

The Food Industry

Pages from History, Part 4



Photo: Pillsbury.com

Look at that smile! For her No-Knead Water-Rising Twists, a beaming Theodora Smafield of Rockford, Illinois, accepts the \$50,000 grand prize check at the first annual Pillsbury Mills Grand National Recipe and Baking Contest, held at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel in New York in 1949. Turn to Sarah Elvins's article on page 4.

MORSELS & TIDBITS



Issued by Canada on April 17, 2019, the Sweet Canada series of postage stamps features five celebrated Canadian desserts: the rich and chocolatey no-bake Nanaimo bar (Vancouver Island), the Saskatoon berry pie (Prairie Provinces), the butter tart (Ontario), *la tarte au sucre* (Quebec), and the blueberry grunt (East Coast).

Repast

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The food memoir is coming into its own as one of the more popular literary genres of our time. A few notable examples:

- Rick Bragg, *The Best Cook in the World: Tales from My Momma's Southern Table* (New York: Vintage Books, 2018). "Momma"—the author's mother, Margaret—was a cook at a roadside restaurant when he was growing up in Possum Trot, Alabama, during the 1960s. At home she prepared family dishes generations old—from memory, without recipes. Bragg, a Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist, relates all of the family tales with sensitivity and humor. Sample chapters include his memories of cracklin' cornbread, poke salad, spareribs stewed in butter beans, baked possum with sweet potatoes, turtle soup, fried crappie with hush puppies, and fig preserves.
- Alice Waters, *Coming to My Senses: The Making of a Counterculture Cook* (New York: Clarkson Potter, 2017). Waters recalls her youth in the years leading up to 1971, when she founded the tiny but path-breaking Chez Panisse Restaurant and Café in Berkeley, CA. For someone having a suburban middle-class upbringing, her Spring 1965 college semester abroad in Paris and backpacking across Europe was understandably life-changing. Amid the youthful carousing and romance, we see the gradual emergence of an urge to help change the world—an outlook within which the evolution (and revolution) of her food and cooking was only the most visible manifestation.
- Joe Famularo, *Perdutamente: Crazy for Italian Food, a Memoir of Family, Food, and Place, with Recipes* (Bloomington, IN: Xlibris, 2013). Famularo, an Italian-American cookbook author, recalls life growing up during the two World Wars. His mother, an immigrant from Naples who called her *caponata* relish "the spice of life", held down a full-time job while also cooking and cleaning for her large family in a tenement on the West Side of Manhattan.

NANCY SANNAR, 83



A WOMAN WITH A BIG FINNISH HEART

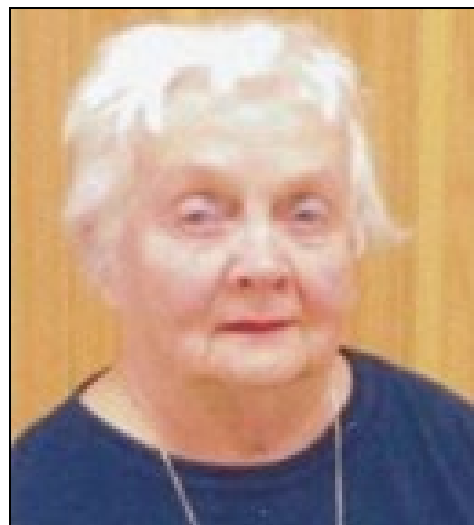
We were saddened when we heard that longtime CHAA member Nancy Sannar passed away on Jan. 18, 2019, of heart failure at age 83. Nancy and her husband Alton (Al), who died in Apr. 2001, had joined our organization way back in the 1990s. A few years ago Nancy moved from Livonia to Henry Ford Village, a retirement community in Dearborn where she was very happy. She remained a well-liked member of CHAA; she was a gracious, generous, and soft-spoken woman, and we will miss her. A memorial was held on May 1 at the Finnish Cultural Association Cultural Center in Farmington Hills.

Nancy was a proud and active member of the Finnish-American community, and enjoyed sharing foods and memories from her heritage. She was born Nancy Lempi Kivisaari on Jun. 28, 1935, one of four children in a farming family in Richmond, a rural township south of Negaunee in Michigan's Upper Peninsula (U.P.). Her parents, Jacob Kivisaari and Lempi Jokinen, were naturalized immigrants, and their farmstead also usually included one or two Finnish lodgers working in the lumber and pulp industry or in the nearby iron mine.

That part of the U.P. is highly Finnish, and the Kivisaaris had plenty of fellow immigrants as neighbors. Before elementary school, Nancy spoke Finnish only. She once began an article for *Repast* by recalling:

When I was growing up in the Upper Peninsula with first-generation Finnish parents, the afternoon coffee that occurred around 3:30 or 4 p.m. was an important part of the day in the Finnish home. My mother always had pastries on hand to serve with the coffee, whether it was just family or whether other visitors came by. In fact, whether visitors stopped by in morning, noon, or evening, they were always served coffee and pastries. There were also cookies or cakes, usually homemade but sometimes purchased. Mother made *nisu* every other week. *Nisu* [also called *pulla*] is a yeasted coffee bread flavored with cardamom. My job when young was to remove the hulls from the cardamom pods and pulverize the seeds inside. (Nancy Lempi Sannar, "Around the Finnish Coffee Table", *Repast*, 25:4 [Fall 2009]).

In the late Summer and early Fall, Mrs. Kivisaari would prepare dishes using whatever bounty was harvested from the farm and garden. There were Finnish-style salads using leftover vegetables and sometimes meat. Blueberries and other fruits and vegetables were often canned for later use.



Nancy went on to college at Western Michigan Univ. in Kalamazoo, where she earned a teaching degree. She met and married Alton Sannar, who was from that part of Michigan. Al had served as a Staff Sgt. with the U.S. Air Force in Korea, and completed a bachelor's degree in 1958 at the Univ. of Michigan, while Nancy completed her master's degree there in 1960. For decades she taught elementary school in the Dearborn Public Schools, mostly second and third grade at River Oaks School, while Al spent the bulk of his career at a Defense Dept. facility in Warren, just north of Detroit.

As a member of our group, Nancy's typically Finnish hospitality was on full display at the semi-annual theme meals. She usually went well beyond the requirement to prepare a single dish! For our German meal, "A Cruise on the Rhein (or the Huron)" (Aug. 2009), we recall that she not only made dishes of *Bayerischer wurstsalat* (Bavarian sausage salad) and *tomaten mit wurstsalat* (tomatoes stuffed with sausage salad), but also several appetizers, including *heringstopf mit saurer sahn* (jarred herring with sour cream), thin-sliced German bread topped with *lachstuten mit rahm* (cones of cured salmon with cream), and *bleichsellerie mit roquefortkäse* (ribbed celery stuffed with Roquefort cheese and walnuts). Of course, Nancy often treated us to Finnish dishes, such as beet salad with herring ("Salads from Around the World", Jul. 2006), *canapés* of rye crispbread topped variously with smoked salmon, shrimp, *Lappi* cheese, lettuce, and slices of radish and hardboiled egg ("Sandwiches from Around the World", Jul. 2007), and *mustikkarahatorttu*, a blueberry-cheese torte ("Favorite Hometown and Family Recipes", Aug. 2010). One of her favorite cookbooks was *The Finnish Cookbook* (New York, 1964) by Beatrice Ojakangas of Duluth, MN.

Nancy was a big booster in her community. In addition to the CHAA and the Finnish Cultural Association, she was a member and onetime President of Friends of the Livonia Library. She was also active in several local organizations promoting music performance and appreciation (she herself had played the piano from the time she was young), two chapters of the American Assn. of University Women (AAUW), and the Livonia Garden Club. ■

“GENTLEMEN PREFER PIE WHEN THE COOK IS A BLONDE”



THE EARLY HISTORY OF THE PILLSBURY BAKE-OFF

by Sarah Elvins

Sarah Elvins is an Assoc. Professor of History at the Univ. of Manitoba in Winnipeg. Her research interests and publications focus on American history, consumer culture, and urban history. In Feb. 2018 she gave a talk on “Betty Crocker, Cheez Whiz, and the Promises of Modernity: Advertising and Convenience Foods in the 1940s and 1950s” at the Rady Jewish Community Centre in Winnipeg. Dr. Elvins earned her master’s and doctoral degrees at York University in Toronto.

We are currently living in a golden age of cooking competitions. On Netflix, BBC, the Food Network, and YouTube, you can watch both professional chefs and home cooks square off and cook dishes for a panel of judges. Popular television shows like “MasterChef”, “The Great British Bake-Off”, and “Chopped” allow viewers to revel in the drama of a fallen soufflé or marvel at a prize-winning layer cake. These types of contests have a long history: in the United States

One hundred finalists attended the live Bake-Off in 1949 to make their recipe at their own oven station. Philip W. Pillsbury, the company’s president and the grandson of Charles Pillsbury, led contestants to their stoves at the start of each contest until 1984.

