

# Culinary Chronicles

Newsletter of the Culinary Historians of Canada

## Food and Folklore

### Memories of Food and Folklore

*Dorothy Duncan*

*Dorothy Duncan has served as Curator of Black Creek Pioneer Village, as a Museums Advisor for the Province of Ontario and as Executive Director of The Ontario Historical Society. Always interested in the food, beverages and medicines of our ancestors she has recently authored Feasting and Fasting: Canada's Heritage Celebrations.*

What is folklore? Folklore is defined in the Oxford English Dictionary as "the traditional beliefs, stories and customs of a community passed on by word of mouth." There must be thousands of those traditional beliefs, stories and customs, many of them related to food, beverages and medicines around the world, depending on the cultural background of an individual or a community. I was born into just such a family and lived, and later taught elementary school, in several communities where those traditions were taken very seriously. There was never any doubt that there were a great many ways of foretelling and controlling the future, warding off evil, and bringing good fortune, simply by using the plants, ingredients and foods that made up our daily diet. In addition, grain, vegetables, fruit and herbs could all be used as preventive medicines and cures for the ills of body, mind and spirit.

My ancestors were Scottish and English, and like so many of the newcomers who arrived on North American shores in the 19th century, brought their own food related beliefs, stories and customs as part of their invisible baggage. As farmers they were close to the land and the steady round of activities that made up the farmer's year. The Farmer's Almanac hung on a hook in the kitchen and was consulted on a regular basis to ensure that their

observations of the sun, the moon and the sky were correct. Spring was an anxious time, for they wanted to be 'out on the land' as soon as possible, but the Canadian climate could be a wildly fluctuating mistress, not to be trusted. They always planted or transplanted their crops when the moon was waxing, and harvested them when it was waning. A waxing moon heralded rain, while a waning one brought dry weather. Wheat was the crop of choice because of its uses and flexibility as food for the animals and the family, and as a barter and sale item. They also believed, but seldom talked about, the fact that a Spirit lived in the grain and brought with it special powers both to the farm and to the family.

Bread was the mainstay of every meal and a symbolic loaf was central to the communion service at the village church as it represented the body of Jesus Christ. Fresh bread was considered bad for the digestive system so in many homes in our community it was not eaten until it was at least a day old. In lean times it could be used to stretch meals, by being made into puddings, used to thicken soups and stews or made into casseroles of dressing with onions and herbs and baked in the oven.

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## Berry Picking in Gimli (Manitoba)

David Arnason

*Poet, literary critic and short-story author David Arnason is also Chair of the English and Icelandic departments at the University of Manitoba. This piece was originally published in the 2009 H2O magazine for the cottagers of the Interlake District in Manitoba.*



I come from a berry-picking family. Some of my earliest memories are of accompanying my grandmother and my mother on expedition into the bush around Gimli to pick wild strawberries and raspberries, wild plums, black currants, saskatoons, chokecherries, pincherries and cranberries. When I was young almost everyone picked berries and either made jams and jellies or preserves. Most people knew where the best berries grew, and we'd often meet other pickers from the area, and so berry picking, though a competitive enterprise, was also a social event.

The area around Gimli is remarkably endowed with wild berries. My mother's favourite was saskatoons, which she preserved as a dessert in quart jars. She stored these in the basement on shelves along with her green tomato pickles, and a variety of jellies and jams. As our family increased in size, we collected more and more berries, and our mother's workload increased. There were seven of us children, but only four of us became fanatics, organizing expeditions right to the present.

In the early days, we were limited to the bushes and fields within walking distance. Then, when I, the oldest, got a driver's license and a car, the whole municipality was at our mercy. Every spring, we would drive the backroads, looking for the flowering shrubs and mapping them. We learned to identify the bushes by their leaves, and we made maps for

each other. We discovered wild asparagus, and marked the plants with red ribbons so that we could find them the following spring.

Berries tend to grow along the edges of bushes so that the sun strikes them from the south or the west. They ripen at different times. Wild strawberries are in the fields by mid June. Raspberries are about a month later. Ripening time is affected by cold or warm springs and by late frosts. Saskatoons usually ripen about mid July, but the weather can advance or retard the season by a couple of weeks. Chokecherries and pincherries are ready in early to mid-August. The last to ripen are cranberries. They should be picked when the berries are yellow turning to red. At that stage they have enough pectin to jell with a simple boiling and without added Certo. Black currants are the most difficult. They ripen unevenly, and a single shrub may have both under-ripe and over-ripe berries. Besides this, they have a stem and a residual flower so that each berry must be cleaned twice. Sand cherries grow along the beaches near Gimli. They are the only true cherry native to Manitoba. They produce large, black cherries that are sour to eat, but that make wonderful jelly.

