

Culinary Chronicles

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Jewish Foods in Canada

You can make matzo balls (knaidlich) from scratch with matzah crackers and eggs, buy them as a dry mix, or buy the balls ready made in jars. Either way, they “are one of the quintessential Jewish American foods.” This issue’s lead article explores their evolution in Canada.

(Photograph courtesy of Robin Bergart)



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President's Message

What does your membership fee pay for?

Since this is the time of year when we ask members to pay their annual fees, it's good to check up on how that fee is used. Our financial statements are available to all members, but those columns of numbers are daunting for many people, so let's break it down simply.

First of all, your fee pays for this newsletter, four issues of the *Culinary Chronicles* each year. Our newsletter editor, authors, and various dedicated helpers do a truly amazing job, and they all work for free. The cost of the newsletter is in the printing and postage, which costs just about exactly \$20 per member.

Our operating expenses are for promotion, supplies, our post office box, web site, and meetings. These costs are quite modest, since we have no office or staff: all told, about \$13 per member.

That bring us to a per-member cost of \$33, which you might notice is a bit more than the member fee. However, we've been very successful at raising money through events. Whenever you join us at a CHO event, your ticket pays for the event expenses, but it also helps to subsidize the costs of the organization. So we'll keep running interesting sessions, and you can help support CHO by attending and inviting your friends to them!

One more piece of good news: I'm delighted to report that we've just received a grant from the Ontario Ministry of Culture for \$911.00 as part of their Heritage Organization Development program. This program assists heritage organizations with their operating costs, and it opens a lot of important opportunities for CHO this year.

Thank you for renewing your membership in 2010, and for your continuing support of CHO. Don't forget to tell your friends about our organization, and our events.

Bob Wildfong, President of CHO

Newsletter News

I would be interested in hearing from CHO members or any new readers who'd like the opportunity to be a **Guest Editor** for upcoming theme issues (listed on the back page). Perhaps you are especially knowledgeable about a particular food history topic or have connections to a particular national or religious community. The Guest Editor partners the General Editor for that particular theme issue by inviting writers, fact checking, assisting in preliminary editing, helping assemble images, and generally helping produce that issue.

Review writers are wanted for these two upcoming events: "Mad for Marmalade, Crazy for Citrus" on Saturday, February 27 and "Apron-Mania" on Saturday, May 8. See the calendar on page 14 for details. Reviewers receive complimentary entrance to programs and two copies of the issue their review appears in. Contact Janet Kronick, Reviews Editor, at 905 526-2874 or janetkronick@yahoo.ca.

Also, would a CHO member be willing to assume responsibility for assembling items for the CHO Member's News column, which I would like to include in each issue rather than the occasional one. The CHO Upcoming Events, which requires communicating with the Program Chair about dates and flyers, could also use dedicated attention from one person.

Fiona Lucas, Editor of *Culinary Chronicles*

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Evolution of the Matzah Ball: Passover Recipes in Canadian Jewish Cookbooks

Robin Bergart

Robin is a librarian at the University of Guelph where she is lucky enough to have access to a fabulous Canadian cookbook collection. This paper was presented at CHO's Culinary Landmarks conference in May 2009.

The first recognizable Jewish recipe to appear in a Canadian cookbook is Ball Soup in "Montreal Lady" Mrs Hannah Constance Hatton Hart's *Household Recipes or Domestic Cookery* (Montreal: 1865). This is a turkey broth ("considered a very choice soup" by Mrs Hart) and the balls are made of onion, suet, soda crackers, eggs, and ginger. Making this recipe today, you would find yourself with a version of that classic Jewish dish: chicken soup and matzah balls.

8.—BALL SOUP.

Make rich turkey broth, which season with mace, pepper and salt, fry some onions with a small piece of suet, roll some soda crackers fine, beat up two eggs, mix with the onions a little ground ginger and the eggs together with the rolled cracker, and form them into balls; if not moist enough add a little boiling water, throw the balls in the boiling broth, leave them boil a quarter of an hour, they should rise to be twice the size they were when first put in; this is considered a very choice soup.

Ball Soup from Constance Hart's *Household Recipes or Domestic Cookery*, 1865

(Photograph courtesy of Liz Driver)

Food historian Jonathan Deutsch describes matzah balls as "one of the most quintessential Jewish American foods ... made of matzah meal or matzah ball mix, eggs, and oil, and cooked like a dumpling in boiling water or broth. Then after they are cooked ... [they] are eaten with traditional Jewish soup."¹ Dumplings, Claudia Roden notes, originated in medieval Germany, and the Jewish version, made with crushed matzah, was "born as a Passover dish, but now appears year round."²

I love matzah balls, but for another perspective, Montreal writer Joel Yanofsky writes, "It occurs to me now that almost everything we ate [at Passover] was brown or some shade of brown,

from the earth-toned brisket to the beige-hued matzah ball floating in the golden-tinted chicken soup. Jews may have invented monotheism but we refined indigestion."³

I decided to investigate to what degree recipes for matzah balls have varied over the past 150 years. Has the matzah ball undergone evolution or revolution? Is there a distinctive Canadian Jewish matzah ball?

I started by looking at some early English-language Jewish cookbooks published abroad. The first thing I noticed was that there are several variations on the name "matzah ball," but that knaidel, knaidlach, matzo balls, dumplings, kloese, and cleis all refer to the same dish. Lady Judith Montefiore's *Jewish Manual* (London: 1846), published two decades before *Household Recipes or Domestic Cookery*, has a recipe for Matso Soup with a list of ingredients similar to those in Constance Hart's Ball Soup: matso flour, suet, pepper, salt, ginger, nutmeg, eggs, onion, and oil. Lady Montefiore instructs that "care should be taken to make them very light," a quality that is not universally desirable, as I discovered.

Another early cookbook, Mrs Esther Levy's *Jewish Cookery Book* (Philadelphia: 1871), includes a recipe for Matzo Cleis Soup for Passover made of matzos or crackers, onions, suet, eggs, onions, parsley, pepper, salt, ginger, and nutmeg. *An Easy and Economical Book of Jewish Cookery* (London: 1874) contains a recipe for Motsa Balls made of biscuits, suet, marjoram, parsley, nutmeg, salt, onion, fat or oil, meal, and eggs. Continuing chronologically, *The Economical Cook: A Modern Jewish Recipe Book for Young Housekeepers* by Mary Henry and Edith B. Cohen (London: 1889) has a Motza Kleis recipe with motzas, motza meal, suet, parsley, onion, eggs,

marjoram, salt, and pepper. Published the same year, *Aunt Babette's Cook Book: Foreign and Domestic Receipts* (Cincinnati: 1889) has Matzo Kloesse made with matzos, goose oil, onion, eggs, matzo flour, salt, nutmeg, and ginger. Aunt Babette, a.k.a. Mrs Bertha F. Kramer, has a second recipe for Filled Matzo Kloesse, which is the same but filled with prunes.

