

CATAWISSA BI-CENTENNIAL

Good day everyone...it's a beautiful day in Pennsylvania.

Since last October, the people of Catawissa have been preparing for this Bi-Centennial, and they are ready for it this week. The whole of Columbia County and others nearby, should have a fun-fest unparralleled. Catawissa saw the light of day before 1774, when James LeTory, the fur-trader wrote to John Penn from the mouth of the Catawissa Creek in 1728. Conrad Weiser, the missionary diplomat between the Penns and the Indians came to the area in 1754. Later, many traders, fur hunters and land speculators came to the area. And shad-fishing, hide tanning, cabinet making, furriers, blacksmiths, and innkeepers made the area flourish. Christian Broabst came to the area from Berks County late in the 18th century and he was the igniter of the area. He developed mills along the creek's flow, laid out a water navigation route from Reading to Erie, which went through Catawissa. Years later, Broabst brought the railroad into Catawissa. This week they celebrate it all--At Catawissa--with music from their famed Catawissa Silver Cornet Band, which is 105 years old, and still playing concerts. "Faith of Our Fathers Day" was yesterday, celebrated in all the churches. Today a queen is born and will be crowned--they'll bury the razors and cosmetics and all this week the 31 chapters of the Brothers of the Brush and Sesqui-Belles will celebrate in the ancient manners. American Day and Industry Day is on the docket.

There will be a great rope-pulling contest across the Catawissa Creek, with the area's strongest showing their muscles; more than 200 fire trucks will be in the Thursday Parade. The Bi-Centennial Ball is set for Friday and on Saturday, the official finale will provide a huge Ox Roast, a Revolutionary Era Battle, the Grand Parade, (with floats, bands, military bands) an Antique Car show, fireworks in the evening, and the shaving off of beards. It should be one of the best fun centennials in recent Pennsylvania history and you should be there. Beneficiaries of the Bi-Centennial will be the Dam Project for swimming, the purchase of a new fire truck, and funds for the Recreational Association of the town. Like all such events, the people of Catasissa have been drawn together in a common cause--and your fun at the Catawissa Bi-Centennial will be the proof of their success. Congratulations, Catawissa! Come one and all.

This is Pete Wambach. It's a beautiful day in Pennsylvania.