*Wok & Roll by Peter Kwong, (Frederic) Inter-County Leader*

**What happened in 1895?**

A good friend sent me a calendar from 1895 awhile back. I didn’t think much of it, thinking that my buddy had nothing better to do, so now he was busy digging out old calendars rather than dusting the house.

1895, that’s 124 years ago; only 55 years before I was born. In the middle of the calendar is a design of two gentlemen checking on an incoming carriage.

If I am not mistaken, it looks like it is my hero Sherlock Holmes and his loyal assistant, no other than Dr. Watson himself. On the left side of the picture, it says, “So they will live for all that love them well: in a romantic chamber of the heart, in a nostalgic country of the mind, where it is always 1895 … Vincent Starrett.”

On the right side is another saying: “Everything comes in circles … The old wheel turns and the same spoke comes up. It has all been done before and will be again… The Valley of Fear.”

While reading those phrases and trying to digest what the saying is about, I looked up at the present calendar, for 2019, and then looked down at the dates on this 1895 calendar.

“Oh my,” I said to myself, how can it be? All the days are identical! In 1895, the Fourth of July was on a Thursday and the same in 2019. Easter is on April 21 on both calendars and same with Christmas, which falls on a Wednesday! How can it possibly be? And we are 124 years apart!

I sat and pondered on the thought for a while and couldn’t help but think that on this same day, 124 years ago, just what happened here in the States. On a broader scale, what happened here 248 years ago, 372 years ago and 1,240 years ago?

With the same calendar, can we trace back all those years and find out just what in the world our ancestors were up to? The Northwoods was probably teeming with wild animals and so was Wisconsin and the rest of the country.

The Pilgrims were probably still building the ship, wondering just how the heck to get to this New World. I love history and I love to search for answers.

Things happen for a reason, just what is it, why and how? I got into trouble many times in my younger days with the nuns, who also were my teachers. I wasn’t the teachers’ pet for simple reasons, as I always asked the wrong questions. But let’s not get too religious here.

So, there are many ways to trace back what happened 124 years ago. However, I just want to quote some interesting facts that I can relate to. After all, I wasn’t born yet; but have learned a lot of fun stuff while I was growing up in Hong Kong. The Civil War just ended in 1865 and within 30 years, these things happened to America:

* William G. Morgan, at Holyoke, Massachusetts, invented volleyball (known as Mintonette then).
* Katherine Lee Bates’ lyrics for “America the Beautiful” were published.
* Van Cortlandt Golf Course opened in the Bronx as the country’s first public golf course.
* John Wesley Hardin, the American frontier outlaw, was killed by an off-duty policeman in a saloon in El Paso, Texas.
* The first professional American football game was played in Latrobe, Pennsylvania, between the Latrobe YMCA and the Jeannette Athletic Club.
* Babe Ruth was born (he died in 1948).
* Shemp Howard, actor and comedian of The Three Stooges, was born. He died in 1955.
* The USS Indiana, the first battleship in the U.S. Navy, was commissioned.
* The Chicago Times-Herald race, the first automobile race in American history, was sponsored by the paper, which aroused significant U.S. interest in the automobile.
* The gold reserve of the U.S. Treasury was saved when J.P. Morgan and the Rothschilds loaned $65 million worth of gold to the U.S. Government.
* There are many events that happened in the year 1895. Maybe we should ask our grandparents and see if they remember some of them.

Who knows what the year 2143 will bring? One hundred twenty-four years … it is just a blink of an eye. Start taking notes for your grandchildren.