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## 2010 Canadian Culinary Book Awards

**November 5, 2010** – (GUELPH, ON) They read, they cooked, they deliberated. Since April, some of Canada's top food professionals have been reading and testing their way through 68 entries to determine the winners for the Canadian Culinary Book Awards. Cuisine Canada and the University of Guelph are proud to announce the winners of the 13<sup>th</sup> annual Canadian Culinary Book Awards.

Winners of the second annual **Canadian Culinary Landmarks Hall of Fame Award**, given to authors who have produced a stellar culinary book or a body of culinary works that taken together have had a lasting impact upon Canadian cuisine, are:

*A Century of Canadian Home Cooking: 1900 Through the '90s*, by Carol Ferguson and Margaret Fraser, published by Prentice Hall Canada, Scarborough, ON, 1992.

*Kate Aitken's Canadian Cookbook*, by Kate Aitken, published by The Montreal Standard, Montreal, 1945.

Winners in the **English Special Interest Category**, books about food and beverages, but not cookbooks, are:

**Gold:** David Sax, *Save the Deli: In Search of Perfect Pastrami, Crusty Rye, and the Heart of the Jewish Delicatessen*, McClelland and Stewart, Toronto.

**Silver:** Tony Aspler, *Tony Aspler's Cellar Book: How to Design, Build, Stock and Manage Your Wine Cellar Wherever You Live*, Random House Canada, Toronto.

Winners in the **English Canadian Food Culture Category**, books that best illustrate Canada's rich culinary heritage and food culture, are:

**Gold:** Chefs' Table Society of British Columbia, *Vancouver Cooks 2*, Douglas and McIntyre Publishers, Vancouver.

**Silver:** Nathalie Cooke, editor, *What's To Eat? Entrées in Canadian Food History*, McGill-Queen's University Press, Montreal & Kingston.

Winners in the **English Cookbook Category** are:

**Gold:** Laura Calder, *French Taste: Elegant Everyday Eating*, Harper Collins, Toronto.

**Silver:** Anna Olson, *Fresh with Anna Olson: Seasonally Inspired Recipes to Share with Family and Friends*, Whitecap Books, Vancouver.

Winners in the **French Special Interest Category**, books about food and beverages, but not cookbooks, are:

**Gold:** Maison de Thé Camellia Sinensis, *Thé : Histoire, Terroirs, Saveurs*, Les Éditions de l'Homme, Montréal.

**Silver:** François Chartier, *Papilles et Molécules : La science aromatique des aliments et des vins*, Les Éditions La Presse, Montréal.

Winner of the **French Canadian Food Culture Category**, books that best illustrate Canada's rich culinary heritage and food culture, is:

**Gold:** Manuel Kak'wa Kurtness, *Pachamama: Cuisines des Premières Nations*, Les Éditions du Boréal, Montréal.

Winners in the **French Cookbook Category** are:

**Gold:** Patrice Demers, *La Carte des desserts*, Les Éditions de l'Homme, Montréal.

**Silver:** Antoine Sicotte, *Le Cuisinier Rebelle*, Les Éditions Cardinal, Montréal.

Each category also has an **Honorable Mention**:

**English Special Interest:** Ricki Heller, *Sweet Freedom: Desserts You'll Love without Wheat, Eggs, Dairy or Refined Sugar*, Trafford Publishing, Victoria.

**English Culture:** Michael Howell, *Atlantic Seafood: Recipes from Chef Michael Howell*, Nimbus Publishing, Halifax.

**English Cookbooks:** Michael Smith, *The Best of Chef at Home: Essential Recipes for Today's Kitchen*, Whitecap Books, Vancouver.

**French Special Interest:** Richard Béliveau and Denis Gingras, *La Santé par le plaisir de bien manger*, Les Éditions Trécarré, Montréal.

