lounge. The McGill Club and Victory Club were packed with people on New Year's eve. The Cypress Hall was full of couples dancing to the

music of the Nat Oxborrow outfit. The Club 50 was another favorite spot to dance. George Maheu provided the music.

The biggest party in the area was of course the Annual Fireman's Ball, at the WPHS gym. I think that it was usually the Doug Hawkin's dance band that played. I remember the large Fireman's hat that sat on the trophy case in the lobby of the gym.

The Nevada Hotel and the Bank Club Lounge also had live music, while most of the smaller places used the music boxes. As the evening wore on people moved from one place to another until finally landing in one spot for the ringing in of the new year. There has been a dramatic change in celebrating since I was a kid, but it all means the same. A new year is coming with hopes of being better than the last one and also the fact that you actually made it thru the last one.

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With another great Christmas in the history books, I just wanted to mention the fact that it takes a lot of work by a lot of people to make such a Christmas happen. The people who build the toys and other gifts, the folks who get the stuff to the stores and the clerks who put up with a lot of guff to satisfy the customers, the Fed Ex, UPS and other delivery outfits and of course the USPS. They are the best in the entire world. These delivery folks are the ones we deal with. We may not see the Fed Ex and UPS drivers, but they are there for us. We do however see the USPS delivery gal at our local Post Office. She is, Cammi, the one that works long hours during the holiday to make sure all the packages get to the right person. She handles a mountain of packages and yet comes thru it all with a great smile and a cheerful, Merry Christmas. So, here's a big thank you, to all who make our Christmas Holiday so great each year and a special one to Cammi.

Old Photo



The William N. McGill residence at the McGill Ranch. Later destroyed by fire. (Nevada Historical Society Collection)

This house was located in the area of the McGill pool. I was told once that the cement platform with the awning by the pool was the actual foundation of the house. If so, then maybe these trees in the foreground are the ones that used to have a plank bench between each of them up behind the cement and just in front of the girl's changing hut, as seen in this enlarged cut out of another old photo.



