

Saint Honoré—Patron Saint of Bakers & Pastry Chefs *And the Evolution of the Cake Created In His Honor*

By Meryle Evans

Tracking down reliable information about both the saint and the origin of his namesake cake has been an exciting search laced with legends and very few solid facts. Honoré, I was finally able to establish, was a 6th-century Bishop of Amiens in Northern France who was so modest that he didn't even want to be consecrated (his remains are in the cathedral). His old family nursemaid was at home baking bread one day when a mysterious oil poured on Honoré's head, a sure sign from the heavens that he should be anointed. She threw down a bud from a mulberry tree and exclaimed that she would believe this miracle if the bud took root. Instantly, the bud became a tree bearing full foliage and fruit—and a legend was born. Though his connection with baking is pretty tenuous, Honoré eventually became a saint and patron of the trade, always depicted in medieval statues and prints holding a long baker's peel and loaves of bread. Even today, bakers throughout France celebrate May 16th—the day he died in 600 A.D.—with festivals and processions.

According to accounts in 19th-century pastry books, the gâteau Saint-Honoré was invented around 1846 by a pâtissier named Chiboust who ran a shop on the Rue Saint Honoré in Paris.

Chiboust paid homage to both the saint and the name of the street with his cake but gave his own name to the filling, made by folding beaten egg whites into a classic pastry cream.

The 1840s were a period of ferment in French pastry, a time of change from tall, inedible *pièces montées* to simpler, more flavorful creations that could be eaten right down to the base. Like the savarin, invented at Julien Frères, an esteemed establishment founded by three brothers in 1844, many of the classics we enjoy today were born in famous Parisian pastry shops of that era.

As to Chiboust's Saint-Honoré, after consulting with culinary historians in France and the Confédération Nationale de la Boulangerie-Pâtisserie Française and pouring over dozens of old cookbooks with master chef and archivist Jacques Coustar in the marvelous library of the Société Culinaire Philanthropique in midtown Manhattan, I discovered that the original gâteau was so different from what we now consider to be the "classic" and that the only constant in the recipe has been a crown of puffs circling a round base with an airy cream filling.

Two renowned 19th-century culinary authorities, Swiss chef Joseph Favre and Pierre Lacam,

pastry chef to the Prince of Monaco, recalled in their reminiscences that the first Saint-Honorés were made with a circle of brioche dough (docked and weighted down) surrounded by small brioche balls. In the earliest printed Saint-Honoré recipe I located, (Louis Bailleux' *Le Pâtissier Moderne*, published in the 1850s) the brioche base was then spread with a layer of choux paste and baked. Hazelnut-sized cream puffs were dipped in a cooked syrup of glazed fruits, attached to the base, and sprinkled with pink or green tinted sugar. Pieces of glazed fruit were placed between the puffs and the center filled with a pastry cream lightened with whipped cream.

According to Favre, Chiboust's original filling was just whipped cream perfumed with strawberries, violets, roses, raspberries, or vanilla. However, when fresh cream became hard to find in Paris during the summer months, a pastry cream lightened with beaten egg whites was substituted.

Soon pastry chefs were coming

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Papers demonstrating serious culinary history research will be considered for inclusion in issues of the CHNY newsletters. Please contact Helen Brody, newsletter editor. Matriculating students of culinary history or related topics are invited to contribute.

FROM THE CHAIR

I am happy to announce the launch of the website for the Culinary Historians of New York, www.culinaryhistoriansny.org. Created by CHNY member Tae Ellin, **it will supplement the hardcopy program announcements and semiannual newsletters that all members will continue to receive by mail.**

We had four goals in creating the website. First and foremost, we wanted to make it easier for non-members to learn about the organization, attend programs, and join CHNY.

Second, we wanted to create a convenient archive of CHNY information (handy if, like me, your mailed program announcement gets lost on your desk). This will include an on-line archive of our newsletters and book reviews and has the added advantage of greater space (for more in-depth essays) than our print version permits.

Third, we wanted to coordinate and contribute to the information available to both passionate amateurs and serious scholars alike. In our “Books and Resources” pages you will find links to cookery collections at universities and libraries, many of which can be accessed by a click of a mouse. Browse these links to reach Michigan State University’s “Feeding America: The Historic American Cookbook Project,” where you can study works like Mrs. Ellet’s *The Practical Housekeeper* (1857). For those who prefer their research in the kitchen, peruse and contribute to our “Virtual Cookbook: Recipes with History,” where we will post recipes placed in their historical and social context. We hope that everyone will share recipes with history.