**French Culture:** Not awarded this year.

**French Cookbooks:** Carlos Ferreira, *Ferreira Café : Du Portugal à Montréal*, Les Éditions la Presse, Montréal.

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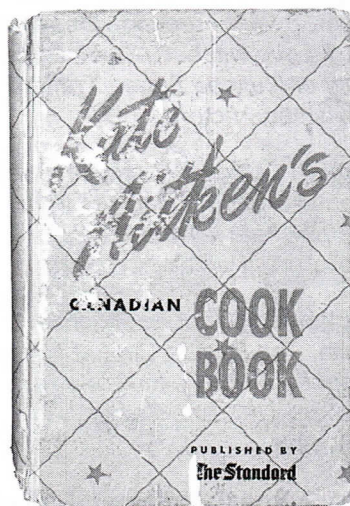
## 2010 Culinary Landmarks Hall of Fame

November 5, 2010 – (GUELPH, ON) In 2009, Cuisine Canada and The University of Guelph inaugurated the Canadian Culinary Landmarks Hall of Fame Award, named after Elizabeth Driver's ground-breaking *Culinary Landmarks: A Bibliography of Canadian Cookbooks, 1825-1949*. (See *Culinary Chronicles*, Number 57, Summer 2008.) This award is given to honour outstanding achievements in the field of culinary writing. It recognizes Canada's culinary heroes – living or deceased – who, through their books, have helped to shape our distinctive food culture in a significant way or who have influenced our perspective of it. The award may go to an author of a stellar culinary book or of a body of work that has had a lasting impact on Canadian cuisine. Two books and three authors were inducted into the Hall of Fame in 2010: Kate Aitken and her *Canadian Cookbook*, and Carol Ferguson and Margaret Fraser and *A Century of Home Cooking from 1900 Through the 1990s*.

### Kate Aitken's *Canadian Cookbook*

Kate Aitken, published by The Montreal Standard, Montreal, 1945

Mary F. Williamson, for Cuisine Canada



*Kate Aitken's Canadian Cookbook*, first published in 1945 by *The Standard* of Montreal where she was food editor, went into numerous updated editions and reprinting into the 1970s. It was published by Collins of Toronto, with separate editions sponsored by the national drug store chain Tamblyn's. In 2004, Whitecap Books published a reprint of the first edition edited by Elizabeth Driver.

The reader of *The Kate Aitken Cook Book* finds traditional recipes for Aitken favourites: chili sauce, mustard pickles and catsup, chicken pot pie and dumplings, apple pie, and cupcakes, but also less familiar foods such as crepes suzettes, brioche and veal rossini. They are reliable, for she tested them all during her innumerable classes and cooking shows including in her own home where she had four kitchens. In her cookbooks Mrs. A. looks back on a happy childhood on the farm where her mother – and many of their neighbours – were prize-winning cooks.

Kate Aitken of Beeton, Ontario, cookbook author, teacher and radio personality, was known to everybody as "Mrs. Henry M. Aitken" in the 1920s and 30s, but by the 1940s she was simply "Mrs. A." to her fans, and Canada's first celebrity cook. Mrs. Aitken compiled cookbooklets for several food suppliers, among them Ogilvie Flour with whom she had a long association as author and broadcaster. During the 1940s and 50s Tamblyn's issued her monthly newsletter *Good News* with four pages of seasonal recipes. These booklets and pamphlets ended up in tens of thousands of Canadian homes, making the name "Kate Aitken" as well known as that of any movie star.

Beginning in the early 1920s, Mrs. Aitken's cooking demonstrations at the Canadian National Exhibition, and the Royal Winter Fair, were attended by hundreds of visitors –sometimes one third of them men. A major exhibition attraction, she won their full attention whether she was putting on a wedding breakfast complete with cake, or creating theme days based on the titles of novels such as "Gone with the Wind," with recipes for southern meals.

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## Memories of Food and Folklore continued...

It could be used to clean wallpaper (if you could afford wallpaper) and it could be made into a poultice with water or milk to heal a cut or wound or to extract a foreign object from your skin. As Lent was drawing to a close my grandmother, mother and aunts would check their supplies of dried fruits and spices in preparation for baking Hot Cross Buns on, or just before Good Friday, to be eaten on that day to keep our homes and everyone within them safe, and to bring good luck in the months ahead.

Spring brought not only the annual cleaning of the house, but the spring cleaning of our bodies as well. As soon as the first shoots of rhubarb and asparagus began to appear through the melting snow, plans were made to include them in our meals once or twice a day so they could begin to work their magic. Known as 'pie plant' in many communities, rhubarb was believed to be the cleanser and healer of the digestive system, stomach and bowels, while asparagus was believed to cure kidney and urinary tract problems. All of this to prepare us for the busy year ahead when we would need to be in perfect health!

