



The Food Journal

The Culinary Historians of Southern California Vol. 9 no 2 Summer 2009

Dedicated to pursuing food history and supporting culinary collections at Los Angeles Public Library

Program Notes

by Nancy Zaslavsky

Who said ice cream sodas weren't served at Casa Verdugo—or did I get my stories mixed up? We lucked out this year as president Charles Perry spoke twice: about the all-American soda fountain and Glendale's long-gone, once hot spot restaurant. Andy Smith (also an '09 two-timer, Andy will be back in October) not only talked hamburgers, he chowed down with us at the original Bob's Big Boy. Carol Penn-Romine's lecture claimed to be "an incomplete history" of Irish Cooking, but I beg to differ given her wealth of knowledge and love of the subject. A members-only dinner at Papa Cristo's served as an April appetizer for May's ancient Greek-themed party in South Pasadena. A huge *σε ευχαριστώ* (thank you) to Sheila Anderzunas and her committee for researching and gathering historic recipes for the cooks; everyone had a delectable afternoon feasting like a bunch of Byzantines breaking a fast. Weslie Janeway spoke at the May program about researching Emma Darwin's recipes, and her talk triggered a lively discussion about foods of the time. Thanks to Ricki de Kramer for chairing Ruth Reeder's talk; we tied-up the season with an unusual program based upon Ruth's stunning collection of 150 antique aprons.

August 16 is our used cookbook sale at the Hollywood Farmers' Market. Please call Billie Connor-Dominguez for information on how to drop off books or how to help at the sale.

Members, this is YOUR organization. We need you to support CHSC fund-raising parties each year, May and October. Hard working committees provide creatively themed events with great food and drink, a silent auction and sometimes even a raffle and door prizes. Yes, tickets cost money—and yes, everyone brings a dish of food—and yes, we entice you to bid on auction items or buy raffle tickets. But, hey, these are the only fundraisers except for August's used cookbook sale. Our next party is in October. Let's all plan to attend and make it the best, loudest, coolest, wildest—most successful—ever!! (No pressure on the committee, of course.)

Please see upcoming dates, on the last page, for future programs.

The Breweries of Old L.A.

by Charles Perry

There wasn't a drop of beer to be had in Los Angeles back in the pueblo days – this was strictly wine country. Breweries didn't start opening until the railroads went through in the 1870s and brought a tide of thirsty Anglos.

Probably the first in town was the New York Brewery on Third Street, somewhere near the L.A. River in order to have a good supply of water. Despite the New York name, it brewed "steam beer," a fizzy, much-disdained (at the time) imitation lager that Californians made at ale temperatures because they didn't have the ice or cool aging caves to make proper German-style lager.

The second would have been the Ed. Preuss Philadelphia Lager Brewery, founded in 1874 near the gigantic sycamore tree around which the Gabrielino village of Yang-Na had grown up. (Another booze association: In the 1830s, the adobe chateau of El Aliso, L.A.'s first winery, had been erected under the shade of this same landmark tree.) To judge from its name, it was proudly producing genuine lager.

The third, originally the smallest, was Maier and Zobelein, run by two partners who had worked at the other two breweries. They opened in present-day Little Tokyo. In 1882, Maier and Zobelein bought out the Philadelphia Brewery and soon expanded it to a three-story building that could turn out 6,000 barrels of lager a year. Ten years later, they had to cut that famous old sycamore down, though. It was 22 feet in circumference and heading for the last roundup, so there had been a problem of falling branches landing on people.

Maier Brewing was L.A.'s beer colossus for the next 80 years. In the early part of the century, play-boy heir Eddie Maier was famous for sporty endeavors like sponsoring boxing matches and car races (the famous race driver Barney Oldfield drove his Fiat 90 for him). He once planned a colossal pleasure pier in Santa Monica big enough to hold a full-size baseball field for his team, the Vernon Tigers.