Photo: Pillsbury.com

in the mid-19th Century, home cooks could enter their pies and preserves for judging at local county fairs. On a national scale, however, nothing compares to the Pillsbury Bake-Off, which originated in 1949 and continues today in modified form.

The Bake-Off (originally known as the Grand National Recipe and Baking Contest) was a corporate-sponsored phenomenon. Grocery stores featured huge displays of Pillsbury items and contest entry forms. The annual cookbook of winning recipes was a bestseller. The contest itself was covered on live radio and television, and results appeared in all major newspapers, with local press excitedly cheering on competitors from their home states.

In some ways the Bake-Off was a precursor to the modern television cooking contest. Contestants were assembled together at identical cooking stations to replicate their dishes live (instead of being able to submit items prepared at home, as was more typical in a county fair). Reporters occasionally walked the contest floor to interview cooks as they worked, and a panel of expert judges convened to evaluate the finished cakes, pies, casseroles, and cookies.

Home Cooks Surrounded by Glamor

The early history of the Bake-Off is fascinating because the contest transformed in some significant ways in its early years. The competition initially had only one stipulation for entrants: that they use ½ cup of Pillsbury flour in their creations. The first contests conveyed a certain urban sophistication and elegance, rather than the cozy, home-cooking vibe that is familiar today. By the 1960s Pillsbury introduced new categories highlighting the use of convenience products, and encouraged quick and easy recipes that limited the amount of time spent in the kitchen. In its early years, however, the competition aimed for more glamor than efficiency, and coverage on television, radio, and in the press helped to whip up excitement about the lucky 100 finalists.

The first Grand National Baking Contest, held in December 1949, was hosted at the renowned Waldorf-Astoria Hotel in Man-



The Grand Ballroom of the Manhattan Waldorf-Astoria during first-ever Bake-Off Contest in 1949.

Photo:
Pillsbury.com



hattan. The hotel's Grand Ballroom was transformed into a kitchen stadium, outfitted with 100 General Electric stoves (which would be gifted to the finalists after the contest). The demand for electricity to power those ovens was so great that the Waldorf had to tap into the New York City subway grid because the ballroom lacked alternating current. Contestants were given from 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. to produce a dish worthy of presentation to the judging panel. The seven judges were led by Edith Barber, food editor of *The New York Sun*. The guest of honor was Eleanor Roosevelt, wife of the late Pres. Franklin Roosevelt, who tasted the dishes and helped to hand out the prize money. Results were announced at an elegant luncheon at the hotel's Starlight Roof, where contestants dined on an *haute cuisine* meal of avocados stuffed with crab meat and caviar,

One contestant from Wisconsin had brought her own eggs from the farm, fearing that she would not be able to find good, fresh eggs in the city.

breasts of guinea hen served on sugar-cured ham with mushrooms under glass, and desserts including golden sabayon, Croquants Madeleines, and a feature of the hotel's regular menu called Bibescot Glacé New Waldorf, decorated with fresh strawberries and chocolate leaves. A beaming Mrs. Ralph E. Smafield, whose family had recently moved from southeastern Michigan to Rockford, IL, accepted a check from Phillip W. Pillsbury, president of Pillsbury Mills. Because she had included a special token from the Pillsbury sack of flour with her entry form, Smafield's original \$25,000 prize was doubled to \$50,000 (the equivalent of about \$537,000 in 2019 dollars).

Modern cooks tend to associate the name Pillsbury with prepared products like refrigerated crescent rolls or pre-made pie

crusts, but the winning dish from 1949 uses an unusual technique and a fair amount of labor. Smafield's Nut Twists requires 12 ingredients and involves creating a sweet yeasted dough from scratch, then wrapping it in cheesecloth and dropping it into a pail of warm water to proof. The risen dough is then separated into strips, twisted, and rolled in a mixture of sugar and nuts. Other finalist recipes were also demanding of the cook's skill and time. The Snow Ring requires three separate dough risings. Texas Hospitality cake is straightforward in terms of creating cake layers, but has a fondant frosting requiring a sugar syrup that is brought to the candy stage known as soft ball (where the hot syrup forms a soft ball if a bit of it is dropped into cold water). Many recipes required use of a double boiler, custard fillings between cake layers, or other elaborate steps. The 12 entries for pies all used home-made crusts. It is striking how few of the recipes from 1949 are "quick and easy"; one can imagine the stress felt by contestants trying to replicate intricate dishes that required repeated risings or fiddling with caramel on the stovetop.

At times the contrast between the home cooks, flown in from across the country, and the cosmopolitan setting of the contest was in high relief. All of the finalists were awarded a trip to New York and a two-day stay at the Waldorf, including a luxurious breakfast in bed. Most of the contestants were seeing Manhattan for the first time, and all of them were excited. At each cooking, uniformed hotel bellhops whisked away dirty dishes from the work tables. One contestant from Wisconsin had brought her own eggs from the farm, fearing that she would not be able to find good, fresh eggs in the city. A woman from Alaska had carried cranberries in her luggage from home. Finalists worried about using electric ranges for the first time, or about unfamiliar brands of ingredients (the grand prize winner, Smafield, reported that she had to wait for hours to get instructions about a new kind of yeast that she had never used before, and so couldn't start cooking until noon). Mrs. Lynn Strickler of Maryland had an anxiety-filled wait as contest officials scrambled to find her a cast-iron pan suitable to make her cornbread. Some contestants who were overcome with worry had to leave the ballroom floor to go and rest to recover their nerve. A correspondent for the *Christian Science*

continued on next page



Left: In 1949, Philip Pillsbury, Eleanor Roosevelt, and Art Linkletter sample the winning No-Knead Water-Rising Twists created by Theodora Smafield of Rockford, IL, standing at right (General Mills Archives, via the Minnesota Historical Society's online MNopedia). Right: In 1950, the Duchess of Windsor, second from right, congratulates winners in that year's Pillsbury Bake-off. From left are Mrs. Bernard Derosseau of Rice Lake, WI, first place winner in a junior division, and Mrs. Peter Wuebel of Redwood City, CA, grand prize winner. Far right, Pillsbury Mills president Philip W. Pillsbury helps hold Mrs. Wuebel's winning "Orange Kiss Me Cake" (Associated Press file photo, via *The Times of Northwest Indiana*, Mar. 26, 2012).

PILLSBURY BAKE-OFF *continued from page 5*

Monitor compared the hardworking finalists to "so many Cinderellas", who were brought to the ballroom not to dance but to toil, "all wearing aprons made from 50-pound Pillsbury flour sacks, waiting for the coming of the Prince Charming prize awardee."

The Eyes and Ears of the Nation Were on It

Public interest in the 1949 contest ran high. Pillsbury Mills announced that it had selected the winners from over 200,000 entries. Initially the company intended to wait until Spring to publicize the recipes in a cookbook, but demand for directions for the winning nut twists was so incessant that by December 31, 1949 it released the recipe to the press, and the *New York Times* published it with accompanying photos showing steps in the preparation process. Eleanor Roosevelt wrote about her experience at the contest in her regular nationally-syndicated column, "My Day". She described the excitement of the contestants as they hobnobbed with company executives and radio celebrities. She emphasized that the competition involved ordinary citizens:

This is a healthy contest and a highly American one. It may sell Pillsbury flour but it also reaches far down into the lives of the housewives of America. These were women who ran their homes and cooked at home; they were not professional cooks.

The 1950 contest again gathered home cooks from coast to coast at the Waldorf Astoria. The awards luncheon was broadcast on both television and radio, using the time slot of "Art Linkletter's House Party", a popular daytime variety show. Finalists came from 36 states as well as the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. The former Wallis Simpson, the Duchess of Windsor, wore a chic, buttoned-down-the-back wool dress and white hat to attend the luncheon. While one might think that the glamorous wife of Edward VIII would have little in common with

American contestants such as 17-year-old mother of two Mrs. Bernard Derosseau of Rice Lake, WI, the Duchess emphasized that "most of us in this room have had the experience of cooking a meal for the man we love. ... I'm happy to say the Duke is an appreciative husband."

The televised broadcast featured interviews with contestants, and host Linkletter homed in on unusual stories surrounding the origin of recipes. One contestant announced that she was given her recipe for lemon curd during the war by a Scottish nurse, while they both were stuck in a P.O.W. concentration camp in Japan. The specter of global conflict was mentioned more than once in the program. Linkletter asked his highness the Duke of Windsor why he was attending the contest, and the royal emphasized how the ladies and girls in 4H clubs on the farm were "keeping us safe from Communism" and part of the great alliance between the United States and the British Empire. He noted, "You wives and daughters and mothers and sisters in the television audience...in this crisis we are facing, we will win."

