

From Raw Beef without Salt to Freedom Fries

Haute Cuisine, the White House, and Presidential Politics

By Mark McWilliams

IN politics, food makes news. Before the Iowa caucuses, we learned that Barack Obama munched a corn dog, Bill Richardson ate pork chops, Mike Huckabee sampled pork-on-a-stick, and Hillary Clinton enjoyed a Women's Wonder Bar. Consuming food, notes Walter Scheib, White House Chef for the Clintons and the first Bush administration, says, "I'm one of you. Vote for me." This attempted connection can go horribly wrong, as with John Kerry's request for Swiss on his Philly cheese steak or Gerald Ford's attempt to eat tamales without removing the wrappers. But even when candidates pull off the culinary feat, not all locals feel con-

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William J. Clinton Presidential Library

Hillary and Bill Clinton at the New York State Fair, September 2000.

Shaker Culinary Traditions

By Mary Rose Boswell

IN 1774, a small group of religious dissenters sailed from England to America and settled in New York City. They were called "Shakers" because of their ecstatic devotions, and they practiced celibacy, pacifism, confession of sin, and communal property.

By 1827, the numbers of this little group had had grown to nearly five thousand, with 21 communities in New York, Ohio, Indiana, Kentucky, Georgia, Florida, and most of New England. Today only four Shakers

remain to practice "Gospel Order" at Sabbathday Lake in Maine. While their membership has dwindled, they still fascinate us for unique faith, beautifully crafted items, high quality agricultural products, and nutritious, flavorful meals.

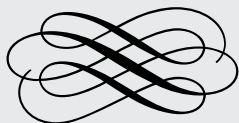
Living in separate communities allowed the Shakers to practice their religion in peace. Cultivating their own produce became necessary to feed their growing numbers of converts.

The first Shakers in America sought the aid of indigenous peoples

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FROM THE CHAIR

WHILE we have had a respite from programming during the summer, the Culinary Historians' board of directors has been hard at work to shore up housekeeping matters and to extend our reach into the growing food history world.

Thanks to the diligent efforts of our web-savvy Holley Atkinson, we have moved our website to an improved host. The site continues with its beautiful design, but should be more user-friendly. In addition, Holley has created a Facebook page for CHNY; what is most exciting about this development is the ability to network in cyberspace with folks who are not part of our membership but are active in culinary history. Within the first 24 hours of activating the Facebook site, we had new friends such as Rachel Laudan (who spoke to us last January on the morality of cooking) and Professor Ken Albala, who has spoken previously on Italian Baroque cookery and will be

speaking about the "Tomato Lady of San Joaquin" at our November program. Signing up is easy (I am a Luddite but breezed through it on the first attempt) and will open a whole network of contacts.

Other opportunities involve our growing relationship with the National Arts Club, located in the fabulous Tilden Mansion on Gramercy Park. Marc Levy, the Chair of NAC's Culinary Arts Committee, graciously extends invitations to our members for many of the events, which often go unpublicized otherwise. To learn about these and other events of interest to culinary historians, you need to agree to receive notices by e-mail (unfortunately time constraints make it impossible to do postal mailings).

I am also pleased to announce that Willa Ying Zhen is the recipient of the 2008 Culinary Historians of New York Scholar's Grant (for-

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CHNY Board and advisors: (L to R) Diane Klages, Cathy Kaufman, Linda Pelaccio, Donna Gelb, Holley Atkinson, Kenneth Ovitz. (Missing: Ellen J. Fried and Carolyn Vaughan)

From the Chair

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merly known as the Amelia Scholar's Grant). Ms. Ying Zhen will be traveling to Canton, China to study the transmission of culinary knowledge in Chinese cooking schools.

Finally, we were excited to start the new season at Culinary Historians of New York with our second annual "Celebration of Our Members" last month. As part of our

annual business meeting, members had the chance to share information about recent books and projects in the field of culinary history through short presentations designed to raise awareness of our talented membership's diverse activities. We have always regretted that, in our limited program year, we cannot accommodate all the wonderful work done by our members in formal programs, as well as bringing in outside scholars to present in their areas of expertise;

we hope this evening provided some recognition of the splendid work of CHNY members.

We hope to see you at many of our wonderful programs in the coming year. Please do not hesitate to contact me or any board member with questions, comments, or suggestions that will help us make CHNY better serve your needs and interests.

