

All in the Family
**Perle Mesta,
 Where Are You?**

By Sarah Child



Birthday party for a 3-year-old. Nothing to it, right? Ask the two or three children of the same age to come to your house. Provide a birthday cake and ice cream and some favors. Plan a candy hunt and one or two other simple games.

In theory it was as simple as it could be. In practice it was something else again. And to think I read my horoscope for the day only to ignore it.

It warned: "Avoid that social affair which could bring some real danger."

All right, so there was no real danger. But otherwise it had to be the wildest party I ever gave or attended.

For the past six months our 2-year-old had threatened everyone from his grandmother to the dachshund next door "You can't come to my birthday" every time he was thwarted in some way.

Thus, in a kind of apology, we ended up inviting everyone within playing distance, ages 3 to 8.

"Not really a party," I told their mother, "just send them in everyday clothes for ice cream and cake. No presents."

The picnic table was brought up to the front lawn. The cake was baked and iced and a supply of ice cream laid in.

At the last minute a freckle-faced red head was seen peeking around the sycamore. I put out another plate which brought the total to 14 or 15.

Our birthday boy then went in to his bed and covered up, pulling the blankets over his ears. After checking for a fever and discovering none I chose to ignore him which worked since he arrived outside, refreshed, some two minutes later.

Two of the guests were late so we played a balloon relay game. Only one fell hard enough to cry.

At the table, all eight boys crowded onto one side, one little gentleman determining the arrangement by yelling, "I'm not sitting with those stinking girls."

A bit shaken for a moment, I immediately regained my composure as one of the little girls led her side in immediate and horror-filled (for the boys) retaliation.

"Come on," she yelled to the young ladies, "we'll fix them. Let's go kiss 'em all." And they did.

A phone call concerning whether or not I would be a "room mother" at school for the year (I would) took me away for a couple of seconds.

I returned to find 15 screaming creatures running to the road to wave their hands fiendishly at a passing tow truck, driven by a stricken driver who must have assumed he was being attacked.

Settled once again at the table, the little guests proceeded to discuss spiritedly: 1. the "lousy" ice cream with marsh-

mallow in it. 2. The lack of choice as to the color of paper cups. 3. The dwindling lollipop supply. 4. The overlong picture-taking session.

Hours later our son declared it "a best party" and fell on the living room couch with chills, fever and his new red football helmet clutched in his arms.

I can hardly wait until next year.

Libbers' Methods Draw Fire

New York—(NC)—A former president of the National League of Women Voters took a critical view of women marching down Fifth Avenue for equality in comparison to the purpose of old-time suffragettes.

"To use the word 'equality'—which means uniformity in this way" for promotion of an equal rights amendment, "annoys me," said Miss Anna Lord Strauss. In addition to league work, for years she has aimed for improvement in industrial, civil and political conditions affecting both men and women.

She dissented from some of the objectives of the women's liberation movement currently promoting the equal rights amendment approved several weeks ago by the House.

Miss Strauss' great-grand-

mother, Lucretia Mott, co-sponsored with Elizabeth Cady Stanton, the historic meeting at Seneca Falls, N.Y., in 1848, which formally launched the effort to enfranchise women.

Those earlier female activists, contends Miss Strauss, were fortunate in having votes for women as a common aspiration.

Today's women's rights activists, she said, aren't doing enough to reach public officials that could help them. She added that she distrusts the "fem-libs" call for equality, unless it is made specific.

"Why don't we take advantage of the fact that we are different, and use it to go after one thing until we get it, then go to another not only to concentrate on getting more money for women in their work, but also to put more women into public office," she suggested.

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Time was, apple tapioca showed up in summer's waning days, when the early apples ripened. The pudding could bake slowly for hours in the black coal range that warmed the kitchen, or simmer in a double boiler at the back of the stove.

Other fuels, other methods: we use a quick cooking tapioca today and make up the dessert in no time. Here are two tapioca puddings, one using fresh apples, the other, dried apricots.

APPLE HONEY TAPIOCA

- 3 to 4 medium tart apples, peeled and cut into eighths (about 3 cups)
- 3/4 cup honey
- 3 tablespoons butter or margarine
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 1 teaspoon grated lemon rind
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/4 teaspoon nutmeg
- 1/2 cup quick-cooking tapioca
- 2 1/2 cups water

Combine apples, honey, butter, lemon juice, lemon rind,

salt, and spices in a large skillet. Cover and simmer over medium heat until apples are just tender. Baste apples occasionally with the honey mixture. Remove apples to serving dish. Add tapioca and water to honey mixture in skillet. Cook and stir over medium heat until mixture comes to a boil. Pour over apples. Stir after 20 minutes. Serve warm with cream or hard sauce, if desired. Makes about 5 cups or 6 to 8 servings.

APRICOT PUDDING

- 1/2 cup quick-cooking tapioca
- 2 cups milk
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- 1 tablespoon butter
- 1/2 cup sweetened chopped cooked apricots

Combine tapioca, milk, sugar, salt, and butter in a saucepan. Let stand 5 minutes. Bring to a full boil, stirring constantly. Remove from heat. Cool 20 minutes. Gently stir in fruit. Serve warm. Top with cream, if desired. Makes about 2 3/4 cups or 5 servings.