



THE WHITE HOUSE
HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

History of the White House Easter Egg Roll

March 2, 2018 (Washington, D.C.) — The Easter Egg Roll is one of the [oldest annual events](#) in White House history. Beginning in the 1870s, Washingtonians from all social levels celebrated Easter Monday on the West Grounds of the U.S. Capitol. However, in 1876, Congress banned egg rolling and restricted public use of Capitol grounds over concerns about the damaging the landscape. Activities resumed in later years but were cancelled again in 1877 due to rain, and again the following year. In 1878, President Rutherford B. Hayes opened the South Lawn to egg rollers as it had previously been reserved for the First Family's private Easter activities- thus, a tradition was born. In 1974, the Nixons hosted egg roll races, an event which has become an Easter Monday favorite.

[See a timeline of Easter Egg Roll Significant Dates](#) and [photos/stories](#) from past White House Easter Egg Rolls.

As the Egg Roll tradition evolved, wooden eggs have grown to replace real eggs, which created a stench when smashed. Today, [wooden eggs](#) created and available exclusively through The White House Historical Association, are used in Easter Egg Roll and given as gifts to children attending. The eggs feature the Great Seal, Presidential Seal and the President and First Lady's signature.

[The role of the First Family](#) in this springtime tradition has varied. President Benjamin Harrison gave his grandson limited exposure to the crowds and the Clevelands kept their daughters inside and away from the rollers. Theodore Roosevelt's family watched from the portico, Edith Wilson invited family friends and cabinet members to join in the Egg Roll, and two Hoover grandchildren spoke from the bandstand for news crews in 1931.

For media inquiries, please contact press@whaa.org or Jessica Fredericks, Communications Director, at JFredericks@whha.org.

About The White House Historical Association

First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy envisioned a restored White House that conveyed a sense of history through its decorative and fine arts. In 1961, the White House Historical Association was established to support her vision to preserve and share the Executive Mansion's legacy for generations to come. Supported entirely by private resources, the Association's mission is to assist in the preservation of the state and public rooms, fund acquisitions for the White House permanent collection, and educate the public on the history of the White House. Since its founding, the White House Historical Association has contributed more than \$47 million in fulfillment of its mission. To learn more about the White House Historical Association, please visit www.whitehousehistory.org.

###