

Elva R. Howard, Res. Fld.Wkr.
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PARK COUNTY BARBECUE

As years go by, the barbecue becomes more popular and larger crowds participate in this outdoor fete in Livingston.

The occasion for a barbecue may be during a **boдео**, a Fourth of July celebration, or later in the season, when elk, deer, or even buffalo meat is plentiful. On these occasions the women are dismissed from any part of the work concerned with the necessary procedure. They may relax to a degree of satisfaction in looking on while their men prepare a real meal. There are many stifled chuckles, smothered smiles, and knowing nods exchanged between these women as they watch the men at work.

No doubt the white man learned many a trick in the art of barbecuing an animal from his red-skinned brother, the Indian. And these ^{readily} Livingston men caught the ideas handed down to them. Though the original methods have been modernized for the sake of convenience, yet it is a barbecue.

During the last few years, Sacajawea Park, along the Yellowstone River, has been the location for the event. Here the citizens of the locality had large pits dug into the ground and concreted to preserve for use from year to year. Grates were made to cover over the pits, to hold the huge hunks of meat, for roasting ~~the meat~~.

The first procedure consists of gathering the proper kind of wood for this open fire method. White ~~willow~~ is generally used, as it will gradually burn down to a nice bed of coals, and give a sweet smelling flavor to barbecued meat.

While some of the men are busy attending the fires, placing the grates, and making certain their long-handled forks are in condition,

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other groups are at work cutting the quarters of the animal into large pieces. Both the hind and front quarters are cut into three or four pieces, according to the size of the animal. Another group carries the meat to the fires, and places it on the grates. Now the work continues, for woe be unto any man who allows his piece of meat to burn! He must continually, untiringly, turn, turn, turn,--and keep turning the meat over the burning coals, until it is browned on the outside just right, yet thoroughly cooked through. And this is no work for a novice.

While all this is going on at one end of the park, another group of men in the Community Hall have cut chunks of bread,--not slices,--and placed them on tables. When the meat is roasted, it is brought into the Community Kitchen, where it is cut in hunks. "Come and get it!" is called, and the crowds form into line, grab a chunk of bread and a piece of meat, and are on their way to the "Java pot", where other hospitable groups of men pour the American drink into tin cups for the passers by. Now are the guests seated at nicely prepared tables, with shining cutlery? Oh, no. They are ushered out of doors, weather permitting, and can sit Injun-like on the ground, or lean against a tree for a prop, so far as the entertainment committee cares. And they like it.

Why shouldn't they? The open fire^{sweet smelling} where the logs of white willow have burned down to glowing coals, and fumes of freshly roasted meat pour forth delicious odors which mingle with those of the freshly brewed hot Java,--could this be anything but a time to "enjoy the earth and the fulness thereof"? And is it surprising that after the eats, this happy crowd of people,--men women, and children,--join hands encircling the fires which some thoughtful one has made into a glowing blaze? Dancing and singing in sheer delight and happiness of an

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event which has come down through ages as custom and tradition.

FISH FRY

This affair at Cooke City is a typical Montana pioneer gathering and feast of fish. As to setting an exact date each year for this event,-- this aint done! It comes about when a bunch of these old timers figure they have caught enough trout to feed the multitude, who come over the trail each year when the invitation is given. Two weeks or so before the date is set for the Fry, the good citizens of Cooke City and any others who wish, contribute their catch which is placed in cold storage.

When the right time for the gathering is agreed upon, word is sent out. Every one is invited and welcome, from the oldest pioneer to the youngest dude. Large camp fires are built, over which are placed any and every available sort of large frying utensil. Cast iron skillets are in order. The tops of discarded stoves are real finds for this purpose. Bacon grease, lard, and butter is put in to brown by the quarts and gallons. Then in to the grease go the mountain trout, which have been nicely seasoned with salt and pepper, and floured.

This group of pioneers do not fuss about organization of duties. The oldest guy tells the other fellers what to do. ^{or} "Get to ^{hell} out of here!" Whether it is chopping the wood, keeping the fires, or turning the fish in the pan, all hands fall to. There is a knack of knowing just when to flop a trout over in the grease and how to get it out whole, not in pieces.

Now we all have our little tricks here in Montana,-- some best known to ourselves alone. Here's one these pioneers have and use, regarding the troublesome dude, or ^{the} too-curious "Down Easterner",--"standin' 'round askin' too many dam questions,--pesterin' us". Old Man Hughes knows how to bait a hook, ^{use} pole, line, sinker, and all. He has these at hand, and says to these dudes,--says he, "C'mon, we'll all go fishin',--catch our

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own mess." This is an invitation most attractive,

"And may we eat our own trout?" queries the most troublesome dude.

"Hell, yes!" says Hughes. "I guar'ntee it so."

Well, anyway, the dudes are out of the way till "Come and get it" is called.

The hungry ones gather in line with tin plate and cup, ready for his share of the fry. The odor of fresh fried trout and coffee,--the blue of the skies,--the fall of the mountain stream,--the shade of pine trees, --~~the tops of~~ the tops of snowy mountain peaks,-- who cares who caught whose fish, or who et it?