

# Culinary Chronicles

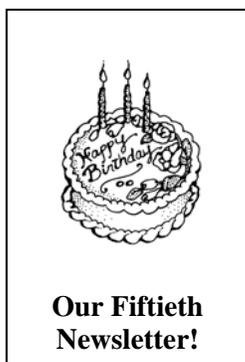
THE NEWSLETTER OF THE CULINARY HISTORIANS OF ONTARIO

AUTUMN 2006

NUMBER 50

Advertisement for Harry  
Webb wedding cakes in  
*Types of Canadian Women* by  
Henry Morgan. Toronto:  
Wm. Briggs, 1903.

(Courtesy of Mary F.  
Williamson)



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## President's Message

So much has happened since the publication of the summer *Culinary Chronicles!* In this issue you will read Eva MacDonald's report about August's very successful "Picnic on the Grand" at Ruthven Park in Cayuga. As this issue goes to press, CHO members are still relishing memories of a wonderful day "exploring food history in Hamilton," at Dundurn Castle and at Whitehern Historic House.

At the AGM in September, the membership unanimously passed a new Mission Statement and amended the Constitution to reflect the change. Since the Mission Statement will guide the development of the organization in the coming years, we have printed it on this page to signal its adoption. At the AGM we learned from Membership Chair Amy Scott that memberships are up 10%. Another welcome outcome of the AGM was \$436.00 from our silent auction of cookbooks. Thank you to everyone who participated in the silent auction, especially to Mary Williamson for her generous donation of antiquarian cookbooks. Treasurer Bob Wildfong's annual report is included in this newsletter. Anyone wishing to read other AGM reports should contact Secretary Maggie Newell through our email or snail mail addresses, found on the back page.

Shortly before the AGM, your Board met at Doon Heritage Crossroads in Kitchener for a strategic planning meeting, to take stock and discuss future directions for CHO. We looked at the considerable strengths of the organization and our existing resources. It was encouraging to note, for example, our renewed organizational structure; members' support for *Culinary Chronicles*; increasing numbers of visitors contacting us through our website; the enthusiasm, skills, and academic credentials of the membership; their expertise as historic cooks, gardeners, interpreters, etc.; the profile CHO gains through the support of our members and through association with such institutions as the University of Guelph, City of Toronto museums, and other historic sites; the benefits that come to CHO from partnerships with these institutions; the wide-ranging food-history interests of our members; that CHO occupies a special niche in a rapidly growing area of interest; and our survival for 12 years. We identified a number of possible goals to strive for in the next five years, then ranked them. The three top goals, in no particular order, were to make strategic links with scholarly institutions and researchers; to create a Canadian Culinary Timeline; and to boost our promotional resources. There was also support for making programs that were accessible on an individual basis, e.g., interactive programs, possibly through the web. In the next year the Board will continue to advance the ideas generated at the strategic planning meeting and welcomes input from the membership.

November brings two events – the **Cookbook Caper** on 12 November and **Christmas Food in Historic Riverdale** on 28 November. See you there!

**Liz Driver, President**

### New CHO Mission Statement

*Adopted unanimously at the AGM on 28 September 2006*

The Culinary Historians of Ontario 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 programmes, events and publications, CHO educates its members and the public about the foods and beverages of Canada's past. Founded in Ontario in 1994, CHO welcomes new members wherever they live.



## Observations on Twelve Years and Fifty Issues

Fiona Lucas

*Fiona is one of the co-founders of the Culinary Historians of Ontario. Currently, she is Past President and editor of Culinary Chronicles. She has a BA in the History of Fine Art, an MA in Canadian History, and has worked for the Museums of the City of Toronto for almost twenty years. She is the author of *Hearth and Home: Women and the Art of Open Hearth Cookery* (Lorimer, 2006).*

This summer, I realized that CHO's Autumn 2006 newsletter would be Number 50. Since I too am about to turn fifty, I have the number on the brain. Today's polished and illustrated 20-page products are a far cry from our four-pagers of twelve years ago. CHO and its newsletter have come a long way since Spring 1994. For one thing we have a title now, *Culinary Chronicles*, something we managed to be without until Number 40. Here is a little trip down memory lane.

Creating the Culinary Historians of Ontario may have been my idea, but creating a newsletter was Bridget Wranich's. She and I, along with our third co-founder, Christine Lupton, later Ritsma, produced all the newsletters of the first several years, with contributions from a few others and layout help from Bridget's sister, Charlene, and then Melanie Garrison. We spent a lot of time laughing and many late nights. From the start, we intended it as a communication vehicle for members, but also as a repository of research. Ontario culinary history was still new a decade ago, so we were interested in getting some of it on paper.

Turning each page, from Number 1 through Number 49, several themes emerge. For instance, CHO has a strong link to museums, unlike some of our American counterparts. A wish to know more about Canadian cookbooks and the material culture of Canadian kitchens appeared often. Through book reviews, we tried to keep track of the increasing number of Canadians who write about culinary history, but their numbers are getting away from us.

I also came across the first appearances of ongoing supporters. Bob Wildfong, for instance, wrote an elegiac item called "Leaven from Heaven" that I remember admiring in Number 7, Winter 1996. Also in that issue was the first piece by undoubtedly our most frequent contributor, Mary Williamson, who wrote on Canadian

pioneers liking curry despite a reputation for bland food, a topic she continues to explore today. Mary is an extraordinary advocate for rigorous primary research. Dorothy Duncan first appeared in Number 9, Summer 1996, Carolyn Blackstock in Number 12, Spring 1997, Ed Lyons in Number 22, Autumn 1999, Amy Scott in Number 30, Autumn 2001, and so many more. We also followed the progress of Liz Driver's herculean *Culinary Landmarks: A Bibliography of Canadian Cookbooks, 1825-1949*, finally due to be released early in 2007.

A few obituaries appeared. Beatrice Synder was recognized in Number 18, Una Abrahamson in Number 20 and, in this fiftieth issue, the late great Edna Staebler. Edna appeared in several issues, starting with the second.

In Number 7, Winter 1996, CHO announced its first major event, *From Rations to Riesling: Ontario's Culinary Heritage*, a conference in partnership with Doon Heritage Crossroads, Kitchener. Our major guest speaker was Sandy Oliver of *Food History News*. The conference was spectacular and remains legendary among attendees. Since then we have offered and reviewed many programs.

CHO has kept pace with technology. Newsletter communication is via email, images are scanned, and final versions are delivered to the printer electronically instead of by a master paper copy. In the past three years, the quarterly newsletter has been supplemented by another method of disseminating information and research – our website. No one twelve years ago imagined how research and researchers would be enhanced by such websites. I keep the CHO website bookmarked on my computer, but what I find most satisfactory is sliding yet another paper newsletter into a binder. I keep my first fifty newsletters in a two-inch yellow binder. With Number 51 in January 2007, I will start to fill a matching second binder.



**CULINARY HISTORIANS OF ONTARIO**

Spring 1994 NUMBER 1



**TORONTO REGION**

**Welcome to our inaugural issue!**

We invite everyone, from the "Just Interested" to the truly dedicated to join us in celebrating our Ontario food heritage and traditions throughout our history.

Are you an amateur cook? Interested in interpreting an historical diet? Interested in historical research on professional chefs? Have you ever studied anthropology? Interested in research? Food historians? Food history books? Antiques? Food preservation or home? Antiques? Antiques? Or do you just enjoy?

We want everyone to share their wisdom, knowledge and traditions about our province's culinary heritage!

There are already six American groups who meet under the banner of Culinary Historians of \_\_\_\_\_ Our dinner was right, we discussed Culinary history to join the list. Or do we know, we're the first Canadian group. So - join who's who?

- Flora Lewis is Senior Domestic (Interpretive) at Historic Fort York in Toronto. I would like to be a culinary historical party because of the job description, but mostly because of the food served in Ontario's culinary history.
- Christine Lapierre is a high school teacher in Montreal, Quebec. My involvement with food history began when I met a gourmet dinner party at Stone Hillside Country Club in Montserrat and at Historic Fort York.
- Bridge Wrench is an interpreter at Historic Fort York, Toronto. My love of

food, writing and historical research has inspired me to pursue the study of culinary history.

Over the past few decades, culinary history has emerged as a subcategory of material culture studies and research history. We want to continue practical know-how for those curiously practicing historic cooking in historic sites and residences, or in their homes and restaurants, and the academic research that supports it.

