

June 8 - Barbara Ward - Lady Jackson

" " Ellsworth Bunker

June 15 - Dale Miller

June 17 - Granite / Dorothy J.

June 30 - Gary Shuman

June 13 - Pat Taylor

June 11 - Abe?

1965

Tuesday, June 8th

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Was an overwhelmingly full day. In the morning, desk work and beauty parlor, returning just in time to encounter the National Society of Interior Decorators, some 350, who were having a tour of the White House, with Mr. Ketchum standing in for me. I rushed right into their midst as I came in from Jean Louis, flying to the Diplomatic Room, and was soon engulfed in saying hello on every hand. I found myself standing in front of the fireplace, receiving their tribute which Jim Ketchum was going to receive in my place. A brief encounter.

And then on upstairs for a meeting with Liz, Bess, Barbara Keene, and Dr. Eric Goldman in the Queen's Room over a bite of lunch to talk about my bete noir, the Festival of Arts, next Monday, June 14th. I was a little, not much, reassured by all they told me. This I know. A great deal of work has gone into it, most of it done by Dr. Goldman, most of it good work. But the Lowell affair has gotten us off to a bad start.

And then, with the quick changes, the shifts of gear of the mind that go with this life, down to the West Hall to talk to Bob Gätwillig about Mrs. Johnson's book. I had seen the mockup -- it looks wonderful. He wants me to do a story for some magazine about my trips around the country, the County courthouses and old graveyards in Virginia and Maryland with Mrs. Johnson, in general

6
1965

Tuesday, June 8th (continued)

about her interest in genealogy and how it developed. It is relaxing to find something that sounded like it is going well.

And next a session with Simone and John Secordari about the ABC documentary on the beautification of Washington. This too, like the Festival of the Arts, looms as a great question-mark, though I have found since starting it that I am much more at ease than I had thought, that I actually enjoy parts. It's just that we must establish the line of communication between us and that lady on the other end of the set in the living room in Gadsden, Alabama, and Portsmouth, New Hampshire, and Sioux Falls, South Dakota, and make them think, now what can I go out and do? That line of communication I have not seen come through yet.

And then to the big event of the day at 6 o'clock. To the East Room for a reception for the Presidential Scholars. There they were, all seated in their gilt chairs, 120 of them -- 60 girls and 60 boys. There was one more, but he was absent. Two from each State of the union, some from Territories, and some at large. As the paper said, not even a sardine could have squeezed into the East Room of the White House. Besides the students, there were their parents, of course, and distinguished guests from all walks

1965

Tuesday, June 8th (continued)

of life that we had invited to add to the luster of the occasion, to inspire the young folks, and to send them home thinking they had seen something of their wonderful country.

TV and all its machines and humans takes up so much room that many distinguished guests -- John Glenn, the astronaut, Robert Merrill, the opera singer, and lots of parents and aides and press were standing pressed together against the walls.

I went in ahead and took a seat in the front row, and Lyndon came in a little bit late to the tune of Hail to The Chief. Lyndon warmed up the audience by saying, "We are delighted to greet the parents of the Scholars this afternoon, having gone through the experience of graduating our second daughter last week. Mrs. Johnson and I feel it might be in order to give parents medals too."

And then the line I liked best in the speech, "An abiding faith in man himself and a decent respect for yourself and your own potential." He recognized a certain rising discord in the world of the intellectuals when he said, "Another value I regard as very nearly supreme is that of believing that every man created in the image of his God has something to say to his time and has the right to be heard by his contemporaries without prejudice and without misconception."

1965

Tuesday, June 8th (continued)

At the end of his speech, after the rising and the clapping, he smiled and walked out. And this is an example that not even at the White House does everything go on clockwork, for every affair must be in a measure rehearsed beforehand. He and I and all who really participate in it should know, should be told, exactly what we do when, when, when. It is a matter of precision and grace combined. The indispensable Bess, who always does that so quietly, so efficiently, for once somehow had not done it. I didn't really know what Lyndon was supposed to do. I should have quickly observed the white-wrapped, gold-ribboned boxes behind him. Those were the medals, on the table. I didn't. He walked out.

I went out to find out what the score was. Bess came quickly and told us that instead of standing in the line in the Blue Room to receive them, students and all, it would really be much simpler if he returned to the podium, greeted the students there, and as each name was called out, handed him or her the Presidential Medal.

And so, seeming very awkward, back in we went. The names were called, the students filed past, Lyndon shook hands. I knew by his smile he was trying to invest each one with that feeling of, "This is a big moment" that he or she deserved. I knew also that he was

1965

Tuesday, June 8th (continued)

feeling ruffled, as I was, by the confusion.

And then a blind girl, Susan Maltby from Oregon, was led up onto the stage by White House Aides and, although he was trying to be very solicitous (he had practically lifted her down from the platform) as she returned she stumbled. Fortunately, he caught her, gracefully enough so she wasn't embarrassed. I jumped up, motioned to them to take my seat at the front. Otherwise they would have had to go once more through the crowd to their seat somewhere in the rear. Another snafu. The Aide didn't understand, and of course the blind girl didn't. But presently some helpful person brought her back, put her down in the seat I had vacated, and another gentleman rose and insisted that I sit by her. These are the sort of things you have to smile through.

