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Post 2/13/76

Alice's Birthday

By Nina S. Hyde

A spry and cheerful Alice Roosevelt Longworth welcomed about 60 friends, relatives and admirers, led by President and Mrs. Ford, to a 92nd birthday party in her honor last night.

Seated in a room on the second floor of her four-story brownstone on Massachusetts Avenue near Dupont Circle, the daughter of President Theodore Roosevelt was asked by an early arrival how she felt these days.

The white-haired grande dame of Washington politics and society responded by grasping her right ankle and yanking it up until it rested on her left shoulder. "I guess I'm feeling pretty fine," she said.

The turnout was small compared to her 90th birthday celebration two years ago when then-President and Mrs. Nixon joined 175 other well-wishers at Mrs. Longworth's house.

But five small children, all grandchildren of Kermit Roosevelt, made up for it by keeping the festivities at a high pitch. Guests greeted Mrs. Longworth amid balloons, party hats, noise and warm peanut butter hors d'oeuvres prepared especially for the children.

Corinne Roosevelt, 6, presented Mrs. Longworth with a T-shirt that said "Great Aunt" on it and featured a drawing of a formidable ant.

Another youngster, Kermit Roosevelt, 3 1/2, hopped the President on the head with a

pink balloon as Mr. Ford sat talking with Mrs. Longworth. Kermit later relented, however, and kissed Mr. Ford on the cheek at the President's request.

Mrs. Longworth had left her chair to greet the Fords at the top of the stairs when they arrived. She shook hands with Mr. Ford and received a polite kiss from the First Lady. A military aide carried the Fords' gift, a crystal bowl with the presidential seal.

Other guests included columnist Tom Braden, commentator Eric Sevareid, Mrs. Robert Low Bacon (who brought a green velvet frog as a gift), Clare-Boothe Luce, Mr. and Mrs. Robert McNamara, Ann Richardson (whose husband, Secretary of Commerce Elliot, was in New Hampshire), National Gallery director J. Carter Brown, Kennedy Center chairman Roger Stevens and AFI head George Stevens and his wife Liz.

A favorite gift reportedly was a genuine rattlesnake rattle, which delighted Mrs. Longworth. She also received a T-shirt for ski buffs that said "Deep Powder Is Better Than Sex," and there was a chocolate birthday cake with the message "Happy Birthday to Me."

After about an hour it was time for the Fords to leave and the President made his way down the stairs, chased all the way to the front door by 3 1/2-year-old Kermit and the other children.



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WASHINGTON (UPD) -- FRIENDS AND ADMIRERS, INCLUDING PRESIDENT AND MRS. FORD, HELPED ALICE ROOSEVELT LONGWORTH CELEBRATE HER 92ND BIRTHDAY THURSDAY WITH A PARTY AND FORD SAID LATER TEDDY ROOSEVELT'S FAMOUS OUTSPOKEN DAUGHTER IS AS "ATTRACTIVE AS EVER."

THE FESTIVITIES TOOK PLACE AT MRS. LONGWORTH'S FOUR-STORY BROWNSTONE HOME ON "EMBASSY ROW." AMONG THOSE ON THE GUEST LIST WERE SECRETARY OF STATE HENRY KISSINGER, FORMER DEFENSE SECRETARY ROBERT MCNAMARA, TELEVISION COMMENTATOR ERIC SEVEREID, COLUMNIST ART BUCHWALD AND WASHINGTON POST PUBLISHER KATHERINE GRAHAM.

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C-2 The Washington Star Wednesday, February 11, 1976

Alice Longworth Marks No. 92

By Betty Beale
Washington Star Staff Writer

Alice Longworth, the walking Washington monument, wit and most perennially quoted woman in town, celebrates her 92d birthday tomorrow. The famed daughter of Teddy Roosevelt meant it two years ago when she said the big reception she had then to mark her 90th would be her last birthday party. But her granddaughter, Joanna Sturm, decided to corral family and close friends for a smaller gathering tomorrow afternoon.

President and Mrs. Ford plan to drop by. Two years ago, the Nixons came and found themselves surrounded by Alice's liberal friends, including several of the more critical columnists. Enchanted by the drama they were permitted to watch, the columnists minded their manners and all went well.

The Fords are not nearly as close to Mrs. Longworth as the Nixons, but outspoken Betty Ford is Mrs. L's type of woman.

Mrs. Longworth is as candid as always and frankly admits to growing vague. The once controversial figure who doted on politics and had delicious comments to make about the candidates, said about the presidential race today, "I don't bother about it." She didn't have to bother, she said, because "I have reached an age where I can say I am too old to understand." Whereupon she burst into laughter at the very idea. When the long list of Democratic candidates was trotted out, she said, "I am not in the least interested in any of them at the moment. I wish I were. It's more fun to be interested."

Does she still consider herself a rebel?

"I never did," she replied then added, "There's nothing particular to rebel about now."

How has she kept so well for so long?

"Just not bother about things. I think a lot of people have aches and think about them. I don't have any important aches or pains. I am going to rap on wood. I don't want an important ache."

All her life an omnivorous book reader, she peruses

news magazine and newspapers today. Glancing at yesterday's Washington Star, she read aloud a headline: Will Bribe-Torn Lockheed Default on U.S. Loan?

"I don't give a damn," said Alice.

Can she still sit cross-legged?

"I do indeed," said the double-jointed nonagenarian. "I am lying down with my legs in a lotus position now."

"His Imperial Highness Louis Ferdinand, Prinz von Preussen" is the way the name reads on the invitation of Argentine Ambassador and Mrs. Rafael Vazquez. But it might not dawn on the people who receive them that Prince Louis Ferdinand of Prussia is the eldest grandson of Kaiser Wilhelm II, the man who changed the face of Europe and the course of history in World War I.

At the invitation of Ambassador Vazquez, who formerly served as ambassador to Germany, Frederick the Great's direct descendant, who like his ancestor is also a musician and composer, is coming to Washington for a brief visit to see the Kennedy Center and hear a concert Feb. 17 by his friend Bruno Gelber, the noted Argentine pianist.

Three policemen will be feted on the party circuit in the Cleveland Avenue area Saturday. When Muriel and Al Hackl's English sheepdog, Fritz, was struck by a car in early December it ran off in the direction of Henderson Castle before the eyes of frantic Mrs. Hackl. For six long weeks the family searched in vain for Fritz, making trip after trip to the pound.

Finally, during a regular exercise period of the Canine Corps on the six acres of Henderson Castle, the police dogs picked up the scent of the lost animal which was found under a makeshift shelter it had fashioned in the underbrush. The three policemen spent off-duty hours luring the emaciated dog out of hiding and finally returned Fritz to his owners. When a reward was refused, the Hackls decided to thank the men and their wives with a neighborhood bash.