To add to the entertainment value of the program, radio singer Joan Edwards emerged in elegant dress to sing a new song that had been composed just for the occasion. Edwards was known as a popular soloist, and had hosted her own program, "Girl About Town", on CBS, and performed on the show "Your Hit Parade" with celebrity singers including Frank Sinatra and Lawrence Tibbett. The lyrics of the song reinforced the idea that the cooking and baking provided opportunities for women to attract a mate and keep him happy:

A woman's place – without her it's not home
With her it's a paradise; it needs a woman's touch
For she knows how to win a man, and when it's dinner hour
She wins him with a little cup of flour

He may like the way you look
He may like the way you cook
But he'll love you if you learn to bake a cake.

He'll keep on making with the lovin'
If he likes the cake you're baking in the oven
You'll find that baking makes him chummy
Cause the way to win the man is through his tummy

If the things you make are right and it suits his appetite
Then perhaps there'll be a prize that you can take
At the Bake-Off, at the Waldorf
Where you'll show the world you've learned to bake a cake!

The winning recipe in 1951 was indeed a cake, a layer creation christened Orange Kiss Me Cake in homage to the hit Broadway musical "Kiss Me, Kate".

A Barometer of Cultural Trends

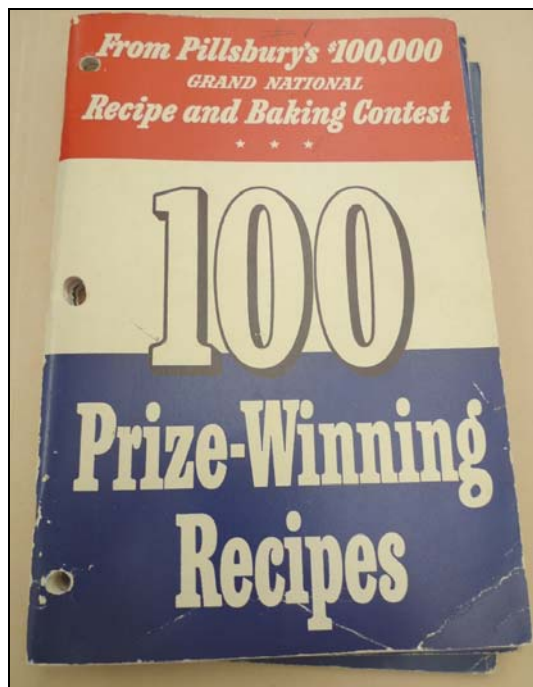
Not surprisingly, news coverage of the Bake-Off reinforced 1950s gender stereotypes. *The Washington Post* reported that Mrs. Kendall E. Cooper, who won "Best of Class" and \$1,000 for her French Silk Chocolate Pie in 1951, was a "blue-eyed bonde who lives in suburban Silver Spring [Maryland] and knows that gentlemen prefer pie." Mrs. R. W. Sprague of San Marino, CA, knew she had to enter her chocolate cake with white filling and fudge icing because it was a dessert that "all the men like."

Many contestants framed their success in the kitchen in terms of their ability to please the men, rather than their own desires or personal preferences. The 1952 Bake-Off cookbook reinforces this sense that the cook's main goal was to please others: "A wo-

The novelty of having a man create a dish was underscored by a contestant by the name of Houston James Newman, a former glass blower from St. Louis, who named his creation "The Man-Cooked Dinner".

man seldom bakes a cake, a pie, or a batch of cookies for herself. But through the foods she bakes, she expresses her thoughtfulness and love to her family, her friends or her church." The rare male contestants who made the finals were a source of curiosity. The three men who made the cut in the 1949 contest were described as "few but eager", and the novelty of having a man create a dish was underscored by a contestant by the name of Houston James Newman, a former glass blower from St. Louis, who named his creation "The Man-Cooked Dinner".

The media discussion of the Bake-Off also tapped into larger fears about changes to the American nation in the postwar era. The high levels of mobility during the war and afterward, and the fact that fewer people were staying home on the farm, led to anxiety about the loss of traditional values and expertise. In 1951,



Left, Sarah Elvins's own copy of the Pillsbury Bake-Off cookbook; below, opened to the 1949 winning recipe for No-Knead Water-Rising Twists.



food editor Jane Nickerson of *The New York Times* noted wryly that although the contest managed to bring in finalists from 31 states and the Territory of Hawaii, for the third straight year there were no cooks from Manhattan, perhaps indicating "what many a Manhattan husband has long suspected, that the art of home cooking has died here."

After the 1954 contest, *The Washington Post's* J. A. Livingston pointed to the fact that a woman from tiny Webster, SD, took home the top prize of the contest, and the runner-up was a 13-year-old girl from a town of 100 in upstate New York, as proof that rural women were superior cooks. He spoke with disdain of the urban housewife, who "creates jobs for the middle men. She doesn't squeeze orange juice. She doesn't mix her cake batter or biscuit dough. ... She can, if she desires, buy an entire cooked meal." In contrast, he argued, women living in the country still viewed housework as a career, and their culinary skill paid off in prestige at the county fair and the church social, not to men-

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THE “SWEETEST PLACE ON EARTH”

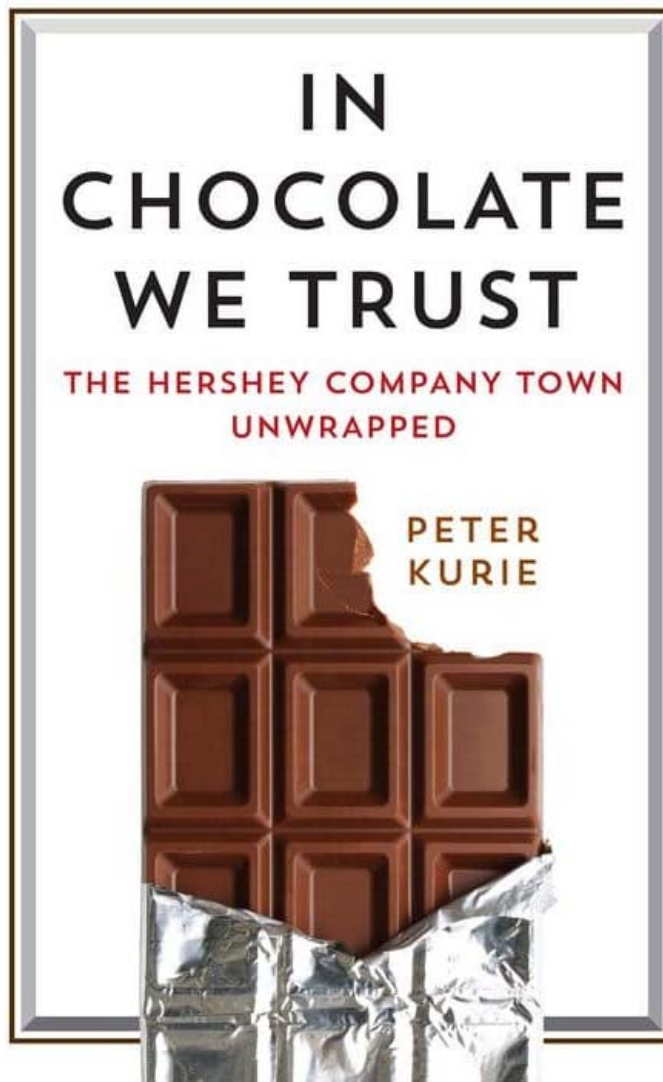
Peter Kurie,
In Chocolate We Trust: The Hershey Company Town Unwrapped
 Philadelphia: Univ. of Pennsylvania Press,
 2018
 216 pp., \$34.95 hbk.

by Howard J. Bromberg

Howard Bromberg, who joined CHAA last year, lives in Ann Arbor with his wife Maria and their three children. He is a Prof. of Law in the Legal Practice Program at the Univ. of Michigan. Among his other writings, he was the Editor of a three-volume reference work, Great Lives from History: The Incredibly Wealthy (Ipswich, MA: Salem Press, 2011). After earning three degrees at Harvard and Stanford, he worked as an assistant district attorney in New York and as legislative counsel to Congressman Thomas Petri of Wisconsin. In addition to UM, Dr. Bromberg has taught at Chicago and Stanford law schools, Peking University School of Transnational Law, and Ave Maria School of Law.

In the Gilded Age, incredible fortunes were made from the distinctive American pursuits of religious fervor, health food, and entrepreneurial innovation. In Battle Creek, MI, in the beginning of the 20th Century, the Kellogg Brothers, Seventh-Day Adventists, built a fortune from their invention and marketing of corn flakes. Adding a genius for mass marketing, C. W. Post amassed his riches by marketing ready-to-eat breakfast foods that would, he claimed, put customers on the “road to Wellville”. One of the most remarkable—and most influential—fortunes in the food industry was made by Milton Hershey. Hershey (1857-1945) was born to a devout Mennonite family (Church of the Brethren) in Pennsylvania. In 1903, he founded what soon became the largest chocolate manufacturing company in the world, selling billions of milk chocolate bars.

As with the cereal makers of Battle Creek, Hershey’s formula for business success included mass production, national marketing, consumer convenience, and a salute to healthy eating. Chocolate confections, which previously were a luxury, requiring expense and effort to prepare, were now wrapped in foil, ready to eat, accessible to all for anytime snacking. Hershey likened the health effects of his chocolate to those preached by the Battle Creek cereal makers. Early promotional slogans included “Cocoa is a food and a good food is Hershey’s” and “Hershey’s for health” (p. 80).



