

## Hot on the Trail of a Legend: Pastéis de Belém

By David Leite

ON the fringes of Lisbon, in the picturesque section of Belém, are two shrines that every year draw hundreds of thousands of pilgrims. The more imposing is the Mosteiro dos Jerónimos, the Manueline-style monastery that contains the tombs of venerated kings and queens, Vasco da Gama, and the national poet, Luís de Camões.

Nearby is a pastry shop called the Antiga Confeitaria de Belém, home to what is arguably the Holy Grail of Portuguese sweets: *pastéis de Belém*, the recipe for which has been a secret for centuries. Having been raised in a Portuguese-Catholic family, I looked at the monastery, then at the *confeitaria*, and joined my fellow sinners in the happier-looking line in front of the shop.

This adoration of the *pastéis* is easy to understand after you've taken a bite. The confection's shell is made from *massa folhada*, Portugal's equivalent to France's puff pastry. It spirals up, creating a nest of hundreds of crisp layers. Inside is a luscious, warm custard. Rarely do a dozen make it home intact.

The proximity of the monastery to the bakery is no accident. Until the nineteenth century, monasteries were Portugal's research, trade, horticultural, and confectionary epicenters, around which rose small businesses. Originally, lay bakers made the *pastéis* behind the Jerónimos walls and sold them to the public. A revolution



*Packaging pastéis for sale.*

PHOTOS © 2007 DAVID LEITE

in the early 1800s shuttered the monasteries, which gave Domingo Rafael Alves, an enterprising Portuguese from Brazil, the opportunity to buy the recipe from a desperate out-of-work baker. In 1837, production of the *pastéis* resumed in Alves's nearby sundries shop, and soon he scuttled the rest of his inventory to specialize in them.

"It's still the same recipe," said Pedro Clarinha, current owner of the *confeitaria* and a descendant of Alves. "Only three people in the world know it."

I was bucking to become the fourth.

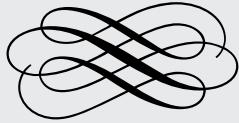
Security is tight at Antiga Confeitaria. Master bakers make the custard and dough in a locked room, and not even the women who sit a few feet away tucking spirals of dough into small, flared baking tins know what goes on in that room. As

I circled through the kitchen taking pages of mental notes, I backed up to the barred door and gently rattled it.

"Nice try," said Maria Dulce Roque, the *confeitaria*'s publicist.

It's partly this mystery that keeps the *confeitaria*'s dining rooms filled. Scattered among the prim families who visit every Sunday at teatime and the dusty workers who huddle together knocking back piles of *pastéis* and demitasses of strong Portuguese coffee at lunch are the sleuths. Primarily tourists, these *pastéis* lovers are determined to crack the ancient code, an activity Lisboetas gave up long ago. With pens poised, they bite off a tiny piece, confer, and write. And so it goes, picking, nibbling, conferring, and writing—yet according to Roque there have been no dead ringers as a result.

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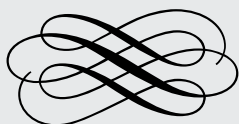
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# FROM THE CHAIR

THE fruits of the 2005 and first CHNY Amelia Scholar's Grant are being harvested this spring in a form that none of us anticipated: a day-long America Eats Symposium investigating American foodways during the Depression and World War II.

To help understand American food of the 1930s and '40s, the Works Project Administration (WPA) embarked on the America Eats project to document local and regional foodways. Extensive field research and interviews of participants at food events that ranged from church suppers and clambakes to barbecues and holiday meals were conducted. World War II cut short the project, and many reports were never finished, catalogued, or delivered to the Library of Congress for use by researchers.

Elizabeth Alsop, CHNY's first Amelia Scholar's Grant recipient, delved into the WPA's *America Eats* archives. As part of the grant's conditions, she must present a report to CHNY on her research. Founding CHNY member Anne Mendelson had the brilliant idea of expanding Elizabeth's program into a symposium that would bring together others familiar with the America Eats materials to permit a dialogue about the fascinating and valuable documents.

As plans for the symposium were being formulated, it seemed a shame that there continue to be gaps in the America Eats archives that plague scholars working in the area. Inspired by the recent interest in the project (NPR's "Hidden Kitchen," [http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story](http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=4176589)

[php?storyId=4176589](http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=4176589) profiled *America Eats* work by culinary historians John T. Edge and Mark Kurlansky in 2004), CHNY is initiating a nationwide effort to locate missing materials before they disappear forever. We are soliciting volunteers to be responsible for each of the America Eats regions by canvassing municipal, county, and state archives, period historic houses, living history museums, and any other potential repository of these materials. CHNY plans to act as the initial clearinghouse, to collate information on new discoveries with the ultimate goal of preserving the primary source materials in a digital archive accessible to future generations of culinary historians. It is an ambitious, long-term project, but one that has already received enthusiastic support from scholars outside of the CHNY family.

Finally, four administrative matters. First, application instructions for the 2007 Amelia Scholar's Grant are available at [www.culinaryhistoriansny.org/amelia](http://www.culinaryhistoriansny.org/amelia) with an application deadline of May 31, 2007; who knows where the next grant will lead?