Finally, we are offering members an “opt-in” e-mail notification system: register your e-mail address and receive notice of non-CHNY events (such as the current exhibition of chocolate, tea, and coffee accoutrements at the Metropolitan Museum of Art).

We hope that you enjoy the website and will visit soon. We are still “under construction,” and I invite you to contact me with questions or ideas (chairman@culinaryhistoriansny.org) about making the website better serve your needs.



Cathy Kaufman

LETTERS

To the Editor:

In “Early Sephardic Foodways in the Hudson Valley,” Judith Hausman posits that “Chamin known to Ashkenazic Jews as *cholent*, may in fact have been an antecedent of the popular Boston baked beans.”

The use of long, slow cooking methods goes back to the dawn of civilization, countless millennia before Abraham, not to mention Moses and the commandment to observe the Sabbath. Until the advent of metal cooking pots in the Bronze Age, all cooking involving liquid had to be executed very slowly. Perforce, primitive “stone boiling” was painfully laborious and barely kept the liquid hot. Earthenware pots, while a wonderful improvement, cannot stand up to rapid boiling. My point is that long slow cookery has been practiced from earliest time by peoples of all faiths, and owes nothing whatsoever to customs in observance of the Sabbath.

As to beans specifically, long slow cooking is the only proper way of cooking dried beans. The indigenous peoples up Boston way had surely been cooking their own dried beans slowly long before the English showed up. Further those English colonists had ancestral recipes for long slow cooking of dried beans, albeit a different variety. In a fifteenth century manuscript entitled *Form of Cury*, I find a recipe that instructs the reader: “...Take benes and dry hem in a *nost* or in an *ovene* ... & do hem to seeth in gode broth, & ete hem with bacoun.” (In *Curve on*

Inglysch, editd by Constance B. Hieatt and Sharon Butler, page 98). There are much earlier recipes, but this one is particularly pertinent in that it concerns beans dried in an *oast* before being seethed, that is cooked exceedingly slowly, then eaten with bacon.

There are other errors, but versions of this particular bit of wishful thinking are a staple in writing culinary history. Let us all do our homework.

—KAREN HESS

Ed. Note: Karen Hess is a founding member of the Culinary Historians of New York. In addition to many other presentations, in 1994 she gave the keynote address at a two day symposium at

the Smithsonian Institution on the history of American bread titled “A Century of Change in the American Loaf: Or Where are the Breads of Yesteryear?”

She has co-authored or edited eight published works and her newest edited work *Mr. Jefferson's Table: Culinary Legacy of Monticello* is forthcoming.

To the Editor:

We were pleased to see a reprint of our article on Sephardic foodways in your Fall 2003 issue. However, we noticed that the photo credits were missing. Photo credits are for Jerry Novesky/*The Valley Table*.

—JANET CRAWSHAW, Publisher
The Valley Table

CULINARY BOOKSHELF

The Cook's Canon: 101 Classic Recipes Everyone Should Know
by Raymond Sokolov
(New York, HarperCollins Publishers, 2003)

REVIEW BY HELEN STUDLEY

COOKBOOK author, former restaurant critic of *The New York Times*, one-time columnist on America's foodways for *Natural History* magazine, and former editor of *The Wall Street Journal's* “Leisure and Arts” page, Raymond Sokolov loves to play “enfant terrible.” As a passionate scholar with a sense of humor, it is a role that suits him well. Forestalling eyebrow raising protest from his readers, Sokolov admits that the 101 recipes worthy of his culinary hall of fame (arranged in alphabetical order), are

in the end, an arbitrary exercise of personal taste.

In spite of the author's cautionary warning, some entries are sure to raise eyebrows. Macaroni and cheese, meat loaf. Is this a joke? But then, again, who are we to tell? Macaroni and cheese achieved restaurant chic when executive chef Doug Psaltis, of Alain Ducasse's restaurant *Mix* in New York, put it on the menu. The meat loaf recipe, Sokolov tells us, is from his editor, Susan Ruth Friedland, whom he calls “the Lucullus of publishing.”

On a personal note, I was delighted to find vitello tonnato and tripes à la mode de Caen among his “canonic” dishes. The veal-tuna combination is an ideal summer dish that seemingly went out of style and deserves to be resur-

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rected; the erstwhile popular French bistro item, tripe, however, strikes fear in the heart of today's faint-hearted diner. In his mayonnaise recipe, Sokolov states his case regarding current "forbidden" or "foreboding" food.

"Some people won't eat real mayonnaise anymore," he writes, "because they fear that the raw egg yolks in it may be contaminated by salmonella. For me, the tiny risk of death by mayo is no more frightening than the prospect that someday (as actually happened to a friend of his) I may walk out of the house and be hit by a set of barbells falling from a window overhead."