Peter Kurie, in his 2018 book, *In Chocolate We Trust: The Hershey Company Town Unwrapped*, briefly recounts the business successes of Milton Hershey, but the focus is on the philanthropic trusts to which Hershey left the entirety of his fortune, and on the company town entwined with those philanthropic endeavors: Hershey, PA, the “sweetest place on earth”, about 100 miles west of Philadelphia. The Hershey entities include the M. S. Hershey Foundation, Hershey Junior College (since closed), Hotel Hershey, Hersheypark, Penn State Health Milton S. Hershey Medical Center, and Hershey Entertainment and Resorts Company. But central to the book’s perspective is the Milton Hershey School Trust, with a mission to serve orphans, later including children in need (“social orphans”), and powered by what is now a \$12 billion endowment, courtesy of being the majority shareholder in the Hershey Company.

The author, himself a native of Hershey town, is a young cultural anthropologist. The book is based on his Ph.D. dissertation at Princeton Univ., in which he employed ethnographic methods to explore what he calls the “Hershey ecosystem”. His focus is the town of Hershey, as it participates in and is shaped by the legacy of Milton Hershey—both as a man and as embodied in the perpetual trusts that he founded.



A postcard published in 1931 by Curt Teich & Co.

Photo:
Matchsets, via
<https://www.hippostcard.com>

Kurie's research consisted of "participation in and observation of local public rituals and ordinary social activities; informal and semi-structured interviews; reading in local history books, archives, and newspapers; and in general, being present and alert to whatever might transpire among the 'natives'." He examines the imprint of Milton Hershey on the town, and the influence that his vision still bears—the "afterlife" of Milton Hershey, as Kurie labels it. He traces the impact of the Hershey Company and its connection to Milton Hershey's social aspirations; for example, in World War 2, Hershey Ration D bars were supplied to American GIs.

The town of Hershey was one of several company towns envisioned and built by the entrepreneurs of the Gilded Age. Reflecting his spiritual heritage, Milton Hershey imagined and constructed a town with amenities and decent living standards for his workers, replete with a trolley system, free health care, free education, and a sister town in Cuba (all defunct to a large extent) and the still existing amusement park, zoo, theater, hotel, gardens, golf course, stadium, and ice rink with hockey team. Nevertheless, Kurie reflects on the nature of a town so entangled with the life and legacy of one man. For example, Hershey's vision of generous wages for his workers could run up against the need of his trusts to accumulate capital for his philanthropic activities. Kurie recounts the Hershey Company's resistance to unionization and the bitter factory workers' strike of 1937. Recently the company has seen downsizing of workers and export of operations to Mexico and Canada.

Kurie spends time with students, teachers, house parents, and trustees of the Milton Hershey School. The school imparts a rigorous education and lessons in life and religion— free of charge— to some 2,000 needy students annually, on a 2,500-acre campus and at a yearly cost of \$110,000 per pupil. Funding is supplied by the aforementioned Milton Hershey School Trust, and Kurie investigates the controversial state of the Trust and of various other Hershey entities circling the

town. Chief among these controversies was the so-called scandal of 2002, when the trustees of the Hershey School Trust proposed selling its shares of the Hershey Company— a sale that was eventually derailed. The scandal sparked a public outcry, lawsuits, and the creation of a watchdog group, Protect the Hershey's Children. The fallout also included a multiyear investigation, launched in 2011, by Pennsylvania Attorney General Kathleen Kane, as to whether the Hershey trustees were profiting extravagantly from their positions, to the detriment of the Trust to which they owe a fiduciary duty. In addition, in 2016 the U. S. Department of Justice launched an investigation into the School's compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The resulting publicity drew the attention of legal scholars and sociologists, who wrote about the nature of trust agreements and the impact they have on the societies in which they are embedded.

Such investigations leads Kurie to a reflection on the nature of trusts— a distinctive, American philanthropic institution that freezes the money and intentions of the founding donor into perpetuity. How does trust law correlate the iron-clad restrictions laid down by the grantor with the changing needs of society? Wherein does a trust such as the Milton Hershey School Trust owe its duty: to the school it was established to fund, or also to the broader social concerns and actors— factory workers, town residents, hospital patients— which its operations affect? Should the Trust sell its Hershey company shares, its central identity, as proposed in 2002, if it maximizes profits for the Milton Hershey School? And what does it mean in a democratic society that so much of its charitable life is dominated by benevolent billionaires— Rockefellers, Carnegies, Bill Gates, Warren Buffet— and Milton Hershey? Such are the questions— as relevant as ever in 2019— that are borne of the legacy of a beloved bar of wrapped milk chocolate. ■

THE STRANGE AND WONDERFUL WORLD OF PROFESSIONAL FOOD STYLING

by Denise Vivaldo with Cindie Flannigan

*Denise Vivaldo has been an award-winning food stylist in Los Angeles since the late 1980s. Originally a professional chef caterer in Hollywood, she was “discovered” by TV mogul Aaron Spelling. Her company, The Denise Vivaldo Group (<https://denisevivaldogroup.com>), styles food for cookbooks, packaging, grocery store chains, restaurants, television, and film. Vivaldo won the Award of Excellence for Food Styling from the International Assn. of Culinary Professionals (IACP) in 2010. She and her creative partner, Cindie Flannigan, also teach food styling, catering, and cooking classes across the U.S. and internationally, and are the authors of *The Food Stylist’s Handbook*.*

I’m betting that you’ve seen beautiful food photography in cookbooks, magazines, and social media, and have thought to yourself, “I want to know how to do that!” You see the dazzling settings, the beautiful light, the expensive linens and tableware, the delicious-looking food, and you love it, critique it, and might even try to copy the styling and experiment with the recipes.

In 1984, I was struck by a passion for food styling. I was a culinary student in San Francisco and found myself hooked after a food stylist taught a week-long class at my school. The class took us to a photographer’s studio and taught us about recipe writing, designing a photograph, and prepping food for a shot. The information was everything I had wondered about— that course changed my life.

Food styling is bigger than ever. It has gone from being a niche activity to an industry that drives websites such as Instagram, Facebook, and Pinterest. But it’s a still-growing market with strong international appeal. Both of those trends bode well for food styling.

When I began working in the business, getting information about food styling was almost impossible. Stylists in the field were few, and they were reluctant to share their information. There were no books on food styling, and no Internet. I wanted to change that. So, after 30 years of working as a food stylist, I, along with my creative partner and fellow stylist Cindie Flannigan, wrote *The Food Stylist’s Handbook: Hundreds of Media Styling Tips, Tricks, and Secrets for Chefs, Artists, Bloggers, and Food Lovers* (2010, 2017).



Photo: Jerome Pennington

Just another day at work: Here, Cindie Flannigan is styling food while she kneels under a table during a video shoot. Styling food on a set is often awkward, especially on video sets because there are so many people involved.

The Job of Food Styling

What a successful food stylist does is to help produce an image that sells a dream, brand, product, sandwich, plate, lifestyle, chef, or restaurant. We style everything and anything connected to food. Think of it this way: every picture tells and sells a story.

It fulfills something deep within our souls to produce a beautiful photo, food buffet, or show segment for everyone to see. Food styling is an art form in which food is our medium.

A variety of different people have reason to hire a food stylist— photographers, producers, and art directors among them. The job has different definitions depending upon the client. Nevertheless, what all jobs and clients share is a need for someone to wrangle food in front of a camera, whether that camera is digital, film, HD video, or live television.

The actual styling of the food, when you put all of the separate pieces together, is the smallest— but also the most important— part of the job. That is where food styling experience truly counts.



Photos: Jon Edwards

A Brief History of Food Styling

Professional food styling arose a century ago out of the activities of the home economists who were employed by large corporations as recipe developers and testers. While selling appliances or new products, such as a cake mix, they were drafted into food styling simply because there was no one else to do it. They worked in uncharted waters. Even if they did manage to make something look nice for the camera, the photographer probably had no idea how to light it. See for yourself: Go to any used book store and look at the photos in books and magazines from the 1930s, 1940s, 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s.

Photos of food looked the way they did back then mostly because the food looked that way. Printing methods of the time didn't help either, as they didn't accurately represent the colors of the food, and props were used with little or no logic. (One of our favorite old photos shows a roast beef on a platter sitting on fake grass with a duck decoy next to it— for heaven's sake, why?!) Also, in the thirties and forties, molded foods were popular: lots of domed salads and meat recipes with thick, shiny sauces. It's often impossible to tell what the food had started its life as.

