The New Executive and Board of the Culinary Historians of Ontario, Montgomery's Inn, September 2003. Left to right: Program Chair: Eva MacDonald; Newsletter Chair: Melanie Garrison; Past President: Fiona Lucas; Secretary: Maggie Newell; President: Liz Driver; Treasurer: Bob Wildfong; Vice President: Amy Scott; Membership Chair: Elizabeth Nelson-Raffaele.

This year's Annual General Meeting on September 21st was a momentous occasion for the Culinary Historians of Ontario, an association founded by Fiona Lucas, Christine Ritsma, and Bridget Wranich nearly a decade ago. These three committed food historians had the vision to create CHO, got it up and running, then maintained it as a vital organization for almost ten years - a great achievement! Also under their leadership, a draft Constitution was drawn up this summer, which the membership voted to adopt at the AGM.

The CHO is entering a new phase, with a formal organization, and, as the new President, I would like to thank Fiona, Christine, and Bridget for all their hard work on behalf of CHO over the years. They have not just created an association valued by its members, but in the process they have raised the profile of Ontario's food history in the province and beyond. The first meeting of the new Board will take place after the autumn newsletter goes to press. I look forward with pleasure to working with the new team. It will be exciting for us to consider new ideas and to set priorities for the association. Two initiatives are already in the works - a web site and a members' directory, and there are celebrations to plan for CHO's tenth anniversary.

If you have any thoughts or concerns to bring to the Board's attention, please do not hesitate to contact me:

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Food & History is the journal of the Institut Européen d’Histoire de l’Alimentation (IEHA). It is the first journal in Europe, both in its vocation and concept, specialized in the specific field of food history. Food & History aims at presenting, promoting and diffusing research that focuses on alimentations from an historical perspective. The journal studies food history from different points of view. It embraces aspects of social, economical, religious, political and cultural history. It deals at the same time with questions of consumption, production and distribution, alimentation practices, medical aspects, culinary practices, gastronomy and restaurants.

Some of the articles for the October issue include: "The Late-Medieval Menu in England - a Reappraisal: Revenge, Cannibalism and Self-denial"; "Introducing Italian Cuisine into Flemish Home-meals in the Twentieth Century"; "An Analysis of the Flemish Cooking Bible Ons Kookboek (1927-1999)"); and "Cow’s Milk and Human Disease: Bovine Tuberculosis and the Difficulties involved in Combating Animal Diseases". Other articles included are written in French, Italian and German.

For more information, you can contact the publisher at info@brepols.net. Cost of the journal is listed as 50 euro.

Closer to home, members can offer their expertise at the ALHFAM 2004 Annual General Meeting from June 20-24, 2004 at the Henry Ford Museum in Dearborn, Michigan. ALHFAM (www.alhfam.org) is seeking papers for presentations, panels or workshops for this conference. The theme, "Sustaining History: Valuing Tradition and Sharing Innovation," draws on Henry Ford's interest in history and his tradition of balancing resourcefulness and innovation. The group welcomes sessions related to the tried-and-true or the fantastically new, and how the concept of sustainability may be interwoven in programs. Deadline for Proposals is December 5, 2003. Submissions or questions can be forwarded to Leo E. Landis at leol@thehenryford.org.

CULINARY HISTORIAN ORGANIZATIONS

Culinary Historians of Chicago
Email: bkraig@jps.net
Web site: www.culinaryhistorians.org

Culinary Historians of Hawaii
Nancy Lewis, 60 N. Beretania Apt. 3010,
Honolulu, HI 96817 USA

The Culinary Historians of Ontario and Montgomery’s Inn present:
The Archaeology of Culinary History
Saturday, February 21st, 2004 from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at Montgomery’s Inn
$20 CHO members, $30 non-members
Bringing together historical archaeologists and culinary historians to discuss how material culture research can inform culinary history.
Archaeological presentations + 19th-century-style Farmers Lunch + Culinary presentations
Contact Eva MacDonald at 416-534-9384 for more information.
Pre-registration required – by contacting the Inn, 416-394-8113 or rwagner@toronto.ca
Saturday January 18, 2003 was the date of the 2nd annual Queen Charlotte’s Birthday Ball at Historic Fort York. The event began at noon with two workshops to choose from. I attended the foodways demonstration which promised to explain the mystery of the authentic trifle. The recipe that was the basis for this demonstration is found in The Art of Cookery Made Plain and Easy, originally published by Hannah Glasse in 1796, and reprinted in a facsimile edition in 1971.

