Issue 16, Spring 2011
Published by the Peacock-Harper Culinary History Committee
http://spec.lib.vt.edu/culinary/CulinaryThymes/

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Editor’s Note

Spring has finally arrived in southwestern Virginia! Daffodils and tulips are blooming and on a recent drive to Roanoke I enjoyed seeing the first hints of color in the forest—many shades of green in addition to pink and white from the blooming redbud and dogwood trees. It is wonderful to experience this season of rebirth after the long cold days of winter.

In this issue of the Virginia Culinary Thymes, we are highlighting the varied and exciting programs hosted by the Peacock-Harper Culinary Friends. We heard about the lives of Nannie Figgat and Martha Mary Godwin (Fincastle, Virginia) based on the research adventures of Jean Robbins and Gail McMillan using diaries, letters, and manuscript cookbooks; enjoyed an Old Fashion Christmas celebration at the Hotel Roanoke; and enjoyed Kira Dietz’s presentation on historical household management resources followed by a time to review some of the new materials in Special Collections. Dr. Ann Hertzler, a founding member of the Peacock-Harper Culinary Friends, will be the speaker at the final program for the academic year. The Steering Committee is also pleased to welcome Dr. Elizabeth Fine as an advisor.

After reading about the various programs, I hope that you will consider becoming a member of the Peacock-Harper Culinary Friends (http://spec.lib.vt.edu/culinary/JoinPHCHF.pdf).

I have enjoyed serving as newsletter editor and member of the Steering Committee for the past year. However, family care-giving responsibilities limit the time available to be an active and engaged member of the committee. The Virginia Culinary Thymes is in need of a new editor, if you are interested please contact Jean Robbins (jrobbinsj@gmail.com).

Caryl Gray
Sharing Virginia Tech’s Culinary History Collection
Kira. Dietz1

Last fall, a call for presenters popped into my e-mail box. A graduate student from Appalachian State University was putting together a panel on Appalachian food and foodways for the Southern Humanities Council (SHC) Conference to be held in February 2011. The conference theme was simply “Food.”

I grew up in the kitchen, cooking with my mother and baking with my father. I like to think I know something about food, so the idea of a food conference caught my attention. Two years earlier I had joined the faculty in Special Collections at Virginia Tech’s University Libraries. As the Acquisitions and Processing Archivist I developed a fascination for the Culinary History Collection. I readily saw the SCH conference as an opportunity to highlight Virginia Culinary History, and accepted the invitation to be on the panel.

Jacksonville, Florida, hosted the conference February 11-13, 2011. Our panel was titled, “Then, Now, and Soon: Food as Connectors over Time.” Along with a paper by Robert Mason (Duke Divinity School) titled, “Keeping Table: An Exploration of Thriving Rural Communities” and a presentation by Rebekah Epling (Appalachia State University),

“Preserving Appalachian Foodways: An Apprentice’s Study of Cultural Shifts and Attitudes Pertaining to Mountain Food Systems,” I shared “Preserving the Culinary History of Virginia: An Archivist’s Perspective.” Although no two Special Collections are alike, I talked about the development of the Culinary History Collection at Virginia Tech as an example of a resource for culinary studies; how the collection continues to expand; and the research potential for these materials. SHC may not be a large group, but we were well received and the questions from our audience sparked some interesting discussion of gender roles relating to/being shaped by food, the idea of food as performance, and the difficulties of preserving the oral tradition aspects of culinary history. All three themes reappeared frequently during the conference.

Another wonderful take-away from this conference was hearing about the research and writing of humanities scholars. In addition to analytical and academic panels, the conference featured a number of sessions by fiction and non-fiction writers. As we continue to accept donations and purchase books and manuscripts for the Culinary History Collection at Virginia Tech, we are also looking for ways to market the collection to the scholarly community and throughout the region. I came back from Florida with new ideas of how people perceive, interact with, and study food in our everyday lives, as well as in the fields of literature, performing arts, sociology, and other humanities disciplines.

“Then, Now, and Soon: Food as Connectors over Time” is on Facebook at http://www.facebook.com/pages/Then-Now-and-Soon-Food-as-Connectors-over-Time/148912928497884. The discussion board includes a link to the slides for my presentation, currently at: http://spec.lib.vt.edu/culinary/SHC2011_CulinaryHistory.pdf. For more information about my experiences sharing this collection with the Southern Humanities Council or general inquiries about the Culinary History Collection at Virginia Tech, I can be reached at kadietz@vt.edu or 540-231-3810.

1 Acquisitions and Processing Archivist, Special Collections, University Libraries, Virginia Tech. Photo used with her permission.
Facts about the Culinary History Collection at Virginia Tech

- More than 3,700 volumes
- More than 2,400 are housed in Special Collections
- 2 dozen manuscript collections
  - Handwritten receipt (recipe) and home remedy books, household account ledgers, faculty papers, and produce pamphlets/publications
  - Digital versions of some are available at http://scholar.lib.vt.edu/collections/manuscripts/
- Guide to the Culinary Pamphlet Collection (circa 1900-1975) is available at http://ead.lib.virginia.edu/vivaead/published/vt/viblbv00787.xml.frame
- Digitized rare books are available at http://scholar.lib.vt.edu/digital_books/ and they are linked from the library’s online catalog, Addison.