Part of the book's enjoyment comes from the short essays that precede the recipes. In his introduction to Peking duck, Sokolov pays tribute to his Lithuanian-born aunt Tzipi who found refuge from Nazi persecution in Shanghai where a "notorious rake" introduced her to Peking Duck. In the communal kitchen of a slovenly hut, between opium pipes and love making, he boiled the duck atop a charcoal fire and then dipped it in honey. "He wore no shirt, and I didn't like it that the women could see him half naked, even though I was sure most of them had seen more of him at other times."

Browsing through the book before buying it, the following footnote to moules marinière had me sold: "Belgium brings out the worst in the French. If you think Frenchmen are anti-American, you should hear them sneer at their Francophone neighbors." But all joking aside, the recipe is clearly stated and foolproof.

French recipes dominate because French cuisine has shaped every other European and American cuisine. Still there are plenty of dishes from other European cultures. To me, one of the most intriguing recipes is *Maiale in Latte* (Italian Pork Roast in Milk).

There are the recipes from more distant places with great cuisines: China, Morocco, and India. Given the author's interest in the eating habits of people in the Americas, there are many telling entries.

Comfort food, like bread pudding and chocolate pudding, fried rice and rice pudding are given equal billing with suckling pig, *jambon persillé*, *quenelles de brochet* with crayfish sauce. The latter is clearly meant as tribute to the great Henri Soulé who was the undisputed apostle of refined taste.

The Cook's Canon, informed by history and a people's culture, gives us the love letters of a man who enjoys eating and invites us to share his passion.

There is one thing about the book, however, that bothered me: its cover. The colors are loud and garish and out-of-tune with the nature of the book. Maybe it was designed to address a generation unfamiliar with Raymond Sokolov's contribution to the culinary world. In that case, I withdraw my objection and simply say: "Get the book. You'll enjoy it."

Helen Studley, formerly co-owner of the restaurant *La Colombe d'Or*, author of *The Chicken For Every Occasion Cookbook* and *Life of a Restaurant: Tales and Recipes from La Colombe d'Or*, is a freelance food and travel writer.

What Einstein Told His Cook
by Robert L. Wolke
(New York, W. W. Norton, 2002)

REVIEW BY JEANNE LESEM

ASCIENCE book that's fun to read? Wolke's book is just that, but if you find puns unfunny, be forewarned; the author likes them. "Beet me with a cane" introduces his explanation of the differences between beet and cane sugar.

Among the many questions he answers is, "Does it ever really get hot enough to fry an egg on the sidewalk?"

"It's unlikely. But scientific opinion has never been known to discourage people from trying to prove an age-old urban legend."

While readers may enjoy Wolke's views on food preparation, and may even be tempted to follow a recipe, finding a specific one isn't easy. There's no recipe index and no indication in the general index whether the listing is for a recipe or not. This factor has discouraged me from trying any of them; some, like one for champagne jelly, are in my view a waste of a good and expensive beverage, better to drink than to jell, especially since the raspberries called for are apt to overwhelm the champagne flavor. Anyway, it's a good read.

Jeanne Lesem, a freelance journalist and author, was the first food editor of *United Press International*. Her most recent cookbook, *Preserving in Today's Kitchen*, won a *James Beard Foundation Award* when first published as *Preserving Today*.

PROGRAM SUMMARIES

WHAT'S COOKING IN MESOPOTAMIA?

A History of Iraqi Cuisine

Presented by Nawal Nasrallah

The cuisine of Iraq has evolved over several thousands of years. As the crossroad of many eastern and western cultures the cuisine has a distinctive character that testifies to the diversity of its roots. Nawal Nasrallah, who lived in Iraq until 1990, is the author of *Delights from the Garden of Eden: A Cookbook and History of the Iraqi Cuisine* (Bloomington, In., 1st Books Library, 2003).

In her presentation she highlighted the cuisine's origins in civilizations that can be traced back more than three thousand years before Christianity. The Sumerians, Babylonians, and Assyrians, collectively referred to as ancient Mesopotamians, achieved a cultural sophistication which extended to their cuisine. Theirs was the first documented "cookbook" with recipes inscribed on clay tablets ca.1700 BCE. (Yale Babylonian Collection)

The complex spice combinations that flavor many of the dishes come from spices traded on the Silk Road, such as cardamom, cumin, anise, mustard, and cassia, a cinnamon type spice. Methods of farming, cooking, and preserving foods as well as some of the recipes are still employed in today's society. Dishes we enjoy today like hummus, lamb stew, and flatbread are basically unchanged from ancient times. —LINDA PELACCIO

Linda Pelaccio, chair of CHNY's program committee, formerly a producer at the Food Network, is a food writer and culinary media coach.