As soon as the garden was ready to be harvested, the pressure mounted at every meal to eat those fresh vegetables! Carrots will make your hair curly! Beets will strengthen your blood! Oh yes, beets will also cure your sore eyes if made into a poultice, and beet juice will cure your dandruff or baldness! Onions will bring you good luck! Potatoes will cure your freckles! Every vegetable appeared to have one or more magical attributes and I was constantly reminded of them at every turn.

The summer months brought the opportunity to search for four leaf clovers, not to make a salad, but to bring good luck! It was imperative that we carry them home and store them carefully between the pages of the family Bible if they were to be effective. This too, was the time to entertain, and be entertained, and there were rules that must be remembered. We must never seat thirteen at a table, else one of us would die before the year was out. Knives must be very carefully aligned on the table so they were parallel, and not crossed, for that would lead to trouble! To take the last piece of food from a plate would doom a female to being an 'unclaimed treasure' and a male to being a bachelor for the rest of his life.

Tea, the beverage of choice in every rural home, must always be poured by a member of the family, never by a guest, for that would bring bad luck to the house and everyone who lived there. When a fresh cup of tea was poured it was important to capture and swallow the bubbles before they vanished, for they represented money and it was important not to let that wealth escape. When the last sip of tea was finished, the cup was turned upside down, rotated three times in the saucer while making a wish. The leaves could then be 'read' by someone with the gift of interpreting their meaning, and everyone would know what the future held in store.

As the days shortened and the harvest was gathered in, preparations for winter began. This was the time of year when puddings and cakes laden with dried fruit and spices were made, drenched with 'spirits' and safely stored for the special meals ahead. Cakes and puddings were often used to predict future events, particularly at celebrations such as birthdays, weddings, Thanksgiving, Christmas and the New Year. For example, every single girl who attended a wedding would never eat her piece of wedding cake until she had slept with it under her pillow and seen her future husband in her dreams. The traditional shape for those cakes was always a circle, representing eternal happiness for those celebrating, while the symbols that were often hidden in them foretold the future of the guests. A coin meant wealth; a thimble, meant an unclaimed treasure for a female; or hard work ahead for a male; while a ring signified the next person to be married.

In Scottish homes Hogmanay was celebrated on New Year's Eve. This was a time of both sadness and anticipation. Sadness, as old friends, now departed were remembered, but anticipation of the arrival of the 'first footer' as the clock struck midnight. It was hoped that this visitor would be a tall, dark man carrying gifts that included whiskey, tea, salt and a piece of wood or coal. These were symbols of good fortune, good health, a warm home, and a full larder. Who could wish for more in the coming year?



## Butter Tarts

© 1997, I. Sheldon Posen, Well Done Music BMI

Sheldon Posen is Curator of Canadian Folklife, in the Ethnology & Cultural Studies Department at the Canadian Museum of Civilization, Gatineau, QC J8X 4H2

You may talk about the pastries of Vienna  
Or the cakes they sell in Paris *à la carte*  
Such as almond *Pithiviers* or *Gâteau Saint Honoré*  
But there's none that can compare with butter tarts.

Butter tarts, butter tarts

No, there's none that can compare with butter tarts.

Oh, we eat them by the dozens at the cottage  
In the country they're a kind of tourist art  
There is many a city slicker driving with a bumper  
sticker

That reads, CAUTION: THIS CAR BRAKES FOR  
BUTTER TARTS.

Butter tarts, butter tarts

That reads, CAUTION: THIS CAR BRAKES FOR  
BUTTER TARTS.

Now, there's some that like the filling almost solid  
For the robust, chewy texture it imparts  
While others, just as choosy, like it syrupy and  
oozy

You just can't account for taste in butter tarts.

Butter tarts, butter tarts

You just can't account for taste in butter tarts.

Well, I can't resist a piece of apple *strudel*  
I've a tender spot for shortbread in my heart  
I can always justify a second piece of cherry pie

But quite frankly I'd prefer a butter tart.

Butter tart, butter tart

Yes, quite frankly I'd prefer a butter tart.