Cathy Kaufman

A Podcast History of Cooking

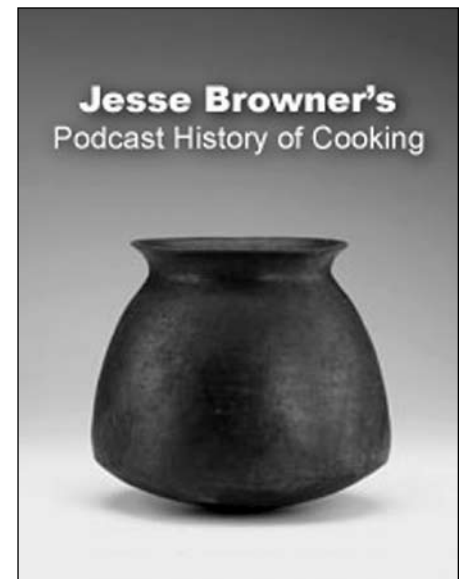
THE Oxford University Press is sponsoring a Podcast History of Cooking, a series which will be featured on its upcoming culinary studies website. CHNY member Jesse Browner is researcher, writer, narrator, and producer of the history.

The first two episodes are a brief introduction to the series and a speculative essay on Stone Age recipes. Three more episodes are in production with estimates that the complete series will be twenty episodes.

The Podcast History of Cooking draws on novelist Browner's

sense of storytelling to bring widely diverse disciplines—natural history, economics, the history of trade, linguistics, political history, and the art of cooking—to bear on a narrative that follows the evolution of the culinary arts in Western civilization from their prehistoric origins in Africa and the Middle East to twentieth century American cooking. Although of interest to culinary historians, the History's target audience is a more general one.

The first versions of the potcasts are available at www.jessebrowner.com and for free on iTunes.



Recipe for Literacy

RECIPE for Literacy is a new program conceived by CHNY member Mary Jo Weinig of the Weinig Foundation. This novel program promotes literacy by using literal and figurative recipes.

The seven-week-long program, presented to children last year in Greenport, Long Island, and Jupiter, Florida, will be offered this fall at five locations in Florida and New York with the children in each location, communicating via the internet. The Weinig Foundation hopes to form

partnerships as they go nation-wide to all ages, and welcomes inquiries about volunteering.

The mission of this community-oriented program is to excite children about writing and language by incorporating culinary and local history, nutrition, and the environment in its curriculum. Last year the topic in Greenport was the potato because of its long history on the North Fork and Long Island. Guest speakers included a town councilman/farmer, who explained how potatoes grow, a

wellness manager with his healthful French-fry recipe, and the mayor, who prepared latkes.

Each week the children taste a new dish and write about it in their *Chef's Journals*. The program culminated with a well-attended public reception. All sorts of potato dishes were served and the chef-writers took the stage and read from their journals.

To learn more, please contact Mary Jo Weinig at mjm95@mac.com.

Raw Beef

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nected. One Iowa voter compared such antics to faking a local accent: “They’ve tried to become the people that they’re talking to just to gain their votes.”

Indeed, food has a political history in America going back to the Revolution. Surprisingly, it includes denigrating the food of an ally, France. Patrick Henry attacked

Thomas Jefferson’s appreciation of *haute cuisine* as “an effete taste [...] which had led [Jefferson] to ‘abjure his native victuals.’” While Henry’s comment grew out of his fears of a country which itself was in political and social upheaval, the terms of his critique—placing rustic American food against the sophistication of *haute cuisine*—have proved useful to American politicians ever since.

Henry’s comment echoes the period’s celebration of “native victuals.” Simple, wholesome food was coded as a sign of republican virtue while European cuisines were considered overly luxurious and morally suspect. Foodways thus expressed late eighteenth-century republican anxieties about luxury and virtue.

To counter Europe’s decadence, an ideal of republican simplicity emerged, combining Jeffersonian natural aristocracy with frontier egalitarianism.

In foodways, this ideal became associated with the simple, wholesome food of the colonies: baked beans, cornbread in all its forms, roast game and pork, and the New England boiled dinner.

The symbolic resonance of such rustic fare strengthened throughout the early nineteenth century, and thus remained politically useful. In 1840, for example, presidential candidates were what they ate. On

April 14, Representative Charles Ogle, a Pennsylvania Whig, rose to the floor of the U.S. Congress to ridicule a recent Van Buren White House menu. Trying to give correct French names, Ogle worked through seven courses and almost thirty dishes, including soup (*Potage au tortue*, *Potage à la Julienne*, et *Potage aux pois*), fish (*Saumon*, *sauce d’ancbois*, et *Bass piqué à la Chambore*), chicken (*Supreme de volaille en bordure à la gelée*), meat (including *Filet de boeuf piqué au vin de Champagne* and *Filets mignons de mouton en chevreuil*), and game (*Pigeons à la royal aux champignons*).

To further berate the president, Ogle carefully set up a comparison with common fare: the President’s “table is not provided with those old and unfashionable dishes, ‘hog and hominy,’ ‘fried meat and gravy’ ... with a mug of ‘hard cider.’ ... All these substantial preparations are looked upon by gourmands, French cooks, and locofoco Presidents as exceedingly vulgar... .”