Second, I would like to urge everyone to consider joining our growing Program Committee; programming is the organization's lifeblood, and we rely on the wisdom and effort of our members to continue to bring superb monthly lectures to our membership and the public. Congratulations to our new committee co-chairs Carolyn Vaughan, Diana Pittet, and Linda Lawry for a season of flawless programs.

Third, I am sorry to announce that our Vice-Chair and Webmaster,

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# Culinary Trust Luncheon Unveils Restored Manuscript

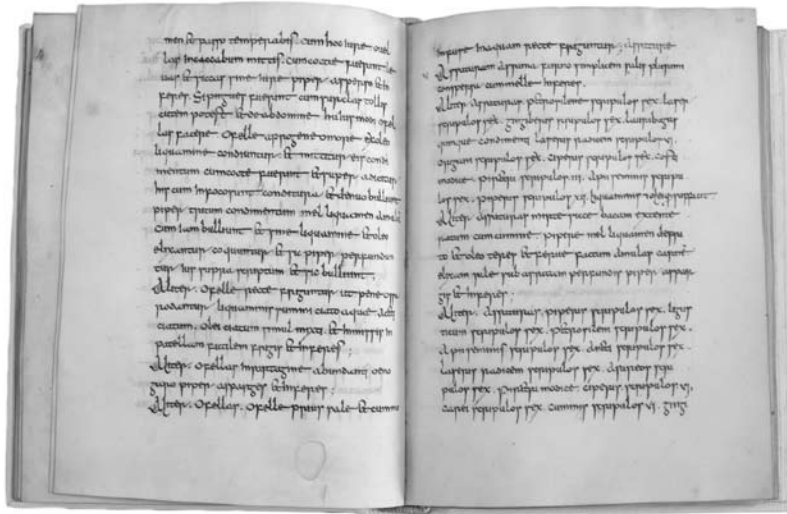
EARLY Roman cookery never tasted this good—at least in New York City. From the mini chicken quenelles and lovage “borscht” that opened the meal to the Passum-Poached Peaches and Honey Fritters served for dessert, the four-course luncheon was refined and tempting to the eye and palate.

The press luncheon celebrated the restoration of the *Apicius De Re Coquinaria*, the oldest complete cookery manuscript in existence. This collection of ancient Greek and Roman recipes, compiled in the fourth century, is attributed to the first century Roman “gastronome” Marcus Gavius Apicius.

The celebration took place at the French Culinary Institute (FCI) in Soho and the food was prepared by FCI chefs and students using British scholar Sally Grainger’s book, *Cook-*

*ing Apicius: Roman Recipes for Today.*

CHNY’s Andrew F. Smith, Chair of the IACP’s Culinary Trust, and who presided over the event, said that “The Endangered Treasures program of the Culinary Trust is dedicated to pre-



*Apicius, De Re Coquinaria, Fulda, ca. 840. Courtesy of the New York Academy of Medicine Library.*

serving the world’s culinary heritage. The restoration of this ninth-century manuscript provides historians and others interested in food access to a unique culinary record.”

The manuscript is part of the New York Academy of Medicine’s Margaret Barclay Wilson’s Culinary Collection. A photocopy of the *Apicius* from the Fulda Monastery in Germany can be seen in the academy’s rare book room.

In addition to Sally Grainger, Christopher Grocock author of *Apicius, a Critical Edition*, and Deborah Evetts, the Pierpont Morgan Library retired conservator who undertook the three-month restoration project, were in attendance. Also present were representatives from KitchenAid and Brown-Forman, whose generous contributions, in addition to those of the Culinary Trust, helped make the rebinding possible.

Ken Albala, the distinguished food historian, came as Marcus Apicius and true to his character donned a white toga and addressed his guests in Latin.

If the conservation efforts on behalf of this culinary treasure weren’t proof enough of the Roman epicure’s immortality, the luncheon honoring his legacy certainly was.

*Culinary historian and lecturer Alexandra Leaf is co-author of the IACP award-winning Van Gogh’s Table at the Auberge Ravoux (Artisan, 2001, now in paperback), and The Impressionists’ Table: Recipes and Gastronomy of Nineteenth Century France (Rizzoli, 1994). A chocolate educator, she is president of Chocolate Tours of NYC, Inc. (www.chocolate-toursnyc.com).*

## From the Chair

*continued*

Tae Ellin, has stepped down due to the press of an exciting new job. We all appreciate Tae’s original Herculean efforts to design and build the CHNY website. We will miss her dry wit and wish her the best in her new career. Nonetheless, we need a new webmaster; if you have the skills and can donate a few hours a month to updating the web site, we would love to hear from you.

Finally, elections for the Board of Directors will take place in September; anyone interested in standing for election and influencing the direction of CHNY should contact any member of the board (listed on page 2).

*Cathy Kaufman*  
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# Program Summaries

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## ITALIAN COOKERY FROM APICIUS TO THE BAROQUE

Presented by Sally Grainger, Christopher Grocock, and Ken Albala  
September 2006

SALLY Grainger, Christopher Grocock, and Ken Albala strutted their culinary stuff in a mesmerizing demonstration and tasting of Italian cookery from Apicius to the Baroque. All were in town to celebrate the re-binding of the New York Academy of Medicine's ninth-century copy of the Roman cookbook popularly called "Apicius," making Apicius and its influence on Italian cookery through the ages the theme of the evening's program.