In 1907, Maier and Zobelein broke up, and George

Zobelein bought out the Los Angeles Brewery at Moulton and north Main, roughly halfway between the river and the 5 Freeway today, and renamed it the Eastside Brewery. Like Maier, Eastside survived Prohibition making near beer and soft drinks. It reopened as a brewery the exact moment beer was legal again, at 12:01 a.m. on December 5, 1933. Walter Huston gave a little speech on the occasion and Jean Harlow christened the first delivery truck by breaking a bottle of beer over it.

Maier and Eastside both survived Prohibition just fine (though Maier got raided over and over for producing near beer that had alcohol levels a degree or more too far). After World War II Maier was still the fifth largest brewery in California.

But in the Fifties and Sixties, national brewing companies established local breweries here. Under the competition, Maier, best known by that time for a low-priced beer called Brew 102, closed down in 1974, but it had still been such a prominent place when the 101 Freeway was built that the freeway makes a little jog east of Alameda to dodge the brewery location.

The Pabst brewing company of Milwaukee had bought Eastside in 1948. The brewery continued for years to make an Eastside beer, though taking a second place to the Pabst brand. The Eastside plant shut down in 1979 and the seven-acre site is now the Brewery Art Complex. That was the end to our local beers until the emergence of the craft brew movement.



A Letter from the Editor

Dear Fellow Historians,

I'm pleased to announce two new features to *The Food Journal*. We've started an occasional series of book reviews as part of Check It Out. The debut review is by Kentuckian Carol Penn-Romine on *Kentucky's Best: Fifty Years of Great Recipes* by Linda Allison-Lewis. If you have a particular knowledge base and are interested in writing a review for *TFJ*, please let me know.

At a board meeting awhile back, I received a charming vintage photo of one of our members that sparked a new Query Corner pursuit—name that culinary historian, or, that SoCal dining experience. So dig through your old photos for future puzzlers in future issues to nutritionistcharles@gmail.com. You won't find the answer to the photo opposite in this issue. Gotta visit our website for the stats or wait until next winter!

Librarian Dan Dupill contributes this summer's centerfold piece on the CHSC/LAPL book conservation project, a sort of Check It Out column writ large. Using the very rare first "Times prize cook book" as an example, Dan leads us through the painstaking process of restoring old cookbooks. I'm so proud of CHSC's efforts in preserving social history.

Lastly, here's a new book you might enjoy: *What We Eat When We Eat Alone* by Deborah Madison and Patrick McFarlin (Gibbs Smith, May 2009). A compendium of the authors' collected recipes and anecdotes about the people's solitary eating habits (full disclosure: I'm one), the book offers some intriguing observations on our cultural food memories.

Bon appétit,

Amelia
Amelia Saltsman

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Upcoming Dates

July

No program

August 16

CHSC Used Cookbook Sale. Hollywood Farmers' Market

September 12

Jonathan Gold

October 10

Andy Smith

November 14

Eric Boardman and panel, "Soda"

December 12

Dan Strehl & Romaine Ahlstrom

January 2010

Charles Perry, Annual President's Lecture

Saturday morning hospitality volunteers needed! Help make our post-lecture receptions brilliant; contact Susan Fox: selene@earthlink.net and Sharon Cohen: silver0se@aol.com.

Membership Opportunities

Please consider joining at a higher membership level (with perks!) to better support CHSC:

Angel or Corporate: \$500 and up—Individual or Family membership plus 4 free admissions to Summer Picnic or Winter Holiday Party

Benefactor: \$250-\$499—Individual or Family membership plus 2 free admissions to either event

Patron: \$100-\$249—Individual or Family membership plus 1 free admission to either event

Household/Family: \$40 (\$50 with snail mail only announcements)

Individual: \$25 (\$35 with snail mail only announcements)

You may pay in advance for more than one year if you wish. Culinary Historians of Southern California is a 501 (c) (3) tax-exempt organization.

Visit our website for information and membership application: www.culinaryhistoriansofsoutherncalifornia.org. Membership Chair Susanna Erdos may be reached at Serdos@aol.com; (323) 663-5407.

Query Corner:

Q: Can you name this CHSC member dining out at Clifton's Cafeteria? Care to guess the year? Hint: Our member is the adult in the photo. The answer can be found on our website's gallery section: www.culinaryhistoriansofsoutherncalifornia.org, and will be printed in the next Food Journal issue.