NEW YORK'S FIRST REGIONAL CUISINE

Presented by Anne Mendelson

How does one begin to investigate a cuisine of a culture that had no written language and has left no obvious impression on our current foodways? If you are scholarly Anne Mendelson and your topic is the cuisine of the Lenape, you immerse yourself in the topographical history of the region, open your eyes to the dizzying variety of wild plant life still found in the Hudson River Valley, and critically pore over Eurocentric 17th-century descriptions that can be found to document the dying culinary culture. Anne shared the fruits of her labors with a packed house at the Mount Vernon Hotel Museum on November 19, 2003.

The unique geography of the Hudson River Valley—the Hudson River is a glacially created fjord in which salt waters travel up some 150 miles to mingle with fresh—creates a striking series of ecosystems that were home to dense schools of fish such as shad, bass, sturgeon and salmon. The retreating glaciers also created the wetlands surrounding Hackensack which, nourished by the tides, were the largest spawning ground for shellfish on the East Coast. Not only were the grounds large and

fertile, but the oysters themselves were large: often over a foot long and quite broad. With these copious winter oysters and spring salmon runs, the Lenape had "a permanent cushion against seasonal food shortages" before plants ripened.

The Lenape were primarily hunter-gatherers, organized into social units of a few dozens or up to several hundreds. Labor was generally divided along gender lines. Men hunted animals such as deer, black bear, raccoon, lynx, and the highly prized wild turkey that early colonists complained was too fat. Water birds abounded and the list reads like a late medieval cookbook: terns, swans, bitterns, and plover, added to the very American canvas-backed duck and passenger pigeon, insured a regular avian food supply, especially during the migrating season when the sky could be darkened for hours while a flock of birds passed overhead. Women gathered wild plants and shellfish, the things that "stood still." Fruits and nuts were essential paths in Lenape foodways, including starchy chestnuts, sadly destroyed by blight in the early 20th century, black walnuts, butternuts, beechnuts, hazelnuts, and acorns. Wild fruits included the fat strawberries that contrasted with the skinny fraises de bois known to the Europeans, certain grapes, cranberries and blueberries, persimmons, bitter cherries, prickly pear, and certain brambles. Jerusalem artichokes, American wild ginger, and wild greens rounded out the gatherers' larder.

Although based on a mobile, hunting-gathering model, the Lenape practiced a kind of proto-agriculture: controlled fires

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burned forests to open areas that were invaded by favored wild plants. Significantly, they also had three domesticated plants that were not indigenous to the region: maize (in this case the hard, Northern Flint variety), beans, and squash. Maize in particular is a difficult plant to grow and requires constant human intervention, as the plant cannot pollinate itself. How the Lenape learned to grow these plants and how committed they were to the more fixed agriculture required by maize remains a mystery.

Lenape foodways began to change during the 16th century, post “Contact,” as scholars like to call it, when Europeans explored the New World and traded with the indigenes, but before colonization had begun. The Lenape, a pre-metal culture, was fascinated by the metal and glass beads explorers brought to barter for the luxurious pelts demanded by Europe. Once Contact began, the Lenape focused efforts on amassing furs for trade.

Pre-Contact, the Lenape had Stone Age cooking techniques: without metal, frying and sautéing were impossible, as clay vessels cannot withstand the high temperatures those techniques require. Yet Stone Age does not mean unsophisticated: the Lenape could boil, roast over open fires, bake in embers, smoke, sun and wind-dry, and pit-cook, a hybrid of baking and steaming. From colonists’ descriptions, the Lenape palate was different from the European. The Lenape did not add salt to their foods and had a taste for a certain pungency achieved by drying ungutted creatures without salt, so

that bacterial action would start to set in. The Lenape also employed different fats from nuts and animals, each of which was unrefined and added its distinctive flavor. After colonization, the Lenape acquired the European taste for salt and the newly introduced sugar, alcohol, and wheat.

Unlike Mesoamerican foodways that fused with European cookery to define modern Mexican and Latin American cookery, Lenape cuisine is, at best, a palimpsest underlying Hudson River foodways. Colonists adapted ingredients that were easily domesticated, but no interest was shown in the wild crops and traditions of the Lenape. As the Europeans divided up land and introduced the concept of private property, the Lenape, who had traditionally depended on moving among local ecosystems, lost the ability to exploit the environment and with it, their cuisine.

