

Carroll County Times "Carroll's Yesteryears" Articles

Carroll's Yesteryears
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Get a taste of the past – 1890s cookbook reissued
By Joe Getty

"An Election Day Dinner." That is what my grandmother, Henrietta Roop Twigg would call a main course of pot roast with potatoes, turnips and carrots when she came to Sunday dinner at our house.

In the 19th and early 20th centuries, elections were held every year and it was a tradition in her family to cook a pot roast dinner on Election Day.

This is just one of many traditions related to food in Carroll County. Food and its preparation offer insights on everyday life in the homes in this region.

An excellent source of information about local foods is "Choice Maryland Cookery," a cookbook first published in 1898 by the ladies of St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Uniontown. The church has just reprinted the original edition.

The cookbook was very popular in this area and the early editions sold several thousand copies. Belle Cover of Uniontown directed the compiling of the recipes. Mary B. Shellman of Westminster wrote the introduction and contributed recipes for a cough remedy, Pine Apple Marmalade, and Rose Geranium Cake. In baking the cake, three rose geranium leaves were placed at the bottom of the cake pan to provide a "delicious flavor."

The cookbook contains a number of regional specialties, such as recipes for beaten biscuits, oyster pie, stewed snapper, Welsh Rarebit, Waldorf salad and dandelion wine. A section on puddings includes recipes for huckleberry pudding and caramel custard. There are also numerous recipes for cakes, pies and other deserts.

The book contained recipes submitted by local residents in the Uniontown area. Some of the family names that appear in the book as contributors of recipes are: Angel, Baile, Bare, Baughman, Birely, Buffington, Cover, Dorsey, Eckard, Englar, Erb, Eyler, Floyd, Foutz, Fox, Getty, Gilbert, Haines, Heck, Hines, Hiteshew, Kemp, Koons, McCabe, Martin, Mears, Mering, Miller, Myers, Norris, Rinehart, Roop, Royer, Routson, Schaefer, Segafosse, Shreeve, Sittig, Smelser, Snader, Stouffer, Unger, Yeakle, Waltz, Weaver and Williams. A number of family names are also included in the business advertising from Carroll County communities.

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Two of my great-grandmothers submitted recipes that are in the cookbook. Virginia Getty contributed recipes for Philadelphia potatoes, baked apple pudding and ripe cucumber pickles. Kate Roop submitted spice cake and tea cake recipes as well as one of the several recipes printed for jumbles (a small cake).

While some of the recipes are odd by today’s standards, most can still be prepared in today’s kitchens. For example, here is Virginia Getty’s recipe for Philadelphia potatoes, served as a breakfast dish: “Cut Irish potatoes into squares, after peeling; fill a baking dish with layers of potatoes, little pieces of butter, salt and pepper on each layer, pour one pint of sweet milk over the whole, bake one-half to three-fourths of an hour. When they are done they should be nicely browned on top.”

Copies of “Choice Maryland Cookery” are available by contacting the Historical Society at (410) 848-6494.

Photo credit: Courtesy of the Historical Society of Carroll County

Photo caption: Virginia Baile Getty, left, had several recipes included in the “Choice Maryland Cookery” cookbook published 1898. Others in this 1890s photograph are, from left: J. Walter Getty, R. Lee Myers, J. Frank Getty, Dr. Louis H. Dielman and Dr. John A. Buffington.