We welcome all writers and general contributions to the newsletter in a form or clear information and questions. We really want to progress in our interest in Ontario's culinary history.

This first meeting, in which you are all invited, will be a potluck "bring your favourite food along with the recipe" in October. Please share recipes that help to food preservation and food safety, protein and restaurant meals, history and other shows, their dinner, historic cooking classes, visit from members of other Culinary Historians groups and participation in educational and cultural programs for an interesting and special experience.

Eventually our goals are to have a profit source so that we might be able to, in the meantime, we're looking for volunteers to assist in developing a book. Your ability will be appreciated and we'll be happy to help you with your computer skills.

Look out the next issue for early a summer!



**Culinary Historians of Ontario**  
Toronto Region Winter 1997 NUMBER 11

The Culinary Historians of Ontario is an informative network for food history research in Ontario. It is an organization for people interested in Ontario's history, food and heritage, from those of the First Nations to recent immigrants. We research, interpret, preserve and celebrate Ontario's culinary heritage.

**Women's Institute Celebrates 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

To mark the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Women's Institute (W.I.), a major celebration will take place at the Hamilton Convention Centre from June 17 to 21, 1997. The theme of the National Convention, hosted by the Pukwukong Women's Institute in Inukjuvat in the Yukon, is "Celebrating the Future".

For many decades, the W.I. has been a recognized name for one which is not too familiar. In this issue, CHC staff attempt, with the assistance of several W.I. members, to introduce you to this great organization.

**What is a Women's Institute?**  
The W.I. is an important world-wide rural organization, designed to help the rural women and their families. It was founded in 1897 in Stoney Creek, Ontario.

Agribusiness Historian (Horticulture) was an important achievement of "domestic science" for women (i.e. the idea women should be educated in the science of housework and home life - cooking, cleaning, sewing, etc.) to improve family life. She was included by Edward Law to speak about their lives in Ontario's Institute meetings, which was an organization for women to teach "domestic science", hence the first W.I. was formed.

With the help of the Centre for Department of Agriculture and an enthusiastic response from across the province, W.I.s were formed in many villages and communities. The organization was nationalized across Canada in 1919 and worldwide in 1920.

**Inside This Issue**  
Women's Institute 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary  
Visions From the Women's Institute  
Culinary Queries  
Cooking in Colonies  
Agriculture: Home Handouts  
Culinary Calendar

## The Four Looks

CHO's quarterly newsletters have had four "looks" over twelve years and fifty issues. The first in Spring 1994 was quite plain, with a woodcut that we taped in - no scanned images in those days! The second started in Winter 1997. We used a variety of typefaces, played with the column sizes and jumped to eight pages. It was jazzier and more confident, although some thought it cluttered. With issue Number 26 in Spring 2002, we tried a vertical banner and an elegant typeface, once again seeking a fresher look. But our big aesthetic leap forward happened in Spring 2004, Number 40, when David Robertson created the template of our fourth design and we chose a title, *Culinary Chronicles*. Library and Archives Canada appreciated our new title because it made the newsletter easier to identify and catalogue, although the institution did rap us over the knuckles for not getting an updated ISSN number for our updated product!! Smart, legible, and sophisticated, this fourth look is destined to last. ?

Culinary Historians of Ontario

Spring 2002 NUMBER 32

**Fasting and Feasting Today?**

By Bridget Wrench in Toronto, Ontario/1840s



Historically and geographically, fasting and feasting vary greatly from group to group and over time. However, many people from hunter-gathering to agricultural to industrial to post-industrial have been driven by religious and cultural "rules" associated with the production and consumption of food. Most people consider a fast period as a time when they abstain from eating, but not necessarily from drinking. However, if you look closely, people do eat when they fast of someone else's food or when the food is not eaten in the usual way. Why do these things bother us? It's because we have in our mind a set of "rules" for what is appropriate on these occasions. Traditionally, what was considered appropriate was handed down from the temple or the church. Today's is more likely based on our changing notions of culture, science, religion and health.

Fasting, in its strict definition, implies the total abstinence of food and drink for a given period. A wider level of fasting, in common usage, usually suggests the giving up of specific foodstuffs for a prescribed period. An example of the latter is the traditional abstinence of meat on Fridays for Roman Catholics, although many people now use the word fasting to describe this behavior. Abstinence also can imply the temporary suspension of other types of enjoyable or indulgent behavior such as smoking tobacco or sexual activity.

Feasting, on the other hand, is a celebration in which a specific food or drink is prepared, presented and served in an elaborate highly ritualized and ceremonial manner. The custom varies widely in preparation and serving of the food and drink and usually leads into a symbolic representation of the event being celebrated. For example, Easter feasts such as eggs and lamb are reflective of the ending of the Lenten fast and the celebration of rebirth, while the Easter Bunny is a symbol of spring.

There is often a period of abstinence before the day of celebration and feasting, especially in some many religious observances. The fasting (or the abstinence and/or abstention) is a way to a celebration enjoyed with great gusto, drinking and merry-making. The two activities are not always mutually exclusive; they can be integrated into a ritualized celebration of the same food or celebration.

There are many reasons for abstaining from our modern day indulgent foods. Today, most people in Canada do not fast, in the strict meaning of the word. This is particularly true for the decline in our participation in religious and historic fasts before that a complete fast is not good for your health. Various forms of abstinence, for religious or cultural factors, are more common. There can also be a spiritual fast to this type of behavior. Those who wish to stop non-vegetarian, political positions in a public manner may undertake a hunger strike. Those who undertake this activity hope that the public of their "word" will result in public pressure and eventually demands that some foods mean people "fast" or at least abstain from food thereby drive but this behavior is now called dieting. We abstain from various types of food and drink with the hope of losing weight or simply to maintain a healthy lifestyle. Some use one of natural necessity. One might say a woman who is pregnant that the food manufacturer has found the need for developing, but not eating it as yet. Almost every child under the age of 18 is "light" on their feet. An older lady is trying to get on her feet with the help of the general public. Feasting on the other hand is more common than ever for us. We are fastidious only for holidays but also to demonstrate our wealth and sophistication in a personal or even political level.

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**Send This One**  
Pg. 2 The Joy of Cookbooks  
Pg. 3 From a Marriage  
Pg. 4 A Culinary History  
Pg. 5 Book Reviews  
Pg. 6 Family Fun  
Pg. 8 Culinary Calendar



**Culinary Chronicles**  
THE NEWSLETTER OF THE CULINARY HISTORIANS OF ONTARIO  
SPRING 2004 NUMBER 40

**ANNIVERSARY ISSUE**



**What's Inside**

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 Floral Mailings 12  
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Kate Aikens in her kitchen at Stonebank Acres, near Stoneville, Ontario, 1899 (photograph courtesy: Kate Aikens Family).

## “Prime Minister to the Interior”: Thomas and Harry Webb, for eighty years bakers, confectioners, caterers and restaurateurs.<sup>1</sup>

Mary F. Williamson

*Mary is a very active member of CHO whose writing frequently appears in Culinary Chronicles. She is an Adjunct Professor in the Fine Arts Department at York University.*

As Harry Webb was laid to rest in November, 1906, under a walnut tree in the family plot in Toronto’s Mount Pleasant cemetery, his widow and family must have felt unease about their future. Today the Webb name is virtually unknown, but Thomas Webb established the business as a bakeshop as far back as the 1840s. The Webb dynasty continued with Thomas Jr, and in 1876 Harry Webb succeeded his father. In no time the Harry Webb Company was synonymous with wedding *dejeuners* in towns all over Ontario; banquets and fine dining; and personal, group and corporate entertaining. Harry’s bakery became the largest in Canada. His catering service could handle crowds or exclusive events with equal ease, and eventually he opened his own restaurant where 300 diners could be seated at once. Shortly before he died Harry had retired, selling his restaurant at 66–68 Yonge Street to the St Charles Hotel. As Harry Webb and Company, the bread company, lingered on at Davenport and Kendall until 1928 when it was absorbed by Canada Bread. By then Torontonians had moved on to hundreds of other bakers, caterers and restaurants.

This, in brief, is the story of a family that had its finger in the pie – so to speak – of almost every star-studded gathering in the city, where corporate and political movers and shakers, plus the social elite, entertained each other and enjoyed the very best food. A wedding, Christmas or New Year’s was incomplete without the customary cake and other confections, along with all the other requirements for a sumptuous meal that could be ordered from Webb’s catalogue and delivered to your door. In 1885 Harry Webb ventured to call himself “The Delmonico of Canada” in proud reference to Delmonico’s Restaurant of New York, a dining mecca since 1837.

