

## July 4, 1922 Was Memorable for Monroe Residents

The Fourth of July 2020 will probably be one that most of us will remember for many years to come. It was different from the previous years because of all that was canceled due to the Covid-19 virus. The Independence Day celebration in Monroe in 1922 was also quite different from the previous years in Monroe because it was the first time that the American Legion took charge of the event. By the comments made in the paper, it sounds like the celebration was much more calm than previous years.

# Legion Celebration a Success

Headlines from the July 4, 1922  
issue of the Monroe Evening Times

The next day Undersheriff A. E. Mitchell said, "There was never so great a number of automobiles in Monroe as last night. There never was so orderly a crowd of anything like the number here Tuesday. No disorder occurred worth mentioning."

Chief of Police N. B. Mackey also shared, "I did not have a single complaint of drunkenness or disorder of any kind. The crowd was good natured and everybody seemed to be having a good time."

There were thousands of people present and comments about the day were enthusiastic that the legion boys showed that they could handle and entertain large crowds in a way to assure all of having a fine time. The celebration was free from the usual roughness and vulgarity. Nobody was taken to jail or police court during the entire day or evening. This was an unusual thing considering the large number of people in town all day.

Hundreds of people took part in dancing at Chesebro's pavilion, which was formally opened to the public that evening. The dance pavilion was operated on a percentage basis. Half of the proceeds went to the American Legion. There were many spectators and dancing until midnight.

Members of the legion committee admitted that things might have gone a little more promptly, but delays in conducting such a large affair could hardly be completely avoided. The large program went off practically as scheduled, with changes being made so that the crowd would not miss any of the free attractions.

The "fire dive" of daredevil Wannamaker from a 90-foot illuminated ladder to a net was the final event after the fireworks. This stunt proved to be a thriller. It was a most daring feat with the athlete in danger every time he performs it. Thousands saw this remarkable act.

The display of fireworks came well up to the strong descriptions given out by the committee and since a generous proportion of the pieces were of the high rocket kind, people all over the city were able to see them.

The afternoon program was full of interest and happy excitement. The water fight that had been advertised between the New Glarus and Darlington teams made a good exhibition for the spectators. Since "Peg" Martin of Darlington was not able to be here, it was decided to put on a good show for 20 minutes and call it a draw. Edwin Stuessy and LeRoy Kubly were on the New Glarus team and a Moore from Darlington and William Rieder of Monroe were on the other.

The "junior" water fight between Ralph Bruni and Robert Hefty was the most laughable event of the day. Gottfried Bruni came to the aid of Ralph and Sam Kuenzie sought out to help young Hefty. All were "perfectly soaked" with the streams from the chemical hose.

**NEVER SO MANY  
AUTOS IN TOWN  
GREAT CROWD HAS FINE TIME  
AND IS SINGULARLY FREE  
FROM DISORDER.  
GREAT FIREWORKS DISPLAY  
ENJOYED BY THOUSANDS**

The west side boys won the water polo match having a better strategy than the east side lads. The west siders successfully worked a trick of giving the ball a push with the stream of water and then turning the hose on their opponents so as to blind them while the ball rolled over the goal line.

The Kempf family, consisting of the parents, two children and a dog, gave a free act of acrobatic stunts and drew large crowds during the day and pleased many. They gave two performances each of which lasted about 45 minutes.

A final thrill while the crowd “oohed” and “aahed” during the fireworks was an alarm of fire. The department was called to extinguish a blaze at the home of John A. Kundert on North West Street [15th Avenue between 9th and 10th Street]. The fire of unknown origin burned a small hole in the roof. The blaze, which was put out by a neighbor before the fire department arrived, did about \$25 worth of damage. Thinking that a spark from the fireworks might have caused the fire, the legion boys offered to pay for the damages if it was proven to be true.

We can hope that our celebration in 2021 will be much closer to what we remember from the years prior to 2020.