—CATHY K. KAUFMAN

Cathy K. Kaufman is chair of the Culinary Historians of New York. She is a professional chef and culinary historian and is on the faculty of The Institute of Culinary Education (formerly Peter Kump’s) where she teaches classes in historical and French cookery. She is also an Associate Editor for The Oxford Encyclopedia of Food and Drink to be published by Oxford University Press later this year.

ART IN FOOD AND FOOD IN ART

Presented by Peter G. Rose

The curl of a half-peeled lemon droops over a table’s edge. Light is refracted through a glass of wine

onto a freshly pressed damask tablecloth. A luminous fish glistens on a pewter platter. A fly closely examines a peach. Image succeeds luscious image on the screen in front of us. Are we in a History of Art 101 class? Almost.

We are in a December slide lecture given by Peter G. Rose in which she tells the CHNY members and friends that still-life and genre paintings of the 17th-century Dutch masters and the writings of the descendants of Dutch colonists in America help us to learn what foods the Dutch settlers of New York, New Jersey, Delaware and parts of Pennsylvania and Connecticut consumed and how they prepared them.

Mrs. Rose is the author of several books about Dutch foodways, including *Matters of Taste: Food and Drink in 17th-Century Dutch Art and Life* (Syracuse University Press, 2002), a book which accompanied an exhibition of Dutch paintings in Albany in the fall of 2002 celebrating the 350th anniversary of the founding of Beverwijck, the Dutch settlement that became present-day Albany. The slides she showed us were of paintings in the exhibit.

We learned that the Dutch brought with them to the New World seeds and root stocks, implements to cook with, and tableware. They introduced donuts, coleslaw, sweet pretzels, pancakes, and cookies to America. They had cows but used their milk, not for drinking, but for making cheese. Their main drink was beer, for adult and child alike. They sold rusks in lots of 100, 50, 25. Also wishing to sell them in half lots, 13 became half of 25 originating the term “baker’s dozen.”

Mrs. Rose provided many of the foods she was to discuss as we

arrived for the meeting. Ginger cakes, anise cookies, candied (Jordan) almonds, candied cinnamon, candied quince, Gouda, Edam, and cumin cheeses, rye, pumpernickel, and sweet white bread, butter were accompanied by her own raspberry brandy. —JOHN JENKINS

ABSOLUTE ZERO: AND THE CONQUEST OF THE COLD

Presented by Tom Shachtman

On a frigid January evening the CHNY gathering was, appropriately enough, at ICE (Institute for Culinary Education) to hear Tom Shachtman, author of *Absolute Zero: And the Conquest of Cold* (NY, Mariner Books, 2001), talk about the history of refrigeration. Food and drink, happily, was on hand to warm our bodies before his talk began. Some food represented the pre-refrigeration era: smoked salmon and air-dried bresaola, and others represented those available since the coming of refrigeration: frozen grapes, shrimp cocktail on ice, and ice-box cake. Pindar-Johannisberg Riesling washed it all down. Also, open-faced cucumber sandwiches were there with a twinkle to represent “cool as a ...”.

Warmed and refreshed, we sat down to hear our speaker define *absolute zero* as a temperature hundreds of degrees below the temperature at which water freezes. To give us an idea of how cold that is, he said the temperature in outer space is about two degrees above absolute zero and, despite their efforts, today’s scientists continue to be unable to achieve absolute zero.

He went on to describe early attempts at refrigeration, notably

one in 1620 in which inventor and engineer Cornelis Drebbel used snow, salt, nitre, water, and fans to cool a portion of Westminster Abbey enough to make the king of England shiver. In the 1660s a scientist, Robert Boyle, promulgated a theory that linked volume, temperature, and pressure, a theory that would lead to critical discoveries 200 years later.

Shachtman’s talk roamed from the ice palaces in St. Petersburg in the mid-eighteenth century to the ice houses of the nineteenth century. He took us through a maze of inventors whose efforts finally

resulted in the 1870’s in the beginnings of refrigeration as we know it today. Shachtman concluded his talk with Clarence Birdseye’s discovery in the early 1920s of quick frozen food that left individual cells unbroken and hence palatable and not mushy, when thawed. By the 1940s there was a refrigerator in every modern home.

—JOHN JENKINS

John Jenkins has recently returned from an extensive tour of Spain including two weeks in Northern Spain with Penelope Casas. He is recently retired from the Food Network.

MEMBER PROFILE

NACH WAXMAN

By Kara Newman

NACH WAXMAN is the owner of Kitchen Arts & Letters. Conceived as a place to enlighten food professionals—and not just those people who ply their trade in kitchens—it is a small but lushly stocked store that specializes in books on every aspect of food and wine. Today three-quarters of the store’s business is firmly bonded to the food industry, whether chefs or food writers; students of food history, and the related fields of social history and anthropology, or collectors of antique cooking equipment. Food, as it relates to industry or agriculture, is not beyond the store’s reach, nor are books in foreign languages.



