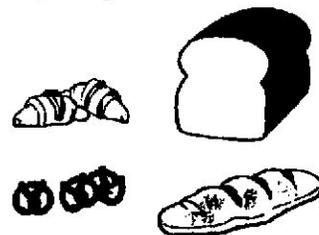


# Culinary Historians of Ontario

Winter 1999

Number 19



## Domestic Outbuilding Reconstructed at Joseph Schneider Haus

From the outset of the restoration of the historic Joseph Schneider Haus in Kitchener, it was the intent of the committees involved to replace as many of the original outbuildings that related to the domestic operations of the farmhouse, as practicable. Schneider family records document the existence in the 1850's of a combination smoke house/bake house/drying house (schnitzhaus), a spring house, a privy, and a wash house among other more farm-oriented outbuildings. Archaeological investigations conducted in 1984 unearthed the foundation of the wash house, one of the most important of the domestic buildings, and provided details that will ensure an accurate reconstruction in the future. The discovery of a brick fireplace in the wash house was significant for it will allow us to represent open hearth cooking, adding greatly to the interpretation and programming potential of the site. The presence of this early building will also provide an interesting architectural continuum with the second brick wash house built c. 1870 which now forms part of the reception wing.

In 1997, an architect was contracted to survey the property to review the research conducted by staff over the past ten years and to complete a schematic of the

“domestic Hof“ (door yard). This plan indicates the size of each original building and sites them in the landscape, with fence lines, plantings, paths and grades. Construction of the first outbuilding, the combination smoke house/bake house/schnitz house was planned for the summer of 1998.

A fortuitous development late in 1997 provided an opportunity to preserve an existing building rather than reconstruct one to period specifications. A smoke/bake/schnitz house on an Elmira Mennonite farm was slated for demolition. Located ten years ago when research on Waterloo County outbuildings was conducted, this building is one of only two found at that time that closely corresponds in space and function to the one used by the Schneiders. 19<sup>th</sup> century outbuildings are

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**Outbuilding** cont. from pg. 1

very vulnerable and have been disappearing from our architectural landscape with appalling frequency. In this case, however, our timing was auspicious so that rather than reconstruct a reproduction, we were able to save an authentic one from demolition. As winter approached, museum staff in concert with the Region of Waterloo staff, examined and photographed the building, prepared "as found" drawings, and located craftsmen with expertise, knowledge and interest in being a part of this special project. In the early spring of 1998, it was slowly dismantled, the bricks salvaged and cleaned, and all the components readied to be moved to the Schneider Haus site. Photographs and a video documented the process and was available for viewing by visitors in a gallery exhibit last fall.

Reconstruction began early in August when "modern" concrete footings were poured in preparation for the erection of the "historic" foundation and masonry walls. Staff have already utilized this building for school groups. We show them how critical such a building was on local farms in helping preserve foodstuffs for the long winter months.

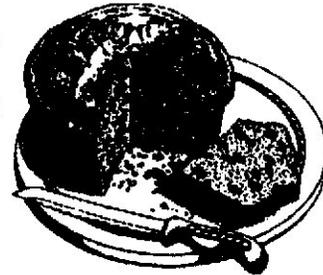
This has been a tremendous win-win project: the outcome has been a fully-functional vintage Waterloo County domestic outbuilding that will not only preserve an important piece of our heritage, but will greatly extend the interpretation/education potential of Joseph Schneider Haus.



*Written by Susan Burke, Manager/Curator of Joseph Schneider Haus Museum, in Kitchener.*

## **"Give Us Our Dally Bread" . . . a leavening response to historic yeast and bake oven cookery.**

Just when you thought that we (Bridget, Fiona and Christine) had taken a sabbatical from organizing programmes for our members, we've planned another event for the spring!



Mark April 10, 1999 on your calendar as interested folk will be traveling to **Joseph Schneider Haus**, in Kitchener, for a day on bake ovens and historic yeasts.

Such a topic can hardly be covered in a day, but let's hope this workshop will open up for more discussion and networking between sites.