British experts Grainger and Grocock, authors of a recent critical edition and new translation of Apicius, along with Grainger's companion volume of redacted recipes, *Cooking Apicius*, are leading authorities on ancient Roman cooking. They comfortably practice their craft both in modern kitchens, such as the one provided in the French Culinary Institute's amphitheater, and on their specially-commissioned field kitchen built after Roman models that is set up outside their Surrey home and can be packed up to travel to various Roman sites throughout England. They toted part of their "authentic" kit, a large pestle and mortar, cast with tiny stones to make an efficiently abrasive surface, to demonstrate the different results from processing foods on ancient versus modern equipment. Instead of their usual togas, Grainger and Grocock dressed in smart white chef's jackets with broad imperial purple stripes, a sartorial concession to the modern kitchen

and a witty acknowledgement of the elite cookery they prepared. Guests sampled tender lamb kidneys, succulent pork belly, and a luscious pear patina, flavored subtly with ancient Rome's ubiquitous fish sauce, while learning how modern fish sauce can be doctored to approximate ancient garum.

Albala, Professor of History at the University of the Pacific, is a specialist in the cookery of the Renaissance and early modern Europe and author, most recently, of *The Banquet*. He identified Apician strains in Italian food one thousand years after Apicius was penned, in works such as *L'Apicio Moderno*. This food, however, was not a copy of the ancient Roman, but was the product of changing dietary theories and a slew of ingredients introduced into Italy well after the fall of Rome. To the audience's delight, Albala prepared two complex dishes, a *raviolletti gnudi* of capon—little *quenelles* floating in a sweet, egg-thickened broth—and an asparagus tart flavored with candied citron, sugar, rosewater, and marzipan. Although Apicius had intricately flavored dishes of asparagus and pounded meat balls, the Arab influence in Albala's dishes was unmistakable.

—Cathy Kaufman

## GUILTY PLEASURES

Presented by Andrew F. Smith  
October 2006

ANDREW F. Smith romped through the history of American fast food and junk food, an event hosted, with palpable irony, by New York University's Department of

Nutrition and Food Studies. Smith, a prolific author, has recently published the *Encyclopedia of Fast Food and Junk Food*, wherein he describes the birth of American fast food and junk food in the late nineteenth century and gives short, but fact-jammed business biographies of such icons as White Castle, McDonalds, Cracker Jacks, Taco Bell, and the Mars Company. Smith did not shy away from the health concerns about fast food that have grabbed headlines in recent times. He dispassionately explained that obesity, especially the increasing incidence of childhood obesity and the pernicious effects of fast and junk food advertising to young audiences, motivated much of his research, and his encyclopedia includes informative entries on these topics. Nonetheless, throwing caution to the wind (and all being consenting adults), CHNY members nibbled White Castle burgers (more than one guest claimed it was her first White Castle—ever!), chips galore, and the hit of the night: visually arresting Twinkie Sushi, magnificent in their polychrome glory, prepared by CHNY membership chair, Kara Newman. —Cathy Kaufman

## GIVING THANKS FOR COLONIAL FOOD HISTORY

Presented by Sandra L. Oliver  
November 2006

IT'S not what you were told. The American Thanksgiving Day ritual—with its roast turkey, cranberry chutney, and sweet potato casserole studded with mini-marshmallows—is really the result of the fanciful imagination of magazine editors. There

was no pumpkin pie at the Plymouth Plantation in Massachusetts.

In a talk to the group presented at the historic Mount Vernon Hotel Museum in Manhattan, food historian Sandra L. Oliver served up the unvarnished truth about Thanksgiving. Oliver is the publisher of *Food History News* and co-author of *Giving Thanks* with Kathleen Curtin, a book designed to accompany an exhibit at the Plimouth Plantation in Massachusetts about what really happened at the Pilgrim colony in 1621. She is also the author of *Food in Colonial and Federal America*.

Before Oliver's talk, the group sampled a diverse selection of holiday appetizers and sweets in the tap room of the hotel reflecting individual family culinary traditions that have come to define the American Thanksgiving holiday. The spread included baked brie, sausage stuffed mushrooms, a Southern sweet potato pie, and an Italian-style Apple Almond Crostata, although none of these items were likely served at Plymouth.

Speaking in the second floor parlor of the hotel, Oliver, a gregarious woman with a warm, friendly demeanor deconstructed the legends and traditions of Thanksgiving. She explained that that meal in Plymouth is now referred to as "the event of 1621" and was not actually the first Thanksgiving, as harvest celebrations did already exist. Historians can't confirm that turkey was even eaten, but the only 40-word account that exists says that venison was served. However, Thanksgiving has still emerged as the oldest American holiday and has been celebrated continuously somewhere on the continent from the 1600s until today.

