

Girl Scout Junior Manners Badge:

# Social Butterfly



Marjorie Merriweather Post, who once lived at Hillwood, enjoyed entertaining guests. She was known for being a gracious and welcoming hostess.

Today at Hillwood you will practice using good manners to show you respect others. When you know the proper way to behave in a situation you will also feel more confident and at ease.

**To earn your *Social Butterfly* badge:**

- Complete all the “Try This!” activities in this booklet.
- Keep track of the activities you complete by marking the checkbox on each page.
- You or your troop leader can purchase the Social Butterfly badge from the Girl Scout Council of the Nation’s Capital to get the badge that you earned by completing these activities.

## Step #1 — Hold a conversation

Practice conversation starters.

**Imagine you are invited to a party at Hillwood, hosted by Marjorie Post.**

Mrs. Post was known as one of the top hostesses in Washington, DC, a city where conversation was especially prized. As Betty Beale, a social columnist in Mrs. Post's time, said, "Washington is a very conversational town because of politics."

A good opportunity guests had for conversation at a Hillwood party was in the Dining Room during dinner.

### Try This!

#1 

**Practice your conversation skills by role playing a scene in Hillwood's Dining Room.**

Try out one of these conversation starters, or make up one of your own:

- Where would you like to travel on a vacation?
- What interesting books have you read recently?
- What games or sports do you like to play?

#### **Tips for starting a conversation:**

Choose a topic that will make the other person comfortable. Don't choose a controversial topic, or ask anything that puts them on the spot or asks them to share information that is too personal.

Some good conversation topics include:

Hobbies	Food
Sports	Pets
Places to travel	Music
Movies	Books

Ask open-ended questions so you don't get one-word answers.

Good ways to phrase questions include:

- Did you know....?
- Have you seen....?
- What do you think of...?"

Remember: body language is important!

- Make eye contact.
- Speak clearly and in a positive tone.

## Step #2 — Use table manners.

Set the table.

Dining at Hillwood was a formal experience. Find the Dining Room in the Mansion to see how the table was set for a meal.

Marjorie Post's granddaughter, Ellen Charles, recalls dining at Hillwood: "The presentation was fabulous...there was never anything informal here if you came for a meal...it was always full service and beautiful porcelain."

Men dressed in coats and ties and women wore full length gowns to a formal evening at Hillwood.



## Try This!

#2

Visit the **ART PROJECT** near Hillwood's **LUNAR LAWN** to make a placemat with outlines to show where plates, utensils and glasses belong.

## Step #3 — Be prepared for special occasions.

### Wedding

Find the *Boyar Wedding Feast* painting in the Pavilion room in Hillwood's mansion.

#### What is happening in the painting?

This painting imagines what life might have been like for the boyars, the Russian nobility in the 1500s and 1600s. The scene shows a wedding feast.

You may notice the bride (standing on the right side of the painting, with her head bowed) looks a little sad. This is the first time she is meeting her new husband. Their marriage has been arranged by their families. In the boyar's time the wedding joined two prominent families.



## Try This!

## #3

Complete the following chart, comparing today's wedding traditions to those pictured in the *Boyar Wedding Feast* painting.

	In A <i>Boyar Wedding Feast</i> ...	At weddings today...
<b>Food</b>	A roast swan is presented on a platter as the final course of the wedding feast. Because swans mate for life, they were considered a symbol of fidelity, meaning the husband and wife would be faithful to each other.	<i>What foods might we eat at a wedding today?</i>
<b>Clothing</b>	The bride, as well as other women guests, wear a Russian headdress called a <i>kokoshnik</i> . Married women in Russia at that time kept their heads covered. The guests all wear fancy clothes.	<i>What special clothes do the bride, groom and guests often wear to weddings today?</i>
<b>Toast</b>	The gentleman with a long, white beard is raising his glass to give a toast to the bride and groom. He says, "Gorka, Gorka!" This means that the wine is bitter and the bride and groom must kiss to make it sweet again.	<i>What special sayings or well-wishes might we say to a bride and groom at a wedding today?</i>

## Step #4 — Say thank you!

Thank the host.

Marjorie Post was a gracious hostess. She was also very appreciative of the generosity shown to her by others. When her staff gave her a 75th birthday gift of the flagpole you see on the Lunar Lawn, she thanked them graciously by saying “I can’t tell you how thrilled I am... this is the one important item which has been missing at Hillwood.”

At the end of every party she hosted at Hillwood, Marjorie also always remembered to thank her staff for their work. She would go to the kitchen to thank the cook for the delicious meal after hosting a dinner.

## Try This!

#4 

**Practice thanking your host by role playing a scene on Hillwood’s Lunar Lawn.**

Imagine you were a guest at one of Marjorie Post’s famous garden parties at Hillwood. How will you thank her when you leave?

*Start by thanking the host for including you:*

Thank you for....

- Having me over today.
- Inviting me to your lovely party.
- Including me at this festive occasion.
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_.

*Next, let your host know what you enjoyed most and found most memorable:*

I most enjoyed...

- Being in the beautiful gardens.
- Spending time with friends.
- Seeing the exquisite artwork.
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_.

*Conclude by expressing your appreciation:*

I appreciate...

- Your hospitality.
- Your generosity.
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_.

## Step #5 — Practice being at ease.

Make introductions, make conversation.

Practice your skills being at ease at today's Girl Scout Garden Party at Hillwood.

### Try This!

#5

- Meet someone new. Introduce yourself to a Girl Scout from another troop who is also visiting Hillwood today. Start a conversation.
- Meet the "Health Helper" Laurie Tucker and ask her tips for staying healthy.
- Have a conversation with the other girls who are visiting Hillwood with you today. Try having a conversation with their parents, too.
- What are other ways you can practice being at ease?