*Au Québec, on mange le tir sur neige au printemps*

*En hiver y'a la poutine et la tourtière*

*En automne les fèves au lard, et le rôti de canard*

*Mais toute l'année on peut manger les tartes au  
beurre.*

*Tartes au beurre, tartes au beurre.*

*Oui, toute l'année on peut manger les tartes au beurre.*

Now from time to time this country looks quite fragile

And threatens every day to come apart

But anglophone or Québécois, east to west 'cross  
Canada

People stick together 'cause of butter tarts.

Butter tarts, butter tarts

People stick together 'cause of butter tarts.

Butter tarts, butter tarts—

They're a good excuse to stay intact

They may be all we've got, in fact—

We're Canadian as a dozen butter tarts.



**Berry Picking in Gimli continued.**

When we pick berries, we use ice cream pails tied with small ropes so that the pail hangs on the chest. This leaves both hands free, one for holding the branches and the other for picking the berries. It is best to have a couple of extra pails, because you will often find two or three kinds of berries ripe.

Once the berries are picked, they must be cleaned before they are boiled. You can clean by hand, but there are shortcuts than can help with this tedious chore. You can take a piece of plywood and nail a couple of boards to it in the shape of a V. Incline the plywood slightly and let the berries roll down toward the narrow point of the V. The perfect berries will roll easily, but those that are misshapen or have been attacked by insects will not roll. Next, take the good berries and put them in a pail. Set up a fairly strong fan, and pour the berries through the breeze into another pail. This will blow away all the leaves, twigs and dust leaving the berries ready for their final wash in cold water. When they are clean, cover with water to the level of the berries and boil. Filter the juice through cheese cloth or an old but clean pillow cover, hang and let the juice drip over night. Don't squeeze, or you will not get clear jelly.

My second passion beyond berry picking and canning is growing and collecting herbs. Each year, I grow about sixty different kinds of herbs, and collect others that grow wild. Not many people know that wild caraway grows along the edges of most of the roads in the

municipality, or that rose hips make both wonderful jelly and wonderful wine.

Almost every herb figures in mythology. Herbs touch the human body in several ways. Some have medicinal qualities, such as feverfew and comfrey. Others make fine perfumes and sachets. Still others are aids to beauty. But it is the culinary herbs that interest me the most.

A few years ago I decided to put two passions together and make a series of herbal jellies. I chose cranberries as my base, because it has a delicate flavour and a beautiful red colour. I started with mint. The marshes south of Gimli have plenty of wild mint, and a walk through marsh grasses will evoke the scent of the crushed mint. I took two cups of packed mint leave and blanched them with hot water. I let them stand for about two hours, then drained them and added equal parts of cranberry juice and the mint infusion. I made jelly from this juice as I would have for cranberries alone. The result was a beautiful and bold tasting cranberry mint jelly.

I branched out. I made rosemary-cranberry jelly, thyme-cranberry jelly, sage-cranberry jelly and rose petal-cranberry jelly. Each was a complete success. I experimented using these jellies with different meals. The rosemary is particularly good with lamb, as is the mint, but they all seem to work well with whatever you cook. In Gimli, you are in the middle of wonderful wild foods. All they require is a bit of work and a bit of imagination.

**Cranberry Jelly**

*The Female Emigrant's Guide  
and Hints on Canadian Housekeeping*  
Catharine Parr Traill  
Toronto, 1854

Gather the fruit as soon as the frost has touched it, any time in October or November: pack the berries into a jar and set the jar on the stove, or in a vessel of boiling water, covered down, till they burst; pass the fruit through a sieve or colander; the seeds being large, will not go through; boil the juice up with a pound of sugar to a pint of juice; if you want it for immediate use, a smaller quantity of sugar will be sufficient, as it jellies very readily: but any fruit jelly that has to be kept for weeks and months, requires equal quantities of sugar and fruit to preserve it from fermentation.



### Culinary Book Awards continued...

Winner of **The Edna Award**, in honour of food writer Edna Staebler, is **John Bishop** of British Columbia. The Edna is a lifetime achievement award given to an individual who has contributed to the promotion of regional cuisine and who exemplifies the region through his or her work.

Cuisine Canada's **Founders Award** is given on occasion to those Canadians who have achieved a lifetime of service to the culinary community of Canada. They may be come from any field of culinary endeavour. This year's recipient is **Elizabeth Baird**.

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**Cuisine Canada** is a national alliance of Canadian culinary professionals who share a common desire to encourage the development, use and recognition of fine Canadian food and beverages. The University of Guelph has for more than 140 years contributed to Canadian cuisine in its programs in agriculture, food science, hospitality and tourism management and is the home of one of Canada's best cookbook collections.