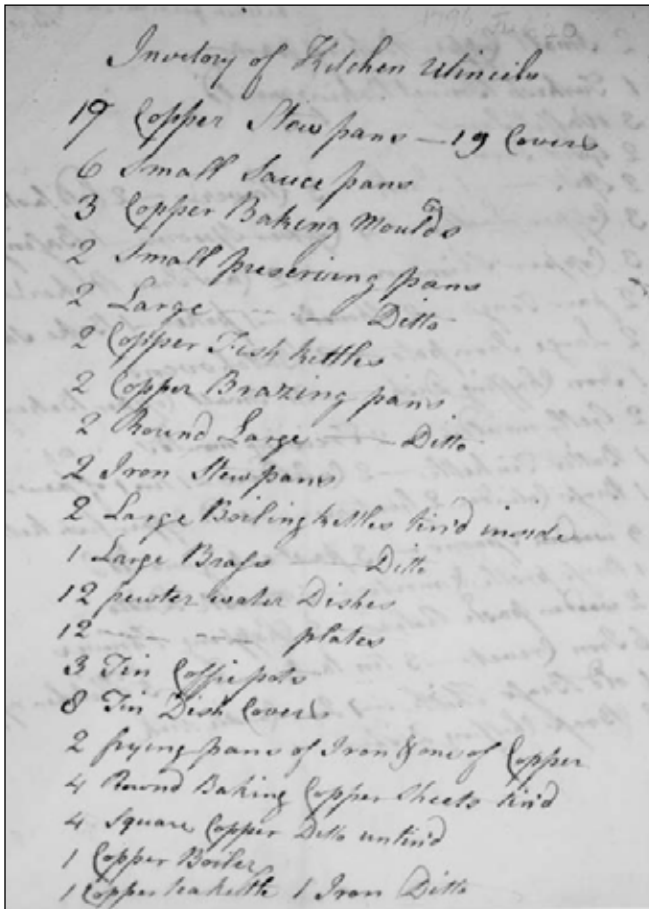
Condemning Democrat Van Buren for following the White House precedent of serving French cuisine became part of the strategy of Whig Presidential candidate William Henry Harrison’s 1840 campaign to appeal to republican simplicity. After Democrats joked that Harrison would spend his presidency drinking hard cider on the porch, Whigs, attempting to obscure Van Buren’s humble origins, commented on his effete taste and “pretty tapering soft, white lily fingers” and linked their candidate to the working class which enjoyed “raw beef without salt” and cider.

The Whig’s appeal to the common man illustrates what later candidates were trying to tap into with slogans like McKinley’s “Full Dinner Pail” in 1900 or Hoover’s



Thomas Jefferson Foundation, Inc.

A copper tortiere.



Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Papers of Thomas Jefferson

First page of Thomas Jefferson’s kitchen inventory.



Thomas Jefferson Foundation, Inc.; watercolor by G. B. McIntosh

Artist G. B. McIntosh imagines how Monticello's kitchen might have looked in the early 19th century, ready to prepare the haute cuisine favored by Thomas Jefferson.

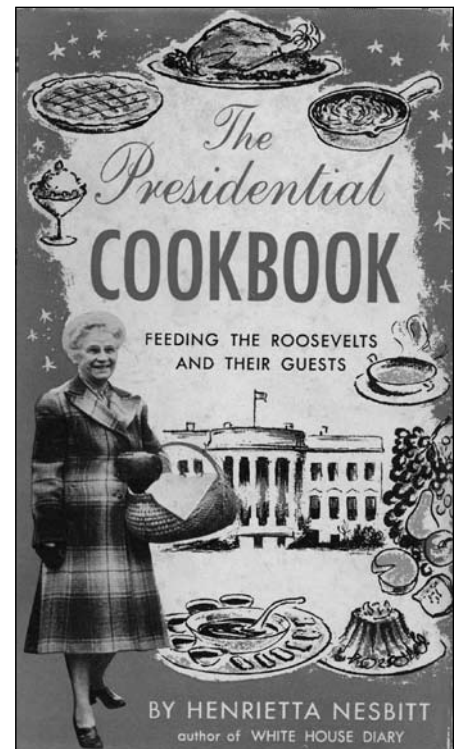
“A Chicken in Every Pot” in 1928. The recent “freedom fries” debate occurred in a similar symbolic space, even though fries are hardly *haute cuisine*. With “freedom fries,” Republican Representatives Robert Ney and Walter Jones repeated the moves made much earlier—for more pressing reasons—by the American revolutionaries, re-categorizing foods to change their symbolic force. After using his position controlling House cafeterias to accomplish this change without a vote, Ney claimed, “This action ... is a small, but symbolic, effort to show the strong displeasure many on Capitol Hill have with our so-called ally, France.” Jones cited respect for military families to justify the renamed potatoes. Some restaurants had already banned French fries, a trend reportedly started by Neal Rowland, the owner of Cubbie’s in Beaufort, South Carolina, who coined Freedom Fries. Similar efforts followed the congressional action; soon a new ice cream company was selling “I Hate the French Vanilla.”

