

Now & Then in Ripon ... Looking back with the Ripon Historical Society

Local Thanksgiving recipes from the early 1900s

The first Thanksgiving was a 1621 harvest celebration between the Pilgrims and the Wampanoag people.

President Abraham Lincoln declared Thanksgiving a national holiday in 1863. In 1941, the fourth Thursday in November officially was established as the date that the holiday is celebrated across America.

Ripon residents have long had various recipes for traditional Thanksgiving dinners.

The following recipes are found in Ripon cookbooks housed in the library of the Ripon Historical Society.

'Everybody's Friend ... A Cookbook'

The cookbook was written by Ophelia Bloom Fenelon and published in 1908.

Roast Turkey — Select a young turkey. Pick off all feathers and pin feathers. Singe with a piece of wrapping paper or over the gas stove. Cut off legs above the joints and tip of wings. If neck is too long, shave back skin and cut bone quite close to the body. Carefully take out crop by cutting through the skin.

Cut down from breastbone and take out all inside. Wash outside and in thoroughly, if it seems a little strong inside rub well with soda, then rinse well, rub inside with salt, fill neck and inside with dressing. Sew up with cord and darning needle and tie the skin around neck. Tie legs and wings close to body with cord.

If you have a large roaster, put plenty of water in bottom, put turkey on grate and set on top of stove. Steam two hours. Sprinkle, over with salt and pepper then bake in hot oven one hour until a nice rich brown. Try with a fork. If liquid runs out clear, it is done. A 12-pound turkey will need three hours.

Wash and clean gizzard, liver and heart well. Wash and rinse well with neck. Put in a stew pan with plenty of water. Season well and cook till very tender. Take out and cut into little pieces with a sharp knife.

Put back in liquor when turkey is done and out and put in gravy in pan. Thicken with flour mixed with water. Boil until smooth, season with salt and pepper. If too greasy pour off some before you make gravy. A good-sized turkey will make a quart of gravy.

'Ripon Library Cook

THIS ADVERTISEMENT FOR Thanksgiving groceries was featured in the Nov. 22, 1935 Commonwealth. Prices of 9 cents to 37 cents from 90 years ago would be equivalent to \$2.12 to \$8.75 today. Amend's Grocery was located at 221 Watson St.

RCP file photo

'Book' and later 'Ripon Library Association Cook Book'

The cookbook was compiled by the Ripon Library Association with the description: "A collection of tried recipes contributed by many well-known and successful housekeepers."

Recipes from 1904 edition:

Sweet Potato Puff — Put two cups of mashed potatoes over the fire with the beaten yolks of two eggs, one-half a cupful of cream and a little salt; mix well; remove from the fire; add the stiffly beaten whites of the eggs, heap into a conical loaf on a buttered form, brush with white of egg and brown in a hot oven.

Creamed Peas — Drain one can of peas, rinse, cover with boiling water, and drain again. Melt two tablespoons of butter; add one teaspoon full of flour with one teaspoonful of sugar and half a teaspoon of salt; add peas and one-third cupful of milk, stir and let cook until it begins to bubble.

Recipes from 1922 edition:

Coffee, recipe from Fannie Merrit Farmer — One cup coffee, one egg, one cup cold water, six cups boiling water.

Scald graniteware coffee

pot. Wash egg, break and beat slightly. Dilute with half cold water, add crushed shell and mix with coffee. Turn into coffee pot, pour on boiling water and stir thoroughly. Boil three minutes. If not boiled coffee is cloudy; if boiled too long, too much tannic acid is developed.

Add remaining cold water to clear and let stand a few minutes on the stove where it will not boil and serve at once.

Pumpkin Pie, recipe from Mrs. John Baker — One cup stewed pumpkin, one cup milk, one teaspoon cloves, half cup sugar, two tablespoons molasses, two tablespoons melted butter, half teaspoon salt (scant), two eggs beaten light, half teaspoon ginger, one teaspoon cinnamon.

Mix pumpkin, sugar spices, eggs, butter and milk; beat together and pour into a pie plate lined with pie crust. Do not use an upper crust. Bake in a moderate oven until custard is set. Do not have the oven too hot as custard is then apt to curdle.

Handwritten notes in the cookbook done by the unknown owner state that white or brown sugar can be used. They have crossed out the molasses and suggest adding half teaspoon cloves or to replace the spices with two teaspoons

THIS ADVERTISEMENT FOR the Middleton Lumber & Fuel Co. is found in the Ripon Library Association Cook Book printed in 1922. This company was in business in Ripon from 1885 until approximately 1947.

submitted photo

of pumpkin pie spice.

stir until smooth. Chill. When it begins to thicken, fold in celery and pineapple. Chill. Serve on lettuce with mayonnaise.

'Tested Recipes, Ripon, Wisconsin'

Recipes compiled by the Women's Guild of the First Evangelical Lutheran Church and the United Church of Christ. Book printed by the Commonwealth in 1962.

Dill Pickles — recipe from Mrs. Howard Brockman: Seven cups water, one cup white vinegar, half cup salt, half teaspoon cream of tartar, half teaspoon powdered alum.

Pack cucumber in jar with dill top and bottom. Heat liquid and pour over pickles boiling hot and seal. Makes four quarts. Add garlic for other flavor.

The Ripon Historical Society is the oldest continually operating historical society in Wisconsin. It is open Fridays and Saturdays 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

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