

## NACHWEIHNACHTZEIT / POST CHRISTMAS SEASON

Neujahrstag (der 1. Januar): New Years Day

Neujahrstagsitte: New Years Day custom

Neujahrstagspeisen: foods for New Years Day

Neujahrsgetränke: beverages for New Years Day

A 'Big Day'  
In Dutchtown

NEW YEAR'S DAY was a big day in old Dutchtown years ago. The welcome mat was out everywhere as the residents threw open their doors and invited everybody to join with them in celebrating the new year. Even the singing societies and Turn Vereins held open house. Food and drink was free everywhere.

Every house was spic and span. The front and rear door sills were scrubbed snow white to ward off the evil spirits. Silver coins to bring prosperity to the house rested on every window ledge and above every door.

A new broom rested in every kitchen to replace the old broom that was discarded after it had swept away the old year's bad luck.

Every housewife had at least two pounds of new butter on her pantry shelf. This was done to make sure that things were well buttered in the new year.

The tables in the homes were piled high with food the German housewives had worked for days cooking and preparing. And each tried to outdo the other in food for the guests.

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Pork was served every place, because of the belief that the forward rooting of the animal was a harbinger of prosperity. There was pickled herring to insure good health. Rhine

wine was served everywhere, because Rhine wine was supposed to bring health and wealth for the coming year. For extra good health giant pretzels were baked and served everywhere.

Among the baked goods found on most tables was Dutch apple cake, nut bread, popovers and coffee kuchen. Many housewives put out pickled crab apples, watermelon rind, pickled pears and spiced grapes. Of course there was always plenty of pickles of all sorts.

From early morning folks went from house to house. Nobody was turned away, especially dark haired men. For to turn away such a man meant ill fortune for the household. And Dutchtown, being superstitious, turned away nobody whether he had hair or not.

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This open door policy attracted a few shady characters now and then. But the residents never called the police. They wined and dined these intruders and quietly sent them on their way.

By midnight the district was quiet. Most of the homes were dark. Here and there the strains of an accordion or the voices of a quartet sounded through the district as the merry-making throng wended their way homeward from the various parties and dances. Dutchtown had celebrated another New Year.

Prost Neujahr!