Bridget Wranich, a Program Officer (aka Historical Interpreter) at the fort and CHO co-founder, began her presentation by asking us about our experiences with trifle. Most of us confessed to having eaten modern adaptations that included Jell-O, whipped cream, custard, cake, jam, and sometimes even fruit cocktail. An authentic Georgian trifle is five desserts in one bowl. Hannah Glasse calls for Naples Biscuits, Mackeroons, Ratafia Cakes, custard, and syllabub. The cakes are layered in a glass bowl and liberally soaked with sack (sherry) before being topped with custard and syllabub. The whole may be decorated with jelly, flowers, or small candies called nonpareils.

This presentation in the historic kitchen took us step by step through the ingredients with tastes available of everything but the sherry. Naples Biscuit are in fact a hard sort of sponge cake in biscuit form. Jane Austen is credited by the Oxford English Dictionary with the first written reference to sponge cake in a letter dated 1808. Hannah Glasse does not provide a recipe for Naples Biscuits, likely assuming the cook will buy these at a confectioners to save time. The samples we ate were based on a recipe from Mary Randolph’s The Virginia House-wife, originally published in 1824. The resulting cake was denser and drier than pound cake. As I have discovered with many 19th-century cake recipes, the modern consumer wants frequent sips of tea or something sweet to wash these down.

Georgian macaroons do not contain any of the coconut associated with the modern article. Hannah Glasse’s recipe for “Mackeroons” consists of equal parts of pounded almonds and sugar, with orange–flower water for flavouring and egg whites for structure. The samples we tasted were like almond-flavoured meringues. These were delicious on their own, and in Jane Austen’s time would have been served with wine or liqueur.

The Ratafia Cakes reinforce the trifle’s almond flavour with a combination of sweet and bitter almonds. Bitter almonds are difficult for the modern cook to obtain, as they are believed to be poisonous if taken in sufficient number. All of the almonds used by the Georgian cook had to be blanched at home to remove the brown skin before they were fit to use.

The custard recipe provided for this workshop was from the 1833 The Cook and Housewife’s Manual by Mistress Margaret Dods. The popular instant “Byrds” custard powder was developed in the 1830’s by chemist Alfred Byrd. Mr. Byrd’s wife had an allergy to eggs, and his custard powder is based on cornstarch. Another advantage of the powder is the reduced risk of curdling when cooked.

Syllabubs could form the basis for another report. There are three types of syllabub: first, the drink combining fresh milk and a sweetened alcohol such as cider or beer; second, a mix of cream and spirits frothed with a chocolate mill; and third, the everlasting or solid syllabub, a dessert served in small decorative glasses. It is this last version that adorned the trifles served at our dinner. Solid syllabub as explained by Hannah Glasse contains a quart of rich cream, and one pint of white wine, sweetened “to taste” and flavoured with the juice of two lemons and the zest of one.

All of this food served to illustrate the level of sophistication of the Georgian cook and diner. It is little wonder the modern cook takes short cuts with custard powder and store-bought sponge cake and “ladies fingers” substituting for the Naples biscuits. It seems ironic that a dessert incorporating five separate recipes should be called a trifle.

Maggie Newell is the Program Officer at historic Zion Schoolhouse and is the new Secretary of CHO.
Entertaining in the Canadas in the late 18th and early 19th centuries always included a ball to celebrate the birthday of Queen Charlotte. The ball held in her honour was the highlight of the social season. Charlotte of Mecklenburg-Strelitz became Queen in 1760; she died in 1818, the year after this account.