In the early 20th century, the extremely popular Jewish American fundraiser, *The Settlement Cookbook* by Lizzie Black Kander (Milwaukee: 1901), presents two versions of Matzos Kloese. One uses goose fat and ginger, the other poultry fat or butter and almonds and sugar. Nutmeg and matzo meal or cracker meal are called for in both. *The Little Book of Jewish Cookery* (London: 1912) has a Motza Kleis Soup that calls for motza cakes, meal, suet, eggs, onions, ginger, pepper,

and salt. *Nu-Kooka: A Modern Cookery Book Containing Best Jewish and Celebrated Dishes* (Sydney, Australia: c. 1900) offers three versions of Matzo Klise that vary only in the presence or absence of ginger and sugar. Finally, the third edition of the commercial cookbook *Tempting Kosher Dishes Prepared from World's Famous Manischewitz's Matzo Products* (Cincinnati: 1930) offers no fewer than 14 different matzah ball recipes variously called Feather Balls, Dumplings, or Knoedel, all sharing the basic ingredients of Manischewitz's matzo meal, eggs, and salt.

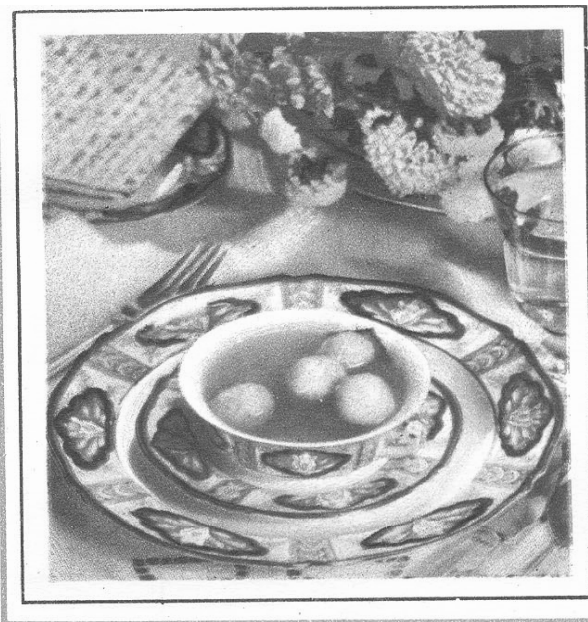
Do Canadian Jewish matzah ball recipes continue in the tradition of the established British, American, and Australian recipes or break new ground? I pored over 33 Canadian Jewish cookbooks published between 1915 and 2002

containing a total of 52 matzah ball recipes (Jews love their matzah balls!). The evidence indicates continuity rather than innovation. The first Canadian Jewish cookbook, *The Economical Cook Book* (Ottawa: 1915), contains two traditional recipes. Matzo Balls – No.1 is actually lifted directly from *The Settlement Cookbook* with only minor modifications.

The traditional matzah ball recipes, with very only slight variations, persist to this day, although new kitchen technologies, availability of commercially prepared mixes, and healthy eating trends have made their mark. Norene Gilletz's *MealLeaniYumm! All That's Missing is the Fat!* (Toronto: 1998) includes two low-fat matzah ball recipes using egg whites and club soda or ginger ale – “the secret ingredient to make these knaidlach light and fluffy.” I think it is more coincidence than continuity that while older recipes call for ginger, this

Feather Balls from *Tempting Kosher Dishes*, 1930, stipulating Manischewitz's Matzo Meal

(Photograph courtesy of Robin Bergart)

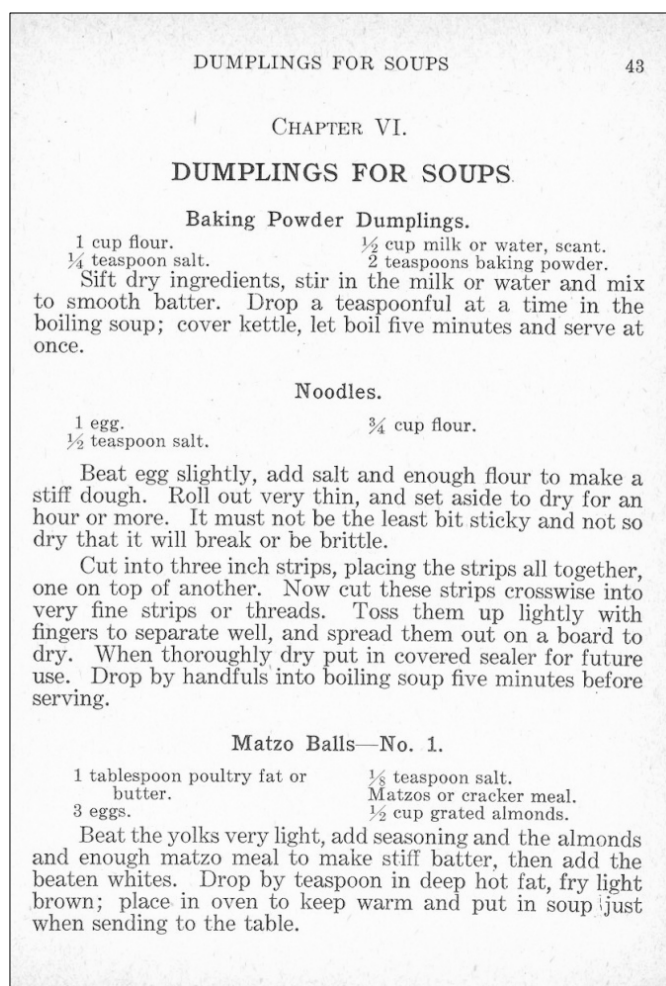


Feather Balls
Alsation Style

1 cup chicken fat, 3 eggs (well beaten), ½ cup hot chicken broth, 1 tsp. salt, 1 tsp. nutmeg (ginger if preferred); Manischewitz's Matzo Meal (about 2 cups).

Cool to lukewarm a cupful of fat from a stewed chicken, then beat well with an egg beater. Add other ingredients, roll balls about size of a walnut, cover them with a thin cloth, and set aside in a cool place from 1 to 24 hours. When ready to use them, boil remaining broth from chicken. Drop balls into boiling soup, cover and boil for 18 minutes.

[7]



**Matzo Balls – No. 1 from
The Economical Cook Book, 1915**

(Photograph courtesy of Robin Bergart)

one calls for ginger ale. Gilletz's *Food Processor Bible* (Vancouver: 2002) mixes the matzo balls in a food processor and suggests freezing the uncooked dough in ice cube trays for ready-to-use convenience when needed.