A. Corrections and embellishments: Gerry Furth-Sides notes that Robaire's was on La Brea, not La Cienega. [Duh, how did I let that one slip by?? I dined at the romantic balcony table on my 21st birthday!—*ed*]. Ron Segall reminisces that Robaire's was "probably the only good restaurant on La Brea until Campanile came along."

Q. Ron also wonders: Did the chain of "Swiss chalet style continental restaurants" Carolyn Perry queried about include the Villa Frascati on Sunset Strip near Doheny? Ron was served their last order of duck with black cherry sauce before they switched to the more common 'à l'orange'. Hey Ron, what year was that?

Thank you to Patrons and Benefactors

The Culinary Historians of Southern California acknowledges the generosity of members who have joined at the Patron, Benefactor, and Angel levels. Your gift allows our organization to enhance member services and increase our support of the culinary collections of The Central Library.

Benefactor

Amy & Craig Nickoloff

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Tim Castle
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Wendy Yu

(Contributions received after this issue went to press will be listed in the Winter 2010 issue.)

Check It Out:

Kentucky's Best: Fifty Years of Great Recipes by Linda Allison-Lewis

Review by Carol Penn-Romine

Is it possible to consider Kentucky food and drink without automatically thinking of KFC and the mint julep?

In *Kentucky's Best: Fifty Years of Great Recipes*, Linda Allison-Lewis aims to remedy this deficit of culinary knowledge when it comes to the cuisine of the Bluegrass State. Through a collection of recipes gathered from Kentucky's restaurants, bed-and-breakfasts, distilleries and home kitchens, she shines the light on the state's food traditions, while including recipes near and dear to Kentucky hearts but that have no specific link to the state itself.

The book really shines in its presentation of local dishes such as burgoo, Sourmash Bourbon Bread and Chess Pie (although the latter is Southern, not specifically Kentuckian). Its strongest section is the one on breads and includes standards such as Southern Spoon Bread and Cracklin Corn Bread (good luck finding crackling outside of the South!), the practical Clean-Up-The-Garden Bread and the whimsical Flowerpot White Bread. In a nod to the modern, the book includes a recipe for buttermilk bread created especially for the bread-making machine.

Just as certain recipes are reserved for the holidays, dishes in the Derby Favorites category are special and trotted out only for Derby Day festivities. That's when you splash out and put a mixture of cheeses in your grits and trade your everyday burgoo recipe for your special Kentucky Colonels' Burgoo recipe, which calls for 85 pounds of assorted meats (including turtle), feeds 150 and cooks all night long. Might want to trim that down a bit if you only have a few people over. The Wild Turkey Racehorse Pie recipe came straight from the distillery and calls for Wild Turkey but, thankfully, no racehorse.

The amusingly named Vegetable Extravaganza and Company Onions, both of which call for the addition of bread crumbs on top, remind us that that's what Sunday dinner is about in the South—fancying up the casseroles with bread crumbs and pulling out the good dishes when company comes a' calling.

Kentucky's Best provides an enduring collection of recipes that are welcome, regardless of whether your grass is blue, green or, as in Southern California, brown.

Kentucky's Best: Fifty Years of Great Recipes

By Linda Allison-Lewis
The University Press of Kentucky
\$19.95
ISBN 978-0-8131-9215-4

CHSC Annual Used Cookbook Sale
Donate, volunteer or just buy books!

Sunday, August 16, 2009
8am to 1pm
Hollywood Farmers' Market (at Ivar and Selma)

To volunteer time or to donate books call Billie Connor-Dominguez at least one week before the sale: (323) 660-6399

Save the Date!

"*New York Times* restaurant critic William Grimes in conversation with *L.A. Weekly* restaurant critic Jonathan Gold"

The Los Angeles Public Library Foundation's ALOUD series presents a conversation between the critics in conjunction with the release of Grimes' new book, *Appetite City*.