The tale begins with Thomas Webb (1811–1892), who had assumed the mantle from

his father Thomas, a baker and confectioner from about 1845 at 302 Yonge Street where Dundas Square now sits, and several blocks north of the city’s main shopping area. In the early days Thomas Sr was outflanked by Mrs Dunlop and McConkey’s, both of them established confectioners on the fashionable stretch of King Street. By 1871 the younger Thomas employed two confectioners, one baker, two apprentices and two saleswomen, plus a driver. When he retired in 1876 he left the business to his son Harry, but the Webb name was already well known around the province for its “bride cakes” and for the ice cream room on the upper floor. Harry expanded the business by moving north to 447 Yonge Street, just north of College, calling his shop “The Ontario Wedding Cake Manufactory.” Soon he was sending his highly ornamented cakes to customers across Canada and to the United States. In 1879 the company was appointed Caterers to His Excellency the Governor-General, the Marquis of Lorne, and Her Royal Highness the Princess Louise, and it carried on “by appointment” with their vice-regal successors. Finally, in 1891 Harry opened a restaurant in the *Globe* building at 66–68 Yonge Street where the high-ceilinged dining area, second floor parlours and Ladies Dining Room occupied almost 6,000 square feet.

Because copies of the regular catalogues issued by the company over the years have not survived, it is not easy to reconstruct details of the foods that Webb’s patrons could purchase at the bakeshop or order from the catering branch.<sup>2</sup> Judging from newspaper advertisements, besides the wedding cakes and the wedding cake ornaments for which the company won a gold medal in 1885, Webb’s was particularly proud of its Fancy Ices (1897); Vienna Bread and rolls made from Manitoba hard wheat (1900); Christmas cakes covered with almond icing, and plum puddings baked



according to the recipe of Queen Victoria's own chef, Francatelli (1900); Charlotte Russe which sold for 40¢ a dozen (1906); and a range of brown breads, whole-wheat and white 24-ounce regulation-size loaves, plus scones (1913).

Webb's restaurant welcomed drop-in patrons, but its reputation was built on the several private rooms on the second floor where celebrants – almost always men – could play games, give speeches, listen to music, and enjoy the “flowing bowl” (except in 1894 when 70 “old boys” of Ryerson School held their third reunion dinner when no liquor was served). Military regiments, fraternal societies, clubs, university graduating years, and businesses held their dinners at Webb's. In celebration of the centennial of Masonry in Ontario in 1892, the Masons “sat down to a most recherche banquet.” In 1900 the Don Rowing Club held its annual ball in the Harry Webb Parlours when presumably women were welcome.

The Harry Webb Company particularly excelled at catering large dinners and suppers at locations

where kitchen facilities had to be improvised. At the Victorian Era Ball sponsored by Lord and Lady Aberdeen on December 28 in 1897 at the University Avenue Armouries, 2,500 guests were served a midnight supper where each course on the menu was described in French. At the Victoria Club ball in 1901 “a hot tête-à-tête supper” was served in a large marquee at the east end of the club house. However, the Webbs were not so exalted that they scorned the *hoi polloi*, and during the 1890s they sponsored a restaurant at the annual Industrial Exhibition (later the CNE) where large crowds could be accommodated. During exhibition weeks in August and September they advertised “everything in season.” Today, when exhibition visitors are faced with a range of fast foods, we can appreciate that culinary history has much to teach us.

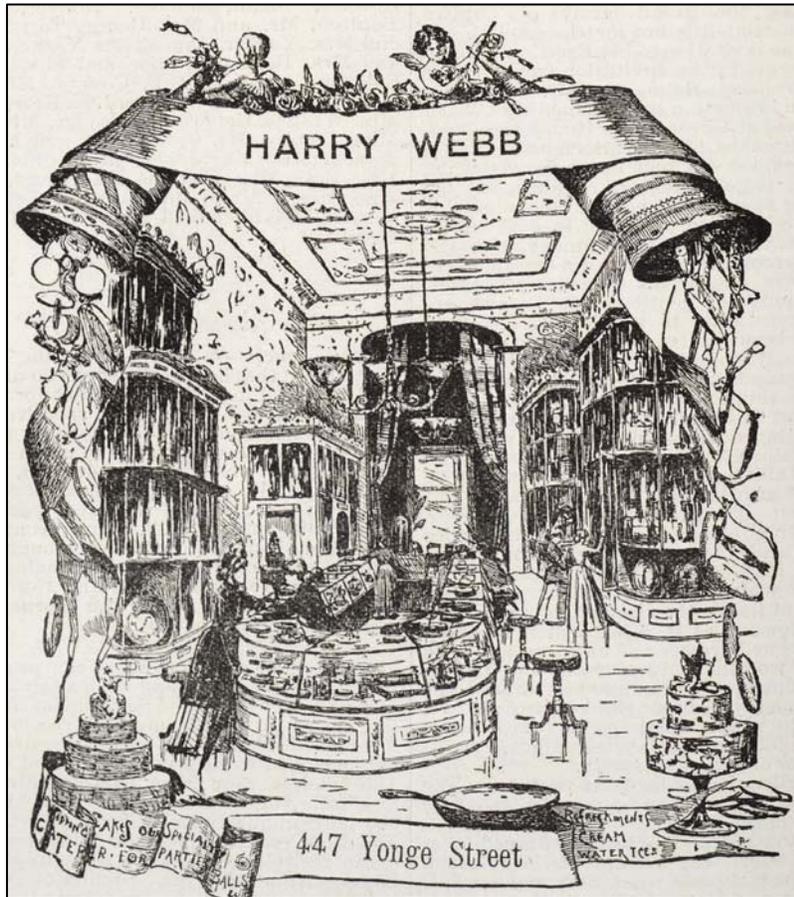
Special commissions were welcomed by Webb's. In 1905 at the E.W. Gillett Co. offices at King and Duncan Streets, shareholders attending the annual meeting were treated to a luncheon where Webb's supplied “bread made with Royal Yeast and



**Harry Webb's restaurant at 66–68 Yonge Street, Toronto. *Toronto Saturday Night*, Christmas 1889.**



(Image courtesy of Mary F. Williamson)



**Webb's bakery and confectionery shop.**  
*Toronto Saturday Night*, March 3, 1888.

(Image courtesy of Mary F. Williamson)

biscuits made from Magic Baking Powder, two of the company's products." However, for the supreme challenge, the "Cake Walk" in 1895 at the Musee on Yonge Street surely takes the "cake," so to speak. The Musee, which was a venue for popular – some would say risqué – entertainment, every day during the last week of January sponsored "the first full-dress colored cake walk ever held in this city." Couples of colour competed with each other to display "the most graceful gait," and were voted on by those watching. The winning couple was awarded the biggest cake ever baked by Harry Webb, but they were required to cut it into "fair-sized morsels" to be distributed among members of the paying audience. The "cake walk," thought to be a hold-over from US plantation days when slaves were permitted to ape their masters, and subsequently

from later minstrel shows, must have enthralled white Torontonians at the Musee. Alas, the history of food in the city of Toronto is largely unknown, and ordinary citizens imagine that celebrity chefs, fine catering, and culinary competitions are inventions of our own era. The tall Webb family monument in Plot J of Mount Pleasant cemetery is not likely to be singled out in cemetery guidebooks or by tour leaders, nor draw sightseers who wish to pay homage to the city's culinary pioneers. However, as major players in the dining culture of Toronto for almost eighty years, the Webb dynasty of bakers, confectioners, caterers and restaurateurs richly deserves a place in the recorded history of our city and province, and I trust that recognition will some day be granted.

1. "Prime Minister to the Interior" appears on an undated advertising card for Harry

Webb's restaurant held at the Toronto Reference Library.

2. Three menus which have survived are in the collections of the Toronto Reference Library: the menu for the supper at the Victorian Era Ball in 1897, also published in the *Globe* on Dec. 29; a City Council luncheon at the Exhibition Grounds on June 22, 1897; and a 1904 business lunch menu for the restaurant.

### **WELSH RAREBIT (Webb's)**

*The New Cook Book* by Grace Denison  
 (Toronto: Rose, 1903), p. 355.