Tension between the plain food of republican simplicity and the

luxurious fare of *haute cuisine* has also shaped the presidential kitchen. Since its beginnings, formal dining at the White House meant classical French cuisine, but conflict between this public image and the first families’ private desires has frequently led to a dual-chef system, with one chef, often French, hired to craft elaborate state dinners and another, often with a history of cooking for the family, tasked with everyday fare. This trend began with the Polks, who hired Auguste Julien (the son of Jefferson’s chef) on a contract basis to prepare state dinners, but otherwise relied on their family cook. Andrew Johnson’s daily meals were prepared by Lizzie Mitchell, whose specialties included Hopping John and pecan pie. Outside the Executive Mansion, however, he was feted with ten-course Delmonico’s extravaganzas. President Rutherford B. Hayes’s formal dinners were “stubbornly French,” despite family fare of beef and potatoes. Grover Cleveland eventually fired Chester Arthur’s French chef, substituting his cook from his days as Governor of New York for favorites like “pickled her-

ring, Swiss cheese, and a chop.” Like some predecessors, he hired contract chefs for State Dinners.

Henrietta Nesbitt’s cooking experience was confined to making pies and cakes for her Hyde Park neighbors before being named by Eleanor to serve as housekeeper and cook for the 12 years of Franklin D. Roosevelt administration. Her philosophy was that she had been keeping house for her family all her life and cooking and housekeeping at the White House would be much of the same but on a larger scale. In *The Presidential Cookbook, Feeding the Roosevelts and their Guests* (Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1951), she recalls, “If ever humans were what their eating habits were, it was the Roosevelts. The President and his family liked the hearty, vitamin-filled dishes that are typically America.” During the War years, the First Lady insisted that food rationing be practiced in the White House as in the rest of the country. “Red Points” (meat) were saved for special occasions.



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White House

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“Mrs. Roosevelt said ‘chicken it is’ so chicken we had.” After chicken it was turkey. For a family dish the Roosevelts preferred their chicken fried with Maryland gravy. (See recipes below.)

Mrs. Nesbitt confides that “Cocktails and Highballs were served upstairs and I had nothing to do with them, but the New Year’s eggnog

was traditional, and the entire White House was concerned with its making. Each New Year’s Eve the creamy mixture was prepared in the same way, and the great punch bowl was carried before the President. And each time, lifting his cup, President Roosevelt gave the same toast: “To the United States!”

For Eisenhower, “continental fare was strictly for state occasions” while daily meals followed 1950s fashions, including a famous

luncheon featuring new processed foods like powdered orange juice and cheese spread. In the 1960s, LBJ’s long-time cook Zephyr Wright fixed Texas favorites while Executive Chef Henry Haller, who served from Johnson through Reagan, was responsible for formal occasions. Like some of his predecessors, LBJ’s taste seems to have been suspect: he once rejected Haller’s *tournedos Rossini*, declaring the meat “rotten” before many guests had been served. As presidential historian Barry Landau points out, however, Johnson simply wasn’t used to the taste of *pâté de foie gras*. During Gerald Ford’s term, Haller’s lobster *en Bellevue* might be served in the State Dining Room, but lasagna and stuffed cabbage were found at family meals.

Regardless of presidential tastes, public events revolved around classical French fare, with menus printed in French without translation. (Jackie Kennedy introduced a variant with main ingredients in English.) Despite occasional complaints that the president should promote American cooking, the White House only recently moved away from these French roots.

When the Clintons announced that they wanted to showcase American art, Alice Waters wrote an open letter to the Clintons, signed by many leading chefs, urging American cuisine in the nation’s kitchen. The letter echoed the rhetoric of republican simplicity—“We chefs ... believe that good food, pure and wholesome, should be not just a privilege of the few, but a right for everyone”—and urged environmental stewardship: “By promoting the value of organically grown fruits and vegetables, your table would reaffirm Thomas Jefferson’s ideals of a nation of small farmers.”

MARYLAND CHICKEN

Disjoint frying chicken into serving pieces.

Put in paper bag
2 tablespoons flour
1 teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon pepper

Place several pieces of chicken in bag at a time and shake. Pan fry with either bacon fat or bacon fat and butter, until nicely browned. Turn down heat and cook until tender. Take out chicken, add another piece of butter and 1 tablespoon of flour and blend with the caramel. Add rich milk or thin cream and make gravy. Season with ½ teaspoon salt and ⅛ teaspoon pepper. Boiled rice is served with this. Two pound chicken serves 4.



NEW YEARS EGGNOG

12 eggs, beaten separately
3 quarts heavy cream
(thin may be used)
1 pound sugar
¼ pint rum
1 quart brandy
Nutmeg to taste

Beat egg yolks with sugar until creamy. Add cream gradually, then beaten whites of eggs. Add liquor and nutmeg last. Yield, about 6 quarts.