The 2010 Canadian Culinary Book awards were sponsored by: Agricultural Adaptation Council, CanolaInfo, Royal Agricultural Winter Fair, Chicken Farmers of Canada, Pork Marketing Canada, Beef Information Centre, Niagara College Teaching Winery, The Fairmont Royal York, Borealis Grille & Bar, George Brown Chef School, Georgian College, Liaison College, Rootham Gourmet Preserves, Harbinger Communications, Stratford Chefs School, and Ontario Farm Fresh Marketing Association.

For more information about the awards visit [www.cuisinecanada.ca](http://www.cuisinecanada.ca) or contact Fiona Lucas, National Chair of the Canadian Culinary Book Awards, [flucas@uoguelph.ca](mailto:flucas@uoguelph.ca), or 416 781-8153, evenings only.

### Kate Aitken's *Canadian Cook Book* continued...

It was through her radio broadcasts – over 9000 in all – that Mrs. A. taught cookery to anyone within reach of a radio signal. Beginning in 1934 her cooking lessons were heard three days a week on station CFRB in Toronto, Ottawa and Windsor. By the late 1940s the CBC was airing her cooking show every weekday, and eight of these broad-casts have been pulled from the CBC archives for their website. Each year



speeches and lectures took her from one coast of Canada to the other, and to the United States. After giving up broadcasting in 1957 she wrote cookery columns for the *Globe and Mail*.

She loved to reminisce about her celebrity gigs: tea with King George and Queen Elizabeth in Buckingham Palace on more than one occasion, being seated in the Abbey for the wedding of the Princess Elizabeth and Prince Philip, tea with Winston Churchill, and a long "chat" with Mussolini in 1927 which led to sales of Canadian wheat to Italy.

Kate Aitken wrote and spoke on subjects other than food such as etiquette and childcare. But "the busiest woman in the world" was best known to English-speaking Canadians as the best source for everyday recipes, and for her chatty on-air advice about food and cooking.

(For an article on Kate Aitken, see *Culinary Chronicles*, Spring 2004, number 40.)



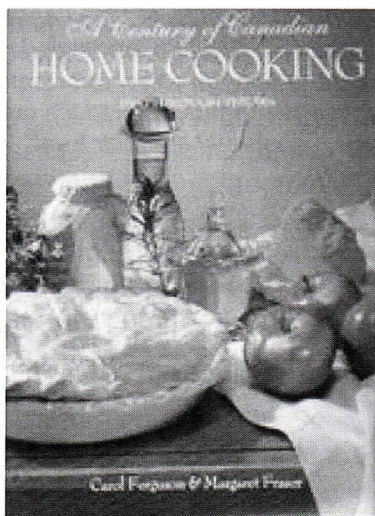
## ***A Century of Canadian Home Cooking: 1900 Through the '90s*** **Carol Ferguson and Margaret Fraser, Prentice Hall Canada, Scarborough, ON, 1992**

Charmian Christie, Editor of *Cuisine Scene*, Cuisine Canada's blog

*A Century of Canadian Home Cooking* is a landmark publication providing a lavish and engaging overview of our 20<sup>th</sup> century culinary history. Published in 1992, as Canada marked its 125th birthday, this book celebrates both the traditional and new styles of meals prepared at home.

Taking a chronological approach, the book layers decade upon decade, showing how Canada and our tastes have evolved and changed. Authors Carol Ferguson and Margaret Fraser highlight the major influences in each decade through text and pictures, captions and sidebars.

Each decade examines a wide range of topics including: the impact of media on eating habits, how kitchens have changed, developments in nutrition, food preparation and shopping, the influence of restaurant trends on home cooking, and the contributions of women's organizations. History, culture, changing family patterns and education all have their place in this culinary tour.



Each chapter includes recipes typical of each decade, Canadian classics like butter tarts and Nanaimo bars, multicultural traditions and regional favourites, illustrating our interwoven culinary roots and diversity.

From the turn of the century, when immigrants adapted their treasured recipes, through the difficult

times of the '30s and '40s, from the convenience food of the '50s to the raised nutritional consciousness in the '60s, from natural foods in the '70s to nouvelle cuisine and comfort food in the '80s and '90s, *A Century of Canadian Home Cooking* is an entertaining, sumptuously illustrated historical-cultural tribute to the evolution of Canadian cuisine.