Cultural changes greatly influence food. After World War 2, for example, household kitchen equipment began to be improved and more widely available. In this "age of convenience", household help began to disappear in America, and it became more common for Mom to be the cook. She needed recipes; they came with pictures. Self-service grocery store chains proliferated, making every kind of food easier to purchase, prepare, and store. Those fifties coffin-like freezers allowed

women to shop only once a week, and changed how Americans ate and looked at food. Together with prosperity and an economic boom, eating out became more common, and increasing numbers of diners were being exposed to artfully presented food. Julia Child and James Beard began educating the public about great food, and as a society we became more interested in food and cooking. Photography and printing improved, as did the presentations.

Slowly, food images began to change. Food photography started getting better. The lighting, framing, and propping improved, and the food began looking truly edible in the 1980s.

However, the incongruous use and overuse of props was a constant from the fifties all the way through the eighties. In the sixties and seventies, food tended to be portrayed in the context of entertaining; beginning in the eighties, the emphasis was on lavish entertaining and gourmet food. An empty wine glass on its side was a frequent prop; we still don't know why. In the late eighties and early nineties there was an emphasis on busy, tiny garnishes and lots (and lots and lots) of height.

The late nineties brought towering food to the plate, dwarfing the food from the eighties. Food became architectural in scale. But the closer the camera got to the food, the fewer props were needed. Although the food often looked fussy and silly, this change, along with better photography and printing, meant that you could actually see the food close up, making the profession of food styling an ever more crucial one.

The nineties also brought healthy foods to the forefront. Later in the decade, photos of simple, clean, and well-lit food became very popular. From the late nineties and continuing to the present, beautiful realism is the popular look. Today, food bloggers who are also talented amateur or working photographers are reaching millions of people around the world, influencing the industry in ways yet to be seen.

When Life Imitates Art

When considering the culinary and cultural impact of decades of food photography, we sometimes ask ourselves: Does life imitate art or does art imitate life? We think it's a little of both. Food in our society is trendy, and its changes are reflected everywhere in our society, including in magazines, television, and online. But in turn, the way food is portrayed in those media influences how people think about food and how they prepare and consume it.

Food styling is a job that is constantly changing, always different, and full of surprises. It entails solving problems and puzzles, and working with fabulous, wonderful, creative, and crazy people. Every day is different.

By way of conclusion, below we present some tips that we've come up with and that anyone can use to improve their

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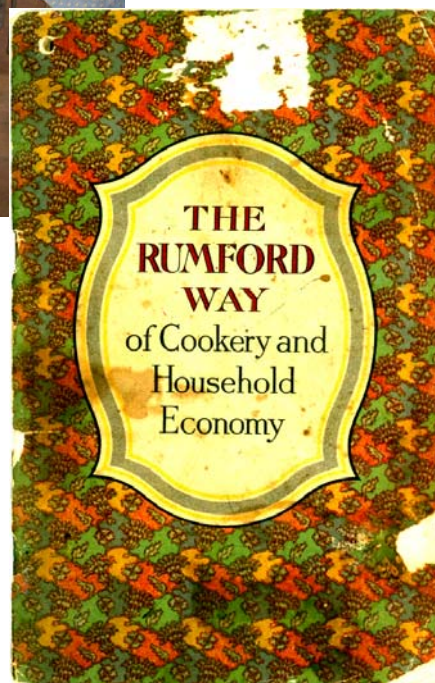
MORE SNAPSHOTS OF

The Tennessee whiskey distiller Jack Daniel, with mustache and white hat, in a photo at his distillery from the late 1800s. The man to his right is believed to be a son of Nathan "Nearest" Green, a slave who had helped teach Mr. Daniel how to make whiskey. In 2016, when the African-American writer Fawn Weaver uncovered the story, the owners of Jack Daniel Distillery acknowledged Green as the company's first master distiller, with Daniel second. The distillery in Tennessee attracts about 300,000 visitors a year. (Photo via *The New York Times*.)



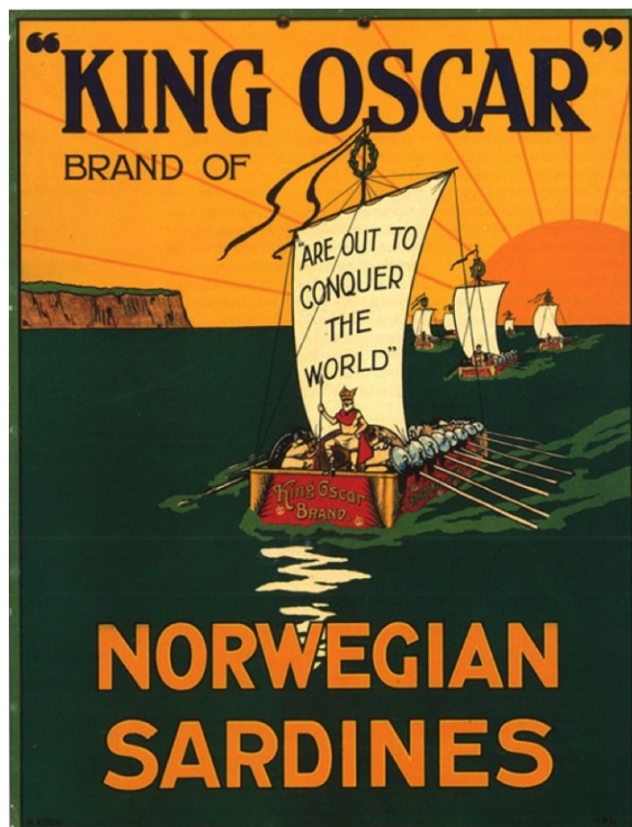
One of the displays at the Hulman Baking Powder Museum in Terre Haute, IN. Hulman & Co., still headquartered in Terre Haute, became nationally known for its Clabber Girl baking powder which it began producing in 1899, now the leading baking powder in the U.S. The mid-1800s invention of baking powder as a fast, easy leavener also gave birth to a lucrative new industry— and one of the fiercest trade wars in history. It is documented in a book by Culinary Historians of Southern California member Linda Civitello, *Baking Powder Wars: The Cutthroat Food Fight that Revolutionized Cooking* (Univ. of Illinois Press, 2017). (Photo from 2000s by CHAA member M. Joanne Nesbit.)

The Rumford Way of Cookery and Household Economy (Providence, RI, 1920) is an advertising cookbook commissioned by the Rumford Co.'s Home Economics Dept. and compiled by Janet McKenzie Hill. The title page includes a sales pitch: "The leavener used is largely responsible for the flavor, texture, wholesomeness and appearance of your baking." The Rumford Chemical Works was established in Providence in 1854 by Harvard professor Eben N. Horsford, who had developed an improved baking powder. A century later, in 1950, Clabber Girl would purchase the facility and the Rumford brand name. The influence of promotional cookbooks is explored in *American Advertising Cookbooks: How Corporations Taught Us to Love Spam, Bananas and Jell-O* (Process Media, 2019) by Christina Ward, a Wisconsin culinary historian, teacher, and writer. (Book from the collection of Randy Schwartz.)



THE FOOD INDUSTRY

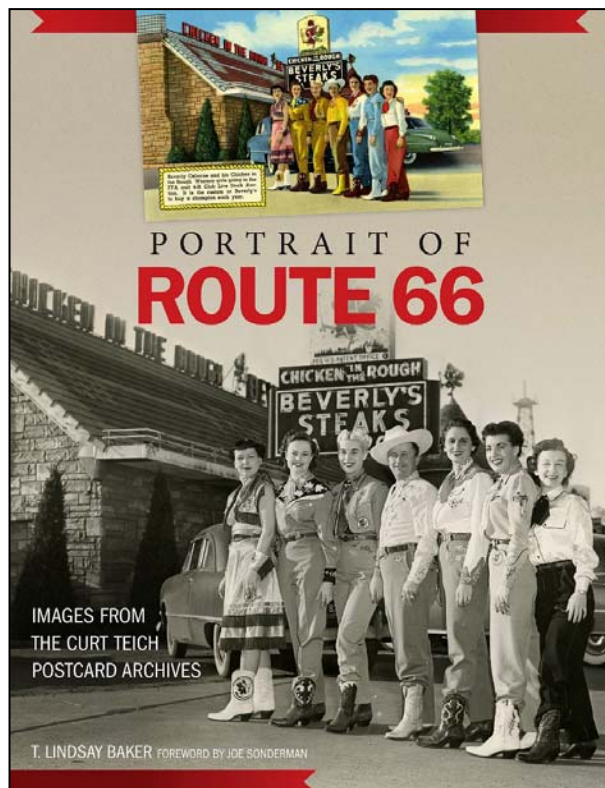
The Stavanger Canning Co. was established in 1873 on the North Sea coast at Stavanger, the “canning capital” of Norway-Sweden. Its smoked sardines were introduced to the U.S. at the 1893 World’s Columbian Exposition in Chicago. In 1902, King Oscar II of Norway-Sweden granted Stavanger special royal permission to use his name and portrait on its products, an expedient that continues today. In 1909, the company produced a 13-minute silent film, “Sardine Fishing”, which is considered the earliest moving-picture commercial in the history of Norway; it is viewable at the website (<https://www.nb.no/nbsok/nb/aace3c5f8fe3a60f811cc8e348e7e856?index=1>) of the National Library of Norway. (Photo: Norwegian Canning Museum.)