The White House has occasionally attempted to showcase American cuisine, as at a series of dinners hosted by Ronald Reagan in 1983: “first a southern-themed dinner, then an American seafood luncheon, then a ‘Creole Occasion,’ then a Tex-Mex lunch.” Notably, however, these meals occurred in Williamsburg. Presidents seem less bound by tradition away from the Executive Mansion, as in 1939, when Eleanor Roosevelt served hot dogs and baked beans to King George VI and Queen Elizabeth at Hyde Park.

In the White House itself, the changes suggested by Alice Waters came slowly. Hillary Clinton worked with the White House Chef, Pierre Chambrin, though he bristled at changing the Inaugural Dinner to celebrate American food. The menu, a collaborative effort with a “Kitchen Cabinet” of three outside chefs, started with “smoked marinated shrimp with a mango horseradish chutney, roast tenderloin of beef, baby vegetables in a zucchini basket and Yukon Gold potatoes with Vidalia onions.” After a salad of “winter greens with a hazelnut dressing and [Massachusetts] goat cheese” came “an apple sherbet terrine with Applejack mousse and hot cider sauce.” Wines were American; the menu was in English. Yet this was more than an exercise in translation. Unhappy with the new direction the kitchen was taking, Chambrin disagreed with emphasizing American and low-fat food. With his cookbooks “all in French and all by dead people,” Chambrin was “incapable of doing low fat,” according to *The New York Times* in 1994, so the Clintons replaced Chambrin by someone with up-to-date cookbooks.

At the Greenbrier, Walter Scheib had been in charge of developing a

“light menu” featuring local ingredients—just the kind of chef Waters had recommended. Scheib’s first state dinner, for the Emperor of Japan, offered a regional American menu uniting cosmopolitan sophistication with republican simplicity, reflecting America’s maturation as a political and cultural power.

Unsurprisingly, the chef hired by the Clintons was fired by Laura Bush. Scheib claims that he had adapted to the Bush’s desires for what he termed “country club food.” But at the end of the first Bush administration, Scheib found his cooking under repeated attacks, from being sent dog-eared magazines like *Martha Stewart Living*, with instructions to “make it look just like the picture” to the social secretary’s claim that he always overcooked vegetables.

The best commentary on this conflict in the White House kitchen came in a meal that was never served. According to a story written by Deanna Swift on her satirical site titled “The Swift Report,” Scheib’s “relationship with the first family had grown increasingly tense since he was asked to stop using French [...] techniques after France refused to support the U.S. led invasion of Iraq.” Things soon got worse, Swift reported, as the Bushes requested that their chef support not American food but American corporations: “Tensions were further exacerbated ... by White House orders that Scheib create a special inaugural menu to honor the brand names represented by ... Bush campaign donors. Scheib was reportedly vocal about his unhappiness over having to create dishes that featured such ingredients as Coca-Cola, Krispy Kreme Doughnuts and Pilgrim’s Pride Whole Butter Basted Turkeys.” Though false, like all good satire, the Swift menu

rang true enough to be picked up by mainstream news outlets, including a story from the *Onion* reported as fact. Indeed, the menu says more about food’s entanglement with fundraising than any meal ever actually served at the White House.

Eventually, the Bushes fired Scheib and hired Cristeta Comerford, the first woman to serve as White House Executive Chef. Though specializing in ethnic and American cuisine, Comerford was trained in French classical techniques and had spent much of her career in French restaurants. Clearly, the White House kitchen isn’t headed back to Patrick Henry’s “native victuals.” Balancing her background and goals, Comerford uses her classical skills to produce “American flavors,” as the White House puts it.

The precariousness of this balance reminds us that the Freedom Fries incident, like Raw Beef in 1840 or last year’s pilgrimages by presidential primary candidates, was about image rather than substance, presentation rather than taste. After all, not even Representative Ney suggested that patriotic Americans should stop eating fried potatoes.

Mark McWilliams is an associate professor of English at the United States Naval Academy. He writes about food and culture, specializing in the shifting portrayals of food in literature. His work has appeared in various scholarly journals including the proceedings of the Oxford Symposium on Food & Cookery. He received his M.A. and Ph.D. in English Literature from the University of Virginia.

Shaker Traditions

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to locate herbs and plants. Meals changed with the seasons and depended upon what they could grow, preserve, and store. Busy forming their communities and overseeing new converts, the early Shakers followed the eating habits of the day and ate simply: minced meat, bean porridge, potatoes, “Indian bread,” cider, and occasionally milk, butter, or cheese. As their fields and orchards grew, so did their choices of food. The goal to feed their members was also joined by a goal to provide a source of income to ensure their survival.