An entire wall devoted to culinary history and social sciences reflects the increased number of books published to meet a growing demand both from academia as

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Nach Waxman

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well as hands-on cooks who want to research the past in hopes of re-discovering an old technique or ingredient that may have fallen out of favor.

Perhaps surprisingly for someone running a store devoted to titles focused on food, Waxman has never worked in the food service industry. After 18 years as an editor for a major publishing house, he opted to open a bookstore. Having always wanted to run a store with a particular specialty, the concept of Kitchen Arts & Letters allowed him the opportunity to indulge his long-time interests in food and anthropology.

The business of locating well-researched books is Waxman's particular passion and, having discovered that there is a buyer for even the most obscure book, he has grown to be uncommonly daring in his buying. Ideas are triggered by publications from all over the world that he and his staff read, by customers returning from foreign travels with names of books not available in the United States, and from the pressure exerted on him by researchers who insist that "there *must* be *something*" on this or that subject.

Waxman finds a challenging part of his job is to get people "not to paint by numbers," as he describes cooking strictly by the recipe. He asserts that the great chefs who come in to his store are looking for recipe *concepts* and ingredient *ideas*, not recipes and so should the home cook. "Since Fannie Farmer, there has been an increasing dependency on precise recipes. We are crippling ourselves by denying our taste buds—do it as you like it—give the recipe some

thought." Waxman and his staff encourage customers to choose books that will give them the background knowledge and instincts to make them better cooks. As he explains, "If you know what I call the 'cultural and historical' background of a dish, you'll make it better."

Kitchen Arts & Letters does not have a website. Having experimented with one, Waxman prefers the customer to contact the store directly. "We encourage people to ask questions," he explains. "Our major commodity is conversation."

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Kara Newman, secretary of the Culinary Historians of New York, is a freelance editor and writer, currently working for egullet.com, an international website devoted to food.

MEMBER NEWS

Lisa DeLange graduated with an MLS (Library Science) from Queens College this winter. She also received an MA in Food History in Spring 2000. Her website is up and running (www.LisaSez.com) with a link offering information on sustainable agriculture.

Betty Fussell's book *My Kitchen Wars* is being presented with a live musical format written by Melissa Sweeney and starring Dorothy Lyman at the 78th Street Theatre Lab. The show opened on March 14th and tickets may be purchased through Smarttix.com.

With a newborn (Daniel) and a seven year old (Mikol) **Alexandra Leaf** continues to teach and contribute stories to the *Philadelphia Daily News* food section.

Gary Goldberg, Executive Director, reports that the New School, Culinary Arts has greatly expanded

its program of culinary walking tours to meet increased demand. See Regional Calendar, page 9.

Saveur magazine has named **Marion Nestle** as its "nutritionist with a backbone" in the magazine's best "100 Special Issue." (January-February, 2004). In April, Marion will be a keynote speaker at a University of New Hampshire symposium on "Eating as a Moral Act," with a presentation titled "Food Politics and Public Health: The Paradox of Plenty." **Helen Brody** will be appearing on a panel at the same symposium on the subject of "Civic Agriculture: Relocalizing the Food System."

Meryl Rosofsky's next Food & Wine Tour in Tuscany will take place from June 19–26. It will be co-hosted by master chef and Lucca native Gianluca Pardini. The trip will feature hands-on cooking classes at the centuries-old Villa Volpi in the countryside of

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Lucca; excursions to Pisa, Viareggio, and the seaside villages of the Cinque Terre; and visits to wineries and olive groves in Chianti and Colle Verde, where the group will meet with the proprietors of centuries-old family-run estates and taste their award-winning wines and prized Lucchese olive oils. The trip will conclude in the very special town of Siena and its surrounding countryside. For more information, please contact Meryl at mrososky@aol.com.”

On May 23, **Andrew Smith** will discuss how Americans have made foods from other areas around the globe truly “American” at the Crane House Museum of the Montclair Historical Society.

The Overlook Press, NY, has recently reprinted **Lynn Visson’s** book *The Russian Heritage Cookbook* in a revised and updated version. The book uncovers the foods brought to this country by Russian émigrés before or during the 1917 revolution.

Accompanying the recipes are introductions providing the history of this cuisine previously only found in the memories of the cooks and on scraps of paper.