### **Margaret Fraser**

After graduating from the University of Saskatchewan, Margaret Fraser fulfilled a dietetic internship at Toronto Western Hospital, and spent three years there on staff as a therapeutic dietitian. She then joined the Shirriff Foods test kitchen / lab, leaving to have a family with husband Gil in the 'no-maternity-leave' era.

As her two girls grew up, Marg freelanced as a consultant to numerous food companies in recipe development and food-styling for brochures, packages, magazines, labels and print promotion, in the process becoming one of Canada's leading food stylists.

In the early '80s, she freelanced for *Canadian Living Magazine* as a food stylist, becoming a contributing food writer, then Associate Food Editor and finally Associate Editor of *Canadian Living's FOOD Magazine*. She co-edited *The Total Fibre Book* (Grosvenor House, 1987), as well as editing / coordinating five *Canadian Living* cookbooks: *Microwave* (1988), *Barbecue* (1989), *Rush Hour* (1989), *Light & Healthy* (1991), and *Canadian Living's Family Cookbook* (1995). During this time Marg served on a committee for The Canadian Home Economics Association in liaison with Canada's metric commission, as Canada moved to convert to metric measures.

Marg received the Toronto Culinary Guild's Silver Ladle Award in 1985/1986, the Toronto Home Economics Association's Marjory Flint Honour Award in 1993, and the Ontario Home Economists In Business Hall of Fame Award in 2002.

Now retired, Marg shares her love of food with her family: two daughters, four grandchildren and two sisters.





**Marg Fraser (left) and Carol Ferguson (right)**  
Photograph from back flap of: *A Century of Home Cooking*

### Carol Ferguson

Carol Ferguson is a familiar and respected name to magazine readers, home cooks and food professionals across the country. She is an award-winning Toronto-based food writer, editor, author, educator and consultant with more than 35 years experience in food-related communications.

She was the Founding Food Editor of *Canadian Living* and Food Editor for 12 years (1975-87), editing six seasonal specials per year. She was also Editor-in-chief of CL's *FOOD* magazine (1987-90).

Her long list of book credits include being author/editor of the first *Canadian Living Cookbook* (1987) and the *Canadian Living Entertaining Cookbook* (1991). She was also a contributor to 12 other CL cookbooks. After *A Century of Canadian Home Cooking* (Prentice Hall, 1992), she coauthored *The New Canadian Basics Cookbook* (Penguin, 1999).

As Food Writing instructor at George Brown College (2001-2008), she developed and taught basic and advanced courses in the Journalism department in Continuing Education. She also conducted private workshops for small groups and earned a good reputation for her mentoring of novice writers.

Since 1990, her freelance projects include being a contributing editor/writer/columnist for numerous

national magazines, newspapers and publishers, including *Homemakers* and *The Globe and Mail*. She has been a consultant on a wide variety of projects ranging from consumer research / trends to supermarket publications to specialty television. She spoke frequently at professional conferences and is a founding member of Cuisine Canada.

Her diverse and impressive career track reflects her belief that "Food is many things -- sustenance, sensuality, sociability, science and art."

*"In the early days, rhubarb was known as 'pie plant', and delicious pies it certainly made. Most farms had great clumps of rhubarb, and children soon learned that although it was sour, fresh rhubarb was delicious when dipped into a small fistful of sugar. Rhubarb was featured in everything from drinks to desserts: rhubarb wine, crisps, cobblers, tea breads, coffeecakes, upside-down cakes, in jams or spreads, or mixed with strawberries, raisins or apples in pies. The simplest treat was Rhubarb Compote (stewed rhubarb) made by cooking rhubarb until barely tender with just enough water to prevent burning, and enough sugar to sweeten. Served by itself or over hand-cranked ice cream, it was an early summer treat"*

Quote from:  
*A Century of Canadian Home Cooking.*



# Calendar and Upcoming Events

## **Picnic In the County** **4th Annual Sumer Picnic** **in** **Prince Edward County**

**Saturday, July 23, 2011**

**12-3pm Potluck Lunch**

**New Location!**

**From the Farm Cooking School**

Cynthia Peters – Owner

618 Burr Road, Prince Edward County

(north of Bloomfield, west of #62)

613-922-9194 - 416-712-7763

This year's annual potluck picnic for CHC members, their partners and children will be held at "From the Farm Cooking School", about a 2 hour drive from Toronto. CHC member Cynthia Peters runs the school in her 1830's loyalist farmhouse furnished with antiques, including period cooking utensils, a Menonite wood stove, plus a professional GE Momogram propane range. In addition to visiting the house, a summer picnic is the perfect time to see Cynthia's kitchen garden and cookbook collection, play croquet on the lawn and sip Mint Juleps on her front porch.