Oliver peppered her talk with fascinating anecdotes about the evolution of the Thanksgiving meal. Before becoming an officially desig-

nated U.S. holiday, it was celebrated in the South, until the Civil War happened and nobody wanted to recognize "that damn Yankee holiday." Eventually, Southerners picked up the tradition again, and that's when regional favorites like sweet potatoes, pecan pie, and corn bread stuffing found their way into the meal.

Thanksgiving was even used as a propaganda tool. In the late 1800s and into the early 1900s immigrants were taught how to become "proper Americans" by learning about Thanksgiving.

As industrialization grew, Thanksgiving foods changed, with mass-audience dishes like the ubiquitous green bean casserole taking its place at the table. Oliver remarked that the hugely popular concoction of green beans, canned mushroom soup, and French-fried onions is fifty years old and is now a part of food history. "Some of us wish it *was* history," she noted.

Oliver said her research for *Food in Colonial and Federal America* raised intriguing questions about the evolution of regional foods that merit further study. She found that as dishes often traveled between communities, names changed, and ingredients were substituted resulting in subtle variations or what she termed *micro dishes*. These foods became part of the fabric of individual communities, but their ancestry is often obscured.

Oliver offered a word of advice to those partaking in Thanksgiving dinner—take pictures of the cherished family menu items and get your loved ones to write down the recipes. So often a family's idea of what constitutes a traditional Thanksgiving dinner is shaped by the beloved recipes relatives bring to the table each year. When those relatives are gone, that's a piece of family history

and Thanksgiving history that could be lost forever.

Oliver delivered a feisty speech in support of Pilgrims, who have been stereotyped and maligned for everything from dowdy clothing to bland foods. "You ought to stop picking on Pilgrims," said Oliver. "They gave us one heck of a fine holiday."

—T.W. Barritt

<http://culinarytypes.blogspot.com/>

## GINGERBREAD HOUSES: CRUMBS OF HISTORY

Presented by Joanne Lamb Hayes  
December, 2006

JOANNE Lamb Hayes peaked our Christmas creativity with a history and demonstration of *Gingerbread* in December. The event took place at Chelsea Market amidst a winter wonderland display of imaginative gingerbread animal houses that amazed young and old alike, all for the benefit of Rational Animal charity. —Linda Pelaccio

## THE ABSINTHE ABYSS

Presented by David Weir  
January 2007

JANUARY had us dancing with the Green Fairy (La Fée Vert), as absinthe was often called during its height in the Belle Époque, when David Weir entertained us with the history of absinthe. Although there is little on the market that resembles the authentic emerald green liquor, we sampled two distilled versions which are close approximates, each containing the infamous wormwood, or *Artemisia absinthium* plant. We watched as water was poured through an ornately perforated spoon holding a sugar cube into a conical shaped

*Continued next page*

## Program Summaries

*continued*

glass containing a dose of the notorious elixir, causing it to “louche” or turn cloudy. Tales of hallucinations and mind-altering murderous rages so clouded the reputation of the drink that it has been banned in many countries for almost a century. Whether or not it is deserved of such a fate is doubtful, yet difficult to tell as there are no exact recipes for the original liquor.

—Linda Pelaccio

### CULTURAL HISTORY OF CHOCOLATE ON VALENTINE’S DAY

Presented by Alexandra Leaf  
February 2007

A GIFT of chocolate has long been a Valentine’s Day tradition and member Alexandra Leaf shed light on that and other strong affinities for the luscious concoctions in her presentation. In addition to the historical evolution of cacao, she described current artisanal and organic farming and processing methods which are gaining popularity in the chocolate market. A tasting of several producers’ varieties of the dark treat and a sip of a chocolate drink from an eighteenth-century recipe reproduced by Cathy Kaufman gave a sweet end to the evening.

—Linda Pelaccio

### IN PURSUIT OF TEA

Presented by Sebastian Beckwith  
March 2007

SEBASTIAN Beckwith presented a richly textured pictorial tour of tea regions from the Yunnan Province in China to Sri Lanka off

the southern tip of India for his talk, “In Pursuit of Tea” (which is also the name of his importing company). The history of tea spans thousands of years from 2737 B.C.E., when ancient Chinese records report that it was discovered by China’s mythical second emperor Shen Nung. Myths and legends abound depending on the region traveled, but we learned that all tea comes from one plant, *Camellia sinensis*.

The speaker focused on the artisanal growers and explained that the differences in the many teas we have —whites, greens, oolongs, blacks, and pu-erhs, is in the specific varietal that was used, the local environment the tea was grown in, and the way it was processed. Sebastian provided a tasting of a white tea and an Assam, or black tea, accompanied by a delectable assortment of international sweets prepared by members of CHNY.

—Linda Pelaccio



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#### Second Biennial Symposium On American Culinary History: Regional and Ethnic Traditions

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Clements Library  
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Details available at  
[www.Clements.umich.edu/  
culinary/symposium.html](http://www.Clements.umich.edu/culinary/symposium.html)



## Call for Culinary History Manuscripts

McFarland & Company, Inc., a publisher located in North Carolina, is inviting members of the Culinary Historians of New York to contact them with proposals for “food-related manuscripts... with substantial text and ample documentation.” McFarland is strictly non-fiction and does not publish cookbooks, but is interested in “serious book-length works of culinary history.”