On Thursday 23 January 1817 the *Upper Canada Gazette* described two balls that had occurred on board His Majesty’s Ship Charwell, anchored in the York (now Toronto) harbour. The first was the annual formal Birth Day Ball for Queen Charlotte and the second was a dance and supper. Both were part of the social season, and all persons of consequence in York society would have attended both affairs. We quote:

“All on Saturday last, the Anniversary of Her Majesty’s Birth Day, the Principal Officers of Government, the Officers of the Garrison and His Majesty’s Ship Charwell, lying in the Harbour, and the Gentlemen in the vicinity, partook of an elegant entertainment, given by his Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor … a splendid repast … detained them till a late hour.”

“All on the Monday evening the Deck of His Majesty’s Ship presented a novel, and interesting appearance; the gallant Captain with the characteristic resource of a British Seaman, … had converted it to an elegant Ball room, by extending sails from the foremost, to the mizen, so well disposed, that the inclemency of the weather, was completely excluded, and by means of a judicious arrangement of Stoves, an agreeable temperature was maintained during the whole of the evening;…” At 8:00 o’clock His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor and Mrs. Gore honored the company with their presence. Mrs. Gore led off the dancing with The Tars of the Victory followed by twenty couples who kept it up until one in the morning when supper was served, described as “a profusion of every delicacy, displaying at once taste and hospitality…”[1] Dancing resumed until four in the morning.

An evocative description, to be sure, but what was served at Saturday’s “splendid repast” and what was the “profusion of every delicacy” at Monday’s supper at one o’clock in the morning? Where did the fare come from, given that York in 1817 was a backwater village even though it was the colonial capital of Upper Canada (now Ontario). Remarkably, despite the raw locale, distance from manufacturers and limited pool of servants, the British elite lived well in the colony, because they self-consciously recreated the standards of urban Britain.

Formal Georgian Dining. A host couple expressed their taste by their silver and porcelain and the food’s elegant presentation. If a ball included dinner it preceded the dance, which began around 8 o’clock. A ball always included supper, anytime between 11 p.m. and 2 a.m. Dinner and supper service were similar, but supper was less formal, probably because it started so late; often it was a buffet (especially later in the century). Having been fortified by the likes of cold tongue, ham, roast chicken, meat pies, and many sweets, dancing continued, often until dawn.

Formal Georgian dining was called service à la française, in the French style. It consisted of two multi-dish courses, plus dessert. For each course, the tureens, covered dishes and platters were symmetrically laid. Each setting had two forks, knives and spoons and a single water tumbler.[4] Rolls or bread slices were tucked into the white napkins, folded simply on each plate or to the left side. Salts were placed for every two people, and pickle dishes strategically set. Wine glasses were brought upon request, although wine decanters were sometimes put at each corner.[5] Etiquette manuals vary in these instructions.

When the Gores and their (perhaps) 50 guests entered the larboard (port side) dining room at 6 o’clock, they saw sideboards and tables splendidly covered by white damask tablecloths, and arayed with blue and white transfer plates at each place, silver flatware and water glasses; each piece was laid precisely in relation to each other. Many candles lit the room, flattering the ladies and catching the sparkle and sheen of glass and ceramics. Menservants – probably soldiers in their capacity of private servants - stood at the sides awaiting the steward’s direction.
First Course: As hostess, Mrs. Gore sat at the top to ladle soup into the pile of waiting bowls, which were either passed along by the guests or delivered by the servants. Soup options in January 1817 could have been mulligatawny, tortoise or green pea. At the host’s end of the table was the fish, served after soup. One of the most common and delicious local fish were whitefish. Elizabeth Simcoe described them as “most exquisitely good” and Catharine Parr Traill as “the finest of all our fresh water fish”. [6] Salmon from the Credit, Hunher and Don Rivers could have been served, although they were best during the spring spawn. Sometimes they were smoked for winter. Other choices were Lake Erie perch, bass, pickerel and trout, perhaps baked with parsley, mushrooms, shallots and cream, or gently fried in egg and breadcrumbs. As early as the 1790s, frozen cod came from Boston.[7]