Half a glass of old ale, half a pound of old cheese, pinch red pepper, sufficient mustard to cover five cent piece, dash of Lea & Perrins' Worcestershire sauce. Grate cheese fine, place in a chafing-dish or small saucepan on fire, rub well with back of spoon until thoroughly dissolved; mix pepper, mustard and Worcester sauce thoroughly with ale, and pour into cheese. Thoroughly mix until smooth. Serve on buttered toast, cut diamond shape on red-hot dish.

*The author is happy to provide readers with references to sources used for this article.*



## My Manitoulin Island Visit, or “What I Ate on My Summer Vacation”

Maggie Newell

*As CHO's Secretary, Maggie often writes for Culinary Chronicles.*

This past August my partner and I took a camping trip that included three days on Manitoulin Island. During our visit we attended a Rodeo, a Pow Wow, a Pancake Breakfast, a local Fair, and the Farmer's Market. Quite unexpectedly our visit turned into a gastronomic tour as we discovered and enjoyed local food at every occasion.

Our guide was *Exploring Manitoulin* by Shelley J. Pearen. I am indebted to this book for the following history. Manitoulin means “Spirit Island.” Native lore identifies the island as home to the Great Spirit Kitchi Manitou. It is also the historical home of Ojibwa and Iroquois peoples. When French Jesuit missionaries first arrived in 1648 they settled with the Hurons. It was not long before raiding Iroquois drove the converted Hurons and the missionaries off the island. Jesuit records state that in 1651 about 200 persons in 40 canoes left for Quebec and other safer locations.

European contact brought unfamiliar diseases to the First Nations with tragic consequences. Oral tradition reports that the Manitoulin forests were intentionally set afire to cleanse it of disease after the Jesuits' departure. Around 1833 the Jesuits again established a Manitoulin mission, this time at Wikwemikong. In the many years between these two Jesuit missions the Province of Upper Canada had undergone a transformation. Europeans were coming to settle, not just passing through to trade. The new native community at Wikwemikong was a combination of First Nations people returning to their ancestors' home and others displaced by European settlement in the south. In 1861 the Canadian government began negotiations to persuade the natives of Manitoulin to cede the island and allow non-native settlement. The Wikwemikong Jesuits opposed the treaty and perhaps as the result of their influence the first offer made to the natives was refused. When negotiations resumed the Superintendent General of Indian Affairs announced that the Wikwemikong Peninsula and its people would not be included in the discussions. As

a consequence the peninsula, where the majority of the population was concentrated and where the Jesuits had their power base, was not ceded. The rest of the island was opened to settlement in 1862.

Today the ruins of the Wikwemikong mission school serve as the summer theatre space for the De-ba-jeh-mu-jig Theatre Company. Unfortunately the show was rained out the day we were there but we spent an enjoyable, although overcast, afternoon at the “Wiki” Rodeo. Among the concession stands we found bison burgers and “strawberry drink.” The bison burgers were ground meat patties served on Kaiser buns with all the typical burger condiments.

The strawberry drink was more intriguing. It consisted of what appeared to be homemade strawberry syrup measured in a plastic cup of ice water, capped with another plastic cup and shaken like a martini. I did not detect any added sugar, but my partner found the drink too sweet. I thought it light, refreshing and an excellent example of using locally available produce and a minimum of technology to make a treat. Strawberries are so abundant in the area that there is a Strawberry Island off Manitoulin's coast. The strawberry is also a clan symbol that appears on traditional native dress and in art.

The following day we attended a Pow Wow at the rocky northern end of the island, on the Whitefish River First Nation, at a site called Sunshine Alley that is overlooked by the sacred Dreamer's Rock. Its natural beauty was certainly a factor in everyone's enjoyment of the day. The rebirth and proliferation of Pow Wows on Manitoulin began in the 1990s. Each of the six First Nations communities on the island today holds its own during the summer. The modern Pow Wow is a descendant of the “war dance” Anna Jameson observed when she attended the annual gift-giving ceremonies on Manitoulin in 1837, a visit she described in her *Winter Studies and Summer Rambles*. The Pow Wow we attended was an



inclusive event, with everyone invited to join in the intertribal dances. I was highly amused when one of the exhibition dances was postponed because it was discovered that the entire class – adolescent boys – had gone swimming and were unavailable to perform at their designated time.

At the Pow Wow we joined a line to purchase “tacos.” We had seen tacos advertised as an inducement to attend a yard sale, so I was curious to discover if they were really “just” tacos. Our curiosity grew as we noticed large jars of grape jelly and peanut butter on the condiment table. Approaching the front of the line we observed the cooks deep frying bannock, then topping it with tomato sauce, ground meat, shredded lettuce, grated cheese, and sour cream. This was the taco! The grape jelly mystery was explained when the woman behind us ordered “Just the scone,” and was presented with an unadorned deep fried bannock to dress with peanut butter and jelly if she saw fit. A boy in line ordered a hot dog, and this too was served with a fried bannock “bun.”

We explored the culinary legacy of the white settlers at the Fall Fair at Providence Bay and the Farmer’s Market at Mindemoya, where we shopped at several organic farmers, whose produce included heritage varieties of tomatoes, carrots and lettuces. The tomatoes and carrots came in a variety of shapes and colours, including plum-shaped tomatoes that were almost black, and purple carrots. The purple, alas, is only skin deep.

To my surprise we found fresh and preserved citron watermelons at both the market and the fair. I associate citrons with historic house museum gardens and 19<sup>th</sup>-century preserves. I found a page of instructions in a reprint of a 1920s cookbook published by the Women’s Auxiliary of Holy Trinity Church, Little Current, at the Little Red Schoolhouse Museum in South Baymouth. This book includes more than a page of instructions on preserving citron, with particular attention to keeping the fancy cut pieces intact during the cooking process. This suggests that citrons have been a part of the Manitoulin diet for many years. Perhaps these excellent instructions have kept the habit of growing citrons alive.

Hawberry Jam was among the homemade preserves available at the market. With a

little detective work and consultation with Bob Wildfong (CHO’s Treasurer and also Executive Director of Seeds of Diversity), I confirmed that hawberries, which resemble rosehips, are the berries from the hawthorn tree. The term “Hawewater” is applied to someone born on Manitoulin Island because it is believed that hawthorn berries saved the early settlers from starvation in their first hard years on Manitoulin. In local parlance these berries are simply “haws.” A recipe for Hawberry Jam in the summer 2006 issue of *Manitoulin’s Magazine* begins with the direction to “crush Ripe Haws into a Large Saucepan,” with no explanation of “haw.” This jam is in fact a jelly because it uses the haw juice and not the flesh. I expect haws, like rosehips, are full of seeds. The jelly I sampled was pleasant enough, pink and sweet with a subtle flavor, but it was perhaps most remarkable for its history and associations.

Manitoulin Island is the world’s largest island in a fresh water lake. The geography is varied with farmland to the south and true Canadian Shield at the north end. Historically, wheat was grown by the European pioneers. The soil is not very rich, and today the principal form of agriculture seems to be raising sheep and cattle. Farquhar’s Dairy is based in Mindemoya in a stone dairy building that is the third built on this site since 1902. Farquhar’s provide milk and ice cream to stores across the island. Their ice cream stand near Little Current is a roadside attraction where tourists take photographs of their children sitting on the fiberglass cows. Of course they have hawberry ice cream on offer.

Long ago, the First Nations discovered the rich natural resources of Manitoulin. They came to hunt and fish. These activities continue. For folks more comfortable shopping, red deer sausages and chops are available at the Farmer’s Market, and fresh, frozen, and smoked whitefish from Purvis Brothers fishery are provided through some grocery stores.

Despite our best efforts to see and do everything during our visit we will have to make another trip to take the tour of the Purvis Brothers fishery, eat a meal in the Schoolhouse restaurant, hike to the Cup and Saucer, and visit Woolly Harvest: Manitoulin Yarns. Come spring we will consult the ferry timetable and make plans. ?



## Edna Staebler, 1906–2006: A Canadian Twentieth Century Culinary Pioneer

Rose Murray

*One of Rose's several cookbooks, Hungry for Comfort, The Pleasures of Home Cooking, won gold in the Cuisine Canada and University of Guelph National Culinary Book Awards in 2004.*

Edna Staebler remembered her parents taking her outside in her yellow flannelette pyjamas to see Halley's Comet flashing across the sky when she was four years old. There was no electricity or telephone in her house yet, and Kitchener was still Berlin. Born in 1906, Edna's long life spanned most of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and some of the 21<sup>st</sup> until she died peacefully on September 12, 2006.