The day will begin with a slide presentation by Susan Burke, Curator of Joseph Schneider Haus, which discusses the restoration of their historic "outbuilding" (smoke house, schnitz house, garden shed and bake oven. A tour of this outbuilding will include the firing of the bake oven. Following this, Sigrid Neuland (Black Creek Pioneer Village), Jenny Rieger and Anna Patrick (The Grange) and Bridget Wranich (Historic Fort York) will examine the puzzling characteristics of their unique bake ovens. Questions such as how to fire a bake oven, regulating temperature and historic recipes will be addressed.

After lunch, the research and preparation of slow-rising/hop, brewer's and potato yeast will be shared by Jan Melega (Joseph Schneider Haus), Cathy Masterson (Dundurn Castle) and Maggie Newell (Montgomery's Inn). To complete the day, Elizabeth Nelson-Raffaele (The Gibson House Museum) and Karen Rennie (Joseph Schneider Haus Museum) will explore public and educational programmes using bake ovens and yeast.

\$20.00 per person, including lunch. Registration is limited.

**For more information and register, contact Christine Ritsma at (519) 272-1949.**

# CULINARY COLLEAGUE

This ongoing column features people who are currently contributing to Ontario's culinary history.

## + ROSE MURRAY +

*It's not difficult to understand why people pay attention when Rose Murray writes or speaks. As we sat around her kitchen table one January morning, Rose's easy-going, earthy manner filled the room as we talked about children, travel, girlfriends, leaking roofs, . . . and of course, food.*

**Edna Staebler (Culinary Colleague, Autumn '94) once commented that "she knew a lot of good food people that couldn't write a cookbook." Any comments?**

Yes, I would agree with Edna because there are people I know in the food business who know a lot about food but can't write a recipe worth a darn. It's a challenge for me because I have so many different venues (6 national magazines and cookbooks) in which I write recipes for. So what I do is think about the audience and then I think you need to be very practical when you're writing recipes and if I was the audience, what would I want to know? And then, of course, you **have to test the recipe.**

**How many times do you generally test a recipe?**

When you're writing for a magazine, they all have their test kitchens so these kitchens are really the first "consumer" of the recipe. Sometimes I need to test the recipe once, or, three or four times in order to get it right. But it really depends on the recipe. My son (when he was living here) had an interesting statement about my recipe testing. He'd say, "we'd [the family] only get the good stuff once."

**What training have you acquired over the years that assists you in your writing?**

I guess the training started with my Mom because she was such a great cook. I also have a degree in English and taught several years in a high school. Then I had kids and I loved being at home with them, but I wanted to do more, so I started to experiment with recipes. I eventually took cooking classes in France, Costa Rica and other countries and have also taught cooking classes. I also love to read . . . anything I can get my hands on that deals with food.

**With your involvement in the food industry, do you see any food trends developing?**

Well it's interesting, sometimes local food editors will phone me for my predictions for the New Year. There are certain food fads that come and go and I think some of them are silly. The whole business of that nouvelle cuisine . . . was kind of ridiculous. I think people are returning to "classic" recipes such as really good pies, stews, strawberry shortcake, and biscuits. And since our population is getting older, I see more health related recipes gaining attention.

**Any favourite food experience you'd like to share with CHO members?**

Several years ago, some friends and I were working on a piece about young chefs working in Burgundy, France. Oh, I can still remember the caramel ice cream. Anyway, at the last place we visited, on our way to Paris, . . . we started with little cups of egg and caviar and the cheese course (souffle) was about the seventh course on the menu . . . and this was lunch! But you remember meals for the company you're with. You seem to enjoy food more when you're with people that enjoy eating.

**As a food writer, it then must be very difficult to find places to eat out when you've had such interesting food experiences.**

Yes, I get really impatient with restaurant food, mainly because it's often very difficult to get food that's really fresh and simple.

**What advice would you give to aspiring cookbook writers?**

Well, I guess to start, there are so many cookbooks out that you would need to find something rather different or unusual to write about. That's why my *Canadian Christmas Cooking* was so successful because there weren't a lot of books out that dealt with Canadian Christmas traditions. Then one should organize it, have recipes that are clear and consistent and test them. You would be amazed by the number of cookbooks that don't have tested recipes!