Eaten with the fish were the hot side dishes (“entrées”), such as Vegetable Curry with Rice and Cabbage with Onion. Curry is spicy and yellow-brown, cabbage bland and green-white, exactly the nice balance of opposites preferred by the Georgians. At a January dinner in 1817, the few vegetables included would have been those which kept well, like cabbage, carrots and parsnips, onions and shallots, and cauliflower boiled in milk to enhance its whiteness. These vegetables could have been retrieved from the Gores’ root cellar or bought at the farmers’ market that Saturday morning. Rice came from the Carolinas. These entrées were, literally, entrance dishes to the roast, which replaced the fish. Perhaps a sirloin or pork roast, accompanied by the requisite gravy, and the appropriate sauce: horseradish (pulled from the garden late in the season and kept in the root cellar) or applesauce, perhaps made from reconstituted dried apples. Or the roast could have been wild turkey or venison, hunted by one of the gentlemen or bought from a Native. Carving was by the host or senior male guest. Accompaniments were forcemeat balls or toast points called sippets, or pickled turnip, or oysters from Nova Scotia,[8] Italian capers, soy sauce, mustard, cranberry sauce, mushroom or walnut ketchup, and many others. Bottled pickles and ketchups were purchased from import merchants or one of the anonymous enterprising women who cooked for a living.[9]

Corner dishes offered a contrast to the side dishes. For example, diagonally paired were cold sliced ham and cold sliced turkey with hot gravies, and egg pie and onion pie. Each of these dishes had its own serving spoon waiting on the table for guests to help themselves from the nearest dishes and assist neighbours. The platters stayed stationary and individual plates were passed for filling. 18th and early- to mid-19th century cook books often specified whether a dish was appropriate for the sides or corners, or for dinner or supper. The corners were meant to be “eye-catching”.[10] Said Mrs. Raffald in her cookbook, printed many times from 1769 to 1834. Sometimes a dish was suitable for a dinner side dish, or a supper corner dish - the subtlety is elusive.

Second Course: The second course repeated the symmetrical placement of platters and pairing of their contents, but situated sweet puddings, complicated jellies and moulded creams alongside “made dishes.” Curried Eggs, for instance, from preserved eggs removed from a crock of wood ashes or salt,[11] since hens stopped laying eggs in the autumn.[12] Fine Patties required puff pastry – butter and white flour, both available in winter to these people – folded over minced chicken and ham. Other possibilities were braised venison, sweetbreads in béchamel, and from Coote’s Paradise in Hamilton, “small tortoises, cut up and dressed like oysters, in scallop shells.”[13] Hedgehog was a particularly attractive and playful sweet dish for the centre, as were Trifle, Floating Island and Ribband Jelly. The Gores’ cooks used either imported isinglass or made their own gelatine from calves’ feet.

Particularly popular were tarts of mincemeat, preserved local apples, strawberries or raspberries, or imported quince paste, or cheesecake, custard or chocolate cream. One impressive dessert was Apple Charlotte, reputedly named after the Queen herself,[15] but no relation to Charlotte Russe, created by chef Antonin Carême in 1815 for the Parisian elite.[16] Queen Charlotte Pudding was a baked lemon and orange pudding tart.

Dessert: Dessert featured cheese in the French manner, such as Double Gloucester, Stilton and Cheddar,[17] all imported because Canada had no cheese industry yet, although some skilled farmwomen made soft cheeses.[18] Yeasted fruitcakes were not served in the evening, but little cakes like Wafers and Jumbles, Seed
Cakes and almond-based Prussian Cakes, Mackeroons and Ratafias were. Orange blossom water, rosewater, lemon juice, almonds and walnuts were imported. Vanilla was still rare. Also significant were preserved fruits, such as dried Niagara apricots, cherries in syrup and large Muscatel raisins. Being January, fresh fruit was not in much evidence, although fresh figs and cocoanuts were available, at least they were in December 1815, according to the Upper Canadian Gazette.[19] On display at the Queen’s 1787 birthday supper at the Governor’s residence in Quebec were “many pyramids of fruit ... artistically arranged”[20] from his long-established orchard and kitchen garden. In York, in 1804, William Bond had about 10,000 fruit trees on his property.[21]

Candies and bonbons concluded the meal. In 1787 servants handed around “lots of candies” – perhaps candied lemon and orange peels, liquorice and peppermints using imported liquorice and essence of peppermint,[22] and candied seeds. Tea and coffee were offered, too. Bohea and Souchong, both black, and green Hyson teas were imported in vast quantities. Being loose leaf, many tea accoutrements were necessary, like strainers, slop bowls, cream jugs and sugar bowls filled with little lumps, laboriously cracked off the loaf by some poor servant.