Every year before Passover, *The Canadian Jewish News* publishes holiday recipes. Last year it included two updated matzah ball recipes, Chicken Soup with Asparagus and Shitakes served with Roasted Fennel Matzah Balls and a gluten-free recipe substituting chicken or turkey for matzah meal. But on the whole, the matzah ball has rolled through the centuries using the same basic ingredients. If anything, the modern Canadian cookbooks have simplified the recipe, omitting all spices but salt and pepper and favouring cooking oil over animal fat.

The only area left to explore is whether matzah balls ought to be light and fluffy or sink to the bottom of the soup bowl. The Canadian cookbooks seem to favour light and fluffy. Comments like “matzo balls will be very light and tender”⁴ and “the greatest compliment you can pay a cook is to say her matzo kloese are light”⁵ pepper their pages. However, one cookbook seems to vacillate: “I have never met a Jewish person who will admit that he doesn't like them but everyone has a very definite opinion on whether knaidlach should be hard or soft.”⁶ Similarly, a more recent cookbook notes “there is an age old debate on whether matzo balls should be light and fluffy or hard as a bouncing ball. We've offered a recipe that falls somewhere in between, firm but still light.”⁷ Here's a recipe that appeases and accommodates. Perhaps a truly Canadian matzah ball does exist after all!



Making Matzo Balls at home today

(Photograph courtesy of Robin Bergart)

I would like to thank Mary Williamson for directing me to some Canadian Jewish cookbooks in her own collection.

Endnotes

¹ Jonathan Deutsch, *Jewish American Food Culture*, Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2008.

² Claudia Roden, *The Book of Jewish Food: An Odyssey from Samarkand to New York*, New York: Knopf, 1996.

³ Joel Yanofsky, “Passover with Uncle Solly,” *Canadian Geographic* Jan/Feb, 2002.

⁴ Hadassah Organization of Canada, *The Naomi Cook Book*, 4th ed., Toronto: Naomi Chapter, 1960.

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A Bevy of Jewish Cocktails

Alexandra Grigorieva

CHO member Sasha Grigorieva is a food and wine writer and researcher of food words. This piece is an extract from her talk, "Jewish Cookbooks in Ontario from 1915 to 1960: Trends and Issues," at the Culinary Landmarks conference hosted by CHO in early May 2009.

Early Jewish cookbooks of Ontario (from 1915 to 1960) are at considerable variance with our modern ideas about what a Jewish book on cookery is supposed to be. There seems to be much less preoccupation with rules of kashrut and much more desire to observe the gastronomic fashion of the day, from the Christmas Cake of the *Economical Cook Book* published in 1915 by Ottawa Ladies Hebrew Benevolent Society to the 7-Up Jelly Salad with 7-Up Boiled Dressing of *What's Cooking?* published in 1957 by Toronto B'nai B'rith Women.

That's why it is perhaps not entirely surprising to find a chapter on cocktails (separate or merged with appetizers) opening all four editions of the classic Torontonion Jewish community recipe collection called the *Naomi Cook Book*.

The first edition (1928) dictates: "Start the meal right by serving cocktails," and tags an advert: "Start the week right by sending your laundry to the Modern Laundry." All the cocktail recipes here are fruit-based with no alcohol at all: the temperance movement was going strong in Canada in the 1920s and rigorous prohibition laws were valid in Ontario from 1916 to 1927. A similar no-alcohol strawberry cocktail recipe can be found in the *Economical Cook Book* of 1915 – along with totally non-kosher* oyster and lobster cocktail recipes, forerunners of the modern shrimp cocktail.

The second edition (1932) of the *Naomi Cook Book* lets its hair down by introducing gin, scotch, and rum cocktails, although innocuous fruit drinks are still a fixture.

The third edition (1948) is out of hard cocktails again; fruit cocktails prevail, although a discreet addition of ginger beer or wine is encouraged. It is the first time that Jewish-themed cocktails make an appearance: "strained beet borscht with sour cream served ice-cold" and "sauerkraut juice

with a dash of lemon added makes a zestful cocktail," which could well have been inspired by the emergence of the state of Israel. Recipes for cocktails are presented in both senses of the word. Fish cocktails (with sardines or boiled halibut) are introduced and, unlike the 1915 cocktails of the *Economical Cook Book*, non-kosher seafood is absent.

The fourth, and I think last, edition (1960) of the *Naomi Cook Book* lists fruit cocktails – with and without alcohol, including cold borscht but not sauerkraut juice – and fish cocktails with sardines, halibut, and salmon.

Comparisons of this relatively marginal topic in the four editions of the *Naomi Cook Book* show that the Jewish community of Toronto in 1928 to 1960 was alive to changes in mainstream gastronomic fashion and ready to embrace them. But there was also a notable shift from the not-so-kosher of earlier books to conscientiously kosher, a new awareness and pride in heritage and tradition, which we see prominently evident in Jewish cookbooks of today. Doubtless this was boosted by the creation of the State of Israel in 1948, which is even specifically referred to in the fourth edition: "published ... to re-dedicate itself to continuing effort in the upbuilding of the State of Israel."

For those interested in early Jewish cookbooks of Ontario, the *Economical Cook Book* (Ottawa, 1915) can be found online in the Culinary Collection of University of Guelph. The four *Naomi Cook Books* (Toronto: 1928, 1932, 1948, 1960) and three cookbooks by Toronto B'nai B'rith Women (*Party Book*, 1953; *Oven Magic*, 1956; *What's Cooking?*, 1957) may be looked up at the Ontario Jewish Archives.

* The first *Naomi Cook Book* is not that observing either, as it suggests serving caviar (a non-kosher item!) on toast.

2009 Canadian Culinary Book Awards

November 6, 2009 – (GUELPH, ON) They read, they cooked, they deliberated. Since April, some of Canada's top food professionals have been reading and testing their way through more than 50 entries to determine the winners for the Canadian Culinary Book Awards. Cuisine Canada and the University of Guelph are proud to announce the winners of the 12th annual Canadian Culinary Book Awards.

Canadian Culinary Hall of Fame

- *Culinary Landmarks: A Bibliography of Canadian Cookbooks, 1825–1949* by Elizabeth Driver (University of Toronto Press, Toronto).

Winners in the **English Special Interest Category**, books about food, but not cookbooks, are:

- **Gold:** *Anita Stewart's Canada* by Anita Stewart (HarperCollins Publishers Ltd, Toronto).
- **Silver:** *Apples to Oysters: A Food Lover's Tour of Canadian Farms* by Margaret Webb (Penguin Group Canada, Toronto).
- **Honourable Mention:** *A Taste of Canada: A Culinary Journey* by Rose Murray (Whitecap Books Ltd., North Vancouver).