When each one had received his Medal, Lyndon and I went once more to the Blue Room, and there we met the parents of all the youngsters. Proud and smiling, just as Lyndon and I had been when Lynda Bird in her freshman year at the University of Texas had made the honor society. Nothing could have kept me away! And along with the parents, distinguished guests. There was quaint little poetess Maryann Moore, fragile and old, John O'Hara, the author, Dr. Jonas Salk, who gave the world the vaccine for polio, Stan Musial, the

1965

Tuesday, June 8th (continued)

great figure in baseball, now Special Consultant to Lyndon on physical fitness. And I had a hug for the Bill Haggertys of ^{Drexel}~~Drexel~~ University, now lost to us at the University of Texas. And pretty Dr. June Nobel, who had worked with the Girls' Job Corps affair, Barbara Tuckman, author of Guns of August, Jason Robards, whose performance in Arthur Miller's rather ill-fated play I will never forget. Playwright Paddy Chayefsky. And from our own part of the country, Tom Lea, author and artist. He told me that on the back of the picture of the dun horse he had done us were the words: "Dun horse with zebra legs. He will die before he gets tired." You can see that in the lift of his head.

When we had finished with the receiving line, Lyndon went back upstairs and whispered to me he would like to have a boat trip on the river. I said, "Fine. I'll get Barbara Jackson and her husband, who are our house guests, you invite everybody else you want, and we'll go as soon as I've had a little time out on the lawn to visit with the Presidential Scholars and their parents and these distinguished guests. Because, after all, Luci Baines is the hostess for the supper buffet.

But first there was a reception in the State Dining Room for the parents, who will leave after this. A nice blending, too, of all three elements. I had a chance to congratulate Charles Bohlen, the

1965

Tuesday, June 8th (continued)

son of the Ambassador to France, and Barbara Pendleton of Georgia, a friend of Dr. Hurst's, who had written me about her. In fact, I had an especially warm handclasp for all those Presidential Scholars from Mississippi and Alabama and Arkansas and Texas. Soon I thought it was a good party, in spite of awkward moments, and begin to feel that glow that we were having a happy time, was urging all the parents to please be at home, have a leisurely visit in the Blue Room and the Red Room and the Green Room.

And then I asked Barbara if she and her husband wouldn't join us out on the lawn for a while. I knew it would be a thrill for the young people to meet her. I even got a large identification tag pinned on her. This I had learned from the last one we had had. Students failed to recognize Helen Hayes, so each distinguished guest was well marked with a large name tag, so their illustrious presence wouldn't go unknown and uncelebrated.

The lawn was gay with the red and white striped tent, with lanterns and the shell for entertainment, and the fountain and the failing twilight sky. And each was soon gravitating to his kind. Dr. Salk proved one of the most delightful guests present and a regular lodestone for youngsters studying physics and chemistry.

1965

Tuesday, June 8th (continued)

And many gathered around Senator Bill Fulbright. And Stan Musial brought out Luci in her pretty white graduation dress on his arm. They were soon surrounded.

And, of course, modest but so very likeable Colonel John Glenn had a crowd of youngsters around him.

There were some good newspaper people

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Tuesday, June 8, 1965

Page

I think I glimpsed Eric Sevareid and Howard K. Smith and Bill White and Carl Rowan of USIA. And Barbara Ward herself turned out as always to be immediately the center of a lively circle. But soon, and gently I hope, I dislodged them along with Betty and Bill Fulbright (I had gotten the message from Lyndon -- he hoped I would bring them for the boat-ride dinner), and we slipped upstairs to join him, and found Ann and Ed Clark of Austin there. Ed about to be, hopefully, our Ambassador to Australia. And out we went through a front door so we would not go past the guests on the South Lawn, headed for the "Honeyfitz" and a delicious three hours of drinks and talk.

In talking about the international situation and the people who work in it, I remember something Lyndon said about Ellsworth Bunker -- "He can answer any argument and never take any skin off you." He said "He's the only man ^{give} ~~has~~ ever recommended for a post and never had a dissenting voice raised -- not one -- everyone likes him."

And then something Lady Jackson said when we were talking about our beautification program -- how graphically she speaks -- what a rare talent for communication. "If we can put a man out on the dark side of the moon, we change the dark face of the country."

Spending hours with her has been one of the good things for me about these last two years. I like time spent with smart people better

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Tuesday, June 8, 1965

Page 2

than I would like owning jewelry.

I cornered Sir Robert and spent a large part of the evening with him. He plays a very large part in the Mekong River project, and I wanted him to explain it to me -- which he did, with all its multi-ramifications, its achievements, its possibilities. Oddly it's something that in the middle of all the discord -- civil wars and strife -- the surrounding nations of that part of the world have kept on cooperating in, he said. He described very graphically the size of the vegetables raised on the irrigated land as compared with those on the dry land. And he talked to me about the three steps that were coming up in the next month or so that face Lyndon like a series of giant obstacles on which much good or ill may flow -- the meeting of the Prime Ministers of the Commonwealth countries, a great many of whom are our natural strong allies but some -- and more and more -- it seems becoming doubtful. That's the first hurdle, and one he thinks will be passed as a success for the United States. And then the second is a 20th birthday anniversary meeting of the United Nations in San Francisco. He thinks Lyndon's presence there and any speech he makes will have a great strategic importance. And third, the really explosive hurdle is the Afro-Asian meeting. He referred to it as the "Ban-dong" conference in I believe Algeria. This he thinks may be fraught with menace.

It was a fascinating evening. Lyndon spent a sizeable part of it with Ed Clark, and I heard him invite him to breakfast the next

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Tuesday, June 8, 1967

Page

morning with the Prime Minister of Australia, Lord Menzies. He also asked Lady Jackson and Sir Robert.

Boats are Lyndons favorite Shangri-la these days. Here in Washington, the "Honeyfitz" on the Potomac. When we are home, our boat on the Llano River, and the Lyndon B. Johnson lake. It is hard to start calling it that.