**Beverages.** A room was set up for those who preferred to play cards. Menservants discreetly offered tea, punch and confections. Thirsty dancers could stop for lemonade, which in our January 1817 scenario was made with imported bottled lemon juice. Punch was available too, and shrub, which was any number of mixtures featuring such options as white wine, lemon juice, champagne, claret, sugar and nutmeg ladled out of large china or silver punch bowls.[23] Bottled Wellington Punch was sold in York in 1815.[24] Carafes of water were also available. At the 1787 ball in Quebec guests received hot Madeira, which does not seem a good choice for an overheated dancer.

**Transplanted Elegance:** The elite in England entertained themselves lavishly, following the Prince Regent’s glittering example. Remarkably, in 1817 Upper Canada, still surrounded by wilderness, evidence shows they did their best to aspire to that ideal here too, as the balls affirm. Considering the many complaints about the quality of servants and the quantities of crockery broken in transit, it is a wonder these huge entertainments succeeded. However, they did, over and over. Queen Charlotte’s Birthday Ball awaits more research from Canadian historians interested in social and culinary history.

Queen Charlotte’s next Birthday Ball will take place on January 17, 2004. Call Historic Fort York at 416-392-6907 to register. The featured speaker will be Jessica Warner, author of *Craze. Gin and Debauchery in an Age of Reason.*

Fiona Lucas is a co-founder, and now Past President, of CHO.

Those interested in the references cited and end notes are asked to contact Fiona directly.

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**EXCITING NEWS!** CHO is co-sponsoring **Cookbook Caper**

one of the annual events put on by the Ontario Historical Society.

**Sunday, November 16th, 1:00 to 4:00 p.m.**

Hundreds of cookbooks and culinary magazines will be for sale, as well as kitchen collectibles. **More volunteers are needed too,** for which you receive first chance at the books!

Please call Jo Marie Powers to offer your services: (519) 822-3086

The OTHS is located at 54 Parkview Ave, Willowdale, a few blocks north of the North York TTC station.

For more information on the Cookbook Caper, please call (416) 226-9011.
A Cookbook is a Girl's Best Friend.
Helen Barker, columnist for the Stratford Beacon Herald

After reading an article on historic cookbooks, I went in search of my grandmother’s cookbook. It was not where I expected it to be and having gotten rid of several books, felt a sense of panic. What if I had given away this ancient book published in 1898?

“I’ve misplaced grandmother’s cookbook,” I told a friend when she phoned. “How,” she exclaimed, “with all your books, would you know one is misplaced.” “Because,” I explained, “it’s the one I want.” “I don’t understand how you keep track of your books.” “The same way a mother keeps track of her children.” “But the books are not children,” she scoffed. “Perhaps not children, but best friends, and when one is missing, I know.”

Grandmother’s book showed up after a frantic search of bookshelves and bookcases. Why did I want it? To check the recipes after reading what a curator of the southern Methodist University’s collection of century old cookbooks said, “Most of the cookbooks didn’t find it necessary to give cooking instructions. They assumed the cooks knew their way around the kitchen. There’s nothing really that passes for directions in these books.”

I opened grandmother’s book and the curator is right. Grandmother may not have known the alphabet after her name, but she knew how to use a recipe without the need for instructions below the ingredients. Opening the old cookbook, I read the recipe for Tilden cake: “One cupful of butter, two of pulverized sugar, one cupful of sweet milk, three cupfuls of flour, half cupful of corn starch, four eggs, two teaspoonfuls of baking powder, two of lemon extract.” And underneath it reads: “This cake is excellent.” Being curious about the name, “Tilden cake” I went to the internet. Joe Tilden of California published a cookbook, “Joe Tilden’s recipes for epicures” in 1908 and since grandmother’s book was published in 1898, unless Joe had an earlier cookbook, the Tilden cake did not come from this book. Of course, his recipe may have been around before his book was published.