**Edna Staebler and Rose Murray, 1991, on the occasion of Edna receiving The Silver Ladle Award from the (now defunct) Toronto Culinary Guild for her unique contribution to the Ontario food industry.**

(Photo courtesy of Rose Murray)

She did not come to this country to clear virgin forest and build a log house, but she was a true pioneer of her time. In 1929, when few women had the opportunity to attend university, Edna proudly graduated from the

University of Toronto with a Bachelor of Arts degree. When she married in 1933, she did what wives were expected to do – stayed home to cook and sew – but instead of playing bridge, she read books and kept a journal.

It was not until 1945, after a trip to Cape Breton and despite her family's lack of support, that she finally decided to follow her dream of being a writer. She went on to become one of Canada's leading photojournalists. In 1948, she personally delivered an unsolicited article based on the 1945 trip to *Maclean's Magazine*. The story was not only published but was the most-read article in the issue and the first in a long series of pieces Edna wrote for various magazines (*Maclean's*, *Saturday Night*, *Chatelaine* and *Star Weekly*). Her research for each article was unparalleled. Her pioneering work took her on a sword-fishing boat, a little freighter to Saint Pierre and Miquelon, a canal barge to New York City, and right into the homes of Italian immigrants, an Alberta Hutterite colony, the Six Nations Indian Reserve, and of course, an Old Order Mennonite family, all ventures women of the time normally did not undertake. In these stories and more, Edna Staebler taught Canadians about themselves through her special ability to absorb and communicate the texture of life.

It was a second article about Waterloo area's Old Order Mennonites that led to her hugely successful cookbooks, *Food That Really Schmecks* (1968), *More Food That Really Schmecks* (1979) and *Schmecks Appeal* (1987). Her writing about Mennonites led to a better understanding of their lifestyle and lifted the community itself into an important place in the country.

Her troubled marriage ended in 1962 when divorce was rare, and at age 56, Edna found herself living alone in the family cottage at Sunfish Lake. From here, she published all her



books including *Sauerkraut and Enterprise* (1966), the Schmecks cookbooks, and *Cape Breton Harbour* (1972, but written 25 years earlier). From here also, she collected awards and distinctions too numerous to mention, the highest being named a member of the Order of Canada.

Edna found a way to connect with everyone she met and managed in some way to help many who needed assistance. She gave generously to a huge number of local community organizations and national groups such as Cuisine Canada. Passionate about encouraging writers and supporting culture, Edna established the annual Edna Staebler Award for Creative Non-Fiction as well as numerous bursaries at Wilfrid Laurier University and the Writer-in-Residence program at Kitchener Public Library; she supported a local history fellowship at the Joseph Schneider Haus in Kitchener and was one of the founders of the *New Quarterly Journal*.

Her one hundred years were filled with giving, celebrating life, and collecting friends. I am very privileged to have been among them.

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## Two Books on Edna Staebler

1. ***Must Write: Edna Staebler's Diaries.*** Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2005.

Staebler's diaries have been edited by Christl Verduyn, and now appear in Laurier's "Life Writing Series." Staebler just passed away in September 2006. She is, of course, the award-winning chronicler of Mennonite cooking from the Kitchener-Waterloo area. She began writing her diary at the age of 16 and wrote for over 80 years (!), detailing the "frustrations, struggles, and joy of life." This is one of the few memoirs-diaries with an index, which allows you then to look up her food writings and thoughts. The book also has a bibliography of her writings. – *Dean Tudor, Journalism Professor Emeritus, Ryerson University, member of CHO, www.deantudor.com.*

2. **Ross, Veronica. *Edna Staebler, A Life: To Experience Wonder.*** Toronto: Dundurn Group, 2003.

## Camping Memories Revisited

*CHO received this email note from long-time member Joyce Lewis, in response to the camping theme of newsletter Number 49.*

The camping issue brought back sharp memories of my own experiences in fourteen years of camping, and the food we had on our canoe trips. Klim was always part of them, made in water treated first with Halazone tablets, and then stirred ineptly with a wooden spoon so there were generally sodden little yellow lumps floating about the top of your cup or on your cereal. It made Freshie the choice alternative as a drink, in spite of the horrible things leftover Freshie did to the inside of enamel cups if left in overnight! Those character-building Cook Outs were universal (and still are) as the solution to feeding campers their evening meal on the Kitchen Staff's weekly Half Day Off. Salmon Wiggle featured on our longer canoe trips, as did Blushing Bunny, Ring Tum Diddy, Pocket Stew, and BRT. I can't remember what went into the first three, but BRT was Bacon, Rice and Tomatoes – a sort of Spanish Rice mix. After the War we carried those very modern (and rather nasty) instant mashed potato flakes, but for the first night out, we would have fresh potatoes and vegetables. It was usual to try to have everything cooked for the group in one pot, which explains those oddly named concoctions. Desserts might be canned fruit; sometimes a milk pudding; S'Mores (a toasted marshmallow, topped with a piece of chocolate, squashed between two graham crackers); or a sort of cocoon of rolled out biscuit mix twined around a stick and baked over the campfire. When it was considered done, you took it off and filled the centre with jam. No health-conscious cook served fresh fruit in camp, or sent it out on trips, because it was thought to carry polio, or at the very least, "summer complaint" germs, which could sweep through the cabins and tents. Beginning in the early 1900s, Ontario was a leader in the camping movement for North America, from "Fresh Air" camps for inner city children, through church and Y camps, to those charging full fees. There's a whole sub-culture of a century of camping foodways which really might be worth exploring, and someone could have a lot of fun doing it.



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## Canadian Culinary Book Awards Winners

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The winners of the Cuisine Canada and The University of Guelph's Canadian Culinary Book Awards were announced on September 16, 2006, at the Gala Dinner event during Cuisine Canada's national conference in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Some of Canada's top food professionals, chosen as judges, spent the summer testing recipes and evaluating culinary books from the more than fifty entered. The winners are:

### ENGLISH-LANGUAGE

### FRENCH-LANGUAGE

#### Canadian Food Culture

(books that best illustrate Canada's rich culinary heritage and food culture)

**Gold:** Janice Wong, *Chow: From China to Canada: Memories of Food and Family* (Whitecap Books, Vancouver)

**Silver:** Habeeb Salloum, *Arab Cooking on a Saskatchewan Homestead: Recipes and Recollections* (Canadian Plains Research Center, Regina, Saskatchewan)

**Gold:** Anton Fercher, *Chapeau! Canada: les grands chefs* (Chapeau Canada Les Grands Chefs Inc., St-Lambert, Québec)

**Silver:** Michèle Serre, *Les produits du marché au Québec* (Éditions du Trécarré, Outremont, Québec)

#### Cookbook

**Gold:** Anna and Michael Olson, *Anna and Michael Olson Cook at Home: Recipes for Every Day and Every Occasion* (Whitecap Books, Vancouver)

**Silver:** Jurgen Gothe, *DiscCookery* (Whitecap Books, Vancouver)

**Gold:** Jocelyna Dubuc, Pierre Cornélis and Stéphane Triballi, *Le Spa Eastman à votre table* (Spa Eastman, Eastman, Québec)

**Silver:** Robert Beauchemin, *Huile d'olive* (Les Éditions de l'Homme, Montréal)

#### Special Interest Food and Beverage Book

(books about food; non-cookbooks)

**Gold:** Pam Freir, *Laughing with My Mouth Full: Tales from a Gulf Islands Kitchen* (HarperCollins Publishers Ltd, Toronto)

**Silver:** Nazneen Sheikh, *Tea and Pomegranates: A Memoir of Food, Family and Kashmir* (Penguin Canada, Toronto)

**Gold:** François Chartier, *À table avec François Chartier* (Les Éditions La Presse, Sainte-Foy, Québec)

**Silver:** Richard Béliveau and Denis Gingras, *Les aliments contre le cancer: la prévention et le traitement du cancer par l'alimentation* (Éditions du Trécarré, Outremont, Québec)

**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 through its programs in agriculture, food science, and hospitality and tourism management. It is the home of one of Canada's best cookbook collections.

For more information about the awards visit Cuisine Canada's web site: [www.cuisinecanada.ca](http://www.cuisinecanada.ca).

