**Essays on Mount Crosby - New Year Celebration c.1920s**

After the Mount Crosby Hall was built in 1923, it largely replaced the State School as the venue for social gatherings, including dances, sports club meetings, weddings and recurrent celebrations such as welcoming in the New Year. The New Year dances were huge events. In the twenties and thirties they were attended by large crowds that gathered from Mount Crosby, Tivoli, Kholo, Pine Mountain and Lake Manchester to dance to music played by a live band.

All the popular dances were danced, including a now little known one called the balloon dance. For this dance, the ladies had a balloon tied with ribbon to their elbow and ankle, and the dances were performed as normal. Whenever a lady's balloon burst, the startled couple had to leave the floor; the winner being the lady of the last couple dancing.

At one minute to midnight, as previously arranged with the poor souls who had to work that night, the pumping station whistle was opened and its piercing sound reverberated across the township, shooing out the old year and welcoming in the new one, while the crowd at the hall, forever partly Scottish, linked arms and sang that popular refrain "Auld Lang Syne". Don't get any ideas that they went home directly after that ...

Col Hester