

MRS. ROOSEVELT'S OWN PROGRAM

July 2, 1940

Description: 1:15-1:30 PM over the NBC Red Network. ER offers suggestions for Fourth of July picnics and tells the story of a foreign guest at a Hyde Park picnic.

Participants: Ben Grauer, ER, NBC Announcer

(45:51)

[Ben Grauer:] This is *Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt's Own Program* presented by the makers of SweetHeart Soap.

(Theme music 45:58-46:24)

[Ben Grauer:] And again, the nation welcomes Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt who will speak to you in person in just a moment. These intimate visits come to you with the compliments of SweetHeart Soap, a favorite beauty soap fifty years ago and a favorite today. And now our gracious visitor is at the microphone in her home at Hyde Park, New York. Ladies and gentlemen, Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt.

(Break 46:45-46:49)

[ER:] Good day, ladies and gentlemen. Here we are at the second of July, and in two days many of us will be enjoying our most important national holiday. Here's to the Fourth of July and the Declaration of Independence. This is the day on which our ancestors decided to be a free nation. The document in which they declared their will to be free should have more meaning for us this year than it has ever had before. I'm sure many of us have never read it since early school days, and I think it would be appropriate to look at the Declaration of Independence once again. At a time when our liberty and the liberty of the whole world is challenged, the Declaration of Independence can be a great source of inspiration and guidance. On the Fourth of July, I hope we will all give ourselves to the observance of such rights as will remind us and the members of our families that there is something we hold sacred today, the ideals which our nation has always held sacred. The liberty which our forefathers lived and died for must be passed on to our children and their children. Like our ancestors, we will gladly live and die to preserve those ideals in these United States of America.

But I hope you will also enjoy this holiday. If possible, why not spend it out-of-doors? [ER coughs] It may give all of us a greater appreciation of our grand country. [ER coughs] I think living richly and fully is a matter of storing up happy memories and new impressions. I find as I grow older that the times I like best to remember are those spent in the open air and in close contact with nature. (48:36)

Today, I should like to talk to you about picnics in the hope that many of you will pack your baskets and go a-picnicking on July the Fourth. You may go by train or boat, by air or motor, or even

afoot. I suggest that you try and find a patch of green grass, a shady tree, and a view which may linger with you after the day is over. The best picnic is one which is completely free of care, but that requires a great deal of care in its preparation.

Coming from a long line of picnickers and having had a rather long experience in planning and carrying out picnics of my own, I should like to make some suggestions which may be of use to you. I do not take made-up sandwiches with me on picnics. We find it more fun to take a loaf of bread, or several if the party is a large one, then we can make our sandwiches as we want them. It is very necessary to have with you a sharp knife for slicing the bread, and several other knives for spreading the butter. Incidentally, butter can be conveniently packed in a jar.

I think one of the secrets of enjoyable picnics is giving everyone something to do. In that way, each member of the group feels that he is enjoying the fruit of his own efforts. Somehow that makes the food taste better and the day seem more enjoyable. I like to take with me a variety of things for filling the sandwiches--lettuce done up in a damp cloth, ham, cheese, other cold meats, and so on. Of course, the things you take will be according to your own taste. Don't forget a bottle of mustard and salt and pepper. And the best way to carry these is in a little container with a screw top, this prevents the salt or pepper from spilling. Sometimes I use small cardboard salt and pepper shakers so that each one of us can have a set of his own. Some other fine picnic foods are plain hard-boiled eggs, stuffed eggs or deviled eggs, fruit and cake, and coffee in a thermos bottle with a spigot. I also use thermos bottles to carry milk, cream, and water. I find that the best way to carry sugar is in a tin container. I think most people find paper cups entirely satisfactory for cold drinks, but they seem to prefer metal cups for hot coffee. Paper plates and napkins and even paper spoons are a joy because they can be burned after the picnic is over. And that brings up another important rule for picnickers: remember to try to leave the site of your picnic just as you found it. That isn't hard to do. In fact, I think it adds to the pleasure, to see everything spic and span at the end of a pleasant day. (51:19)

The kind of equipment which I've just described is for the simple and easy kind of picnic. It's just right if you're planning to carry your food any distance, either on your back or in your hand. But if you want to be a little more elaborate, there are many other things you can do. You might take with you a wide-mouthed jar stocked with hot mashed potatoes and chops cut off from the bone or small steaks or rice and fried chicken. Sausages and frankfurters are also excellent, but they require knives and forks. This may not be a drawback, especially if you have a girl or a boy scout in the party, for these young people have learned many tricks that make outdoor living easier. But anyone can learn to use his own fingers and that sometimes is the most enjoyable way. If you're going by car, and if you enjoy cooking in the open, there are many things which can be added to make the mealtime part of the picnic a greater success. For instance, there is a kind of outdoor stove with legs which can be pushed into the ground. This holds your broiler, frying pan, or coffee pot. There are also ovens to bake the most wonderful biscuits, and all of this cooking paraphernalia can be packed in canvas bags to economize on space and weight. I advise buying a broiler with a long handle. Nothing tastes better than steaks or chops done out-of-doors. If you have a broiler with a short handle, your hands and face are going to be pretty hot before your food is cooked. Incidentally, if you're cooking for a big party, it may be quicker to make one or two fireplaces out of stones. You could lay your broiler over the top and prepare food for the entire party at the same

time. I'll continue in just a moment, but right now I believe our announcer has a message for us. Let's listen to him. (53:09)