Thursday, October 29
Los Angeles Central Library

For more information and reservations: Click on "Events and Exhibits" at www.lapl.org or call 213-228-7025

Call for winter newsletter stories and member news! Content deadline for winter issue is November 15, 2009. Please submit feature story ideas now for assignment to amelia@ameliasaltsman.com. Send Query Corner, News & Notes, Announcements, and In Store queries to nutritionistcharles@gmail.com

If you've got an old photo of yourself in a SoCal food experience suitable for future query corners, email a scan to Charles Rosenberg: nutritionistcharles@gmail.com



CHSC/LAPL Conservation Project: Preserving the Past For the Future

by Dan Dupill

Many members of the Culinary Historians of Southern California are aware that CHSC has presented the Los Angeles Public Library with a number of important and/or rare culinary titles (the most recent examples were discussed in the Winter 2009 newsletter.) Fewer members are familiar, however, with an equally important contribution you have made to our collection. CHSC has funded an ongoing conservation project to repair and preserve some of our most fragile and important holdings.



Open to the title page. Note torn cover and that the cover is separating from the text block.

Los Angeles is privileged to have a number of skilled conservation experts in our area. The Huntington Library, Getty Museum, UCLA and USC all employ conservators—and the Huntington and Getty in particular possess world-class conservation laboratories. Many of these facilities will allow their conservators to use their laboratories for independent contract work on the conservator's own time.

That's the good news. The not-so-good news is that these people are extremely busy. Many are reluctant to take on additional work, and it can often take months or even a year or more from the initial estimate to completion of the job. Costs vary per item, but professional conservators are expensive, and the Library Department has not had available funds for this work for many, many years. Thus, we are especially grateful to the Culinary Historians for their support in this effort.

Cookbooks are heavily used tools, and consequently, torn pages, food stains, broken bindings and the like are common. Shortly before he relocated to Arizona, CHSC member and retired librarian Dan Strehl visited the Rare Book Department to set priorities regarding our

most important—and most-in-need-of-repair—volumes. With the assistance of Billie Connor-Dominguez, Dan identified several monographs for the project. The final volume of that first group, *Wienerisches bewährtes Kochbuch in sechs Absätzen*, 1791, is currently with a conservator for repair of torn pages and rebinding.

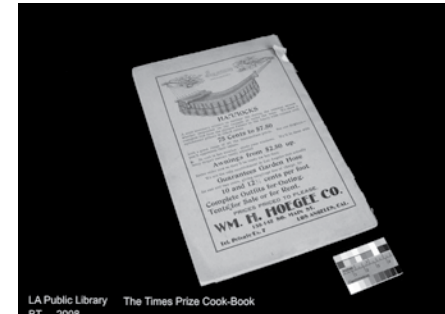
Also included in the first group was a charming manuscript, *Cuadernos de guisados de Doña Maria Dolores Calderon*. [1829]. Mexican manuscripts such as this are exceedingly rare: We know of only two others in the United States, both later than this one, which was written before the first Mexican cookbook was published. You may remember viewing this treasure as part of the "The World from Here" exhibit at the Hammer Museum in 2001. The manuscript required only the protection of an acid-free box, as its paper and soft leather binding remain in excellent condition.

The photographs accompanying this article feature another item from this first group of priority holdings. On first glance, *453 cooking and other recipes by California women: brought out by the 1902 series of prize recipe contests in the Los Angeles Times* doesn't look particularly impressive. Published in 1902, the first "Times prize cook book" is a scant 57 pages, printed on inexpensive paper with a modest paper cover. Original cost – 15 cents. This was the first in a series of recipe books published by the *Times*, which continue to this day. The recipes in this one are based on cooking contests the *Times* sponsored in 1901. Identifying this book has been a problem for years, as there are only three known copies, one at UCLA, one at the Huntington and ours. The *Times* doesn't have a copy in its archives!

The procedures, even for simple repairs, can be fairly complicated. When the items to be repaired have been identified, we contact a con-

servator willing to take on additional work and set up an initial viewing appointment. The conservator will examine each book (usually taking reference photographs) and make descriptive notes to prepare a treatment document with

an estimated cost. When the conservator is ready to proceed, the item is released and carefully logged in, and both parties initial detailed descriptive documents.