RSVP to: Cynthia by July 18<sup>th</sup> indicating number attending and your potluck contribution. Please bring your printed recipe to share at the event, and lawn chairs.

For directions, visit: <http://fromthefarm.ca/find-us/>

## **Annual General Meeting** **@ Campbell House Museum** **including** **"A Green Corn Pattie Brunch"**

**Sunday, September 11<sup>th</sup> 2011**

**11am – 12pm: Meeting**

**Followed by:**

**"A Green Corn Pattie Brunch"**

A seasonal celebration of Catharine Parr Traill and her delicious recipe for fresh corn.

Cost of Brunch: \$5

Location: Campbell House Museum

160 Queen Street West

416-597-0227



On our website you will find a bibliography of Canadian food history, back issues of *Culinary Chronicles*, and links to culinary sites and to cookbook collections. Also posted are CHC's Constitution, reviews of recent CHC events, notices of upcoming events, a membership form for downloading, and much more. Our home page features changing illustrations, courtesy of Mary F. Williamson.

#### **ABOUT CULINARY CHRONICLES**

**Submissions:** We welcome items for the newsletter; however, their acceptance depends on appropriateness of subject matter, quality of writing, and space. All submissions should reflect current research on Canadian themes. The Acquisitions Editor reserves the right to accept or reject submissions and to edit them. The Acquisitions Editor's contact information is 416-781-8153 or [fiona@culinaryhistorians.ca](mailto:fiona@culinaryhistorians.ca).

#### **Upcoming themes:**

Summer 2011, Number 69 – Canadian Cookbooks and Gender Publication Date: August 1

Autum 2011, Number 70 – Asian Foodways in Canada Publication Date: November 1

Winter 2012, Number 71– Kitchen Collectibles in Canada Publication Date: February 1

Spring 2012, Number 72 – Foodways of Old British Columbia Publication Date: May 1

Please contact the Acquisitions Editor if you wish to write on an upcoming theme, or to propose another. Deadline for copy is six weeks prior to publication.

**Newsletter Committee:** Fiona Lucas (Acquisitions Editor), Janet Kronick (Layout Editor), Eleanor Gasparik (Copy Editor). For contributing to this issue, the Newsletter Committee thanks David Arnason, Cuisine Canada, Charmian Christie, Gary Draper, Dorothy Duncan, Angie McKaig, Sheldon Posen, and Mary F. Williamson.

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## **Mission Statement**

The Culinary Historians of Canada is an organization that researches, interprets, preserves and celebrates Canada's and Ontario's culinary heritage, which has been shaped by the food traditions of the First Nations peoples and generations of immigrants from all parts of the world. Through programs, events and publications, CHC educates its members and the public about the foods and beverages of Canada's past. Founded in Ontario in 1994, CHC welcomes new members wherever they live.

### **MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION**

Members enjoy the quarterly newsletter, *Culinary Chronicles*, may attend CHC events at special member's rates, and receive information on food-history happenings. Members join a network of people dedicated to Ontario's culinary history.

#### **Membership fees:**

**\$30 Cdn** for One-Year Individual, Household and Institution

**Website:** [www.culinaryhistorians.ca](http://www.culinaryhistorians.ca)

**\$55 Cdn** for Two-Year Individual, Household and Institution

**Email:** [culinaryhistorians@uoguelph.ca](mailto:culinaryhistorians@uoguelph.ca)

American and international members may pay in American dollars. **Webmaster:** University of Guelph

**Membership year:** January 1 to December 31

**Mailing address:** Culinary Historians of Canada, 260 Adelaide Street East, Box 149, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5A 1N1

**2009–2011 Executive:** President: Bob Wildfong; Vice President: Liz Driver; Past President: Fiona Lucas; Secretary: Marguerite Newell; Treasurer: Amy Scott.

**Committees:** Program Chair: Liz Driver; Newsletter Chair: Fiona Lucas; Membership Chair: Amy Scott; Electronic Resources Chair: Angie McKaig; Outreach and Education Chair: vacant; Hamilton Program Co-ordinator: Janet Kronick.