*Rose Murray is the author of six cookbooks and a regular contributor to several national magazines including Canadian Living, Homemaker's and Elm Street.*



*Christine Ritsma, co-founder, CHO.*

## GET TO KNOW YOUR BAKE OVEN

*Ah, the brick bake oven. Subject of many paintings. Star of the historic kitchen at many museums, bane of interpreters at others. Mysterious, idiosyncratic, temperamental, maddening. With some advice and practice your bake oven needn't be anything but fun. For some readers this information will be a refresher and perhaps provide a couple of new tips, but for those who shy away from ever trying a bake oven, perhaps we can inspire your first attempts.*

### TAKE A LOOK

Hannah Glasse describes how best to construct the ideal bake oven in *The Art of Cookery Made Plain and Easy*, 1796 "In the building of your oven for baking observe that you must make it round, low roofed, and a little mouth; then it will take less fire, and keep in the heat better than a long oven and high roofed, and will bake the bread better."

The best way to get to know your bake oven is to look at its basic features. Put your head in the mouth and observe as much as possible. Your bake oven may not be up to Glasse's standards but find out as much as you can about your oven. Is it original or reconstructed? Is it made of mostly clay or brick? What is the distance from the floor/hearth to the domed roof/arch? When was it last fired? Learn the idiosyncrasies of your particular oven.

### EQUIPMENT

The **oven peel** is probably the most familiar piece of equipment. This long paddle was used to place the food initially into the oven and then to remove it once it's baked. The **oven rake** is used for raking the coals and ash from the oven floor after firing. You also want a large **ash bin** or **pail** to deposit those coals into. If your lucky you have an **ash chute** directly into the fireplace. The **swab** is a pole with rags at one end, used for dampening the embers left behind after the coals are raked out, and also for injecting moisture into the oven's hot atmosphere. **Trivets** and **bricks** can be utilized to lift more delicate foods away from the direct heat of the floor.

*Wrought iron ember rake  
Old Cooking Utensils, Shire Album, 177.*



### FIRING/HEATING

It's very important to heat your oven evenly. Your

main objective is to heat the dome, then, the floor. You need a glowing bed of coals but you also require a rather hot flame lapping fire to reach the top of the dome. Fire size for a successful firing is determined by the distance between the floor and the top of the dome or interior size of your oven cavity. Bake ovens are best heated with dry/seasoned wood cut to fit the size of the hearth/floor. Cedar is a local favourite because it catches and burns quickly. Other woods include pine, spruce, elm, beech or oak as long as they are "split in pieces about the thickness of a spade handle."

To lay the fire, place the split logs in a large teepee or log cabin layered with shredded or crumpled paper and small kindling. You're on the right track if you quickly have a fast hot fire with little or no smoke. You should see heat waves radiating upward. Continue to add wood as needed and stir the coals to distribute the heat. Another sign of a successful firing is evidence of a white residue forming on the bricks.

### TEMPERATURE

When thinking about heat in a bake oven, don't think *temperatures* but *adjectives*. Forget you ever baked at 180°C -- in a brick oven you can't check a built-in thermometer. Instead, think "hot or cool", "brisk or slack", "quick or gentle". Keep in mind that the heat starts to diminish soon after removing the heat source (the fire). If your oven is in excellent shape, cooling is imperceptible and can take hours to complete. But if it has a high dome or air leaks, cooling is much quicker. Most ovens have hot spots too.

The fire must burn for a minimum of an hour, or more likely 2 hours. The longer the time between firings, the longer the time required to reach a useable heat. If your site only fires the oven on special event days, expect it to take considerably longer to warm up than if you use it regularly during school programming. Before raking out the coals, you must decide if the heat is high enough. Better

to overheat and let it cool a bit, than not have it hot enough. Judging the right moment takes practice and must be co-ordinated with the readiness of your batters and doughs. A few minutes before judging, stir the coals again.

**Best method to judge the heat:**

◆ Your arm: This is the method we find most successful. Roll up your sleeve, stick your whole arm deep into the oven and start counting. A good estimate is 10 seconds. If you must snatch your arm out at, say, 6 seconds, it's probably too hot. But if you count to 12 or 13 seconds without serious discomfort to your arm it's probably too cool for your cakes, let alone your bread. Only experience acquaints you with the right count for your own oven. If you absolutely need a technological back-up, test the temperature on 2 occasions with a thermometer to learn the matching sensation on your arm, but after that rely on your own good sense!!!