Winners in the **English Cookbook Category** are:

- **Gold:** *Small Plates for Sharing*, Laurie Stempfle, Ed. (Company's Coming Publishing Limited, Edmonton).
- **Silver:** *The Complete Canadian Living Baking Book: The Essentials of Home Baking* by Elizabeth Baird (Transcontinental Books, Montreal).
- **Honourable Mention:** *Fat: An Appreciation of a Misunderstood Ingredient, with Recipes* by Jennifer McLagan (McClelland & Stewart Ltd., Toronto).

Winners for the **English Canadian Food Culture Category**, books that best illustrate Canada's rich culinary heritage and food culture are:

- **Gold:** *Beyond the Great Wall: Recipes and Travels in the Other China* by Jeffrey Alford and Naomi Duguid (Random House Canada, Toronto).
- **Silver:** *Bottomfeeder: How to Eat Ethically in a World of Vanishing Seafood* by Taras Grescoe (HarperCollins Publishers Ltd, Toronto).

Winners in the **French Cookbook Category** are

- **Gold:** *Québec capitale gastronomique* Anne L Desjardins (Les Éditions La Presse, Montréal).

Winners in the **French Special Interest Category**, books about food, but not cookbooks, are:

- **Gold:** *Ricardo: parce qu'on a tous de la visite: cuisiner en toutes circonstances* by Ricardo (Les Éditions La Presse, Montréal).
- **Silver:** *Gibier à poil et à plume: découper, apprêter et cuisiner* by Jean-Paul Grappe (Les Éditions de l'Homme, Montréal).
- **Honourable Mention:** *Les secrets des sauces révélés* by Jérôme Ferrer (Les Éditions La Presse, Montréal).

Winners in the **French Special Interest Food and Beverage Book Category** are:

- **Gold:** *Les vins du nouveau monde, Volume 2*, by Jacques Orhon, (Les Éditions de l'Homme, Montréal).
- **Silver:** *Répertoire des fromages du Québec, Édition augmentée* by Richard Bizier and Roch Nadeau (Les Éditions du Trécaré-Groupe Librex inc., Montréal).
- **Honourable Mention:** *Manger, Un jeu d'enfant* by Guylaine Guèvremont and Marie-Claude Lortie (Les Éditions La Presse, Montréal).

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Culinary Queries

Questions often arrive in CHO's email in-box. Here are two recent questions and answers.

Wild Leeks

From Madeleine Greey

The following synthesizes several conversations between Madeleine Greey, Liz Driver and Fiona Lucas. If you can add anything to Madeleine's search for wild leeks, please email her at mado@madeleinegreey.com.

Hi Liz: I'm writing about wild leeks on the menu in Toronto. My editor wants to know historical info on wild leeks, like when they were first discovered as an edible plant in Ontario or how they got here, considering they are indigenous to Europe. Would you, by chance, have this info or know where I can find it? This question has stumped me more than any other! I don't know who / where / how to find this info. Can you give me some ideas on where *you* would look? I've called some naturalists, but no one is answering my calls. Any suggestions would be much appreciated! Thanks in advance for any trouble. *Madeleine*

Hi Madeleine: I usually have lots of info to hand, on various topics, but not on wild leeks. Now you have made me curious – just the questions I would ask myself. Would a biologist at one of the universities be of help? Someone who knows about aboriginal foods? Have you asked the Toronto Reference Library for printed reference sources? Does Catharine Parr Traill mention wild leeks? I can't remember, but Fiona Lucas would know because she is intimate with that text. Sorry I can't help. *Liz*

Hi Madeleine: Catharine Parr Traill does indeed mention wild leeks in *The Female Emigrant's Guide* (Toronto: 1854/55), p 184, 7th edition (which is renamed *The Canadian Settler's Guide*):

“Those cows that get their living all spring and summer, roaming at large through the forest, often feed upon the wild leeks, which spring up in the rich leafy soil of the woods; the flavour imparted to the milk by this sort of food is very odious. The milk is almost useless, excepting for the feeding and fattening of calves; but while this circumstance

annoys the settler not a little, there is one advantage that makes amends, in some measure, for the leek diet; which is, that the cattle that are poor and weak, and often in a diseased condition from poor feed, during the long winters, are restored to health and good condition very speedily, by feeding upon the green leeks.

“A small piece of saltpetre dissolved in the cream, I have been told, will remedy the ill flavour, but of this I cannot speak from experience. There are other plants also, on which cows feed in the woods, that give a rank, weedy taste to the milk. These evils are confined to those who, having settled on new land, cannot command pastures for the cattle to feed in.” I couldn't put my hands on any other Upper Canadian quotes in my files or books, but I know that other early settlers do talk about this very thing as well.

Here's a note from *The Oxford Encyclopedia of American Food and Drink*, vol 2, p30, entry for leeks: “Colonial Americans seem to have made little use of cultivated European leeks. John Josselyn's *New England's Rarities Discovered* (1672) praised ‘indigenous wild Leekes,’ probably *Allium canadense*, ‘which the Indians use much to eat with their fish,’ and other early sources talk about gathering the plant.”

Leeks are not included in Alma Hutchins's *Indian Herbology of North America*. Page 105 of *Iroquois Uses of Maize and Other Food Plants* by AC Parker (1910) says wild leeks are *A tricocum* and the Iroquois word is onosaon, and that *A canadense* are wild onions. You could check: *Heirloom Vegetable Gardening*, William Woys Weaver, 1997; and Samuel Champlain's papers, published by Champlain Society and available at Toronto Reference Library. Hope that helps. I'll be curious to know what else you find. *Fiona*

Hi Fiona: This is great material. Thank you SO MUCH for taking the time to find it and send to me. Jonathan Forbes of Forbes Wild Foods estimates that wild leeks have been growing in the Toronto area for a thousand years or more. He says it's an indigenous plant that loves to grow beneath sugar

maples. Wild leeks grow from North Bay down south to the Carolinas. He mentioned records of Iroquois including wild leeks among their edible spring greens, along with fiddle heads and milkweed shoots, but thanks to your research, I now know that settlers to the Toronto region in the mid 1800s were perturbed by the “rank, weedy taste” of spring milk thanks to their cows’ forest menu of wild leeks! All the best, *Madeleine*.

Spaghetti à la Mussolini

From Daphne Hart

The following summarizes an email exchange between Daphne Hart and Fiona Lucas. If you can add anything to Daphne’s search please email her at daphne.hart@sympatico.ca.

Fiona, I hope all is well with you! *Cottage Life* has asked me to write another little article for them. This one is on Eaton’s grocery delivery to cottagers in the 1930s. I found this product mentioned [but not illustrated], in Eaton’s 1935 Summer Handbook catalogue for cottagers: Spaghetti à la Mussolini, canned, College Inn brand at 15 cents a can. Have you ever heard of such a concoction? Any clues much appreciated. Best, *Daphne*.

Daphne’s note to Fiona’s follow up inquiry: No joy on this one. I came to the conclusion that it was probably a version of spaghetti bolognese – a meat sauce rather than a tomato sauce. The “College Inn” brand was American and it is still in existence but now their only product is chicken stock. Here’s the “Our Tasty History” text from their website (www.collegeinn.com).