Back cover before repair.

When the work is completed the procedures are reversed. The conservator will provide a treatment report and often, accompanying photographs that document what was done.

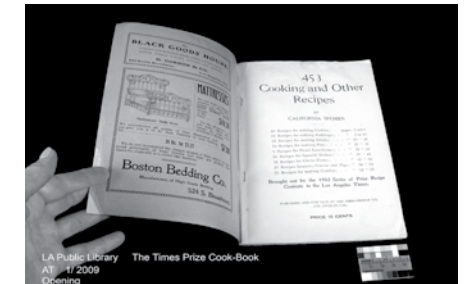
Below is the treatment report by Huntington conservator Holly Moore for the *Times Prize Cookbook*:



Back cover after repair.

1. The paper cover was removed from the text block.
2. Tears and losses to the cover, including the losses at the corners, were mended and filled with acrylic-toned Japanese Kisukishi tissue and Zen Shofu wheat starch paste.
3. A small amount of adhesive material and deteriorated paper was mechanically removed from the block spine.
4. The spine was consolidated with Zen Shofu wheat starch paste.
5. The reconstructed cover was adhered to the text block along the spine with Zen Shofu wheat starch paste.
6. A Microclimate box was tailored to fit the pamphlet. A larger box was used with a 4-flap inside of it to protect the pamphlet and give it a larger size on the shelf.

As a reminder, the *Times Prize Cookbook*, and any other title held in the Rare Books Room, can be viewed by appointment only. Please call (213) 228-7350 to leave a message requesting an appointment. Include your contact information and the specific items you wish to see. Staff will return your call to schedule the appointment. There are no same-day appointments.



The Times prize cookbook after repair is complete.

On-Line Catalog Access to the Collection

- Go to the LAPL web page at www.lapl.org.
- Click on "CATALOG."
- Click on "SEARCH THE CATALOG."
- Choose your search method (i.e., author, subject, keyword, etc.) and enter your terms. For example, a keyword search using the words "cooking" and "Mexican."
- Click on "SEARCH."

This will result in a listing of all cataloged items owned by LAPL that contain the terms "cooking" and "Mexican" in the bibliographic records.

To narrow your search to items held in Rare Books:

- Click on "LIMIT SEARCH" at the bottom of the page. A new page will appear.
 - At the bottom of that page click on "LIMIT BY AGENCY."
 - Select "Central Library – Rare Books."
 - Scroll down the page and click on "SEARCH."
- You will now have a listing of all the books held in the Rare Books Department that correspond to your search terms.

Dan Dupill is the LAPL Central Library Facilities and Programming Manager and liaison for CHSC.

Photo credit: Holly Moore, Conservator, Rare Books and Bound Manuscripts, Huntington Library

In Store: J&T European Gourmet Food

by Richard Foss

The neon sign in the window says “Polish Sausage Factory,” and many people know J&T by no other name. The sausage is their claim to fame, but they make and sell much more. Their hams and bacon are fresh-smoked the traditional Northern European way, and the deli cases and shelves are lined with top-quality imported and domestic sauerkraut, pastries, *pierogies*, herb teas, chocolates and other delights.

Still, the sausage is the big draw at the Santa Monica store—dry beef sausages and German-style pork, plus a variety of versions of the garlicky kielbasa. There are several regional varieties, some flavored with juniper berry, caraway and other herbs. Many are available either smoked or fresh—the fresh sausages can be boiled, fried or barbecued. All are vastly better than the prepackaged and preservative-laden stuff you’ll find at the supermarket.

The shopping experience at J&T is a delight; it has been a gathering place for Northern Europeans for more than thirty years, and you’ll hear animated conversations in Polish, Lithuanian and German among your fellow customers.

J&T European Gourmet Food

1128 Wilshire Blvd, Santa Monica
(310) 394-7227
Mon-Fri, 9AM-7PM
Sat, 9AM-6 PM
Sun, 10AM-4PM

CHSC’s Newest Book Acquisition: *The Big Fat Duck Cookbook* by Heston Blumenthal (Bloomsbury USA, 2008) has been added to LAPL Special Collections housed in Rare Books.