Detail from a 1953 ad for Campbell's Tomato Ketchup. The year 2019 is the sesquicentennial of the founding of the company in Camden, NJ, in 1869, one of several canning firms that arose during or just after the Civil War. Campbell's earliest canned products included tomatoes, small peas, and fancy asparagus.

Thanks to its deep, loamy soil and its German immigrant heritage, the area around Collinsville, in southern Illinois near the Mississippi River, is the most concentrated area of horseradish cultivation in the world. Commercial production of horseradish root began there in the 1890s. J. R. Kelly Co., established ca. 1935 and known as The Horseradish House, is now the largest supplier at 10-12 million pounds annually.





MORE SNAPSHOTS OF

Portrait of Route 66: Images from the Curt Teich Postcard Archives (Norman, OK: Univ. of Oklahoma Press, 2016) is written by history professor T. Lindsay Baker at Tarleton State Univ. in Texas. The cover shows a 1952 postcard of the original location of Beverly's Chicken in the Rough (Oklahoma City, OK, 1936), one of the earliest restaurant chain franchises in the U.S. Curt Teich & Co. in Chicago (1898-1978) was the world's largest printer of view and advertising postcards; its archives of more than half a million cards was transferred to the Newberry Library in Chicago and is digitally accessible (<https://www.newberry.org/curt-teich-postcard-archives-collection>).

The first successful sales of homogenized milk in the U.S. were made one century ago, in 1919, by the Torrington Creamery in Torrington, CT, initially to local restaurants. Homogenization improves the flavor, appearance, and digestibility of milk and helps retard spoilage. In 1946, William Graham Stewart Calder of Lincoln Park, MI, used his Air Force bonus check to establish Calder Dairy. He offered home delivery throughout the Downriver area near Detroit; the first delivery vehicle was a 12-year-old used laundry truck. In later years Calder Brothers purchased a dairy farm in Carleton, MI, which it still uses. (Photo: Calder Dairy.)

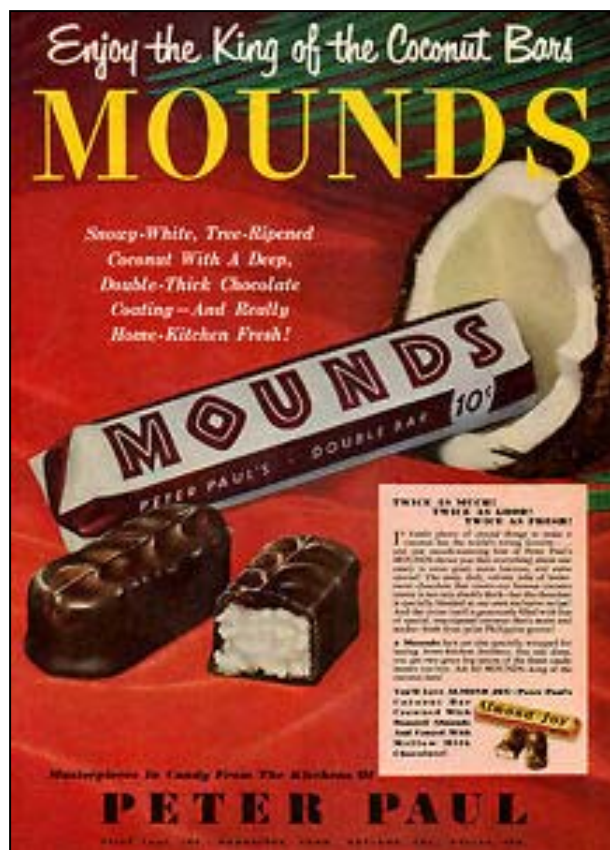


Above, a 1950s postcard of T. Marzetti Restaurant, located at 16 E. Broad Street, Columbus, OH, across from the state Capitol. A family restaurant that lasted from 1896 to 1972, it was recommended by Duncan Hines in his *Adventures in Good Eating* (1961). The place specialized in Italian and seafood dishes; its salad dressings were so popular that the family produced them as a sideline, with sales in grocery stores across Ohio. Even after Teresa Marzetti died in 1972, that sideline continued; today, Marzetti supplies dressings and croutons to the Columbus-based Wendy's fast-food chain. Two other Columbus-based restaurant chains celebrate major anniversaries this year: Arthur Treacher's Fish & Chips (born 50 years ago in 1969) and Damon's Grill (40 years, 1979). (Photo: CardCow Vintage Postcards, via Amazon.com.)



THE FOOD INDUSTRY

A 1950 ad for Mounds, the popular candy bar of sweetened ground coconut with a dark-chocolate coating. Its producer, the Peter Paul Mfg. Co., is celebrating its centennial this year. The company was founded in 1919 by Peter Halajian of Naugatuck, CT, an Armenian who had arrived from Ottoman Turkey in 1890. Before World War 2, Peter Paul was the world's largest consumer of coconuts; it had its own supply route from the Philippines, which was under U.S. rule at the time. The whole story is recounted in Joel Denker's blog entry, "Sometimes You Feel Like a Nut: An Immigrant and His Candy Bar" (<http://www.foodpassages.com>, Jun. 18, 2018). (Photo: parroteducationproject, via Ebay.com.)



On Mar. 17, 1958, chief candy maker Dorothy Schnell oversees a large candy mixer in the industrial kitchen of the candy and bake shop for Stix, Baer, and Fuller, a St. Louis department store chain. Pearl Hackman can be seen in the background cutting a large sheet of candy. Schnell began as a bon-bon dipper in 1935 and was promoted to assistant to the chief candy maker during World War 2. Chief candy maker was an unusual position for a woman at the time, but upon the death of the chief candy maker she was promoted to take his place. (Photo: Henry T. "Mac" Mizuki, via Mac Mizuki Photography Studio Collection, Missouri History Museum, P0374-01488-C02-1t.)

Customers flock to a candy bar sale at Woolworth's 5 and 10 in Manhattan, 1947. During World War 2, roughly half of U.S. candy production had been diverted to the military. After the war, domestic candy sales soared. (Photo by Stanley Kubrick for *Look* magazine, via the Museum of the City of New York, X2011.4.10254.83F.)



COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS UPENDED AT CHAA WINTER PROGRAMS

This past Winter our monthly programs, arranged by Laura Gillis, were not only fascinating but also shattered several widespread misconceptions, including the notion that cheese making is absent from Chinese history and the notion that Americans in the late 1800s ate foods more pure than those of today. The summaries below also cover a non-CHAA talk about wild rice. Recordings of the talks can be viewed at <https://aadl.org/videos> thanks to the Ann Arbor District Library, which hosts the events.

Chinese Cheese is Not an Oxymoron

There is a misconception that cheese has played a negligible role in the Chinese diet, which is attributed to (1) an assumed stigmatization of dairying as nomadic and “barbarian”, and (2) widespread lactose intolerance in Asia. However, Dr. **Miranda Brown** has found a Chinese cookbook from the late 13th Century in which one-third of the recipes are dairy-based, a higher proportion than in European cookbooks of the time. She has also found early Chinese descriptions of *dofu* (“soybean curd”) as a poor people’s substitute for dairy foods. Brown, Prof. of Chinese Studies at the Univ. of Michigan, summarized these and other findings in her talk, “Of Cheese and Curds in China”, on Jan. 20, 2019. Cheeses in China, she told us, are first described in the First Century CE, and recipes are found from the Sixth to 18th Centuries. They followed the influx of Turkic peoples from Turkestan, especially when they intermarried with Chinese rulers during the Tang dynasty (7th – 10th C.), and there were banquets of mutton or lamb topped with a cheese similar to the *paneer* common today in India.

In China, milk was curdled not with rennet but instead by fermentation via bacterial cultures (as with yogurt) or by coagulation using vinegar, acidic fruit juices, or *nigari*, the mineral residue of seawater typically used in Japan to coagulate soymilk for tofu. Brown has identified five historical forms of cheese in China: (1) dried yogurt, which are hard sticks similar to what’s found in Iran and Lebanon today; (2) *ru bing* (“milk cake”), a fist-sized cake of crumbly goat cheese akin to the *paneer* of India or the *beyaz peynir* of Istanbul; (3) cheeses made with *nigari*; (4) *ru tuan* (“milk ball”), a ball of re-cultured yogurt, similar to the *jameed* of sheep’s or goat’s milk found in Jordan and neighboring countries today; and (5) *ru xian* (“milk thread”), a string cheese made from soured cow’s milk (buttermilk).