Their website is [www.mcfarlandpub.com](http://www.mcfarlandpub.com), or contact Natalie Foreman, Editorial Assistant, [nforeman@mcfarlandpub.com](mailto:nforeman@mcfarlandpub.com), (336) 246-4460.

## Final Call For Third Annual Amelia Scholar’s Grant Entries

CULINARY Historians of New York is calling for entries for the third annual Amelia Scholar’s Grant of \$1,000 (see Chair letter, page 2).

Complete applications must be postmarked no later than May 31, 2007.

Applications shall include an essay (no more than 500 words) detailing the project for which the Amelia Scholar’s Grant is sought and one letter of recommendation. Further details and application requirements may be found on the website at [www.culinaryhistoriansny.org](http://www.culinaryhistoriansny.org).

## Legend

from page 1

Still, Clarinha's family registered the name in 1911 to assure that only pastries that come out of their ovens can be called *pastéis de Belém*. Generic, and often anemic, imitations can be had elsewhere under the name *pastéis de nata*, custard pastries.

Although he's cagey when it comes to the recipe, Clarinha did let a few preparation secrets slip. "We rest the custard and dough in the refrigerator overnight, and we bake the *pastéis* for 30 minutes at 400 degrees," he told me. Then almost as an afterthought he added, "Celsius." My eyes widened. That's about 750 degrees Fahrenheit! Granted, a very hot oven is required to create the characteristic mottled brown top, but that's incinerator hot.

Back home, I called Shirley Corriher, the doyenne of food science and author of the book *CookWise*, to find out if something not much bigger than a Dunkin' Donuts Munchkin could survive that heat. "Maybe that's how they keep the secret recipe secret," she said laughing. It is a foolproof strategy: Discourage nosy writers and curious cooks from ever attempting to duplicate the pastries by throwing them off the scent with impossibly high temperatures.

Stymied in Belém, I turned to Alfama, the upscale Portuguese restaurant in New York's West Village. There, chef Francisco Rosa, who studied at the *Escola de Hotelaria e Turismo de Coimbra* north of Lisbon, makes what many Portuguese expats maintain is the next best thing to the original.

"A lot of customers prefer ours," Rosa told me as we rolled out huge sheets of dough. Unlike Clarinha, who has a dynasty to protect, Rosa was happy to share his take on the

popular pastry. "They say they even taste great the next day." I tried to test his hypothesis, but the longest I could hold out was 30 minutes—proof enough for me that his *pastéis* are fraternal twins of the Belém version.

Although of slight build and modest height, Rosa turned out 200 perfect *pastéis* in just under an hour. "Do you think you can do it?" he asked, moving on to prepping sardines.

"Of course," I lied, "but just in case, I better take a dozen for research."

It took a second trip to Alfama, three phone calls, and seven attempts at home before I could adapt Rosa's adaptation of the enigmatic *pastéis* for the home cook.

To celebrate, I gathered a few friends, some of whom had been to Belém with me. I served the *pastéis* slightly warm, sprinkled with a blanket of powdered sugar and a tap of cinnamon, just as they do at the *confeitaria*.

The consensus was six thumbs up. However, I knew that until I could wiggle my way into that secret room and answer the burning question of the 750-degree ovens, my quest would continue.

*David Leite is a freelance writer and has written for many publications here and abroad. He's the recipient of the 2006 Bert Greene Award for Food Journalism and the 2006 Association of Food Journalists Award for Internet writing. His web site, Leite's Culinaria (leitesculinaria.com), won the 2006 James Beard Award for Best Food.*



For the recipe for *Alfama's Pastéis de Nata* (Portuguese Custard Tarts), adapted by the author for baking at home from a recipe by chef Francisco Rosa of Alfama in New York City, visit: [http://www.leitesculinaria.com/recipes/port/pasteis\\_belem.html](http://www.leitesculinaria.com/recipes/port/pasteis_belem.html).



*The two-day process of making Pastéis de Belém begins behind locked doors, where master bakers make the dough and custard. Then workers stretch huge loaf-shaped mounds of dough into a rope and cut one-inch pieces (top). Others smooth the dough into small, flared cups (middle), which are later filled with custard (above).*

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# Member Profile

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## JEANNE LESEM

by Alison Ryley

CAPPING her decade-long search for a “microbrewed” or small-quantity method of preserving, the blogger “Blog Lily” enthusiastically passes along a terrific recipe for raspberry jam. “It comes,” she writes, “from a book called *Preserving in Today’s Kitchen* by Jeanne Lesem. Ms. Lesem was born in Kansas, raised during the Depression in small towns in Arkansas, [then became] a journalist in New York City. I’d love to read her autobiography.” (bloglily.com; posting June 29, 2006.)

When I quoted these lines to Jeanne during our interview at her cookbook-packed apartment in Peter Cooper Village, her response was typically modest and dismissive: Why would anyone want to read *her* autobiography? So far as she’s concerned, the details of her life are unexceptional. But Jeanne’s accomplishments as a food writer and editor have been far from ordinary: a long, successful, and largely self-created career. Feminists, post-feminists, and *Wonderful Town* romantics, take note.