In 1794, seven years after it was formed, the community in New Lebanon, New York, started an herb business. The next year, it started a seed business, as did the Shaker community at Hancock, Massachusetts, and the New Hampshire communities in Canterbury and Enfield. Other villages followed suit.

By 1812, the New Lebanon Shakers established an herb garden to ensure a steady supply of rare plants. Canterbury established an herb garden in 1816, and in 1820, the Believers in Harvard, Massachusetts, began selling herbs. By 1830, the

Believers in Watervliet, New York, issued its first dated herb catalog, offering 128 herbs, as well as medicinal waters, pills, and syrups. By 1850, the nineteen existing Shaker villages had at least 150 acres under cultivation for medicinal herbs.

While we think of herbs for seasoning our food today, the early Shakers used them primarily for medicinal purposes. From 1847 to 1854, they began to sell summer savory, sage, sweet marjoram, thyme, and occasionally horseradish, for culinary use. From 1849 to about 1865, the Shakers planted roses for the sale of rosewater for flavoring and other purposes. They also added maple sugar and honey to sweeten their food. Molasses was used for making beer and as well as medicine.

Perhaps the most interesting aspect of their culinary history was their attempt to adopt vegetarianism. This effort ran counter to their traditional eating habits, which included abundant servings of pork, beef, and dairy products. Elder Henry Blinn reported that in 1801, the Canterbury Shakers processed 2,222 pounds of cheese and 942 pounds of butter. In 1811 they slaughtered about 15 cows and 70 pigs to produce 5,835 pounds of beef and 5,616 pounds of pork. This meat fed the Believers but

also provided a source of income.

Always interested in furthering the physical and spiritual health of their members, Shaker physicians occasionally recommended a beverage or banned a particular food. A popular diet developed in the 1830s by Sylvester Graham, a nutritionist who advocated the abstention from meat, refined flour, alcohol, seasonings, and stimulants, caught their attention. A Presbyterian minister, Graham reasoned that this diet would also reduce sexual cravings, so it is no wonder that in 1841 the Shakers’ Lead Ministry issued formal recommendations to adopt it. The communities in New Lebanon, Canterbury, and Harvard, Massachusetts, were the first communities to adhere to this advice.

Although popular among the “World’s People” (those outside the Shaker Community), the Graham diet proved to be very controversial among the Shakers. The older members were accustomed to more variety, the meat eaters missed their servings of beef and pork, and the cooks fretted about having to prepare too many customized dishes. Moreover, the vegetarian Believers felt that the diet was not strict enough. (At Canterbury, red meat and fish were permitted on Sunday, and a single dairy serving was allowed at every meal.) Although attempts were made to enforce the diet over the years, it was never officially adopted.

Shaker cooks readily collected recipes from the “World’s People” and adapted them for their own use. About 1882 *Mary Witcher’s Shaker House-Keeper*, a collection of recipes and ads promoting Canterbury’s medicinal products, was published. Canterbury Shaker Eldress Mary Witcher wrote in her introduction, “The Shakers recognize the fact that good food, properly cooked and



Enfield Shaker Museum

Onion field at Enfield Shaker community in New Hampshire.



Enfield Shaker Museum

Apple picking in the Enfield Shaker community.

well digested, is the basis of sound health.” She espoused that food not only be “savory” but also “economical.” The cookbook included typical nineteenth century New England dishes such as boiled dinner and leg of mutton. Although some recipes were deemed “Shaker,” most were taken from newspaper clippings from across the country.

Shaker cooks and bakers fed their own members as well as potential converts, visitors, and hired hands. Canterbury Shaker Elder Henry Blinn recorded in his “Historical Record” that an estimated 4,000 meals were given away in 1846 to “inquirers and young Believers not yet gathered into the Family.” Organization was therefore important. At Enfield and Canterbury, the Church Family dwelling house had a dining hall, kitchen, and a bakery. Built-in cupboards and shelves provided storage with minimal space. The layout allowed a head cook, a second cook, and a third cook, or “messer,” to work together. The cooks and bakers rose at four-thirty in the morning

and worked until about two in the afternoon. The head cook planned the meals and cooked the meats, and the second cook washed and cooked the vegetables. The messer fixed special dishes for the elderly, the bedridden, and the spiritual leaders who lived in separate quarters. Two Sisters worked in the bake room and made bread, pies, and pastries for the entire community.

In her memoirs, *Seasoned With Grace: My Generation of Shaker Cooking*, Eldress Bertha Lindsay of Canterbury Shaker Village recalled a life that revolved around the harvesting, processing, and serving of food. She began her culinary training with other girls when she was about 10, first learning how to cook potatoes and then taking on more complicated tasks. At age 20 she was promoted as head cook in the Trustees Office, where some of the Shaker leaders and guests had meals. A separate dining room was set aside for hired hands outside the community (as many as 25 men). Serving meals to the “World’s People” was a way to

promote the Shakers’ fine produce. Eldress Bertha believed that cooking was an art. A fine meal not only had to have fresh produce, but it also had to be delicious and “eye-appealing.” The Shaker culinary style, she said, was plain, nourishing, “country cooking.”