**PREPARING THE OVEN FOR FOOD**

If you remove the coals to the fireplace then clear away any obstacles. If you put them in an ash bin or pail place it at the foot of the oven. Have the swab and a pail of hot water ready, if you plan to use it. (We often don't.) Rake out the coals as quickly as possible to loose the least heat. Be focused -- don't allow a disturbance! Rake them into a pile, then shovel them into the fireplace or pail in as few movements as possible. Don't worry about the embers in the seam between floor and wall yet. Put your rake, shovel and pail of hot coals out of the way. Quickly swish the wet swab around the oven floor to dampen any lingering embers, to capture the ash and to deposit moisture into the atmosphere. Count your heat again. If too hot, wait for a moment, then rejudge. If too cool, you've got 2 lousy options: put your food in anyway and hope for the best, or start all over again with a new fire. Always seal the mouth well. In the mess kitchen at Fort York, we used to have to angle the peel against the door to keep it in place, otherwise we lost heat too rapidly.

**BAKING ORDER**

An efficient oven can accommodate 2, 3 or even 4 successive bakings in the declining heat. The

longest cooking items, like a crock of beans, go to the back out of the way. Bread goes in next. Swabbing leaves behind a steamy atmosphere that's excellent for bread but detrimental to cakes and especially pastry, which only go in once the steam has disappeared. They may come out before the bread is done. Leave room at the front for the tray(s) of biscuits that take only 10 minutes. Puddings vary depending on their type. Custard puddings are ruined by too strong a heat and will be done in 15 to 20 minutes in a middling oven. Small delicate cakes like macaroons and meringues need a gentle heat to dry rather than bake them. Also, in the last traces of warmth, items like tinware can be put in to hinder some rusting. Bread can stand an intense heat that of course meringues cannot. Some authors suggested a heat level, like Mrs. Rundell in *A New System of Domestic Cookery* (1806), who often said things like "Bake in a quick oven. It will require three hours". Mrs. Child in *The American Frugal Housewife* (1833) said of her sponge cake: "Twenty minutes is about long enough to bake. Not to be put in till some other articles have taken off the first few minutes of furious heat." If in doubt about the correct temperature because the original receipt doesn't inform you, then refer to modern cookery books for similar information. Loaves can be tipped off the floured peel directly onto the floor or placed in pans. If the oven floor is too hot, trays of biscuits or pies in their plates can be placed on low trivets. Whenever you open the door to put food in or take it out do so quickly. When opening the door for one reason, like putting in a sponge cake, use the same moment for another purpose, like laying a paper over the plumb cake to prevent too much surface browning.

**SUGGESTED READINGS**

- ◆ Elizabeth David, *English Bread and Yeast Cookery*, chapter titled *Bread Ovens*.
- ◆ *Old Sturbridge Village Cookbook*, 1984 & 1995.
- ◆ Jane Carson, *Colonial Virginia Cookery*, chapter 5 on baking.
- ◆ Lise Boily & Jean-Francois Blanchette, *The Bread Ovens of Quebec*, National Museums of Canada, 1979.

Bridget Wranich & Fiona Lucas co-founders of CHO, with the assistance of Anna Patrick & Jenny Rieger of The Grange (AGO) and Elizabeth Nelson- Raffaele of The Gibson House Museum.

# COOKERY COLLECTION

At the recent CHO session at the Gardiner Museum of Ceramic Art (Jan. 23) Bridget made Hannah Glasse's delicious Portugal Cake for the refreshments. Many people requested the receipt, so here it is:

## TO MAKE PORTUGAL CAKES

Hannah Glasse, *The Art of Cookery Made Plain and Easy*, facsimile of the 1796 London addition, (Hampden, Connecticut: Archon Books, 1971, introduction by Fanny Craddock), page 311.

### Original

"Mix into a pound of fine flour, a pound of loaf-sugar beat and sifted, then rub it into a pound of pure sweet butter till it is thick like grated white bread, then put to it two spoonfuls of rose-water, two of sack, ten eggs, whip them very well with a whisk, then mix it into eight ounces of currants, mixed all well together; butter the tin pans, fill them but half full, and bake them; if made without currants they will keep half a year; add a pound of almonds blanched, and beat with rose-water as above, and leave out the flour: these are another sort, and better."

