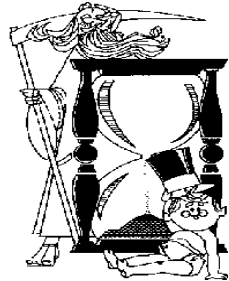


Auld Lang Syne

Should auld acquaintance be forgot
and never brought to mind?
Should auld acquaintance be forgot
and days of auld lang syne?
For auld lang syne, my dear,
for auld lang syne,
we'll take a cup of kindness yet,
for auld lang syne.

Should auld acquaintance be forgot
and never brought to mind?
Should auld acquaintance be forgot
and days of auld lang syne?
And here's a hand, my trusty friend
And gie's a hand o' thine
We'll tak' a cup o' kindness yet
For auld lang syne



For most people, New Year's Eve just isn't complete without singing the song, "Auld Lang Syne," at the stroke of midnight to bring in the new year. This song is filled with special memories for each individual. The words were adapted by the Scottish poet Robert Burns in the 1700's from traditional Scottish songs. It was first published in 1796 after Burns' death. This old Scotch tune, "Auld Lang Syne" literally means "old long ago," or simply, "the good old days." For decades, people have agreed that it makes a proper way to close the "old long ago" year, and usher in the hopes and resolutions of a brand - new year.

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The Romans

For a long time the Romans celebrated New Year on the first of March. Then, in 46 BC, the Emperor Julius Caesar began a new calendar. It was the calendar that we still use today, and thus the New Year date was changed to the first day of January. The month of January was named for their god, Janus, who is pictured with two heads. One looks forward, the other back, symbolizing a break between the old and new. The tradition of using a baby to signify the new year was begun in Greece around 600 BC. It was their tradition at that time to celebrate their god of wine, Dionysus, by parading a baby in a basket, representing the annual rebirth of that god as the spirit of fertility. Early Egyptians also used a baby as a symbol of rebirth. The use of an image of a baby with a New Years banner as a symbolic representation of the new year was brought to early America by the Germans. Thus, today our New Year's symbols are a newborn baby starting the next year and an old man winding up the last year. The Roman New Year festival was called the *Calends*, and people decorated their homes and gave each other gifts. Slaves and their masters ate and drank together, and people could do what they wanted to for a few days.

The Celts

The Celts were the people who lived in Gaul, now called France, and parts of Britain before the Romans arrived there. Their New Year festival was called *Samhain*. It took place at the end of October, and *Samhain* means 'summer's end'. At *Samhain*, the Celts gathered mistletoe to keep ghosts away, because they believed this was the time when the ghosts of the dead returned to haunt the living.

Jewish New Year

The Jewish New Year is called *Rosh Hashanah*. It is a holy time when people think of the things they have done wrong in the past, and they promise to do better in the future. Special services are held in synagogues, and an instrument called a *Shofar*, which is made from a ram's horn is played. Children are given new clothes, and New Year loaves are baked and fruit is eaten to remind people of harvest time.

Muslim New Year

The Muslim calendar is based on the movements of the moon, so the date of New Year is eleven days earlier each year. Iran is a Muslim country which used to be called Persia. The people celebrate New Year on March 21, and a few weeks before this date, people put grains of wheat or barley in a little dish to grow. By the time of New Year, the grains have produced shoots, and this reminds the people of spring and a new year of life.



Hindu New Year

Most Hindus live in India, but they don't all celebrate New Year in the same way or at the same time. The people of West Bengal, in northern India, like to wear flowers at New Year, and they use flowers in the colors of pink, red, purple, or white. Women like to wear yellow, which is the color of Spring. In Kerala, in southern India, mothers put food, flowers, and little gifts on a special tray. On New Year's morning, the children have to keep their eyes closed until they have been led to the tray. In central India, orange flags are flown from buildings on New Year's Day. In Gujarat, in western India, New Year is celebrated at the end of October, and it is celebrated at the same time as the Indian festival of *Diwali*. At the time of *Diwali*, small oil lights are lit all along the roofs of buildings. At New Year, Hindus think particularly of the goddess of wealth, *Lakshmi*.

The Far East

Vietnam

In Vietnam, the New Year is called *Tet Nguyen Dan* or *Tet* for short. It begins between January 21 and February 19, and the exact day changes from year to year. They believe that there is a god in every home, and at the New Year this god travels to heaven. There he will say how good or bad each member of the family has been in the past year. They used to believe that the god traveled on the back of a fish called a carp, and today, they sometimes buy a live carp, and then let it go free in a river or pond. They also believe that the first person to enter their house at New Year will bring either good or bad luck.

Japan

In Japan, New Year is celebrated on January 1, but the Japanese also keep some beliefs from their religion, which is called Shinto. To keep out evil spirits, they hang a rope of straw across the front of their houses, and this stands for happiness and good luck. The moment the New Year begins, the Japanese people begin to laugh, and this is supposed to bring them good luck in the new year.

