

# U.S. presidents is topic for MGM club meeting

11-25-1985

Mrs. Orville Ogden was program chairman for the November meeting of MGM Club. The program topic was "Our U.S. Presidents."

In her opening statement, Mrs. Ogden said the president's life is a fascinating life, filled with many duties, some privilege, and awesome power. Today's president serves the nation from the White House in Washington, D.C. It is the same mansion where all the presidents except George Washington lived, and which he helped plan.

The presidents of the United States have come from all walks of life. Some, like Franklin Roosevelt and John Kennedy, enjoyed wealth. Others, like Millard Fillmor, knew poverty. They grew up both on the frontier, like Jackson, and in refined society, like Theodore Roosevelt. Their education also varied. Woodrow Wilson was a scholar and university professor, while Andrew Johnson was a tailor with no formal schooling at all.

Mrs. Ogden's "Presidential Parade" was a brief description of a limited number of the presidents, their First Lady, and important events in the president's private life.

Her "Presidential Quiz" was a challenge to our knowledge of some of the most interesting facts about the presidents. As one example she asked, "What president gave all his income from the presidency and other government jobs to charity and public service projects?" Answer--Herbert Hoover. Mrs. Ogden also informed the group that Jackson was president at the only time the national debt was ever paid off.

There has also been much "wit" in the White House. Many of our presidents have had a keen sense of humor. Some were quick with the witty rejoinder. Others excelled in telling appropriate jokes for almost any occasion. None was totally humorless. President Grant once remarked that he knew only two tunes. "One of them," he said, "is Yankee Doodle, and the other one isn't." Harry Truman once told a reporter all ex-presidents do is take pills and dedicate libraries.

"For the President's Table" was a picture collection of various china patterns used to set the presidential table. John Adams, our second president, was the first to occupy the still unfinished White House, and the first family used their own Sevres porcelain. Mrs. Benjamin Harrison was founder of the White House china collection.

Great moments in the White House have filled it with an extraordinary range of drama and excitement. Tragedy and sorrow, comedy sometimes approaching farce, wedding marches and funeral dirges, the shouts of children. All the emotions of life have echoed in the stately rooms and corridors. The White House testifies to this democratic faith that a man can wield great power and yet remain human, loving and loved by his wife, his children, his friends.

Mrs. Alice Heun was hostess for the meeting.

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