[Ben Grauer:] How much would you give to help your skin look lovelier? A dollar? Five dollars? Ten dollars? Well ladies, right now you can do it for just one penny. Today you get a full-size cake of pure, gentle SweetHeart Soap for only one cent with every three you buy at the regular low price. The SweetHeart one cent sale is offered you for two grand reasons. First, it is our cordial invitation to people who have yet to try SweetHeart Soap. And, it's an extra bonus to SweetHeart's many old friends. Right now, SweetHeart's one cent sale can save you the most these hot days when your family uses such quantities of soap. Get SweetHeart Soap today, and get one full-size cake for just one penny with every three you buy. Stock up now for months ahead because the more SweetHeart Soap you buy, the more you save. And now, let's listen again to Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt. (54:06)

[ER:] I suppose the most popular picnic sites have plenty of green grass and shady trees. But the seashore is also an excellent place for a pleasant day out-of-doors. I think the best seashore picnic meal is a fish chowder. We used to have a sea captain up on the coast of Maine who made a delicious chowder out of the fish we caught, that is when we were lucky enough to catch any. If not, we bought some from the fishing fleet nearby, and we always had with us potatoes, onions, salt pork, seasoning, and milk, and of course, soda crackers.

I think it adds to one's comfort to bring along a couple of steamer rugs and some cushions. I know many listeners will frown at that suggestion, especially those who like to rough it, but I think it is even possible to rough it in comfort and much of the comfort can come from experience. For example, I have learned always to build a fire so that the smoke will not blow in our faces while we eat. If your picnic goes on even after the sun has set, a bonfire will sometimes help keep up--keep away the bugs and stimulate your imagination to build castles in the air as you look into the flames.

And now, perhaps, you would be interested to hear of my personal experiences at picnics, and I might say that I've had picnics of every variety. Sometimes there are only a few of us, and we sit in a field on the top of a hill and watch the view. Sometimes we have as many as sixty or even a hundred on our picnic grounds near the cottages at Hyde Park. These picnics take a great deal of planning, but we think we've finally evolved a very good system and several rather successful menus. At Hyde Park, the favorite dish to begin a picnic with is fish chowder. Then we have hot dogs broiled on outdoor fireplaces after they've been cooked for two or three minutes in hot water in the house. We provide small bottles of mustard on all the tables scattered about under the trees. We bake big dishes of macaroni and cheese, and we pick a lot of fresh lettuce from the garden and serve that with tomatoes stuffed with cottage cheese. Our desserts are rather limited. We either have cake and ice cream or pie, individual fruit tarts; doughnuts or layer cake are also favorites. We find the most popular drinks are coffee and beer and all kinds of soft drinks. Even though the boys in my own family are grown up, they have a hankering for our own particular milk. This is a matter of taste and I think it is the result of their grandmother's advice that they could not get milk anywhere that was as good as she gets from her Guernsey cows. (56:48)

In the course of many years, we've had any number of different people at our picnics, but on one Fourth of July we had a guest about whom I should like to tell you a story. He's a very prominent writer

from a foreign country, and was brought along by one of our friends to a Fourth of July picnic at Hyde Park a few years ago. On that day, we usually have a picnic to which we invite the newspaper contingent which covers my husband's trips to Hyde Park. On this particular day, some of them were swimming in the pool and some were playing games while the president sat under a tree without a coat in the most informal manner. The foreign gentleman arrived and was introduced. He looked around in utter astonishment for a few minutes. I saw him speak to several people. Finally, he said to the man who brought him, "Where is the military?" We explained to him that in this country, even on the Fourth of July, we do not surround the chief executive with soldiers or any other kind of military pomp or ceremony. There were several Secret Service men scattered about the grounds, but they were out of sight. It was hard to convince our foreign guest that there were absolutely no soldiers. Sometime later, he was still completely puzzled, and he was heard to mutter under his breath, "What, no bayonets?" A short time later, at lunch, I served my husband with a plate of cold food because the day was too hot to build a fire and cook out of doors. My husband looked at his plate for a moment and then exclaimed, "What, no hot dogs?" From that day on, whenever anyone in our family wants to illustrate the difference between two philosophies of government, we always think of the two short phrases that were heard that day: "What, no bayonets?" "What, no hot dogs?" (58:42)

[Ben Grauer:] Thank you, Mrs. Roosevelt. A question we frequently hear about SweetHeart Soap's amazing one cent sale is this: "Am I limited to only one cake of SweetHeart Soap for a penny, or do I get one of those big oval cakes for just one cent with every three I buy?" Well ladies, you are not limited. You actually do get one full size cake for only a penny with each and every three you buy while the one cent sale is on. Supply yourself with enough pure, delightful SweetHeart Soap to last you for weeks and months ahead. And when you stop to think that here's one soap which appeals to every member of the family, one soap that ends the bother of keeping more than one brand on hand, you don't want to lose another day. Remember, it's one full-size cake of SweetHeart Soap for just one cent with every three you buy. Get plenty with your very next order from the store.

[Theme music 59:37-59:54]

[Ben Grauer:] [Music continues softly] And this concludes another friendly visit with Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt. Don't forget you are invited to be with us again next Thursday when Mrs. Roosevelt comes to call. And in the meantime, enjoy the fine product that brings you these programs: SweetHeart Soap, famous for fifty years as the soap that agrees with your skin. Invite a friend or two to listen with you next Thursday then when you'll again hear [Music crescendos, cuts] *Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt's Own Program*. This is Ben Grauer speaking. (1:00:26)

[NBC announcer:] This is the National Broadcasting Company.

[NBC Chimes]

(1:00:36)

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