“Climate Change in 1918?” - YUP.... Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter

Was anyone aware of climate change one hundred years ago? Was that term even used then? More than likely not.... The local families (usually farmers) spoke of a harsh winter or damp spring. The Farmer’s Almanac might predict what was ahead with some luck.

Here are a group of photos all taken with a folding Kodak camera by Alfred Bowers Sr. They cover about a three-year period from 1917 to 1920. The general area is Ridge Road, west of Kodak Park to almost Stone Rd. Albert Jr. is in some of the shots, as is Mrs. Bowers. The photos are not identified by me, but all were noted on the original photos. Unfortunately, none of the buildings or old familiar landmarks that existed 100 years ago exist today. Get out your copy of our societies publication, “Eight Miles Along the Shore” and casually peruse the pages. You will find some of the Bower photos that are used on page 7.

Just a thought, how would we, somewhat pampered folk in the 21st century, deal with the winter of 1917-1918? The roads would not be plowed....no snow plows! A very few roads might have the snow rolled with a large wooden drum pulled by a team, which allowed travel by horse and sleigh much easier. Drifting was a problem because of the open farm fields. Imagine no street lights, and just a few telephones. Early radio was not available to the public until a few years after World War I.

The rare owner of an automobile put it away until late spring. Public transportation was limited to the trolley service on the Lake Avenue line from the city to Charlotte. The Dewey Ave. line ended with a loop at Ridge Rd. You might hope that an Auto-bus would appear along Ridge Rd. from Parma headed to Kodak Park, if the snow fall was light. The Greece farmer was lucky if he had a team of horses hitched to his sleigh or the converted wheel wagon.

Neighbors watched out for each other and always were willing to help. The “family fruit cellar – larder” was always stocked with full canning jars from the fall harvest. The root vegetables were stored in the root cellar. The wood pile and coal bin were ready for winter before Thanksgiving. After Christmas the Parlor was closed off. What little heat rising through the floor or a grate from the warm room below for the bedrooms came from the kitchen and a “parlor stove” in the sitting- dining room. No reading in bed.... too cold and poor light.......no late TV....or even a last look at Facebook or email.

On page 7, enjoy the winter photos from a long time past in rural Greece. Hopefully, you will be warm and snug. Should you feel a chill, heat up a cup of instant cocoa in the microwave and enjoy! Think of April.... winter could be over then!
RR crossing at Ridge Rd looking N. Rogers Grocery on horse drawn wagon.

Two-room school house. Ridge Rd a half mile from Mt. Read, going west, about where Century Discount is now.

Pine Tree Inn. SW corner of Ridge Rd & Mt Read Blvd - now car dealer.

19 Eddy Rd. now Mt Read, looking N from Ridge Rd. Alfred Bowers, Sr. & Jr in photo

General store. SW corner of Ridge Rd & Mt Read Blvd.

Ridge Rd near Eddy Rd.

Ridge Rd bus about 1920. Circle Spot (now Delta Sonic) on right. Boy is Alfred Bowers

Moving day March 5, 1916. Two horses and a wagon full of household goods.