It is gratifying that two winners were books that feature the Canadian culinary history of two groups of newcomers. See the reviews of *Chow: from China to Canada* and *Arab Cooking on a Saskatchewan Homestead* on the next page.



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## Two Award-Winning Canadian Culinary Histories

Fiona Lucas

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**Janice Wong.** *Chow: From China to Canada: Memories of Food and Family.* Vancouver: Whitecap Books, 2006. 190 pages, ISBN 1-55285-650-X, \$24.95 soft cover.

**Habeeb Salloum.** *Arab Cooking on a Saskatchewan Homestead: Recipes and Recollections.* Regina: University of Regina and Canadian Plains Research Center, 2006. 316 pages, ISBN 0-88977-182-0, \$29.95 soft cover.

Intriguingly, these two award-winning books have much in common. They both tell the stories of immigrant families to Saskatchewan, as experienced by adults recalling the culinary heritage of their childhoods. Wong is a third generation Chinese-Canadian, whose father was born into a westernized Vancouver family in 1917, but whose Canadian-born mother was sent back to her traditional family in China for a few years. Salloum's family were farmers from Syria, today Lebanon, who arrived in 1924, with baby Habeeb. Both families faced the usual cultural adjustment and economic hardship but created successful businesses, went on to higher education, and simultaneously sought to blend into the dominant Anglo-Canadian culture and remember their origins, chiefly through their foodways. Salloum writes vividly of his homesteading childhood, while Wong grew up in and around family-run restaurants in the '60s and '70s. Both books are tributes to their parents.

Most Canadians are aware that Chinese men were hired to build the railway tracks, after which many opened laundries and restaurants. Few Canadian towns are without a Chinese restaurant, and indeed Janice Wong's father, Dennis, was proprietor of several in his long life in British Columbia and Saskatchewan. Surely few Canadians, however, realize that the Saskatchewan prairie was also home to a large Arab population who arrived in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Salloums among them. One of Habeeb Salloum's goals was to show that Arabs were one of the "innumerable ethnic minorities that make up the Canadian mosaic." His book is more of a cultural history, showing how his family fit into the larger whole, while *Chow* is more intimate. Neither dwells on racism, but rather mutes it in favour of celebration and acknowledgement of success.

*Chow* is arranged as a series of vignettes interspersed with recipes, while *Arab Cooking*'s chapters and recipes are ordered by ingredient, including burghul, "the cornerstone of our diet," and zucchini, "our vegetarian delight." Yogurt, I discovered, can be made from all types of milk, from cow to reindeer, and from full-cream to skim. Mrs Salloum made her own yogurt, decades before the hippies popularized it. As a boy, her son was often embarrassed when he opened his lunches at school, even as he enjoyed eating his mother's meals at home. He wanted white sliced bread with bologna like his classmates, rather than pita stuffed with roasted vegetables. Later, as a much-travelled adult, he embraced this gastronomic heritage and often promoted it in his writings. On the other hand, the Wongs seem to have melded the two culinary traditions of China and Britain, including such favourites as Welsh Cakes and Butter Tarts!

These books are family recipe manuscripts brought to life. A few photographs of Dennis Wong's handwritten recipes are even included. Salloum also provides some nutritional information, showing how his mother's ability to create meals out of ingredients scorned by others kept her family healthy during the Depression and World War II. Chickpeas, for instance, thrived in the dry prairie, just as they did in the dry sands of North Africa. Many ingredients used by Dennis Wong in his restaurants (such as tofu, oyster sauce and bok choy) and by Shams Salloum in her farm kitchen (zucchini, coriander leaf and lentils) are now familiar to many of us. Most Canadians know what falafels and baklava, and chow mein and peking duck, are too. They have become Canadian foods.

I would love to see more illuminating and personal culinary history of this kind written by Canadians. ?



## Exploring Canadian Food Trends and the Future of Food

Carrie Herzog

*Carrie has an MBA in Hospitality and Tourism Management from the University of Guelph, where she currently teaches. She recently became CHO's Program Chair.*

Much of the talk at Cuisine Canada's "Future of Food" Conference, held from September 16 to 19 in Winnipeg, Manitoba, revolved around current trends in the restaurant industry. Chef David Adjey from the popular television show on the Food Network, *Restaurant Makeover*, began the discussion on evolving Canadian tastes and the impact on restaurants when addressing a group of scholars, restaurateurs, food writers and industry professionals on the "recipe for a successful restaurant." Although admitting that there is no one recipe for success, Adjey described the increasing importance of telling a story about the food to the consumer. He argued that food sells itself; instead, one should focus one's attention on the story *behind* the food. Where did the ingredient(s) come from? What is so unique about the particular supplier? Why is it being served at the restaurant? This type of information, Adjey feels, allows front line staff to provide the best "tableside romance" and make the diner's experience more meaningful – a key component of a successful restaurant.

Chef Adjey was not alone in describing the new Canadian food consumer as more educated, inquisitive, and demanding; this was a main theme in a discussion on the evolving Canadian palate held with six Executive Chefs from Delta Hotel properties across the country. Executive Chef Jason Gower from the Delta Winnipeg, along with Executive Chefs Sean Doucet, Hervé Dumont, Kenton Leier, Jeff O'Neill and Ian Riddick, all highlighted the need to source out good suppliers (both locally and nationally) to obtain quality food to help create "basic" dishes that represent the region or a particular locale. While sourcing out suppliers was described as "time-consuming," they all agreed it was necessary to meet the demands of the customer who wanted to experience authentic food – either authentic to the region or authentic to the style of cooking in another part of the

world. Stories, in either of the two cases, are important to the whole experience, and should be emphasized on menus and in the restaurant as a whole.

This particular group of Executive Chefs also described the increasing need to cater toward customer tastes, including serving "comfort foods" to business travelers and modifying dishes for allergies. Such requests, they argued, are growing and force them to stock ingredients and pre-packaged items in case of last minute requests.

The "Future of Food" conference and the above mentioned Chef speakers raised some important points about the evolving Canadian consumer palate. All suggested that the Canadian consumer and his or her tastes are becoming more sophisticated, complicated and developed, thus requiring Chefs to seek out smaller, more specialized suppliers, and to provide more education on the food plated and presented to the diner. Stories about food, they contended, are both required and requested in today's restaurant, and those places that can communicate these stories are usually more successful because they maximize the dining experience. These Chefs, representing various parts of the country, all said the same thing: the future of Canadian food is more in the stories behind the food, than in the food itself.

So, next time you go for dinner, why not try ordering the story – not the food? ?



## 1876 Bill of Fare

This Bill of Fare was for a dinner given in Ottawa on April 12, 1876, by Sandford Fleming, Engineer-in-Chief of Canadian and Intercolonial Railways. The dinner was for “a few professional friends, embracing some of the principal engineers engaged on the Newfoundland, Intercolonial and Pacific Railways.” *Canadian Illustrated News*, June 3, 1876.

Dominion pea soup.

Newfoundland – Cod, Come by Chance, oyster sauce.

Nova Scotia – Halibut, anchovy sauce.

New Brunswick – Restigouche salmon, Matapedia sea trout.

Prince Edward Island – Oyster patties, Cotelette de Shediac. Homard de Cobequid, Veau à la Baie Verte.

Quebec – Dindon bouilli, sauce au celeri. Langue.

Ontario – Roast beef, potatoes, tomatoes, parsnips, sweet corn, green peas, asparagus.

Manitoba – Poules de prairies, garnis de sauterelles.

Keewatin – Pemmican of the Saskatchewan. Beaver Tail. Cariboo tongue.

British Columbia – Pouding au Continent, sauce à l’Ile de Vancouver, Rocky Mountain Ice Cream.

Dessert – Coffee, &c.

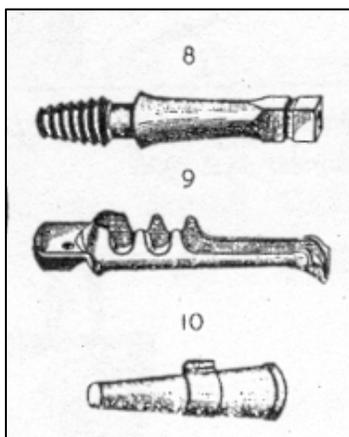
*Notes:* Cobequid Bay is in Nova Scotia, stretching northeast from the Bay of Fundy. The Matapedia River runs south from the St Lawrence River on the Gaspé peninsula to the New Brunswick border. Sauterelles are grasshoppers! In 1876, the District of Keewatin had just been created from part of the North-West Territories, which had been purchased five years earlier by the federal government from the Hudson’s Bay Company. Manitoba had been carved out of the North-West Territories in 1871, and British Columbia in 1872. What was in the pudding, the sauce, or the ice cream is anyone’s guess! Who were the cooks?!