“Bootleggers, flagpole sitters, marathon dancers, bobbed hair and rouged knees. Post-World War I America was bold, restless and itching for a party. In Chicago, celebrities, high society and tourists flocked to the College Inn restaurant in the Hotel Sherman. There, they got their first taste of the devil’s music – otherwise known as jazz – along with the chafing dish specialties of Chef Joe Colton. Chicken shortbread. Lobster Newburg. And College Inn’s famous chicken à la king made with Joe’s secret recipe chicken broth. The folks at the Sherman had the idea of offering Joe’s dishes in cans at specialty shops and by mail order. And in 1923, homemakers from Pough- keepsie to Portland were putting his chicken à la king on their table and

his broth in their recipes. Well, you can’t go to the College Inn restaurant today – the Hotel Sherman closed in 1973. And most of its line of prepared foods has gone the way of the flapper, with one notable exception. Joe’s tasty College Inn® Broth is still the cat’s pajamas.”

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2009 Canadian Culinary Book Awards

Cuisine Canada is a national alliance of Canadian culinary professionals who share a common desire to encourage the development, use and recognition of fine Canadian food and beverages. The University of Guelph has for more than 140 years contributed to Canadian cuisine in its programs in agriculture, food science, hospitality and tourism management, and is the home of one of Canada’s best cookbook collections.

The 2009 Canadian Culinary Book Awards were sponsored by: Agricultural Adaptation Council, CanolaInfo, Royal Agricultural Winter Fair, Chicken Farmers of Canada, Balderson Cheddars, Beef Information Centre, Pork Marketing Canada, The Ancaster Old Mill, Niagara College Teaching Winery, The Fairmont Royal York, Niagara College, Borealis Grille & Bar, George Brown Chef School, Georgian College, Liaison College, Rootham Gourmet Preserves, Wanda’s Pie in the Sky, Harbinger Communications, Stratford Chefs School, Willowgrove Hill Farm, and Ontario Farm Fresh Marketing Association.

For more information about the awards visit the Canadian Culinary Book Awards page on the University of Guelph website: www.cuisinecanada.ca.

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Endnotes for Evolution of the Matzah Ball

⁵ Trina Vineberg, *Family Heirlooms: A Collection of Treasured Recipes*, Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1965.

⁶ Lily Abramowitz, *Knishes & Knowhow: Jewish Cooking for Everyone*, Toronto: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1974.

⁷ National Council of Jewish Women of Canada Vancouver Section, *Bubbe’s Kitchen: Cherished Dishes*, Vancouver: Raincoast Books, 2000.

Books on Jewish Food History

Maria Balinska, *The Bagel: The Surprising History of a Modest Bread*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008.

Bill Brownstein, *Schwartz's Hebrew Delicatessen, The Story*, Montreal: Véhicule Press, 2006.

Gillian Burr with Marion Cohen, *Yesterday's Kitchen: Jewish Communities and Their Food Before 1939*, Vallentine Mitchell and Co., Ltd., 1993.

John Cooper, *Eat and Be Satisfied: A Social History of Jewish Food*, Northvale, NJ: Jason Aronson, 1993.

Jonathon Deutsch and Rachel D. Saks, *Jewish American Food Culture*, Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2008.

Hasia R. Diner, *Hungering for America: Italian, Irish and Jewish Foodways in the Age of Migration*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001.

David Kraemer, *Jewish Eating and Identity Through the Ages*, New York: Routledge, 2008.

Joan Nathan, *Jewish Cooking in America*, New York: Knopf, 1994.

Joan Nathan, "Jewish American Food" in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Food and Drink in America*, vol 1, Andrew Smith, ed., Oxford University Press, 2004, pp 736 –747.

David Sax, *Save the Deli: In Search of Perfect Pastrami, Crusty Rye, and the Heart of Jewish Delicatessen*, Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 2009.

Patti Shosteck, *A Lexicon of Jewish Cooking: A Collection of Folklore, Foodlore, History, Customs and Recipes*, Chicago: Contemporary Books, 1979.

Oded Schwartz, *In Search of Plenty: A History of Jewish Food*, Toronto: Culture Concepts, 1994.

Marlena Spieler, *The Jewish Heritage Cookbook: A Fascinating Journey through the Rich and Diverse History of the Jewish Cuisine*, London: Quadrille Books, 2002.

CHO Members' News

Please send along your news for future columns!

Congratulations to **Elizabeth Baird** for being chosen as the 2010 Woman of the Year for the Toronto-based Women's Culinary Network. Elizabeth is one of Canada's foremost experts on Canadian cooking, and the foods of Canada. She has been instrumental in inspiring many within the food industry, and has been a mentor to numerous women for years. Congratulations Elizabeth!

And, congratulations again to **Elizabeth Baird** for winning Silver in the Cookbook Category of the 2009 Canadian Culinary Book Awards for *The Complete Canadian Living Baking Book: The Essentials of Home Baking*.

Elizabeth Driver was also recognized by the 2009 Canadian Culinary Book Awards. *Culinary Landmarks: A Bibliography of Canadian Cookbooks, 1825–1949* was given the inaugural Canadian Culinary Hall of Fame Award, which will be given annually to honour outstanding achievements in the field of culinary writing.

And continuing with notes from Cuisine Canada, **Fiona Lucas** has been appointed national Chair of the Canadian Culinary Book Awards, co-sponsored by Cuisine Canada and the University of Guelph.

Margaret Lyons has been included in the 2010 Order of Canada list, recognizing her pioneering role as a woman in broadcasting. Margaret was Vice President of Programming at CBC Radio when the flagship shows *Morningside* and *As It Happens* were created in the 1970s.

Five CHO Board members – **Liz Driver, Bob Wildfong, Fiona Lucas, Amy Scott and Maggie Newell** – have their presentation "Canadian Food History 101: Compare and Contrast 1867 and 1967 – A dramatic 'mock class'" published in the 2009 proceedings of ALHFAM (Association of Living History Farms and Agricultural Museums).

Mary Williamson and **Fiona Lucas** have co-written "Frolics with Food: *The Frugal Housewife's Manual* by 'A.B. of Grimsby, 1840'" in a book of essays titled *Covering Niagara: Studies In Local Popular Culture*, Barry Keith Grant and Joan Nicks, eds., due out in June 2010 from Wilfrid Laurier Press.

CHO Program Review: “Sweet Revolutions”

Janet Kronick

Janet is Historic Kitchen Co-ordinator at Dundurn National Historic Site in Hamilton, Ontario, and CHO's Hamilton Program Co-ordinator.