Chinese New Year

The Chinese New Year is celebrated some time between January 17 and February 19, at the time of the new moon, and it is called *Yuan Tan*. It is celebrated by Chinese people all over the world, and street processions are an exciting part of their New Year. The Festival of Lanterns is the street processions, and thousands of lanterns are used to light the way for the New Year. The Chinese people believe that there are evil spirits around at New Year, so they let off firecrackers to frighten the spirits away. Sometimes they seal their windows and doors with paper to keep the evil spirits out.



New Year in the West

New Year's Day processions with decorated floats and bands are a part of New Year, and football is also played all over the United States on New Year's Day.

In Europe, New Year was often a time for superstition and fortune-telling, and in some parts of Switzerland and Austria, people dress up to celebrate Saint Sylvester's Eve. In AD 314, there was a Pope called Saint Sylvester, and people believed that he captured a terrible sea monster. It was thought that in the year 1000, this sea monster would escape and destroy the world, but since it didn't happen, the people were delighted. Since then, in parts of Austria and Switzerland, this story is remembered at New Year, and people dress up in fantastic costumes, and are called *Sylvesterklausen*.

In Greece, New Year's Day is also the Festival of Saint Basil. Saint Basil was famous for his kindness, and Greek children leave their shoes by the fire on New Year's Day with the hope that he will come and fill the shoes with gifts.

In Scotland, New Year is called Hogmanay, and in some villages barrels of tar are set alight and rolled through the streets. Thus, the old year is burned up and the new one allowed to enter. Scottish people believe that the first person to enter your house in the New Year will bring good or bad luck, and it is very good luck if the visitor is a dark-haired man bringing a gift. This custom is called first-footing.

The song, *Auld Lang Syne* is sung at midnight on New Year's Eve, and this custom is now celebrated all over the world. On New Year's Eve, many people hold parties which last until late into the night. It is traditional to greet the new year at midnight and celebrate the first minutes of the year in the company of friends and family. People may dance, sing, and drink a toast to the year ahead. After the celebrations, it is time to make new year resolutions, and these are a list of decisions about how to live in the coming year. Horns are blown at midnight, and people hug and kiss to begin the new year with much love and happiness.

In British Columbia, Canada, there is the traditional polar bear swim. People of all ages put on their bathing suits, and plunge into the icy cold water which surrounds Vancouver during the winter.



NEW YEAR'S CELEBRATIONS

We made it. The old year, for better or worse, is gone for good. The new year has begun with fresh promise. Here's our chance to start again, to do it right this time, to have another shot at success...at glory...at just accomplishing what we resolve to. It's time to shed that baggage from the year long gone and celebrate what can be in the 365 untouched days to come. Happy New Year!



Celebrations Around the World

Not all countries celebrate New Year at the same time, nor in the same way. This is because people in different parts of the world use different calendars. Long ago, people divided time into days, months, and years. Some calendars are based on the movement of the moon, others are based on the position of the sun, while others are based on both the sun and the moon. All over the world, there are special beliefs about New Year.

Long Ago Festivals

Ancient Egypt

In ancient Egypt, New Year was celebrated at the time the River Nile flooded, which was near the end of September. The flooding of the Nile was very important because without it, the people would not have been able to grow crops in the dry desert. At New Year, statues of the god, Amon and his wife and son were taken up the Nile by boat. Singing, dancing, and feasting was done for a month, and then the statues were taken back to the temple.

Babylonia

Babylonia lay in what is now the country of Iraq. Their New Year was in the Spring. During the festival, the king was stripped of his clothes and sent away, and for a few days everyone could do just what they liked. Then the king returned in a grand procession, dressed in fine robes. Then, everyone had to return to work and behave properly. Thus, each New Year, the people made a new start to their lives.



NEW YEAR'S SERVICES

CELEBRATION STOLE



The Celebration Stole was hand crafted by Slabbinck in Belgium and is used during special occasion worship services at Historic Trinity Lutheran Church. It was obtained in honor of The Rev. Dr. David Eberhard's 40th Anniversary in the Holy Ministry. The neck is adorned with the symbols of the four Evangelists. The right panels embody (1) the Shepherd's at Christ's birth, (2) the Baptism of Christ by John the Baptist, (3) Mary and John with the Crucified Lord. The left panels illustrate (1) the Ascended Lord Upon the Throne in Heaven, (2) Jesus Calming the Stormy Sea, (3) the Lord at the Last Supper.

JUBILEE PASTORAL CROSS



The Pastors' Cross, being worn by Dr. Eberhard, is a copy of the Jubilee Cross worn by the Pope John Paul II at St. Peter Basilica in Rome, at the opening of the Cathedral Jubilee Door in 2000. This replica of the cross was purchased at the Vatican in Rome.

CATHEDRAL PROCESSIONAL CROSS

The Cathedral Processional Cross used, today, in our Lutheran Cathedral in downtown Detroit, is a copy of the Windsor Castle Processional Cross. This cross made in England is hand-hammered brass, with filigree ends, with a centered Agnus Dei symbol mounted on a red enamel back-ground.



CHRISTMAS PROCESSIONAL BANNER

The Christmas Processional Banner is made by Gaspard Regal Vestments located in Wisconsin, USA.

A BLESSED NEW YEAR TO ALL

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