(Courtesy of Mary F. Williamson)

## Culinary Whatzits

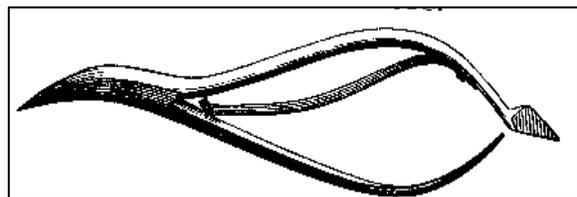
*In Number 48 we started a new column on culinary mysteries. The answer to the new whatzit will be in the Winter 2007 issue. If you have an educated guess about it, or if you have a culinary whatzit that you’d like to suggest for future issues, please contact the Editor at [lucasf@sympatico.ca](mailto:lucasf@sympatico.ca) or 416 534-1405.*

### New Whatzit



These three items are variants of the same what?

### Previous Whatzit



Q: It’s a pair of scissors, but for what fashionable food of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century?

A: Sardines!

*Simmons Hardware Company Catalogue*, 1881, St Louis, found in *Victorian Houseware, Hardware and Kitchenware: A Pictorial Archive*, Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 1992, p 96.



## Eaton's Restaurants

*The Culinary Historians of Ontario have plans to create a culinary timeline for Canada. In keeping with the restaurant and eating out theme of this issue, here are a few dates and quotations that may interest Canadians. One day they will appear on the Canadian Culinary Timeline!*



**A close view of the elegant Le 9e in Montreal on January 28, 1931**

The following dates and quotations are extracted from *Lunch with Lady Eaton, Inside the Dining Rooms of a Nation*, by Carol Anderson and Katherine Mallinson, Toronto: ECW Press, 2004. Some members may remember these well-known restaurants.

- 1887** A coffee room was opened for women shoppers in the flagship store on Queen Street; it was the first of its kind in a Canadian store.
- 1899** The lunchroom opened in the Queen Street store in Toronto. It was capable of serving 5,000 customers per day – lunch was 20¢, and dinner 25¢, and for an extra 5¢ a baked apple with cream was available.
- 1905** The lunchroom and Grill Room opened in the Winnipeg store on July 15.

“Our lunch and grill rooms are on the fifth floor where you can obtain anything from light refreshment to a full-course dinner. These rooms have a combined seating capacity of a thousand, and an average daily patronage of from three to five thousand. The Grill Room is luxuriously furnished with Mission tables and chairs, tapestried walls and rugs. Visitors can inspect the kitchens on application to the Superintendent’s office at any time.” (information on stereoscopic photograph of Winnipeg Grill Room used as an advertisement, 1910)

The T. Eaton Co.’s elegant restaurants were the inspiration of Lady Eaton, who invited designers, artists and French-trained chefs to assist her in creating their ambience and cuisine.

- 1924** The Georgian Room opened in the Toronto Queen Street store.

“The Georgian Room, the name we had chosen because it so well suited the dignity of the first decorative scheme, opened in 1924. People close to the food industry in Canada have often stated that it revolutionized restaurant menus and service everywhere. Certainly it set a new, quite different standard, and my cherished dreams were realized.” (Lady Eaton, 1956)

- 1927** The Pansy Room opened in the Hamilton store. It was renamed the Green Room in 1933.
- 1930** The Round Room opened in Toronto’s College Street store. Today its Art Moderne design is beautifully restored and called The Carlu after its designer, Jacques Carlu.
- 1931** Le 9e opened on the ninth floor in the Montreal store.
- 1949** The Marine Room opened in the Vancouver store.



## CHO Program Review: “Picnic on the Grand: Exploring Food History at Ruthven Park”

Eva MacDonald

*Eva is an archaeologist with a special interest in food history.*

What might a shopping list for a picnic to which 150 guests had been invited look like? I can tell you it included 13 dozen boiled eggs because I helped peel them to make devilled eggs for the “Picnic on the Grand” at Ruthven Park National Historic Site in Cayuga, Ontario, on Saturday, August 19, 2006. The event was a successful collaboration between the Culinary Historians of Ontario and the Lower Grand River Land Trust that administers Ruthven. It hardly seems that it was two years ago when CHO was invited by Marilyn Havelka, the Chief Administrative Officer, to brainstorm the possibility of staging a food-themed event for Ruthven Park, with emphasis on the culinary traditions of the Thompson family, who lived there from the 1840s to 1993. The house is still full of the family’s furniture and art.

If you have never been to Ruthven Park, then you do not know how perfectly the extensive grounds lend themselves to a summer picnic. Despite the opulence of the Thompson’s 1840s mansion with its commanding view of the Grand River, the family had simple tastes. This was demonstrated in a 1916 letter by Colonel Andrew Thompson that praised a picnic hamper from his sister that contained cold chicken, a jar of Aunt Mary’s famous green sauce (the Ruthven variety), cake, and grapes. It is not hard to imagine the colonel enjoying the menu for August 19 devised by CHO member Mya Sangster that was inspired by his letter, and which included cold chicken patties, cheese straws, devilled eggs, pickled cauliflower, prune tarts and lemonade, among other delicacies.

The lion’s share of the baking and cooking was done ahead of time in Historic Fort York’s catering kitchen by the core members of CHO’s Outreach and Education Committee: Amy Scott, Rosemary Kovac and Mya Sangster, who cheerfully served the appreciative guests on the big day with help from Joan and Mike Derblich, Edwin Rowse, several Ruthven volunteers, and myself. Tours of the Ruthven mansion were enhanced by stops in various rooms where CHO presenters explained a particular aspect of food history, including Fiona Lucas on Canadian Centennial cookbooks in the vibrant turquoise ’60s kitchen, Rosemary Kovac introducing a formal Edwardian dinner party in the dining room, and a sneak peak at the open hearth and bake oven in the original basement kitchen with Liz Driver. Local re-enactor Ben Mayville also gave an interesting talk on World War I army rations in Ruthven’s laundry cum barracks building. Outdoor tours were ongoing throughout the day with two of the experts involved in the property’s restoration, Edwin Rowse, principal of ERA Architects, and landscape architect Wendy Shearer.

Despite the miserable rain, the local community came out in force. A grand day was had by all!

*For more on Ruthven’s manuscript cookbooks and Col. Thompson’s letter, please see Number 9, pp 12–13.*



**Liz Driver, Fiona Lucas and Rosemary Kovac**

(Photographs courtesy of Mya Sangster)



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## CHO Upcoming Events

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### November 2006

#### COOKBOOK CAPER

*Ontario Historical Society*  
John McKenzie House  
34 Parkview Ave, Toronto  
416 226-9011, ohs@ontariohistoricalsociety.ca  
**Sunday, November 12, 1 to 4 pm**

The OHS's annual cookbook sale features hundreds of old and new books, food magazines, and collectible kitchen equipment. Every year new treasures are available! For the fourth year, CHO contributes to this popular OHS fundraiser by offering a tearoom, where bargain hunters can relax with tea and delicious sweets. Donations of cookbooks or cooking equipment are appreciated.

Free admission. Also, volunteers are needed, for which they receive a first look at the books. Please contact CHO Program Chair Carrie Herzog at 519 744-7973 or chertzog@uoguelph.ca.

#### CHRISTMAS FOOD IN HISTORIC RIVERDALE

*St Matthew's Church, Parish Hall behind church*  
135 First Ave, Toronto  
**Tuesday, 28 November, 7:30 pm**

Join CHO and the Riverdale Historical Society in anticipation of Christmas. Riverdalian and retired U of T professor Gerald Whyte will set the scene by talking about the local food stores, market gardens, and dairies. CHO President Liz Driver will trace the evolution of Victorian Christmas food through historic Riverdale cookbooks. Bring your favourite old cookbooks for Liz to consider their historic (not monetary) value at the "Antique Cookbooks Roadshow." Christmas treats prepared by RHS volunteers from Riverdale cookbooks.