### Modern Version

First cake:	1 L	4 cups	white flour
	500 mL	2 cups	white sugar
	500 mL	2 cups	soft butter
	250 mL	2 cups	currants, plumped in hot water and drained
	10	10	medium eggs, separated
	25 mL	2 Tbsps.	rosewater
	25 mL	2 Tbsps.	red wine or sherry.

Stir the flour and sugar together. Rub the butter in "till it is thick like grated white bread", then add in the currants. Whisk the egg yolks and wine to a thick cream, about 10 minutes with a wire whisk or 5 minutes with an electric beater. Blend them into the dry ingredients. Whisk the egg whites and rosewater until very stiff, again about 10 minutes with a wire whisk or 5 minutes with an electric beater. Fold the stiff whites into the batter and turn it into a greased 33 cm x 23 cm (13" x 9") pan. Bake it at 180°C (350°F) for about one hour or until a toothpick inserted in centre comes out clean.

**Second Cake:** (This version made for refreshments at Gardiner with the addition of currants.) We suggest you pulverize the almonds yourself to retain the natural oil; commercial ground almonds are too dry.

	565 mL	2 ½ cups	whole almonds, blanched
	25 mL	2 Tbsps.	rosewater
	380 mL	1 ¾ cups	white flour
	500 mL	2 cups	white sugar
	500 mL	2 cups	sweet butter, softened
	10	10	medium eggs, separated
	25 mL	2 Tbsps.	red wine or sherry

Pulverize the almonds with the rose water in a food processor or with a mortar and pestle. Stir the flour and sugar together. Blend together the almonds, flour and sugar. Rub the butter in "till it is thick like grated white bread". Whisk the egg yolks and wine to a thick cream, about 10 minutes with a wire whisk or 5 minutes with an electric beater. Blend the whisked yolks into the dry ingredients. Whisk the whites until stiff, again about 10 minutes with a wire whisk or 5 minutes with an electric beater. Fold the stiff whites into the batter and turn it into a greased 33 cm x 23 cm (13" x 9") pan. Bake in at 180°C (350°F) about one hour or until a toothpick inserted in the centre comes out clean.



## BORDYKE BREAD (Author's Receipt)

Eliza Acton, Modern Cookery for Modern Families, London: Longmans Green, 1845, p. 597-598.

*What is Bordyke bread? After making the recipe it's clear that it is a simple white bread, but why the name Bordyke? According to Elizabeth David in English Bread and Yeast Cookery, Acton's favourite recipe for Bordyke bread was named after the Tonbridge house in which she wrote her first cookbook. (Modern Cookery) David goes on to praise Acton's cookbook by stating: "It is not until 1845 and the publication of Miss Acton's Modern Cookery that we find decisive instructions and definitive directions for the making of bread and management of yeast. What a blessing this book must have been to the baffled housekeepers and cooks of the time." This sure-fire bread recipe was written by an author who was experienced in bread making. Just look at the details she includes, like the variations on the recipe which include cream and butter and her preference for earthen pans instead of tins for baking the bread. In 1857 Eliza Acton wrote an entire cookbook devoted to bread entitled The English Bread Book.*

### Original

"Mix with a gallon of flour a large teaspoonful of fine salt, make a hollow in the centre, and pour in two tablespoonfuls of solid, well purified yeast, gradually diluted with about two pints and a half of milk, and work it into a thick batter with the surrounding flour, strew a thick layer over and leave it to rise from an hour to an hour and a half; then knead it up with as much more warm skimmed milk, or half new milk and half water, as will render it quite firm and smooth without being very stiff; let it rise another hour, and divide it into three loaves; put them into square tins slightly buttered, or into round baking pans, and bake them about an hour and a quarter in a well-heated oven. The dough can be formed into household loaves if preferred, and sent to the oven in the usual way. When a finer and more spongy kind of bread is required for immediate eating, substitute new milk for skimmed, dissolve in it about an ounce of butter, leave it more liquid when the sponge is set, and let the whole be lightly kneaded into a lithe dough: the bread thus made will be excellent when new, and for a day or so after it is baked, but it will become dry sooner than [sic] the other.

Flour, 1 gallon; salt, 1 teaspoonful; skimmed milk, 2 ½ pints, to rise from 1 to 1 ½ hour. Additional milk, 1 - 2 pints: to rise 1 hour. 3 loaves, baked 1 ¼ hour.