Last November 14 and 17, CHO had the pleasure of hosting two nights with Elizabeth Abbott who spoke about her book, *Sugar: A Bittersweet History*. Her book so inspired us to face the truth about this super-commodity. For centuries sugar was a mark of wealth and social power; but over time, its use filtered through society until it became accessible to virtually everyone. Abbott describes the “slave-sugar complex,” an industry that forged a type of slavery whose scope and brutality had never been seen before. That slavery – and its sugar profits – were justified by the development of a racist ideology that still reverberates through contemporary life. As food historians, we chose to pay this writer greater attention and were (are) honoured that Abbott gave an excellent lecture on this subject, twice!

Titled “Sweet Revolutions: The Economic and Social Importance of Sugar as Food,” the first lecture was held in Hamilton at Dundurn National Historic Site and the second at Campbell House Museum in Toronto, with 25 and 45 attendees, respectively, attending.

In Hamilton, one guest handed Abbott a jar of *black* sugar, which she promptly incorporated into her introduction as an example of how sugar is still marketed in a manner that seeks to entice with a gourmet factor, when it is nothing more than white cane sugar with a bad dye job. With selected images from the book on screen behind her, she led us through the history of how this food changed the face of the world, bringing millions of Africans to toil in the cane fields, and then later replacing them with Indians and Chinese. A majority of the talk paralleled her written work, which stressed the way cane (and beet) sugar changed the way North Americans and Europeans ate. The imperialized industry caused this addictive product to become the ultimate comfort food, while simultaneously ensuring the enslavement of cane cutters.



The compelling Abbott spoke in a manner that made us truly *listen* to what she was saying. Images and personal accounts of her life and impressive research in Antigua, Haiti, and the Dominican Republic enhanced what are already incredibly moving, albeit disturbing, realities of ongoing slavery. She quoted a food historian who said “that so many tears were shed for sugar that by rights, it ought to have lost its sweetness,” yet we consume it at such an alarming rate that it leads today’s obesity and health concerns. Rarely have I been so enthralled for the entire length of a lecture.

Thankfully, Abbott did not preach or chastise our taste for sweets, since sweet delights were enjoyed as refreshments, without reproach by anyone, including our speaker. Rather, she encouraged a more sound association with sugar and answered many poignant questions. She revealed how little about “Big Sugar” has changed, that its inherent slavery, racism, and social injustice still reign, though improved in some areas. She told how as a biofuel, cane and beet sugar are superior to grain and corn fuel energy yields, undermine the power of oil-rich tyrannies, and are clean rivals to polluting fossil fuel industries. Despite this, short-sighted politics, disregard for the environment, and racism continue to promote our grotesque sugar consumption. Her final mention of cane and beet sugar industries being the possible future of biofuel is a glimmer of hope. Combined with the rise of fair trade, improved work conditions, and a better relationship with food and our health in general, “One day, the meaning of sugar may become as sweet as the storied sugar of metaphor.”

Ms Abbott is a writer and historian. Sugar: A Bittersweet History was short-listed for the Charles Taylor Prize for Literary Non-Fiction. She is a Research Associate at Trinity College, University of Toronto, where she was Dean of Women, 1991 to 2004.

Book Review: *Schwartz's Hebrew Delicatessen*

Robin Bergart

Robin is User Experience Librarian at University of Guelph. Her office is perched two floors above the second largest Canadian cookbook collection in the country.

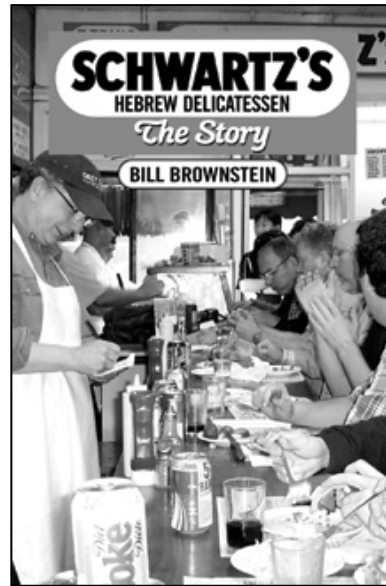
Bill Brownstein: *Schwartz's Hebrew Delicatessen: The Story*
Montreal: Véhicule Press, 2006, ISBN-1-55065-21205, 146 pp, \$19.95

Even before reading Brownstein's book, I knew Schwartz's Deli was a Montreal institution. As a student at McGill I passed by the long lines queuing down the sidewalk in front of the restaurant many times. It's no exaggeration that people stand in line in the most frigid of winter storms and the most unbearable of summer humidity to enjoy a few minutes in this chaotic, cramped deli with a fatty smoked meat sandwich, half-sour pickle, and fries. The question on Brownstein's mind is, why? What's the magic behind this artery-clogging, coronary-inducing, Lipitor-supporting meat (all Brownstein's epithets) that has kept Schwartz's a going concern since 1928?

Perhaps it is the secret blend of spices, or the extra-long marinating process – nearly two weeks in the brine. Or maybe it's the genuine smokehouse at the back of the deli, its brick walls soaked in the accretions ("schmutz," as Brownstein puts it) of over 80 years' worth of brisket. Its success is certainly not due to the canny business smarts of its owners. Brownstein points out that the deli's Romanian Jewish founder, Reuben Schwartz, was no great businessman; in fact he was a bit of a miserly misanthrope. Although subsequent owners have demonstrated more business acumen, Schwartz's rarely advertises, has never expanded, has hardly even renovated in all this time, and has resisted lucrative franchising opportunities for years.

What Schwartz's has going for it is a history of welcoming a diverse clientele that bridges the many solitudes for which Montreal is famous. Anglophones and Francophones, separatists and federalists, poor immigrants and wealthy politicians, tourists and residents, Jews and Gentiles, carnivores and, yes, erstwhile vegetarians – all have surrendered to the salty, fat-riddled smoked meat sandwiches,

unpretentious décor, and gregarious staff. Schwartz's is a Montreal icon that current residents and ex-Montrealers alike can claim as their own.



I must confess that even this vegetarian was seduced by the following description of Schwartz's celebrated smoked meat sandwich: "...a clutch of sandwiches each cocooned in its chrysalis of oiled paper

so that not a smidgen, not a drop of brisket dripping could escape; each sandwich a quivering blush of tongue-shaped slices of spiced smoked meat; each slice rimmed with a golden ribbon of peppered fat and everything snuggled into the embrace of crusty rye bread slathered with lashings of mustard" (p. 126). Brownstein is positively rapturous about Schwartz's. The deli is more than just a familiar and beloved fixture on Boulevard St. Laurent; it is a near-religious experience. Its smokehouse is likened to the Holy of Holies; its staff to ministering priests. Like biblical figures, its customers are a colourful cast of characters—lusty and exotic with outrageous stories to tell. And just like the Bible, *Schwartz's Hebrew Delicatessen* is a wandering, unruly, often repetitive paean to a much-loved institution. But mercifully, unlike the Bible, it is only 146 pages long, so the chaos is bearable.