First Ave is one-way going east, between Broadview and Logan, south of Gerrard. Street parking is on First, Logan, and Gerrard. A city parking lot is on Gerrard. OR: Streetcar 506 along Gerrard to Logan; walk one block south and two blocks west.

Free admission for members of CHO, RHS and St Matthew's Church; \$5, non-members. No pre-registration necessary. Refreshments extra. For more information, contact RHS member Ruthie Gilpin Beck, 416 465-2639.

### January 2007

CHO in partnership with Montgomery's Inn  
**COME AGAIN TOMORROW, WHIM WHAM, AND MUCH MORE FOR 7s 6d:**  
**A Georgian Gentlewoman's Culinary Journey from Charlottetown to Dundee**  
**A lecture with Mary F. Williamson**  
*Montgomery's Inn Museum*  
4709 Dundas St W, Toronto  
416 394-8113, montinn@toronto.ca  
**Thursday, January 25, 7 pm**

*The Practice of Cookery* by Mrs Dalgairns was published from 1829 to 1860 in Edinburgh and London. Reviewers writing in contemporary newspapers and the literary press gave it their serious attention. One London writer who liked it nevertheless was critical that the cookbook was too "Pictish," i.e., Scottish. He would have been unaware that the author, Catherine Emily Callbeck Dalgairns, had spent far fewer years in Scotland than she had in her native Prince Edward Island. Mary Williamson will present Mrs Dalgairns's cookbook as a showcase for Scottish cookery, using a definition that is much broader than is acknowledged today. It brings together recipes for dishes from all over Europe and Asia while calling for local and easily available ingredients. In her flat beside the harbour in Dundee, Scotland, where she lived for twenty years, Mrs Dalgairns could observe ships bringing cargoes of spices, sugar, wines, and other foods from far off lands that for generations had been part of the daily fare enjoyed by the Scottish middle and upper classes.

Besides telling Mrs Dalgairns's story, Mary will look at menus of the St Andrew's Societies in Upper Canada to show that dinners in honour of their patron saint allowed the Scots in



Upper Canada to feast on a broad range of “fusion” foods – many of them addressed by Mrs Dalgairns – that were generally accepted as belonging to the Scottish repertoire. And, in honour of the poet's birthday and in recognition of the evening's Scottish theme, Mary will be making reference to Robbie Burns.

\$10 CHO members and Friends of Etobicoke's Heritage; \$12 non-members. You may pre-register with VISA, MasterCard or Amex at 416 394-8113, or pay cash at the door. Includes refreshments made from recipes in Mrs Dalgairns's cookbook.

## February 2007

CHO in partnership with Montgomery's Inn  
**CELEBRATING THE FOOD WRITING  
OF EDNA STAEBLER**

**A lecture with Carrie Herzog**

*Montgomery's Inn Museum*  
4709 Dundas St W, Toronto  
416-394-8113

montinn@toronto.ca

**Thursday, February 22, 7 pm**



This evening is in honour of the late Edna Staebler who introduced many Canadians to the foodways of Waterloo County and the Pennsylvania Dutch Mennonites. Carrie Herzog will talk about Edna's impact on Waterloo County foodways through her remarkable food writing. Bring your copies of Edna's cookbooks, and share your favourite recipes. Come celebrate the remarkable Edna!

\$10 CHO members and Friends of Etobicoke's Heritage; \$12 non-members. You may pre-register with VISA, MasterCard or Amex at 416 394-8113, or pay cash at the door. Includes refreshments made from recipes in Edna Staebler's cookbooks. Please note that this lecture may take place in a part of the Inn that is not wheel-chair accessible.

## April 2007

CHO and OHS Second Annual Spring Lecture  
**30 YEARS OF COOKING WITH  
CANADIAN LIVING MAGAZINE**

**A lecture with Elizabeth Baird**

*Ontario Historical Society*

John McKenzie House  
34 Parkview Ave, Toronto  
416 226-9011

ohs@ontariohistoricalsociety.ca

**Monday, April 2, 7 pm**



Register now to secure your seat for this much-anticipated lecture! Elizabeth Baird will speak about Canadian food trends of the last three decades, as pictured on the covers and in the articles and advertisements of *Canadian Living* magazine. As Food Editor of the magazine since 1987, host of Food Network Canada's television series “Canadian Living Cooks,” and author of best-selling books about Canadian cooking, Elizabeth has had an enormous influence in kitchens across the country, from her home base in Toronto. Included in the admission price are party sandwiches and “dainties” (squares and cookies) made from Elizabeth's favourite *Canadian Living* recipes.

\$10 CHO and OHS members; \$12 non-members. Pre-registration advised, with VISA, Amex or MasterCard. Refreshments included. Call Rob Leverty at OHS at 416 226-9011.

*ALSO OF INTEREST TO CHO MEMBERS:*

**SECOND BIENNIAL SYMPOSIUM ON  
AMERICAN CULINARY HISTORY:**

**Regional and Ethnic Traditions**

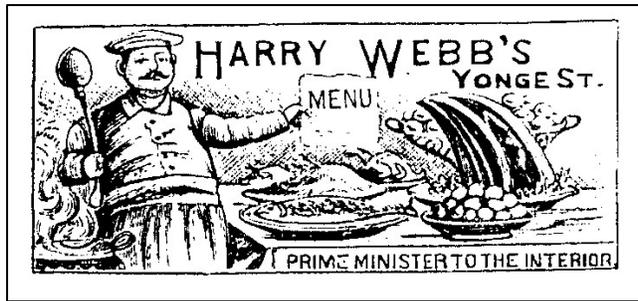
University of Michigan, Clements Library  
Ann Arbor, MI

<http://www.clements.umich.edu/culinary/symposium.html>

**May 18–20, 2007**

Registration information will be posted soon on the web site for the Janice Bluestein Longone Culinary Archive. The first symposium in 2005 was a great success, so you are advised to register early to guarantee a place for 2007. Attendance will be limited to 200 persons.





### Harry Webb Restaurant Trade Card.

(Image courtesy of Toronto Public Library)

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

**Submissions to *Culinary Chronicles*:** 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 Editor reserves the right to accept or reject submissions and to edit them. The Editor's contact information is 416 534-1405 or [lucasf@sympatico.ca](mailto:lucasf@sympatico.ca).

**Upcoming themes:** Winter 2007, Number 51 – Chocolate and Candy  
 Spring 2007, Number 52 – Canadian Kitchens  
 Summer 2007, Number 53 – Collecting Cookbooks  
 Autumn 2007, Number 54 – Breads, Flours and Yeasts

Publication Date: February 1  
 Publication Date: May 1  
 Publication Date: August 1  
 Publication Date: November 1

**Other possible future themes and topics on the Editor's list:** the dairy industry; Canadian pasta; cookies; African-Canadian foods; community vegetable gardens; the diaspora of French-Canadian foodways; meals, mealtimes, definitions of meals; manuscript recipes; Inuit foodways; infants' and children's food; oh! and so many more possibilities. Do you have a suggestion?

*For future issues, the Editor is looking for photographs of culinary whatzits. Do you have a whatzit you'd like to contribute?*

### CHO'S NEW MANDATE

The Culinary Historians of Ontario 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, CHO educates its members and the public about the foods and beverages of Canada's past. Founded in Ontario in 1994, CHO welcomes new members wherever they live.

**Members:** Enjoy the quarterly newsletter, may attend CHO events at special member's rates, and receive up-to-date information on Ontario food-history happenings. Join a network of people dedicated to Ontario's culinary history.

#### Membership fees:

\$30 Cdn for One-Year Individual, Household and Institution  
 \$55 Cdn for Two-Year Individual, Household and Institution  
 American and international members may pay in American dollars.

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

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

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

**Board:** President: Liz Driver; Vice President: Amy Scott; Past President: Fiona Lucas; Secretary: Marguerite Newell; Treasurer: Bob Wildfong; Programme Chair: Carrie Herzog; Newsletter Chair: Fiona Lucas; Membership Chair: Amy Scott; Electronic Resources Chair: Liz Driver; Outreach and Education Chair: Amy Scott.

**Newsletter Committee:** Fiona Lucas, Ed Lyons, Liz Driver. Thank you to Carrie Herzog, Joyce Lewis, Eva MacDonald, Rose Murray, Maggie Newell, Mya Sangster, Dean Tudor, and Mary F. Williamson.

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