During the Song dynasty (960-1279), cheese making spread from the pastoral northwest to hot, wet southeast China. A tradition of clotted creams and cheeses arose. Buddhist vegetarian dairy foods included cheese added to breakfast *congee* (rice porridge); steamed buns with *ru bing*; noodles topped with vegetables and crumbled *ru bing*; a mock



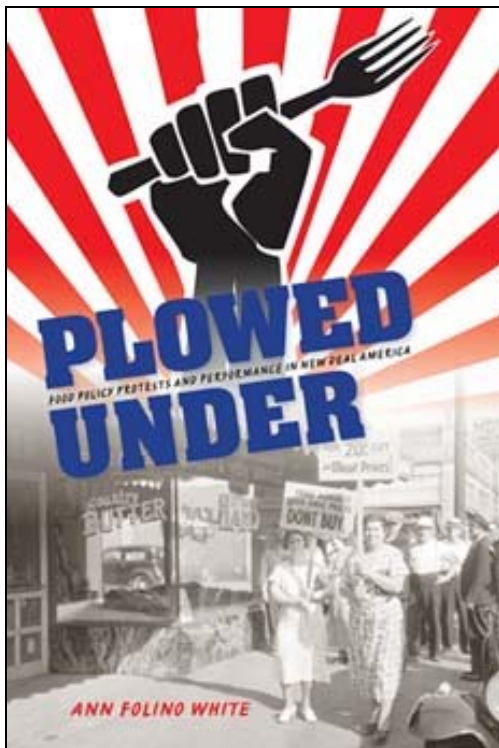
In a home experiment, Dr. Miranda Brown successfully used a recipe from a 1604 Chinese cookbook to ferment non-pasteurized cow’s milk and turn it into *ru xian*, an all but forgotten string cheese.

meat called “fried bones”; and dessert “pierogis”. A Dutch visitor in the 17th C. reported that butter and milk were most plentiful in the south, around Shanghai. The dairy herds were mainly sheep and goats (local breeds of cattle produced only about half as much milk as Dutch breeds) and were grazed on hills where grass but not rice paddies could grow. But in the late 18th C., dairy traditions faded in the core of China due to factors that made milk scarce: hillsides came to be cultivated with New World crops such as maize and sweet potato, displacing herds and leading to a population surge. Milk products became more of a luxury; they came to seem foreign and strange, and disappeared from cookbooks. A vibrant cheese culture remains only in peripheral regions such as the southeast (homemade brined cheeses can still be found near Hong Kong) and especially the Mongol northwest and the Muslim southwest.

How Arab Foods Went Mainstream

Matthew Jaber Stiffler was greeted by a very enthusiastic audience of over 40 people for his Feb. 17 talk, “Familiar and Exotic: The Long History of Arab Restaurants in the United States”. Dr. Stiffler, who is Research and Content Manager at the Arab American National Museum (Dearborn, MI), noted that the 1890s saw the earliest significant food purveying by Arabs in the U.S., in the context of cafés and coffeehouses in New York and Boston where men gathered to converse, play cards, drink, eat, and smoke with *argiles*. The early immigrants were mostly Christians from the Ottoman-ruled lands of the Levant: Maronite Catholics, Greek Orthodox, and some Protestants. In the U.S., most had gravitated to farms and factories, not to big cities. The restaurants began to attract adventurous American eaters. To increase their mainstream appeal and to assimilate better in the context of anti-immigrant sentiment, Arab restaurants typically sold many American non-Arab dishes, were elaborately decorated, and their advertising promoted themes of “Biblical” or “Egyptian” food and deliberately exotic and orientalist motifs (The Sheikh, Sindbad, Aladdin, Ali Baba).

In Detroit, the earliest Arab restaurants, churches, and mosques arose in 1911-21. Quotas severely limited immigration from 1924 to 1965, but today, metro Detroit has



200-300 Arab food establishments. Since the Lebanese came first and set local preferences, their dishes such as *hummus*, *falafel*, lamb *shawarma*, and chicken *shish tawouq* still prevail even among places run by later immigrants from Yemen or Iraq. Iraqi Chaldean Christians, for example, often run large, palace-like restaurants and dining halls serving mostly classic Lebanese fare. But in Dearborn, with its huge immigrant community, the Middle Eastern food repertoire is deeper than elsewhere in the U.S. There, one can find homey village dishes such as stews; loaves of Lebanese *mana'ish*; the lamb-cherry kabob and *muhammara* dip of Syria; *soujouk*, the spicy beef-sausage of Armenia; and *kanafeh*, the Palestinian cheese pastry drenched in syrup. Iraqis specialize in small kabob restaurants, often serving *kofita* kabobs wrapped in thick loaves of *taboon*. Most recently, there are Yemeni strongholds in Dearborn and especially in Hamtramck, bringing a whole new dimension to diners' choices. Dr. Stiffler believes that the future is bright for this local dining scene because the immigrant community is so large and diverse that it can branch out into the mainstream while also offering more authentic, traditional, or specialized foods. Today, despite the modest numbers of Arab Americans nationally, any given large or small city in the U.S. is likely to have at least one Arab restaurant.

Curtailing Food Production in Hungry Times

New Deal legislation during the Great Depression included an Agricultural Adjustment Act (AAA) that paid farmers to stop cultivating some acres and even to destroy some crops and livestock. The aim was to rescue destitute farmers, stabilize food prices, and restore the agricultural economy. But in the face of mass hunger and poverty, the food-curtailment measures sparked moral outrage across the social spectrum, and brought into sharp relief the contradiction between food as a biological necessity and food as a commercial commodity. On Mar. 17 **Ann Folino White**, Assoc. Prof. of Theatre Studies and Directing at Michigan State Univ., discussed her book,

Plowed Under: Food Policy Protests and Performance in New Deal America (Indiana Univ. Press, 2014), which examines the wide-ranging protests against the AAA and related food policies and is written from the perspective of the protestors.

By 1939, 78% of U.S. farmers had AAA contracts with the government, and such farm subsidies basically continued up to the present. To defend its policies, the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture (USDA) mounted pro-AAA exhibits at fairs across the country, most notably the 1933-34 Chicago World's Fair. It also staged plays depicting housewives' thoughtful and patriotic responses to the food scarcity and food price crisis and countering the criticism that USDA was siding with big corporations. Meanwhile, the more left-leaning Works Progress Administration (WPA) also staged plays dramatizing the crisis, including imagined arguments between farming families and workers' families. Produced in conjunction with the Federal Theatre Project (FTP), WPA plays such as "Triple A Plowed Under" (1936), a "living newspaper" documentary, were so controversial that FTP funding was cut off in 1939.

There were also citizen direct actions that had theatrical aspects:

- In Wisconsin in May 1933, corporate-backed dairy farmers jumped on milk-hauling trucks driven by independent dairy farmers, dumping milk from the pails. The National Guard intervened against dumping in these "milk wars".
- In Hamtramck, MI, and other Midwestern cities, women's groups organized protests against government-elevated meat prices. The women, backed up by nutritionists, went so far as to claim that the high meat prices deprived their husbands of energy needed to hunt for jobs. The Polish-American women in Hamtramck called on consumers to boycott butchers, delis, and other meat purveyors in support of a demand for a 20% price cut, and they even intercepted shoppers to destroy whatever meat purchases they found.
- In Jan. 1939 a group of 1,300 people, mostly African-American homeless sharecropper families, set up a camp of makeshift shelters along Missouri Highway 61. They tried to survive on little else but fat pork, bread, and coffee, saying, "If we're going to starve, let's starve out there where the people can see us." Eventually police evicted the squatters, with considerable public embarrassment; the feds intervened, moving to get food supplies sent to the homeless croppers.

The Dark Days of Impurity

Although we tend to think of foods in 19th-Century America as "more pure" than those of today, adulteration was actually common then. This was a major lesson from "Arsenical Candy and Copper Peas: Food Adulteration in 19th-Century Michigan", an Apr. 14 talk by local history writer **Laura Bien**. She noted that the prime motives for adulteration include enhancing a product's market appeal, preserving food over stretches of distance and time, and replacing costly ingredients with cheaper alternatives. The earliest comprehensive work on food impurities was the *Treatise on Adulteration of Food* (1820), in which Friedrich Accum, a German chemist working in Britain, criti-

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C.H.A.A. PROGRAMS *continued from page 17*

cized the use of chemical additives. The impurities problem increased as nations became more urban—since city dwellers must rely on what is grown and prepared by others—but later, the advent of refrigerated railcars and home iceboxes helped establish a “cold chain” of better-preserved foodstuffs. Frozen foods were developed largely by Clarence Birdseye (1924).