Book Review: *What's to Eat?*

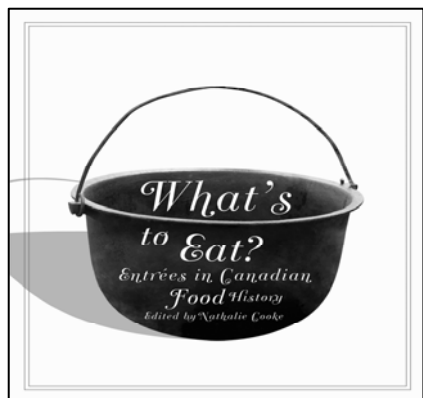
Angie McKaig

Angie is an enthusiastic newcomer to Canadian food history. She's also a web guru, writer, professional photographer, passionate cook, and beginning gardener.

Nathalie Cooke, ed., *What's to Eat? Entrées in Canadian Food History*

Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2009, ISBN 978-0-7735-3571-8, 310 pp, \$29.95

What's to Eat features a collection of essays on a wide range of topics, from the history of chocolate in Canada to favourite cookbooks of Quebec home economists.



Honestly, a quick glance at the contents and I was drooling over the subjects covered (chocolate history? I'm in!). The

lineup of essay writers is equally impressive, with names recognizable even to this newbie: Elizabeth Driver and Margery Fee, for example.

Within each essay, there are nuggets of food history guaranteed to fascinate or delight:

1. Cacao beans weren't readily available to early settlers in Canada. The beans were shipped from the West Indies to England, where they were processed; the processed chocolate products were then shipped to Canada. Talk about accumulating your food miles! ("A Cargo of Cocoa: Chocolate's Early History in Canada," Catherine MacPherson)
2. Canadian Thanksgiving used to be in November; in fact, for 10 years, from 1921 to 1930, it was actually combined and celebrated together with Armistice Day (eventually called Remembrance Day). ("Talking Turkey: Thanksgiving in Canada and the United States," Andrew Smith and Shelley Boyd)
3. Ours isn't the first generation to worry about the quality of the foods we buy and what chemicals they contain—home cooks as far back as 1914 worried about chemicals and the trustworthiness of

the businesses from which they purchased their foods. ("Home Cooking: The Stories Canadian Cookbooks Have to Tell," Nathalie Cooke)

4. History geek? Not to worry – each essay includes detailed footnotes (a great jumping off point to begin or continue your own research). Novices to the history of Canadian foodways will come away with a list of new books and essays to hunt down in order to further their knowledge.

For facts alone, this book is worth its weight in gold. And I'm betting it becomes a staple in foodways studies across the country. However, it's not perfect. This collection of essays is unevenly written; some are eminently consumable, but others read like university papers – big on facts, but thin on verve. Do foodways historians ever use ghostwriters? That might have helped here.

Editor Nathalie Cooke's introduction is a fascinating fast-forward through Canadian cookbook history. In order to provide context to the essays within the book, she suggests an analytical framework that splits this history into five discrete sections. However, the book itself is organized into only two groupings: "Eating Canadian" and "What Do Our Food Stories Tell Us About Ourselves." Nor do any of the essays within refer to Cooke's proposed framework, so I'm left wondering what I'm supposed to do with it.

The choice to wrap the collection with Gary Draper's whimsical "Dishing Dad: 'How to Cook a Husband' and Other Metaphorical Recipes," however, was an inspired choice. His writing is superb and the topic of the essay – essentially, a look at the recipe as literary device and structure, and how we tell our tales through it – leaves the reader wanting more. More cookbooks, more knowledge, more history.

That's what every author hopes for, isn't it?

CHO Upcoming Events

February 2010

CHO in partnership with Fort York National Historic Site

MAD FOR MARMALADE, CRAZY FOR CITRUS! – Third Annual

Fort York National Historic Site

100 Garrison Road, Toronto

off Fleet, east of Strachan Ave, west of Bathurst

416-392-6907, fortyork@toronto.ca

Saturday, February 27, 9:30 am–3 pm

Plan to join the third annual celebration of citrus in winter! Workshops, tastings, marketplace, competition, demonstrations – lots to do!

April 2010

CHO in partnership with Campbell House Museum

APRON-MANIA

Campbell House Museum

160 Queen Street West, Toronto

at Osgoode Subway Station

416 597-0227, campbellhouse@bellnet.ca

Saturday, May 8, 2:00 pm

You and members of the Costume Society of Ontario are invited to gather together to share a passion for aprons, from utilitarian kitchen coverings to glamorous hostess aprons of the 1950s and 60s. Maggie Newell and Daphne Hart will display their apron collections, and you are invited to bring your favourite apron, old or new.

\$10 members; \$12 non-members. Includes refreshments. Pre-registration recommended.

June 2010

CHO'S annual spring lecture, in partnership with Campbell House Museum

LECTURE BY ANITA STEWART

Campbell House Museum

160 Queen Street West, Toronto

at Osgoode Subway Station

416 597-0227, campbellhouse@bellnet.ca

Date and topic to be announced

CHO is pleased to announce that gastronomer and culinary activist Anita Stewart will present the

annual spring lecture, this year held at Campbell House Museum. Anita believes that “communication is central to the creation of a dynamic food culture.” She wrote *Anita Stewart's Canada – The Food, the Recipes, the Stories* (Cuisine Canada Gold Award for Food Culture, 2009) expressly to celebrate Canada's food-scape and culinary history.

\$15 members and non-members. Includes refreshments. Pre-registration recommended.

July 2010

For CHO members only:

3rd ANNUAL SUMMER PICNIC IN PRINCE EDWARD COUNTY

Liz Driver's 1860 farm near Milford

Address and directions to be provided

Saturday, July 24, 11 am, for lunch at 12:30

CHO members, their partners, and children are invited to CHO's potluck picnic at Liz Driver's 100-acre farm, about 2 hrs 45 mins from Toronto. New activities planned for this year! RSVP to Liz by July 19: 416 691-4877, liz.driver@sympatico.ca, indicating number attending and your potluck contribution. Liz will send farm address and directions. Please bring your recipe.

September 2010

CHO'S AGM

Dundurn Castle, Hamilton

Sunday, September 19, time TBA

Following the AGM:

CANADIAN FOOD HISTORY 101:

COMPARE AND CONTRAST 1867 AND 1967

In this dramatic “mock class,” the audience audits Canadian Food History 101, where CHO board members take the roles of professor and students to compare and contrast agriculture, food fashions, cookbooks, kitchen technology, and kitchen fashion, at two significant dates in Canadian history.