She was taught that a typical Shaker meal might consist of soup, one or two types of meat, bread, several kinds of vegetables, and at least one kind of dessert. Pie could be served for dessert but was often served at breakfast. Applesauce, introduced at Canterbury in 1815, was served at each meal. A meal also had to have color and texture. Eldress Bertha followed Shaker tradition by keeping her favorite recipes in scrapbooks. A true artist, she continued to experiment and improve.

Her style of cooking does not differ from Sabbathday Lake Sister Frances A. Carr, who published her own cookbook, *Shaker Your Plate: Of Shaker Cooks and Cooking*, in 1985, two years before Eldress Bertha published hers. Sister Frances describes Shaker cooking as “plain, wholesome food, well prepared.” By 1985 Sister Frances had worked for more than 30 years in the Shaker kitchen. As did Eldress Bertha, she learned how to cook as a child, and was given recipes that had been passed down through the years.

Today, Shaker traditions continue through their programs and herb catalogue at Sabbathday Lake in New Gloucester, Maine, as the only remaining active Shaker community. Other Shaker museums offer tours and meals. The Enfield Shaker Museum in New Hampshire (www.shakermuseum.org) offers the unique experience of touring the Great Stone Dwelling. Completed in 1841, this handsome granite structure is among

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Shaker Traditions

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the most outstanding architectural achievements of the Shakers and of New England. The six-story high building was for many years the tallest building north of Boston. It was intended to serve nearly 100 Shaker Sisters and Brethren and was a testament to their success. The design is an excellent example of how the Shakers embraced new technology. One innovation was soundproofing the building so that the Shakers could carry out their tasks and not disturb others. In addition to tours, the Great Stone Dwelling is open for dining and overnight stays.

Mary Rose Boswell is Executive Director of Enfield (New Hampshire) Shaker Museum (www.shakermuseum.org.) She worked at Canterbury Shaker Village for four years. She edited and annotated Eldress Bertha Lindsay's book *Seasoned with Grace: My Generation of Shaker Cooking*. She is also the co-author of *The Earth Shall Blossom: Shaker Herbs and Gardening*. Both publications are sources for this article. She has written many other articles about the Shakers on a wide variety of topics; two publications have received national awards. She is a recipient of the Institute of Museum & Library Service's National Award for Museum Service.

Member News

The Woman's Day Cookbook for Healthy Living by **Elizabeth Alston** and the Editors of *Woman's Day* will be published this month. The book serves as a guide for those who want a healthy lifestyle, complete with exercise tips and sections on cooking methods, without giving up on delicious meals.

Carolina M. Capehart's historic cooking series "Fireside Feasts" was again held at Brooklyn's Wyckoff Farmhouse Museum this summer. The open-fire cooking workshops included such early 19th-century fare as a boiled egg pudding with a cream sauce, a tansey, and "scolloped" tomatoes. Two Brooklyn newspapers ran articles on the classes and there was a mention in *The New York Times*.

Jody Eddy, author of the culinary website www.eddybles.com and former cook at Jean Georges and The Fat Duck in Bray, England, is the new Executive Editor of *Art Culinaire* magazine.

Betty Fussell's most recent take on American food history, *Raising Steaks: The Life and Times of American Beef*, will be published this month by the newly integrated publishing company Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. In August she did a corn and beef tasting at Peter Hoffman's Back 40 in Manhattan. and she headed a panel of "The Future of Farming" at the first national conference of Slow Food Nation in San Francisco. In September she began teaching a one-semester course for NYU's Food

Studies program, a graduate seminar about "Food Narratives."

Donna Goldman had a recipe for her "Purple & Gold Coleslaw" published in *The Providence Journal* in February after reading a call for entries for cost effective recipes. She is a chef and graduate of The Natural Gourmet, specializing in utilitarian cookery. Members can receive a copy of her recipe by e-mailing recipess4survival@yahoo.com.

Cathy Kaufman is working with Context Travel to offer walking seminars of New York City foodways that focus on the social and culinary history of Manhattan neighborhoods. She is currently offering "Tasting the Immigrant Experience." During a walk through Little Italy and Chinatown, she traces the 19th and 20th century immigration patterns, and contrasts the vibrancy of Chinatown with the fossilization of Little Italy. Generous tastings are provided en route. Visit www.contexttravel.com for more information.

Judy Levin is currently working at the Lower East Side Tenement Museum and investigating immigrant foodways.

