



Who would have come to the ball back in 1776?



Elspeth Abel is all set for the Bicentennial Ball.

by Mrs. Macaroni Jack

Who has not driven along the River Road, gazed at the York County hills, and wondered if they do not look very much as they did in 1776, give or take a few power lines that place us firmly in the twentieth century?

Likewise, it is not difficult to imagine that there might have been a ball - perhaps honoring the Associators (those who pledged themselves to defend our country at the inception of the Revolutionary War).

Those in attendance would have come from Anderson's Ferry (Marietta) Maytown, Donegal, Middletown, Paxtang, Hanover (Lebanon), Londonderry, Drumore, and there might have been some fervent patriots from Lancaster.

A probable location for the ball would have been the home of Alexander Lowry, Donegal's most prominent citizen.

A less likely place might have been one of the "ordinaries", as the local taverns were called. Music for the ball would probably have been provided by local citizens who were fortunate enough to own a fiddle, a transverse (German flute), a fife or pipe and even a dulcimer. The Jew's harp and the bagpipes were favorite instruments among county folk. If Mrs.

Lowry possessed a harpsichord, and the foresinger (choirmaster) from one of the local German Churches was sufficiently accomplished to play for dancing, it would indeed have been a grand ball.

It is more likely, however, that our hardy Scotch-Irish and German forebears would have enjoyed jigs, hornpipes, allemandes, etc., the kind we now call country or square dances.

Guests arriving at the ball would no doubt have been attired in their prized "clothing". Gentlemen in velvet coats, satin breeches, silk hose and brocade vests would certainly have been in the minority.

Alexander Lowry would no doubt have been rather elegantly dressed. Matthew Smith might have presented more of a military bearing. There might have been some of the new green and brown continental uniforms, but the most likely military garb would have been the linen fringed hunting jacket with linen knee breeches, or the more common long narrow pants called overalls.

A "damn my eyes cock" (the Englishman's designation for style of tricorne hat worn by colonials), and his rifle or musket to insure his family's safe journey to and from the ball would have

completed many outfits.

The guest would have welcomed a tankard of punch, perhaps "Fish-house" (made with brandy and rum), or a wine punch. Those of less discerning taste might have a drink made of rum, water, and honey. Liquor was consumed in preference to water, partly because it was less likely to give one dysentery.

Mrs. Lowry, the hostess for the ball, would have a beautiful gown of elaborate design made from silk alamode (light, glossy silk), taffeta, or satin. An abundance of ribbon and lace decorating a lady's dress denoted the fact that her husband or family was well-to-do.

The yards of material and the padding worn under the more elaborate ball gowns were calculated to accentuate the female figure's most desirable assets: a small waist, the bosom, and a neat foot.

Sometime during a break in the dancing a huzza must have rung across the ballroom. Those three "hip-hip-huzza's" would inevitably break out wherever there was a gathering of such revolutionary spirits.

Some of us who live in this area feel that the "cradle of liberty" lies as much in this small corner of God's green earth as it does anywhere. These green river hills could tell stories that would hold their own with the Green Mountain Boys.

As I look out my window and imagine I see an Indian, a fox, or Matthew Smith on his horse, I remind myself that he, too, was once a very live person who roamed and loved this uniquely beautiful part of the earth which we are privileged to inhabit.

Perhaps it is something in the air off the river, but a special spirit of freedom and independence seems to pervade this whole region.

Over the past two hundred years this area has been politically subdivided. This coming Saturday, however, some of these subdivisions are uniting in having a ball.

I know that Matthew Smith will be there, as will Alexander Lowry and his lady. I am hoping to see the Right Rev. Elder again. Macaroni Jack might come and bring his little green buddy along.

I know I will be there with my appreciation and respect for those who went before me, my rationalizations of the present and my hopes for the future.

I do hope you can join me, I am sure you will have an enjoyable and different experience.



Five day-old foal owned by Peter Krol of Rowenna seemed to enjoy unusually warm weather last week. Mother Trixie was happy to see the grass start growing again.

How to enjoy your dandelions

by J. L. Biesecker

Throughout the Donegal area recently an increasing number of people have been noticed rambling about their lawns with sprayers, pry-bars, and prods, attacking mans old friend the dandelion. Efforts are being made to destroy these tenacious little fellows who for many years were a most important ally of man in his struggle with death.

Have you not heard it said that a "Dutchman must eat dandelion to be healthy through the year." "Dutchman" and other European immigrants brought the dandelion to America. For many centuries it had served as an important herbal medicine. High in vitamins A and C and also iron, in roots which are available throughout the year and green leaves that sprout in the very early spring, the plant was a natural assistant to the ancient herb doctors as they fought off the ravages of winter.

More than just a primitive medication, our little immigrant can serve as an ingredient in salads, pot-herbs, cooked vegetables, coffee substitute, wine, prognosticator of future family size and child's toy.

As an obstinate competitor with grass, dandelion also serves as an outlet for pent-up hostility as suburbanities attack it each spring with a vigor matched only by new converts engaged in holy war with the infidel.

Having eaten dandelion all of my life, I assumed everyone else enjoyed it also. However, in recent exposure to "back-to-nature new to the out-of-doors type friends, I found experimenters proclaiming dandelion to be bitter, stringy, and tough. Such is not the case if

dandelion is selected and prepared with reasonable care. Dandelion growing under a wagon on the north side of a barn, picked before the flowers show is the secret of selection that one old-timers uses. Actually, if one wants to use dandelions as a potherb or salad ingredient, the greens should be picked before the flowers sprout, selecting that growing in areas out of direct sunlight.

Tender young leaves placed in boiling water for five minutes, seasoned with butter and salt makes an enjoyable side dish. A pinch of soda can be used in the boiling water is desired.

Crowns of the root, usually starting several inches below the surface, can also be eaten as a cooked vegetable or raw in a salad. They should be soaked in salt water for a short time if used raw. The roots, when peeled, serve as a cooked vegetable if one takes the time to change the water at least one time in the preparation. Peeled dandelion roots roasted until crisp and brown, then ground served many frontier families as a healthful coffee.

substitute as our country pushed westward.

For many centuries, in England, the dapper little blossoms have captured the warmth of the summer sun, holding it until needed on long damp winter nights. Several wine recipes are used in this area, but since this writer always fails as a wine maker, the reader will be relieved to know that my recipe will remain a secret.

However, the directions for fortelling family size are much more reliable. Take a fully mature white dandelion seed head. Blow on it one time as if blowing out a candle. The number of seeds remaining on the head indicate the number of children the person blowing will parent. My last visit to the oracle of the dandelion indicates that my children will number 387.

Maundy Thursday has recently passed, but it is still not too late for Dutchmen of Donegal to partake of their fellow immigrant in some form that will assure their continued health and lend the strength needed to fulfill the prophecy of the dandelion.



Lions to plant roses

The Marietta Lions' Club plans to plant a lot of red roses in honor of the bicentennial.

Roses will be planted in the Marietta square and around the community sign on Route 441.

The Donegal Mutual Insurance Company plans to

plant 175 rose bushes along its stake fence on the highway.

Albert Huck has been named chairman of the rose planting committee for the Lions. Lester Hostetter, champion rose grower of Mount Joy, will act as consultant.