A new edition of **William Woys Weaver’s** *A Quaker Woman’s Cookbook*, which is an edited edition of Elizabeth Ellicott Lea’s *Domestic Cookery*, has been released by Stackpole Books. Will served as the associate editor and art editor of the *Encyclopedia of Food and Culture* (Charles Scribner’s Sons Library of Daily Life) which recently won the prestigious Dartmouth Medal for Outstanding Reference by the American Library Association.

EXHIBITIONS

Montclair (NJ) Historical Society

February 1 through June 20

COOKBOOKS FROM MONTCLAIR
An exhibit of “receipt books,” 18th- and 19th-century cookbooks from the historical society’s collections, and 20th-century cookbooks gathered from local Montclair people and organizations. Crane House Museum.

May 21 through June 20

APRON STRINGS: TIES TO THE PAST
Using aprons dated from the late 1800s through the present, the exhibition chronicles changing attitudes towards women and domestic work. It also surveys the wide range of design and craft techniques apron makers have used to express themselves. For example, the post-war 1940s and 1950s, stand out as the heyday of the apron, when commercial and intricately hand-decorated aprons flourished as symbols of family and motherhood. The exhibit is organized into thematic groups addressing design, historical context, use, and cultural message. Text and photo panels provide general background for each theme.

WALKING TOURS

New School Culinary Arts

Walking tours explore the cultural diversity of New York City’s ethnic neighborhoods through their cuisine. Each tour ends with a full lunch included in the \$65 tuition. Tours are canceled only in case of

severely inclement weather. Class sizes are limited. For additional information and reservations, including directions to tour sites, call (212) 255-4141.

Sat., April 3. The International Culinary Delights of Manhattan’s 9th Avenue Addie Tomei

Sun., April 4. The Japanese Culinary Delights of Mitsuwa Market Pat Kinney

Sat., April 17. The Italian Culinary Delights of Bensonhurst Linda Romanelli-Leahy

Sun., April 18. The Russian Culinary Delights of Brighton Beach, Annie Hauck-Lawson

Sat., April 24. Insider’s Guide to the Culinary Delights of SoHo Philip Bradford

Sun., April 25. The Soulful Culinary Flavors of Central Harlem, Myra Alpersen

Sat., May 1. The Old-World Italian Culinary Delights of Arthur Avenue, Myra Alpersen

Sat., May 1. The Middle Eastern Culinary Delights of Atlantic Avenue, Candace P. Damon

Sun., May 2. The International Culinary Delights of Sunnyside Myra Alpersen

Sat., May 8. The Indian Culinary Delights of Jackson Heights, Geetika Khanna

Sun., May 16. The Vibrant Culinary Flavors of East Harlem, Myra Alpersen

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Regional Calendar

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Sat, May 22. The Portuguese Culinary Delights of Newark, Daniel C. Rosati

PROGRAMS

Montclair Historical Society

Visit www.montclairhistorical.org for extensive program information through December.

Judith Krall-Russo, food historian and tea specialist will present programs in New Jersey.

Sat., April 17. History of English Tea

Tues., April 20. Tea from Many Lands, A Short History

Sun., April 25. Tea from Many Lands, A Short History

Sun., May 2. The Working Class Supper—High Tea

Tues., May 11. Woman and Tea in the Victorian Era

Sun., May 16. Tea-Time for Kids

Tues., May 18. The Jersey Tomato

Thurs., June 24. Blueberries—New Jersey's Wonder Fruit

Sun., August 1. Women and Tea in the Victorian Era

Sun., August 15. Victorian Summer Beverages

Call (732) 985-2486 or E-mail: karusso@erols.com for additional information.

St. Honoré

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up with their own interpretations. In the 1873 *Le Livre de Pâtisserie*, Jules Gouffé suggested a number of interesting variations: coffee or chocolate with pastry cream; Bavarian cream with apricot, pineapple, strawberry or raspberry; and for an orange filling, glazed orange quarters replaced the cream puffs.

Then, towards the end of the 19th-century, pâtissiers who made the Saint-Honoré during the warm summer months discovered to their horror that customers were falling ill with food poisoning. Emile Duval and Emile Darenne, authors of *Traite de Pâtisserie Moderne* c. 1910, devoted three pages to a discussion of the problem, citing chemists and bacteriologists who concluded that uncooked egg whites were the culprit. Their rule was to use only pasteurized egg whites, making sure that they were thoroughly incorporated into the pastry cream. The authors also suggested several other summertime options that have become standard: incorporating a cooked Italian meringue into a pastry cream or Bavarian cream with gelatin or going back to the original whipped cream. Lacam wrote that it would take two pages to describe all of the different kinds of creams and fillings for a Saint-Honoré!