Introducing Elizabeth C. Fine

The Peacock-Harper Culinary History Friends are pleased to welcome a new advisor to the Steering Committee: Dr. Elizabeth Fine. Her research interest in cultural studies and Appalachian studies compliments the goals of the Culinary Friends. Dr. Fine provided the following biographical summary.

Elizabeth C. Fine is Professor and Coordinator of Humanities in the Department of Religion and Culture and holds a joint appointment in the Department of Communication at Virginia Tech. Her research interests include cultural studies, African American folklore, rhetoric, performance studies, and Appalachian Studies. She is the author of Soulstepping: African American Step Shows (University of Illinois Press, 2003, 2007), and The Folklore Text: From Performance to Print (Indiana University Press, 1984, 1994), and editor of Applied Communication in Organizational and International Contexts, co-edited with Bernd Schwandt (Röhrig Universitätsverlag, 2008), and Performance, Culture, and Identity, co-edited with Jean Haskell Speer (Praeger, 1992). She received a Chicago Folklore Prize for her book The Folklore Text.

Her articles have been published in such journals as the Journal of American Folklore, Semiotica, Communication Monographs, Communication Education, Journal of the Appalachian Studies Association, National Women’s Studies Association Journal, Southern Folklore, Literature in Performance, Annals of Tourism Research, and The Drama Review.

She has also made three documentaries: The Patient Art: Weaving the Tampa Tapestries (with Robert Walker), 1990; Well-Known Stranger: Howard Finster's Workout (with Robert Walker), 1987; Up and Down These Roads: A Rural County in Transition (with Jerry Scheeler), 1982.

Fine received her Ph.D. in Communication from the University of Texas at Austin, her M.A. in Rhetoric from the University of California, Berkeley, and her B.S. in Speech Communication from UT Austin.

2 Courtesy of Glenn Comeau and Betty Fine
A Tribute

Karen Hess, Culinary Historian

Jean Robbins

While I was writing a paper in graduate school, I became familiar with Karen Hess as an outstanding Culinary Historian. I was reviewing the book, *A Taste of America*, co-authored with her husband, John. Reading that book increased my interest in Culinary History, and since that time I have often consulted books that she authored.

Karen was born in Blair, Nebraska, in 1918 and graduated from Humboldt University in Arcata, California, majoring in music. With her husband, who was a journalist and at one time Food Editor and Critic, she lived in New York and later in Paris. Along the way her interest in cooking foods and learning the history of foods increased.

Damon Lee Fowler, editor of the book, *Dining at Monticello*, wrote in the *Savannah Morning News* (May 30, 2007) that “Karen Hess was a pioneer in this field and one of the first to apply scholarly discipline to the study of cooking and its history”. At the time of her death, Karen Hess was working on her book, *Mr. Jefferson's Table: The Culinary Legacy of Monticello*.

Another friend of Karen’s was John Martin Taylor, artist, author, and businessman, who also praised her for true scholarship of original research, after she had written the historical notes and commentaries for the facsimile copy of Mary Randolph's *The Virginia Housewife*. He referred to her as a passionate home cook and his mentor and friend. You may read his tribute to her at [http://hoppinjohns.net/KarenHess.aspx](http://hoppinjohns.net/KarenHess.aspx).

Mrs. Hess was one of the founding members of The Culinary Historians of New York. In October 2004, they presented her with their Amelia Award to recognize her excellence in Culinary History. *Saveur Magazine* honored her in 2006 with an article written by Shane Mitchell titled "The Grandest Dame of American Culinary History".


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3 Courtesy of Steven Mays, NYC

4 University of South Carolina Press, 1984.
Culinary Friends Programs  
compiled by Gail McMillan

Several exceptional events brought members of the Peacock-Harper Culinary History Friends and their many guests together.

On Nov. 19, 2010 the Roanoke Country Club hosted us for lunch and an illustrated slice of history when featured speakers, Dr. Jean Robbins and Prof. Gail McMillan, presented TANGLED PANTALOONS AND BLACK CAKE: Food and Family in 19th Century SW VA as told through Nannie Figgat’s Diary, Recipes, and Correspondence. Through diaries, letters, manuscript cookbooks, and more an extraordinary story unfolded through the lives of two seemingly ordinary women, Nannie Figgat and Martha Mary Godwin of Fincastle, Virginia.

On Dec. 3 in the beautifully decorated Hotel Roanoke Executive Chef Billie Raper presented AN OLD FASHIONED CHRISTMAS. Participants were greeted with wassail bowl and enjoyed a menu of traditional recipes and tastings.