A recipe for “Cake without eggs” calls for one and a half cupfuls sugar, half cupful butter, one cupful milk, three cupfuls flour, two teaspoonfuls baking powder, one cupful chopped raisins well floured and added the last thing before putting into the oven. Spices to taste.

A really simplified recipe for Bran cookies suggests: “Two handfuls of bran, three-quarter cup sugar, one egg, a little melted butter, one cup sour milk, one teaspoonful soda, one teaspoonful ginger, flour to thicken and drop on buttered tins.” I suppose the amount of bran would depend on the size of the hand. One has to admire those cooks of yesterday who, in the words of Henry Thoreau, knew how to “Simplify. Simplify. Simplify.”

If grandmother were here today, I wonder what she would think about the baked goods on store shelves, and the easy mixes for cakes, cookies and muffins. I like them. But once was the day when I would never use a cake mix and if I did, would never admit it. But we outgrow these hang-ups. Oh! The convenience of it all.

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Please send your family recipes to Ed at Lyons@idirect.com, or 9 Buller Ave., Toronto, Ont., M4L 1B9
November
Sugar and Spice and Everything Nice:
A Lecture Series
Gibson House Museum 416 395-7432
5172 Yonge Street, Toronto
Sundays in Nov. 2-3 pm
Nov. 2: Sugar, Nov. 9: Herbs and Spices, Nov. 16: Tea
Pre-registration/payment required. $10/1 or $25/3

Stir Up Sunday
Montgomery's Inn 416 394-8113
4709 Dundas St. W., Etobicoke
Nov. 9, 16, 23 1 – 4:30 pm
Make and take home plum pudding and a generous supply of
mincemeat created in the open-hearth kitchen with 19th
century tools and recipes. Cost $ 45

The 19th Century Immigrant Kitchen
Mackenzie House 416 392-6915
82 Bond St., Toronto
Nov. 15 & 16 12 – 5 pm
Enjoy cooking demonstrations and sample traditional
food from the many diverse communities in Toronto.

Christmas & Hogmanay Treats
Gibson House Museum 416 395-7432
Nov. 22 & 23 10 – 2 pm
Learn to prepare shortbread, plum puddings, mincemeat
and mulled cider over the open-hearth using 19th century
recipes. Enjoy haggis at the mid-day break. Pre-
registration/payment required. $25

♥♥♥ Cookbook Caper
Ontario Historical Society 416 226-9011
34 Parkview Ave, Willowdale
Sunday, November 16 1 – 4 pm
Co-sponsored by CHO. Hundreds of cookbooks and
culinary magazines will be for sale, as well as kitchen
collectibles. See ad on page 6.

December
Christmas Desserts by Lamplight
Scarborough Historical Museum
1007 Brimley Rd., 416 338-8807
Dec. 6 6:30 – 9 pm
Enjoy a Victorian dessert buffet lit by lamplight. Pre-
registration/payment required. Adult $11, Seniors &
Youths $8, Children $5.

Kids in the Kitchen
Montgomery's Inn 416 394-8113
Dec. 6 & 13 9:30am – 12 pm
Kids explore 19th century holiday traditions by making
decorations, gifts, and preparing festive foods in the
historic kitchen.

Sharing Our Traditions: Cultural Holidays in Toronto
Spadina Museum: Historic House & Gardens
285 Spadina Rd. 416 392-6910
Dec. 14, Family Fun 1 – 4 pm
Dec. 18, Adult evening 7 – 9 pm
Join Spadina Museum and the Chinese Cultural Centre of
Greater Toronto for two holiday events featuring
activities celebrating Christmas and Chinese New Year.
Event includes kitchen demonstrations, storytelling,
traditional treats and more. Pre-registration/payment
required for evening of Dec. 18.

Mincemeat, Pomanders and Paper Chains
Gibson House Museum 416 395-7432
Dec. 20, 21 12 – 5 pm
Enjoy the sights, aromas and tastes of holiday foods pre-
pared in the historic kitchen.

February 2004
♥♥♥ The Archaeology of Culinary History
Montgomery’s Inn
February 21st, 2004 10 – 4:30
$20 CHO members, $30 non-members
See ad on page 2.