She was born “outside the walls” in Leavenworth, Kansas, and grew up during the Depression years in the “twin cities” of Little Rock and North Little Rock, Arkansas. Along with cooking, she learned pickling and preserving from her mother, who in keeping with tradition, preserved summer fruits and vegetables in large batches to fill the winter larder with a gratifying excess of jars.

Jeanne’s interest in journalism was partly inspired by her cousin Arthur Baermann, a long-time editor at the *Detroit Free Press*. Winning a scholarship to any college of her choice, she unhesitatingly chose the Journalism School at the University of Missouri.

After graduating in 1943, she was hired immediately as a reporter by the Associated Press in St. Louis. Jobs for women as journalists were scarce, but a fortuitous effect of World War II was to make available the jobs of men who were serving at the front. Jeanne went on to work in Denver as an editor for the AP, but New York—where the good jobs were—was always in the back of her mind.

Jeanne had come to New York for the first time on a vacation. When she returned in the early fifties, it was with six months’ income put by to finance her good-job search. Within only two weeks, she was hired by the International News Service, then part of the Hearst organization. She’s lived here in the city ever since—25 years in Stuyvesant Town and 25 in Peter Cooper Village.

Throughout her career, Jeanne worked for the news services rather than for individual papers. Among her “firsts,” she was the first Food and Family Editor at AP. In 1956, she originated a weekly cooking column for the United Press, and was their first full-time food reporter.



PHOTOGRAPH © STAR BLACK

She later became their first Food Editor, and retired as United Press International’s Food and Family editor in 1984.

Meanwhile, Jeanne had seen early on that published recipes and cookbooks on preserving all continued the tradition of the big batch that she had learned in her mother’s kitchen, while the contemporary cook and kitchen favored smaller quantities. Her first book, *The Pleasures of Preserving and Pickling*, published in 1975, focused on the small batches that these cooks preferred and their kitchens could accommodate.

Working with Judith Jones at Alfred A. Knopf publishers, Jeanne wrote her second book, *Preserving Today*, for the “Knopf Cooks American” series. Published in 1992, it won that year’s James Beard award for best single-subject cookbook.

Both books have been reissued in several editions and formats. Most recently, thanks to the Authors’ Guild and backinprint.com, we can again buy copies of *Preserving in Today’s Kitchen: New, Faster Techniques for Preserving Foods at their Peak of Flavor* (ISBN 0595388132) on-line or at bookstores.

More than once during our conversation, Jeanne expressed a recurring Proustian desire to recapture that delicious but elusive fudge recipe she clipped years ago: cocoa, butter, sugar... and then what? Blog Lily?

*Alison Ryley is a retired reference librarian at The New York Public Library, where she was bibliographer for culinary history with a special interest in the menu collection.*

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# Member News

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**Dalia Carmel**, a cookbook collector for over 40 years, recently donated over 7,000 volumes and food-related magazines to the Fales Library of New York University. Previously she had donated books to the Schlesinger Library in Cambridge and the Brooklyn Tech Institute. The collection is an international culinary library covering the cuisines of many corners of the world. Included in the donation is a “pantry” library covering rice, beans, potatoes, vegetables, fruit, eggs, dairy, spices, and herbs. In conjunction with the donation, there was a panel discussion of the increasing numbers and variety of cookbooks being published today.

For insight into the history of food along with tasty recipes, how-tos and culinary tidbits, visit **Jody Eddy's** [www.eddybles.com](http://www.eddybles.com), a site devoted only to the beauty and lasting legacy of food.

**Betty Fussell** was part of a “Cookie Chronicles” panel detailing the unusual history of everyone’s favorite finger food at the IACP convention in Chicago in April. She will also participate in a panel discussion on the history of the meat industry under the umbrella of the Four Season Chef, a collaboration of the French Culinary Institute (FCI) and the Stone Barns Center for Food and Agriculture. The program will be at the FCI on August 12.

**Jo-Ann Heslin, MS, RD, CDN**, announces the release of two new books, *The Diabetes Carbohydrate and Calorie Counter, 3rd Ed.* and *The*

*Calorie Counter, 4th Ed.*, both available from Pocket Books.

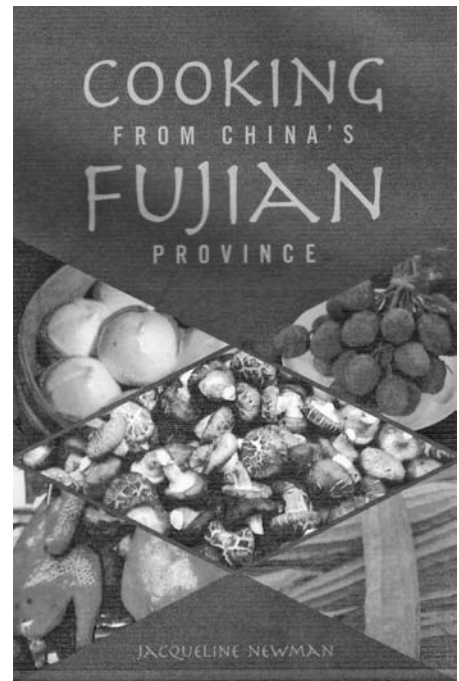
**Zilkia Janer** is Assistant Professor of Latin American literature and culture at Hofstra University where she teaches courses on food in literature. Her scholarly articles on food and culture in Latin America, the Caribbean, and South Asia have been published in the United States, India, and Nepal. She is currently writing *Latino American Food Culture*, a reference volume on the culinary cultures of Latinos in the United States, which will be published by Greenwood Press.