News and Notes

- **Glenous Absmeier** co-chairs the Palos Verdes Art Center benefit dinner on August 1, at the home of Nandini and Deepak Chopra. Chef Enrico Glaudo of Frascati Restaurant prepares an Italian menu. Tickets are \$135. Contact Sharon Holman: (310) 375-6917.
- **Jackie Knowles** was named Volunteer of the Year by the Ecumenical Council of Pasadena Area Churches for her leadership in the development of The Women’s Room at Friends In Deed, a daytime refuge for homeless and at-risk women. To refer a woman in need, or for more information, contact Jackie: (626) 355-6781.
- **Carol Penn-Romine** served as editor for two issues of *Edible Los Angeles*, including Spring 2009, which featured contributions by CHSC members **Linda Civitello, Randy Clemens, Richard Foss, Charles Rosenberg, Sienna Spencer, and Nancy Zaslavsky.**
- **Amelia Saltsman** announces that the Library of Congress has selected *The Santa Monica Farmers’ Market Cookbook* for translation into Braille (Spring 2010).

CHSC Website Debuts New Look

You may have noticed our stylish new look on the web, including event galleries, newsletter archives, and more: www.culinaryhistoriansofsoutherncalifornia.org. These improvements are the work of our long-time volunteer webmaster Randy Clemens and designer Chris Griffiths, who volunteered to help early this year. The CHSC Board heartily thanks both for their service and creativity, which have given us an eye-catching presence on the internet.

—Richard Foss

A Byzantine Affair

by Sheila Anderzunus

The CHSC 2009 Spring Event was a trip through time to the Byzantine Era of Ancient Greece and held at the beautiful War Memorial Building in Pasadena. Thanks to everyone for preparing our feast! Special thanks go out to Janet Fahey, Fran Garbaccio, Ricki De Kramer and Eve Otaola for all their help and to Don Corbett for arranging the silent auction, which included an elegant Carême dinner offered by Charles Perry.

Dishes such as Honey-Glazed Shrimp, Stuffed Grape Leaves, Tzatziki, and Roasted Leeks and Apples were enjoyed by everyone, but “Roast Lamb with Dates and Honey,” adapted from *The Classical Cookbook* by Andrew Dalby and Sally Grainger (J. Paul Getty Museum, 1996), stole the show.



May party planning committee, left to right: Charles Perry, Nancy Myers, Sheila Anderzunus (party chair), Ricki de Kramer, Janet Fahey, Eve Otaola, Mary Letendre, Fran Garbaccio Doris Arima, Joanna Erdos, Don Corbett. Photo credit: Nancy Zaslavsky



Culinary Historians enjoy Byzantine Buffet
Photo Credit: Carol Penn-Romine

Roast Lamb with Dates and Honey

Start one day ahead to marinate meat and dates.
Serves six.

Marinade:

2 1/2 cups milk

1/2 cup honey

1 tablespoon black pepper

Salt

1/2 teaspoon asafetida powder (available at Indian grocery stores. 1/2 teaspoon each onion and garlic powder may be substituted)

2 1/2 pounds lamb shoulder or leg in one piece

Olive oil

Sauce

8 crushed dates

1 1/4 cups red wine

4 tablespoons olive oil

2 tablespoons honey

4 tablespoons fish sauce

A little flour

Combine marinade ingredients, pour over meat, refrigerate, and leave the meat overnight in the marinade, turning it occasionally. Soak the dates in a little of the red wine at the same time.

The next day, remove the meat from the marinade, pat dry and rub well with olive oil. Discard marinade. Roast lamb in a pre-heated 400-degree oven. The timing should be about 20 minutes per lb or to desired doneness. When the meat is nearly ready, pound the dates to a pulp and add to the remaining red wine, honey, fish sauce and oil. Bring to a boil and cook briefly; thicken with flour.

Remove lamb from the oven and let rest for 10 minutes before carving in thick slices.

Serve with a little of the sauce on the side.



The California Bear-Chef first appeared in the Pan-Pacific cookbook, 1915.