When Michigan became a state in 1837, its earliest laws included measures against adulteration of foods, beverages, and drugs, although there was little enforcement power. Examples from that century include butter with its fat replaced by water or boric acid (a preservative), and the addition of annatto to restore color; rancid butter “renovated” via processing; meat spruced up with preservatives and colorants; coffee made with ersatz ingredients such as roasted chicory root, peas, or corn; maple syrup spiked with glucose or corn syrup; and arsenic used to color candy. In the 1890s the Ypsilanti Condiment Co. was caught adulterating its vinegar and catsup with chemicals such as salicylic acid, and went out of business soon after. The scandalous 1901 Detroit trial of George W. Towar for his routine use of formaldehyde as a milk preservative further increased public awareness of the problem. Thanks to advocacy by Robert Clark Kenzie, a physician and chemistry professor at what is now Michigan State Univ., Michigan became the fifth state to establish a pure-food agency, which included the use of both analysts (chemists) and food commissioners (inspectors and supervisors). And thanks to advocacy by USDA chemist Harvey W. Wiley, the federal government passed its first pure-food law in 1906; the process is described in Deborah Blum’s *The Poison Squad: One Chemist’s Single-Minded Crusade for Food Safety at the Turn of the Twentieth Century* (Penguin, 2018).

All Things Butter

“If you’re afraid of butter, use cream” the chef Julia Child once chided her viewers, pooh-poohing health concerns of the time. There were no such concerns expressed at “Butter Extravaganza”, **Margaret Carney’s** May 12 talk celebrating all things butter-related; in fact, she included a video segment of a butter-eating contest! Dr. Carney is Director of the International Museum of Dinnerware Design, and has a current exhibit about

butter at Ann Arbor’s Museum on Main Street. The exhibit includes displays about the history of butter and, principally, displays of newly created butter dishes and related works of art in ceramic, metal, paper, and glass, 19 of them invited for the show and 36 others selected from the open, juried category.

Carney reviewed the culinary and non-culinary history of butter, and noted that many different domesticated mammals have been used to produce it. The resulting butters vary widely in their content of fat, protein, vitamins and other nutrients; for example, sheep’s milk (used to make the fermented butter called *semneh* in the Middle East) has twice the fat content of cow’s milk; the same is true of yak and water buffalo. In Europe and North America, cow dairying became industrialized in the late 1800s and spawned huge butter firms, such as Land O’Lakes (Saint Paul, MN, 1921). Since the early 1900s, state fairs, most famously that of Iowa, have featured life-sized cows and other butter sculptures. There is also an interesting history of the equipment used to turn cream into butter or to shape and preserve it. To thwart rancidification people invented the ice chamber and the butter bell, the latter a French device that surrounds a well of butter with water to block contact with the air.

The Native Elders Cried for Joy

When we buy “wild rice” at a store, it is almost always a version that’s been cultivated in a flooded paddy. Indigenous wild rice, or *manoomin* in Potawatomi (pronounced muh-NO-min), is rather different from the commercial variety and needs much less cooking time. In a talk on May 25, **Barbara J. Barton** explained that wild rice was once found in lakes and streams all over Michigan and in much of the Great Lakes region. In the Ann Arbor area, she said, it used to be harvested from the shores of the Huron River where the Geddes Dam now stands, and from lakes in present-day Pinckney and Waterloo. Barton, who wrote the award-winning book *Manoomin: The Story of Wild Rice in Michigan* (Michigan State Univ. Press, 2018), is an endangered-species biologist and a member of Michigan’s wild rice working group.

Wild rice was a staple food of the Three Fires tribes—the Potawatomi, Odawa, and Ojibwe. It figures in their ancient lore, and remains a key part of their identity. The traditional belief is that the beds of manoomin are gardens of the Great Spirit, with a sacred and healing significance that transcends their status as a food source. It was the abundance of wild rice that, several centuries ago, first drew the three tribes from the St. Lawrence valley to the Great Lakes region, where it had already been harvested by earlier inhabitants since before 100 CE. This “rice” is actually a grass; it grows in gently flowing, shallow (1-3 ft. deep) water from seeds dropped by the plants the previous year. The lake species (*Zizania palustris*) grows up to 8 feet tall and the river species (*Z. aquatica*), which is threatened statewide, up to 13 ft. The river rice has a morphology that makes it more difficult to harvest, and the grains are smaller.

Barton, who lives in the Lansing area, began her research by establishing friendships with a few knowledgeable Ojibwe elders and learning from them first-hand. Eventually she secured a grant that supported these elders in teaching their rice know-how to other tribal members, and she personally joined with them to help spread the skills statewide. Reviving this almost-forgotten culture

strikes such a deep chord, she said, that it often brings elders to tears. In the autumn, a tribe will establish a rice camp for harvest. In a two-man canoe, one man poles the boat forward, the other wields a pair of carved wooden sticks to harvest the rice, using one stick to bend stalks over the boat, the other to knock the ripe seeds into the canoe hold. The gathered seeds are dried outdoors on a tarp for 1-2 days and then parched over a fire, since charred hulls are easier to loosen. The seeds are hulled by pounding or by “dancing” on them in a bucket or shallow pit while wearing special moccasins. The final two steps are air-winnowing to remove the hull fragments and other chaff, and picking out the broken or unhulled seeds by hand.

Barton has pored over archives to piece together the geography and chronology of rice harvesting in Michigan. Most former rice beds have been lost; new ones have been established, but not in similar numbers. Key factors in this decline were the construction of river dams; logging companies that did damming, dredging, and log running on rivers; pollution from paper, auto, and steel plants; and the draining of swamps for muck farming and to fight malaria. However, efforts by tribes and their allies to re-seed rice beds have mushroomed in recent years. ■

FOOD STYLING

continued from page 11

food photos, wherever they might stand on the amateur-professional spectrum.

10 TIPS TO IMPROVE YOUR FOOD PHOTOGRAPHY

1. Have a clear vision of what you are selling. Are you selling beef or are you selling a lifestyle? Be clear on what you want to achieve with your photos.
2. Have at least a dozen copies of what you’re shooting (such as burgers, pies, etc.), so that the stylist has ample pieces to play with.
3. Go through your product and get rid of anything wilted, old, or unsightly. Don’t send a product that isn’t perfect; give your stylist and photographer the best with which to work.
4. Undercook the food. Food loses moisture and shrinks as it cools. Cook food only long enough so that it no longer looks raw. You can always color too-light areas or apply heat with a kitchen torch or heat gun.
5. When designing a plate or environment for your photo, consider color (contrasting or complementary), texture, and balance.
6. Create elevation and movement. Prop pieces up from the back to create definition. Make a hidden base under food to hold it in place using shortening, damp paper towels, cosmetic wedges, or even mashed potatoes.
7. Plan for the use of garnishes. Have appropriate herbs, lemons or limes, or extra ingredients to use if needed.
8. Know that cool food photographs better than hot food. Make cool or room-temperature food appear hot by adding moisture and shine: spray the food with PAM or water, or brush it with a little Karo syrup.
9. Study food photographs that you like. What do they have in common? What don’t you like?
10. Less is more. Appreciate how the camera’s eye is different from your eye. You don’t need to have a sliced mushroom in every square inch of your food to know that it contains sliced mushrooms; one or two will get your point across without making the image messy.

PILLSBURY BAKE-OFF *continued from p. 7*

tion the Bake-Off itself. What Livingstone failed to note was that by the late 1950s, rural wives were also increasingly likely to use convenience products in their cooking and baking, and Pillsbury would hasten this development. By 1968, Pillsbury would refer to the contest as the Busy Lady Bake-Off, and new categories of recipes featuring mixes and refrigerated bread dough encouraged American cooks to move beyond flour into the world of convenience products.

The Pillsbury Bake-Off left New York for the first time in 1957 when it was held in Los Angeles, then rotated to different locations around the country. It continued annually until 1976, then was held biannually until 2012. The grand prize for the contest was increased to \$1,000,000 from 1996 to 2014, but as the contest changed format and became less popular, Pillsbury lowered the prize to \$50,000 in 2017.

The current contest seems overshadowed by the myriad of other cooking competitions clamoring for the public’s attention. In its early years, however, there was nothing like the Bake-Off, with its mix of home cooks, celebrity, and the charmed setting of the Waldorf-Astoria. Thousands of cooks eagerly entered the contest each year, and millions of people watched or listened to the broadcasts covering the final results. The Bake-Off offers a window into changing tastes and attitudes about home cooking, and the recipe books that Pillsbury published each year became mainstays on shelves in kitchens across the nation.

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CHAA CALENDAR

(Except where noted, programs are scheduled for 3:00 – 5:00 p.m. and are held at the Ann Arbor District Library – Malletts Creek Branch, 3090 E. Eisenhower Parkway.)

Sunday, July 14, 2019

(4-7 p.m., Ladies' Literary Club of Ypsilanti
218 N. Washington St., Ypsilanti),
“The Regional Cuisines of France”,
a participatory theme meal
for members and guests of CHAA

Sunday, September 15, 2019

Shachar M. Pinsker, Prof. of Judaic Studies and
Middle East Studies, Univ. of Michigan,
discusses his book, *A Rich Brew: How Cafés
Created Modern Jewish Culture*

On the Back Burner: We welcome ideas and submissions from all readers of *Repast*, including for the following planned future issues. Suggestions for future themes are also welcome.

- Summer 2019: Immigrant Foods of Steel Country (Part 1)
- Fall 2019: Culinary Excursions (Part 2)
- Winter 2020: Immigrant Foods of Steel Country (Part 2)

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First Class