Chocolate Epiphany: Exceptional Cookies, Cakes and Confections for Everyone, by François Payard with **Anne E. McBride**, was published by Clarkson Potter in April. Anne also collaborated with Mitchell Davis on the James Beard Foundation's first white



“Tasting the Immigrant Experience” at a Chinatown market on Mott Street.

paper, “The State of American Cuisine.” The paper is available at www.jamesbeard.org/resources.

Marion Nestle’s book, *Pet Food Politics: The Chihuahua in the Coal Mine* about last year’s pet food recalls and their implications for food safety was published in September by University of California Press. She is now writing a regular column, “Food Matters,” for the *San Francisco Chronicle*.

Susan McLellan Plaisted, Proprietress of Heart to Hearth Cookery in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, presented a program in Skowhegan, Maine, on “The Bake Oven” at the KNEADING Conference. Open to professional and home bakers, farmers, millers, and oven builders, the conference investigates progressive ideas in the art of wood-fired bread baking and production; grain growing and milling; and oven-building. Information about Susan’s classes

and schedule may be found on her website www.hearttohearthcookery.com.

James Reford has written a profile of Michelin Guide director Jean-Luc Naret for the fall issue of *NUVO*, a lifestyle magazine which publishes Canadian and international content.

Peter G. Rose is working on a new book titled *Food, Drink and Celebrations of the Hudson Valley Dutch* to be published by the The History Press (Charleston, SC) in 2009 as part of the Hudson/Fulton/Champlain Quadricentennial year. She serves on the Advisory Committee of the upcoming celebration exhibit at the Museum of the City of New York and is involved with similar celebrations at other locations. As a member of the Speakers’ Bureau of the New York Council for the Humanities she will be speaking throughout the state on topics related to the celebration.

Meryl Rosofsky, with her colleague Susan Yager, co-lead a graduate intensive field trip/seminar on “The East End of Long Island as a Case Study for Sustainability,” for Food Studies students at NYU. The course will focus on the agriculture, aquaculture, wine industries, and restaurants of Long Island’s North and South Forks and will include visits to wineries; scallop and oyster fish hatcheries, organic, biodynamic, and conventional farms; and restaurants continuing family traditions and/or embracing local, seasonal products.

Francine Segan, cookbook author and lecturer, has co-edited a two-volume encyclopedia entitled, *Entertaining from Ancient Rome to the Super Bowl*, which will be published by Greenwood Press this month. Several CHNY members, including Cathy Kaufman and Andrew F. Smith, are contributors. In October at the 92nd Street Y, Francine will give a lecture on the history of Italian desserts and moderate a discussion between Lidia Bastianich and Donatella Arpaia on Italian foods and restaurants.

Valerie Saint-Rossy, who grew up in Taiwan, has been teaching the course “Chinese Characters for Chinese Food Lovers” since 2006. The course (mentioned in *The New York Times* food section) was first offered at NYU’s School of Continuing and Professional Studies, and now meets privately. Learning to read the basic food characters opens the door to those pink-slip daily specials and Chinese-only menus, and it also reveals the cultural, political, and economic roots of

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Chinese food names. Valerie is also a copy editor for *Saveur* magazine.

Andrew F. Smith's next book, *Hamburger: A Global History*, will be published by Reaktion Books this month. It is part of the new Edible series, which includes *Pancake:*

A Global History, by Ken Albala, and *Pizza: A Global History*, by Carol Helstosky. The series will be launched at 8 pm on November 18 at the National Arts Club (15 Gramercy Park South) in New York. Smith, Albala, and Helstosky will briefly present their works. The launch party is free to all members of the Culinary Historians of New York.

UPCOMING PROGRAMS

MONDAY, OCTOBER 20

Bee Wilson on her new book, *Swindled: The Dark History of Food Fraud, from Poisoned Candy to Counterfeit Coffee*
Astor Center

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 17

Ken Albala, "The Tomato Queen of San Joaquin"
Location TBA

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 9

Anne Mendelson, on her new book *Milk: The Surprising Story of Milk Through the Ages*
National Arts Club

Stay in Touch!

2008 MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY

Directories have been mailed. Please e-mail chnydirectory@helenbrody.com with changes and corrections and they will be included in an upcoming newsletter.

SPAM BLOCKERS

If you want to receive organization news, spam blockers must accept CHNY program announcements from Carolyn Vaughan (TFOX2@nyc.rr.com) and CHNY newsletter announcements from Helen Brody (helen@helenbrody.com).

CORRECT E-MAIL ADDRESS?

CHNY members receive numerous announcements by e-mail, not only about our own programs, but also about other events of culinary interest, including talks, tours, and tastings. Please send new address changes to www.culinaryhistoriansny.org/contact.

PROGRAM REGISTRATION NEWS

You can now register for CHNY programs online, through Brown Paper Tickets (www.brownpapertickets.com). Brown Paper Tickets accepts MasterCard, Visa, and Discover. No more scrambling for a stamp and an envelope! Of course, we will continue to accept registrations through the mail for those who prefer it.