Obs. 1. -A few spoonfuls of cream will wonderfully improve either of the above receipts, and sweet butter-milk, substituted for the other, will give to the bread the shortness of a cake: we would particularly recommend it for trial when it can be procured.

Ob. 2. -Shallow round earthen pans answer much better, we think, than tins for baking bread; they should be *slightly* rubbed with butter before the dough is put into them."

### Modern Version

According to Eliza Acton and Elizabeth David, one gallon of flour = 7 lbs. (recipe has been quartered).

1.75 - 2L	7-8 cups	all purpose flour
1 mL	¼ tsp.	salt
25 - 30 mL	2 Tbsp.	yeast ( granulated)
500 -750 mL	2-3 cups	milk (2%)

Preheat oven to (205 °C) 400° F . Mix flour and salt in a large bowl. Make a hollow in the centre of the flour. Dissolve yeast in 1 cup slightly warm milk. Pour dissolved yeast into hollow and make a thick batter by stirring in some of the surrounding flour. Strew a thick layer of flour over batter, cover and leave to proof for 1 - 1 ½ hours. Mix in remaining flour and add remaining milk. Knead dough until it is firm and smooth. Place in greased bowl and cover. Let rise for about 1 hour or until doubled in size. Punch down, divide into 2 - 3 small loaves and place into lightly buttered pans. Let rise for a further 40 minutes. Bake at (205°C) 400°F for 35 - 40 minutes.

# Culinary Calendar

Please send CHO information about your upcoming food history or related events. We are pleased to include them in the newsletter.

## February

**Last Dinner on the Titanic: Discovery of the Titanic Menus and Recipes from the Great Liner**

*Todmorden Mills Museum - Paper Mill Gallery*  
(416) 396-2819

Enjoy an exciting and engaging lecture about social etiquette and the menu for all passengers.

**Feb 7 1:00 pm**

Pre-registration required. Cost \$5.00 adults

**Italian Basics: Icons of Italian Cuisine**

*Gardiner Museum of Ceramic Art*

(416) 586-8080

Well-loved foods & flavours of Italy are an integral part of its

history, culture and social fabric & have been adopted and adapted by other cuisines. Join Robert Martello, proprietor of Grano restaurant & explore some of Italy's most beloved foods.

**Feb 9 6:30 - 8 pm**

Pre-registration required. Cost \$ 15.

**Contemporary Basics: From Banquet Burgers to Pad Thai**

*Gardiner Museum of Ceramic Art*

(416) 586-8080

James Chatto, one of Toronto's trusted food writers, takes you on an entertaining tour of Toronto's *gastronomic past & present* & suggests the forces that are changing our basic Canadian way of eating.

**Feb 16 6:30 - 8 pm**

Pre-registration required. Cost \$ 15.

## April

**Easter Weekend**

*The Gibson House Museum*

(416) 395-7432

Tastes of seasonal dishes in the historic kitchen, children's activities & tours.

**April 3, 4, 5 12:00 - 5 pm**

Cost \$2.75 adults, \$2.25 seniors & students, \$1.75 children.

## Hearth Cooking Workshops

*The Gibson House Museum*

(416) 395-7432

Learn to prepare tasty dishes from 19th century recipes over the open hearth.

**April 17 10:00 - 1:30 pm**

Pre-registration required. Cost \$25.

**Scottish Bread and Yeast Cookery of the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century**

*Mackenzie House 82 Bond St.*

**April 24 10:00 - 4 pm**

This hands-on cookery class features recipes from *Mistress Dods Cook and Housewife's Manual*, 1833. Pre-registration required. Call (416) 392-6910 Class size limited to 12 participants. Cost \$ 45, plus GST.

**Afternoon Tea: History, Etiquette & Receipts**

*Spadina Historic House Museum*

(416) 392-6910

Join cooks experienced in the ways of 19<sup>th</sup> century cookery in a hands-on cookery class.

**April 25 10:00 - 4 pm**

Pre-registration is required. Class size limited. Cost \$45, plus GST.

## Culinary Credits

### Editorial Team

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Thanks for this issue to Susan Burke, Rose Murray, Anna Patrick, Jenny Rieger & Elizabeth Nelson-Raffaele

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\$12 (Cdn.) annual subscription.

Deadlines for entries for April 1999 issue —  
March 15, 1999

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