François Payard of New York's Payard Pâtisserie and Bistro recalls that his grandfather prepared the traditional Chiboust filling, but with today's stringent health regulations and because the *gâteau* has to sit in a shop all day, Payard uses pasteurized eggs for a bavarois and whipped cream filling. "Everything is about the quality of the ingredients," he says, "I use good Kirsch



Signature swirls using a St. Honoré pastry tip.

and very fresh cream and vanilla beans."

Eric Bedoucha, executive pastry chef at Bayard's restaurant and Financier Pâtisserie in lower Manhattan, equally conscious of his ingredients, also uses the pastry cream and whipped cream combination in lovely little individual Saint-Honorés that are studded with berries and topped with more whipped cream. For the large cakes, Bedoucha pipes the whipped cream using the traditional Saint-Honoré tip with a cut out "V" shape.

Some contemporary pastry chefs have completely dispensed with the pastry cream and devised delicious whipped cream fillings. Chef/owner Michel Roux of The Waterside Inn near London, recalls that "since my youth I have always regarded a Saint-Honoré as the ultimate gastronomic and visually appealing dessert," one that he now deftly decorates with alternating bands of piped vanilla and chocolate whipped cream. The acclaimed Parisian pâtissier Pierre Hermé makes his Saint-Honoré with a layer of poached pears covered by a cloud of chocolate whipped cream.

As to the traditional Chiboust pastry cream with beaten egg whites, now seldom used for a

Saint-Honoré, it has blossomed as a dessert on its own. About a year ago Jill Rose, then pastry chef at New York's La Caravelle, created a passionfruit Chiboust that, says executive chef Troy Dupuy, "is so popular it always stays on the menu." In this beautiful presentation the passionfruit pastry cream is topped with a white chocolate meringue, garnished with white chocolate shavings and papaya, and served with a pink cactus pear reduction. While M. Chiboust (never even identified by his first name) remains a shadowy figure, he certainly deserves a place of honor in the pastry pantheon.

Meryle Evans is a food journalist and culinary historian who has written extensively about the world's cuisines for over twenty years. She was an editor of The American Heritage Cookbook, The Horizon Cookbook, and the eighteen volume Southern Heritage Cookbook Library. As a Contributing Editor at Food Arts magazine, Meryle has covered cooking and culture from Australia to Chile, Turkey to Tunisia for the past fourteen years. She also lectures on various aspects of culinary history and was the curator of "The Confectioners Art," an exhibit at the American Craft Museum.

The above article is one in a series by CHNY member Evans called

"Pastry Pantheon: A Collection of Essential Classics." They can be found on PastryScoop.com which was established by The French Culinary Institute to inform professionals and non-professionals on the subjects of pastry history, baking and dessert trends, recipe how-to's, and techniques. The site also offers relevant interviews and career profiles and access is free.



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Contact: Judiaann Woo.

Membership Application

(For current members, please write "Renewal" at the top)

At monthly meetings, the Culinary Historians of New York explore the historic, esoteric, and entertaining byways of food. These events are led by noted historians, authors, anthropologists, and food experts, many of whom are CHNY members.

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Culinary Interests (12 words max; information to appear in the next CHNY directory)

Willing to help with: Programs: _____ Membership: _____ Newsletter: _____

Please make check payable to CHNY and send with completed form to: The Culinary Historians of New York, Stacey D. Harwood, 93 Perry St. #13, New York, NY 10014.

UPCOMING PROGRAMS

Monday, April 26 “Ekiben: A Culinary Train Tour of Japan”

Elizabeth Andoh

Railroads became an important part of Japanese life at the turn of the 20th Century giving rise to a new food phenomenon: *Ekiben*, the Bento Box lunches sold at each train station. Elizabeth, a Tokyo resident and culinary historian, will discuss the variations in regional cuisines found in these intriguingly elegant boxes.

Tuesday, May 11 “New York City’s Greenmarkets: A History & Inside View”

Today **Greenmarket**, a program of the Council on the Environment of New York City, has more than 30 market locations in the metropolitan area offering residents farm fresh local products. Join us for a panel discussion on the history of markets in the city and how various groups are joining efforts to educate consumers and promote regional farmers.

Tuesday, September 21 Annual Meeting and Program

“New Hampshire: A Study in Agricultural and Culinary Innovation”

Helen Brody

Since Colonial days, this small, fiercely independent, granite-ridden, “live-free-or-die” state has quietly adapted to a changing world.

•CULINARY HISTORIANS OF NEW YORK•

C/O Stacey D. Harwood

93 Perry St. #13

New York, NY 10014

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