Tea expert and author **Elizabeth Knight** has launched a series of walking tours and classes celebrating English and Asian tea traditions on weekend afternoons in New York City. The schedule includes stops at unique tea emporiums, a view of antique and contemporary tea wares, and samples of tea-flavored sweets and savories. The \$110 fee includes the tour, tasting samples, a formal, sit-down afternoon tea, and a signed copy of her book, *Tea in the City: New York*. Pre-paid reservations are by PayPal or check. Contact Elizabeth at (866) 616-1154 or by e-mail at [eknight@teawithfriends.com](mailto:eknight@teawithfriends.com).

**Nora Maynard** has been selected as the 2007 recipient of the American Egg Board Fellowship at The Writers’ Colony at Dairy Hollow. During her four-week stay at the colony, she will work on a book on food and drink in classic film based on her column “The Celluloid Pantry,” which runs Tuesdays at *Apartment*

*Therapy: The Kitchen* (<http://kitchen.apartmenttherapy.com/>).

**Jacqueline M. Newman** as its editorial advisor writes a monthly column in *Asian Restaurant News*. The magazine is shipped free to more than twenty thousand restaurants in the United States, Canada, and Puerto Rico. Jacqueline’s *Cooking From China’s Fujian Province*, the first all-English cookbook of foods from Fujian, a province across the Straits from Taiwan, will be released this summer by Hippocrene Books.



**Susan McLellan Plaisted**, Proprietress, Heart to Hearth Cookery has released the first in her DVD series *Hearthside with Susan McLellan Plaisted*. Titled “*A December Bill of Fare at Pottsgrove Manor*,” it takes hearth cooking to a new level as one can view in their own home food preparation at the hearth and

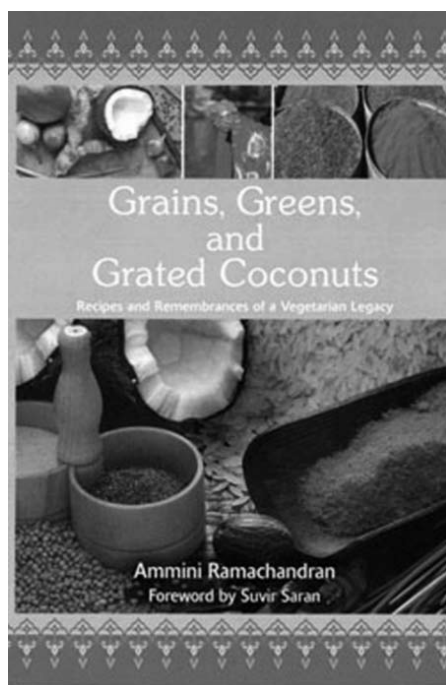
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## Member News

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service to eighteenth-century re-enactors of a three-course dinner meal. Featured in this DVD is the use of the clock-jack spit, the three-tiered bake kettle, and posnet. Included is eighteenth-century music by Pan's Fancy. Susan's web site is [www.heart-to-heartcooking.com](http://www.heart-to-heartcooking.com).

iUniverse Inc. has recently published **Ammini Ramachandran's** book *Grains, Greens, and Grated Coconuts: Recipes and Remembrances of a Vegetarian Legacy*. It is a book of her memories and family recipes presented against a backdrop of the culinary and cultural history of her home state, Kerala, India.



**Debra Ramsay** creates contemplative paintings using beeswax and eggshells. While not exactly food... closer than most art materials. Encaustic paint is an ancient painting medium used before oil paint was invented. It is made from purified beeswax and pigment. The egg-

shells create a mosaic-like surface. This process, known as *Tamago-ji*, originated in China, and traveled to Japan, where it was used during the Meiji era. Ramsay is currently exhibiting paintings in the Encaustic Invitational at the Conrad Wilde Gallery in Tucson, Arizona, and has recently had a solo show in the West Village. Her website: [DebraRamsay.com](http://DebraRamsay.com).

**Peter G. Rose** will speak on the influence of the Dutch on the American kitchen at the biennial Culinary Symposium, May 18–20 at the Longone Center for American Culinary Research in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Peter is the recipient of the Alice P. Kenney Award for her research and writing on the food customs and diet of the Dutch settlers in New Netherland (the present-day states of New York, New Jersey, Delaware, and parts of Pennsylvania and Connecticut).

**Meryl Rosofsky** will be conducting a new walking tour for The Institute of Culinary Education (ICE), "On Aphrodite's Trail: An Aphrodisiac Walking Tour," on Saturday, June 23rd from 11 a.m.–4 p.m. This downtown culinary adventure will include stops at fruit and spice shops, seafood markets, and other specialty stores for tastings and discussion of the historic and folkloric aphrodisiac associations of such foods as oysters, caviar, chile peppers, and chocolate. Visit [www.iceculinary.com/recreational](http://www.iceculinary.com/recreational) for more information or to register.