Virginia Tech’s University Libraries hosted the Feb. 25 presentation by Archivist Kira Dietz. HOW TO COOK A HUSBAND: Household Management in the Culinary History Collection” was followed by Show and Touch in the Special Collections Reading Room. In the Graduate Study Lounge overlooking the Drillfield, she discussed how materials in the Culinary History Collection emphasize and relate to household management. In addition to cookbooks aimed largely at middle and upper-class women (more so than men), the Collection also contains published manuals and manuscripts covering more than three centuries of advice on topics from managing household staff to stretching proteins during wartime.

Kira also provided an overview of the Collection, including how new materials are acquired and processed, and areas of possible research interest. She also covered the relationship between the materials available in the Reading Room and the publications circulating from the open stacks of Newman Library. Following the program, Special Collections hosted the audience, giving them an opportunity to view and handle some recent and favorite Culinary History Collection acquisitions.

5 Courtesy of the Virginia Historical Society and Washington & Lee University Leyburn Library Special Collections  
6 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:MerryOldSanta.jpg  
7 Ms2010-079 Special Collections, Virginia Tech
On March 18, the Culinary History Friends returned to the Hotel Roanoke for lunch and a presentation by Samuel W. Edwards, III, president of Edwards of Surry, VA -- Virginia Traditions. Through THE FAMOUS SOUTHERN HAM STORY Edwards shared the story of the Surry Company's beginnings while everyone enjoyed a specially prepared lunch, including Surry Ham Biscuits.

The menu was
- Brunswick Stew
- Curly Endive, Frisée, Watercress, Carrot, Cucumber, Tomato, Champagne Vinaigrette
- Surry Ham Biscuits
- Vegetarian Plate if desired
- Coffee, Tea, Decaffeinated Coffee
- Platters of Assorted Tartlettes--Chocolate Silk, Banana, Coconut Cream and Peanut Butter

This issue of the Virginia Culinary Thymes is coming out just in time to document the presentation by Dr. Ann Hertzler, Virginia Tech Professor Emerita, and founding member of the Peacock-Harper Culinary History Collection.

On April 15, 2011, she will undoubtedly entertain us with her presentation

CENTURIES OF COOKBOOKS AT VIRGINIA TECH
PLEASURES AND TREASURES

In 1999, Ann was the driving force behind the creation of the Peacock-Harper Culinary History Collection, which she and Jean Robbins helped to expand into the Culinary History Collection, including 3,756 titles available in Addison, the Virginia Tech library’s online catalog.

PZ7 F73578 2000 and TX715 G63 1999

In 2005 she endowed the Ann Hertzler Children's Cookbooks and Nutrition Literature Archive at Virginia Tech’s University Libraries, the first collection of its kind.

The wealth of materials available about children’s nutrition is available to the public and detailed in the online finding aid:

Guide to the Ann A. Hertzler Collection
http://ead.lib.virginia.edu/vivaead/published/vt/viblv00716.xml.frame

http://virginiatraditions.com/assets/item/thumbnail/56_Wigwam_Ham6.jpg
Membership Form

JOIN the PEACOCK-HARPER CULINARY HISTORY FRIENDS

If you or someone you know is interested in becoming a member, please provide the following:

Name: __________________________________________
Address: ________________________________________
City, State, Zip: __________________________________
Phone: _________________ ________________________
E-mail: _________________________________________

Send this page to:
Dr. JoAnn Emmel, Treasurer
Peacock-Harper Culinary History Friends
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If you can help financially support the work of the Peacock-Harper Culinary History Friends, please send donations payable to:

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c/o Doug Seaman
University Libraries, Director of Development, Virginia Tech
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Call for Food Articles for 2012 Special Issue of *Southern Cultures*

*Southern Cultures*, the award-winning quarterly from the University of North Carolina’s Center for the Study of the American South, would like to strongly encourage submissions from scholars and other thoughtful writers for our 2012 special issue devoted entirely to Food. We will be accepting submissions for this special issue now through July 14, 2011.

During the past year, over 40,000 people have read *Southern Cultures* in print, accessed our content online, and downloaded our eBooks—including students and scholars in 66 countries. You can browse our last special Food issue—and the rest of our content on Food from the past decade—by visiting: http://www.southerncultures.org/content/read/read_by_subject/food_and_foodways/

To read our current issue, access our submission guidelines and content in many other subject areas, and find more information, please visit: http://www.SouthernCultures.org

Thank you, Dave Shaw  dshaw@email.unc.edu

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**Breaking New Bread: Cookbooks in the Library**

Several members participated in an online seminar (webinar) to learn more about culinary history collection development. On Tuesday, Oct. 5, 2010, JoAnn Emmel, Jo Anne Barton, and Jane Wills gathered in 2036 Newman Library around Gail McMillan’s large-screen computer for this *Booklist* presentation of recent publications from several publishers. We had a very informative session by Michael Friedberg at Wiley & Sons, Katrina Kruse at Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, Amy Greeman, Storey Publishing, Katite Mediatore Stover *Booklist* editor and head of and Head of Readers Services at the Kansas City Public Library, and Mark Knoblauch, *Booklist’s* cookery reviewer.