November 2010

CHO in partnership with the Tool Group of Canada

KITCHEN TOOL MAGIC

The Victoria Square Community Center
2929 Elgin Mills Road East, Markham
Saturday, November 13, 8:30 am – noon

Arrive at 8:30 am to view and to trade or sell kitchen utensils, and to enjoy homemade refreshments. See collections of meat-grinders, butter pats, corkscrews, cast iron cookware and more. Antique cookbooks for sale by CHO. Meeting begins at 10:00 am, with talks about kitchen tools and fun sessions of “Show and Tell,” “What’s It?” and “No Tool Fool!”

Free admission and refreshments. To offer or request carpooling to this event, please contact Liz Driver: 416 691-4877, liz.driver@sympatico.ca

Also of Interest to CHO Members

SWEET AND SPICY: Valentine’s Workshop **Dundurn National Historic Site** **Saturday February 13, 2010**

Toss another log on the fire and “turn up the heat” in our historic kitchen for a lighthearted but stimulating look at the history of sweet and spicy libido enhancing foods. Arouse the senses preparing Victorian recipes while discovering the folklore of their amorous powers. 9 am–12 pm, pre-registration required, 14 years and older, \$55. To register: www.hamilton.ca/dundurn or call 905-546-2872.

BACK TO OUR ROOTS!

Garden harvest to winter table **Dundurn National Historic Site** **Saturday, February 27, 2010**

Explore food preservation techniques of root cellaring and other historic methods with Dundurn’s Historic Kitchen Gardener. Then turn up the heat in our historic kitchen and try your hand at authentic 19th century recipes with the cook and explore the act of cooking simple ingredients in a pot. Meet with local organic farmer Chris Krucker from Manorun Farm and Karen Burson

from Hamilton Eat Local to talk about the modern cellaring methods and the importance of supporting local farming. Complete your experience with samples of your recipes and Dundurn preserves. Rediscover the methods of our ancestors! 9 am – 12 pm, \$25, pre-registration required, minimum age 14 years. To register: **Manorun Farm:** manorun@hwcen.org tel:905-304-8048

THE CRUST OF THE MATTER: Bread, Buns and Crackers

Dundurn National Historic Site **Date Saturday April 17, 2010**

Bread has had a powerful effect on our culinary history. Come and discover the cultural influences on bread baking in North America during the 19th century. Enjoy a hands-on experience kneading dough in our historic kitchen and bake a few historic recipes using our 19th century wood range. 9 am – 1pm, pre-registration required, 14 years and older, \$55. To register: www.hamilton.ca/dundurn or 905-546-2872.

ALL THINGS SWEET

Montgomery’s Inn, Toronto

Saturday, February 13, 9 am – 1 pm

Sugar and sweeteners have had a long and varied history in baking. In this workshop we’ll look at the history of the sweet side of baking. Using sugars, treacle and honey, we’ll make and bake a variety of gingerbreads using authentic historical recipes to see how gingerbread and sweeteners have changed over the centuries. Pre-registration is required. \$30 plus PST/GST.

FOOD AT MONTGOMERY’S INN

Montgomery’s Inn, Toronto

Saturday February 20, 9 am – 1 pm

Ever wondered what guests were served at early 19th century inns such as Montgomery’s Inn? Or who prepared and served the food? What did it cost the guests? We will learn about the multi-faceted nature of food production and consumption in Inn life in this workshop as we prepare a meal together. We will bake the bread and pie in the wood-fired oven and cook a pot of soup on the open hearth. The workshop series will conclude as we sit down in Montgomery Inn’s tavern to enjoy the meal we have just prepared. Pre-registration is required. \$30 plus PST/GST.

www.culinaryhistorians.ca

On our website you will find a bibliography of Canadian food history, back issues of *Culinary Chronicles*, and links to culinary sites and to cookbook collections. Also posted are CHO's Constitution, reviews of recent CHO events, notices of upcoming events, a membership form for downloading, and much more. Our home page features changing illustrations, courtesy of Mary F. Williamson. CHO thanks the University of Guelph for maintaining our website.

ABOUT *CULINARY CHRONICLES*

Submissions: We welcome items for the newsletter; however, their acceptance depends on appropriateness of subject matter, quality of writing, and space. All submissions should reflect current research on Canadian themes. The Editor reserves the right to accept or reject submissions and to edit them. The Editor's contact information is 416 781-8153 or fionalucas@rogers.com.

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| Upcoming themes: | Spring 2010, Number 64 | – Kitchen Gardening in Canada | Publication Date: May 1 |
| | Summer 2010, Number 65 | – Foodways of Canada's Atlantic Provinces | Publication Date: August 1 |
| | Autumn 2010, Number 66 | – Foodways of Canada's First Nations | Publication Date: November 1 |
| | Winter 2011, Number 67 | – Québec's Historical Foodways | Publication Date: February 1 |
| | Spring 2011, Number 68 | – Canadian Food and Folklore | Publication Date: May 1 |
| | Summer 2011, Number 69 | – Canadian Cookbooks and Gender | Publication Date: August 1 |

Please contact the Editor if you wish to write on an upcoming theme, or to propose another. Deadline for copy is six weeks prior to publication.

Newsletter Committee: Fiona Lucas (General Editor), Ed Lyons (layout), Eleanor Gasparik (copy editing), Janet Kronick (reviews). For contributing to this issue, the Newsletter Committee thanks Robin Bergart, Liz Driver, Madeleine Greey, Alexandra Grigorieva, Daphne Hart, Angie McKaig, and Peter Myers.

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MISSION STATEMENT

The Culinary Historians of Ontario is an organization that researches, interprets, preserves and celebrates Canada's and Ontario's culinary heritage, which has been shaped by the food traditions of the First Nations peoples and generations of immigrants from all parts of the world. Through programs, events and publications, CHO educates its members and the public about the foods and beverages of Canada's past. Founded in Ontario in 1994, CHO welcomes new members wherever they live.

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Members enjoy the quarterly newsletter, *Culinary Chronicles*, may attend CHO events at special member's rates, and receive information on food-history happenings. Members join a network of people dedicated to Ontario's culinary history.

Membership fees:

\$30 Cdn for One-Year Individual, Household and Institution

\$55 Cdn for Two-Year Individual, Household and Institution

American and international members may pay in American dollars.

Membership year: January 1 to December 31

Website: www.culinaryhistorians.ca

Email: culinaryhistorians@uoguelph.ca

Webmaster: University of Guelph

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

2009–2011 Executive: President: Bob Wildfong; Vice President: vacant; Past President: Fiona Lucas; Secretary: Marguerite Newell; Treasurer: vacant. The two vacancies are to be filled at the CHO meeting on February 27.

Committees: Program Chair: Liz Driver; Newsletter Chair: Fiona Lucas; Membership Chair: Amy Scott; Electronic Resources Chair: Angie McKaig; Outreach and Education Chair: vacant; Hamilton Program Co-ordinator: Janet Kronick.