**Joy Santlofer** is an adjunct professor in the Food Studies program at New York University. Her work includes an essay in the anthology *Il Gusto degli Altri* exploring New Yorkers' steak eating habits (2006), plus forth-

coming entries in *Oxford Companion to Food and Drink in America* (2007), and *The Business of Food* (2007). An article, "Hard as the Hubs of Hell: Crackers in War," an exploration of New York's food production role during the Civil War, will appear in the journal *Food, Culture and Society* (Summer 2007). She is currently working on a history of food manufacturing in New York.

**Stephen Schmidt** has been invited to speak/present at the annual CIA/Food Arts by-invitation-only pastry and baking retreat at Greystone, in Napa, at the end of April. His presentation will be based on his *Dessert in America*, a social history of American dessert, with recipes, to be published by Scribner in 2008. If you are curious about the retreat, you can read about it in the July/August issue of *Food Arts* magazine.

## WEBMASTER

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*The Opera Lover's Cookbook* by **Francine Segan** was published in November by Stewart, Tabori & Chang. It features a foreword by Renee Fleming and food photography by the award-winning Mark Thomas. Also included are lush photos from Metropolitan Opera productions, opera trivia, and 125 recipes. Francine will be giving lectures on food and opera in the upcoming months. Please refer to [www.francinesegan.com](http://www.francinesegan.com) for dates and venues.

Chef **Kyle Shadix**, MS, RD, in NYC, was awarded the Emily Quinn Pou Award for professional achievement from the University of Georgia, Athens, Alumni Association. His company Nutrition + Culinary Consultants was also taken over by the WPP, the world's largest communications company. [www.culinarynutritionists.com](http://www.culinarynutritionists.com).

**Andrew F. Smith** has announced the publication of *The Oxford Companion to American Food and Drink*. It includes more than 1000 entries written by 226 contributors—many of whom are CHNY members. It is a single-volume trade-edition priced at \$49.50. He also teaches culinary history and food writing classes at the New School and chairs The Culinary Trust, the philanthropic arm of the International Association of Culinary Professionals (IACP).

**Liz Tarpy**, owner of Teaberry Productions, a service specializing in culinary research, recipe testing, and editing, has been hired by Nina Planck, author of *Real Food*, to provide research for her forthcoming book on real food for pregnant women and infants. Liz was also one of the researchers for David Kamp's

*The United States of Arugula*. Anyone needing research or recipe testing or editing for their book projects can contact Liz at (212) 920-4277 or [lizatarp@hotmail.com](mailto:lizatarp@hotmail.com).

**Jennifer Wolff** writes a food column called "The Literate Gourmet" for *Best Life Magazine*. Each month Wolff tracks down an original recipe related to a dish appearing in a famous work of fiction, music, or art. In May look for a jambalaya recipe from Hank Williams's illegitimate daughter, Jett Williams (in connection with Williams's hit "Jambalaya.") In previous months Wolff has published original recipes for foods that have appeared in Graham Greene's *The End of the Affair*, Truman Capote's *In Cold Blood*, and Washington Irving's *A History of New York*.

## ALICE ARNDT

*Alice wrote her own obituary, printed below in part.*

ALICE ARNDT died March 7, 2007, in Richmond, Texas, of breast cancer, more than eight years after she was first diagnosed. Now, don't you say, "Poor her, what a personal tragedy for her."



*Alice with her "Mews."*

You need to be thinking instead how many women are dying of this malady, and say, "Yikes! We've got a public-health crisis here!" And also, "We'd better do something about this!"

Alice was born in the middle of 1941. So if you care to know how old she was, you can do the math.

She was, of course, much too young to die. She loved being alive, and believed that each day was a gift.

Alice always had lots of projects going. She published articles, taught classes, and presented lectures. She had way more ideas for books than her lifetime allowed, but she was happy that God gave her the time and the ability to finish *Seasoning Savvy* and the biographical dictionary *Culinary Biographies*.

Alice was a convinced Quaker. Even though she was reluctant to leave this life, she was pretty sure that whatever comes next will be wonderful also. A certain curiosity about the afterlife assisted her death.

Those wishing to make a memorial donation in Alice Arndt's honor may do so in care of The Culinary Trust's Endangered Treasures Program for restoration and preservation of historical culinary works (see page 3). Please send donations to: Trina Gribbins, c/o ET-Alice Arndt, The Culinary Trust, 304 W. Liberty Street, Suite 201, Louisville, KY 40202 [www.theculinarytrust.com](http://www.theculinarytrust.com).

# UPCOMING PROGRAMS

Wednesday, May 9  
**A Cultural History of Artisan Cheesemaking in America**  
with Paul S. Kindstedt, Ph.D  
Artisanal Premium Cheese Center  
500 W. 37th Street

Monday, June 4, 2007  
**Appalachian Food** with Mark F. Sohn  
Moore Brothers Wines, 33 East 20th Street

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