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Repast

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Preserving the Art of Handmade Cheeses

Chris Owen sprinkles herbs on fresh rounds of cheese, which she made from the milk of her own herd of goats in the Appalachian hill country of North Carolina. Chris tells us about her Spinning Spider Creamery starting on page 5.

HANDCRAFTED CHEESE: A LIVING, BREATHING TRADITION

Once, at the dinner table when we were about to have dessert, my grandfather Joseph Carp asked for a wedge of cheddar cheese alongside his slice of apple pie, which was a combination I'd never heard of before. I was a boy growing up in suburban Virginia, and my mother's parents were visiting with us. The commercial-brand cheddar that my Mom cut for Grandpa Joe was a favorite of mine, but it became clear that it wasn't quite up to his highest standards. When he asked to see the package in which it had been wrapped, he noted with more than a hint of disapproval that the cheese had been made from pasteurized milk.

It was a small moment but it raised some big questions in the mind of an impressionable child— some of which I could answer easily (Is cheddar cheese really good with apple pie?), others far less so (What is "pasteurized milk", and why is my Grandpa pointing an accusing finger at it?).

Another cheese epiphany awaited me after I went off to college in Hanover, New Hampshire. Every now and then the college dining hall would set a huge block of white Vermont cheddar out on a table for us to sample with dinner. It looked dense, crumbly, and dry, but when I tasted the cheese it melted richly in my mouth with a sharp, pure cheddar flavor. That was the first time I saw to what heights cheese can soar if the people making it "pull out all the stops".

I suspect that many of you have had similar eye-opening experiences. You might also have read about James L. Kraft of

Chicago, who in 1916 patented a way to multiply the shelf life of cheese by killing off all of its microbial life. The resulting "processed cheese food" was a windfall for Kraft, for it was stable enough to be rationed out to U.S. soldiers fighting overseas during World War I. The rest is history.

Or perhaps just one chapter of it. Today, in many different ways and in many different places around the world, food traditionalists are making a strong stand against industrial hegemony and its ways of producing and thinking about food. As far as they are concerned, food should be grown and prepared by hand, by caring people, not manufactured in faceless factories.

Here in Ann Arbor this past October 13, the state Department of Agriculture made front-page headlines when they busted up a local co-op buying raw cow's-milk products from a local farmer. In Michigan and 21 other states, it's illegal to sell non-pasteurized milk unless it is made into cheese aged for at least 60 days. The U.S. government has a similar ban regarding interstate commerce.

Ironically, today it is in Louis Pasteur's home country where the revulsion against pasteurized and processed cheese is perhaps most intense. For the French, cheese is a living, breathing creature, not a dead object. Clotaire Rapaille, a French medical anthropologist who has researched cultural codes and archetypes, once described the dramatic contrast he'd found between French and American attitudes toward cheese:

In France, the code for cheese is "alive". It is young, mature, old cheese. You smell it to tell the age. When you go to America, cheese is "dead". The first impression in America is that smell doesn't matter. Cheese is put in the refrigerator. In France, never. You would not put a cat in the refrigerator, because it is alive. But in America, in the refrigerator, in the morgue; you put cheese in plastic like a body bag. It is legally dead, and scientifically dead, by being pasteurized.

The French company selling the cheese had a French commercial showing a woman smelling the cheese, opening it, poking it, touching the Camembert. You could see fingerprints on it. A love affair. Americans saw this commercial in a test and thought it was disgusting. Americans want safety. They want their cheese dead. (*New York Times* magazine, 7 May 2000)

But not all Americans want their cheese dead. It was 25 years ago, in 1981, that Sadie Kendall in Atascadero, CA, and Laura Chenel in Santa Rosa, began to commercially produce fresh, tangy goat cheeses by hand. That signaled the rebirth of artisanal and handcrafted cheese making in the U.S., which contributed to a broad culinary revival. *Saveur*, in a focus issue on cheese (April 2005), estimated that by 1980 there were no commercially-viable producers of genuinely artisanal cheese left in the U.S.; today there are over 350.

In this installment of *Repast*, we get to peek in on a number of makers of fine handcrafted cheeses in Vermont, North Carolina, Michigan, and California. They vary greatly in scale, techniques, and products. We think you'll find their stories interesting.

– RKS

Repast

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MAKING DUTCH CHEESES ON A 125-YEAR FARM

by Jesse Meerman

Jesse Meerman is the cheese maker at Steve-N-Sons Grassfields Cheese, the cheese-making end of a multi-generation family farm in Coopersville, MI, between Grand Rapids and Muskegon. The farm is a partnership between Jesse, his brother Luke, and their father Steve. Besides cheese making, Jesse also milks and takes care of the animals and, with his wife Betsy, heads up marketing for the farm. Their first child, Sophia, was born last March. Jesse was assisted in writing this article by his sister Bonnie Esther, who works part-time for the family farm as its webmaster and in other ways.



Part of the Meerman family, many of whom are involved in the farm and cheese operations. Jesse and his wife Betsy are in the back row, second and third from the right. (Photos courtesy of Bonnie Meerman)

Steve-N-Sons Grassfields Cheese is a small, family-owned and -operated dairy farm and cheese house in a great location in western Michigan. God has blessed us with nearly a million folks who live within a half-hour of the farm. Nearly all of them are right around a half-hour away, since our township strictly prohibits development. So even though Ottawa is the fastest-growing county in the state, we will be a haven of country life for the foreseeable future.

Our Farm is a History Lesson

The friends who appreciate our products always enjoy coming out to the farm. They describe it as stepping back in time, especially for the many who have farm experience in their ancestry. Our farm was established in 1882 by my great-grandfather Peter Meerman and his brother John. We see so many advances since Grandpa Meerman's operation, such as a low-impedance fencer on high-tensile wire, which can put an 8,000-volt lick on the end of 25 miles of fence! It'll never be exactly the same cow pasture as in Grandpa's time. On the other hand, we still rely totally on grass-fed cows that are free to roam the pasture, and we will be certified organic by June 2007. The folks who visit us still see ducks cleaning up after the cows, pigs drinking whey and digging clover, cows flirting with the bull, and three generations of both animals and our human family born, raised, and living on the same property. To them, we are almost a history lesson.

In researching for this piece, I've discovered a lot about our heritage. We are Dutch, like many people in the area; and Dutch cheeses, like Gouda, Edam, and Leyden, seemed to make perfect sense when we began making cheese in 2002. Only recently are we finding out why these cheeses are perfect for where we live. The Dutch towns of Gouda, Edam, and Leyden lie just to the north of the Rhine River as it contributes to the North Sea. The weather of the towns is much milder than the latitude would suggest, due to the sea to the west. As the Dutch ran out of land, they built dikes and drained the polders for more living and farming space. What has this to do with my cheeses? The Dutch immigrated here in the 1800's looking for a place comparable to their home. They settled near the mouth of Michigan's major river, the Grand, as it flows west to Lake Michigan. The lake

tempers our climate and gives more moisture than inland. Here, the Dutch used what land there was and created more, as evidenced by the former swamp now known as the city of Hudsonville. They drained it and turned it into the breadbasket of Michigan, producing enough vegetables to feed the whole state. The area here, like in the Old Country, is ideal for Frisian cows producing milk for washed-curd cheeses.

Frisian cows need a lot of high-quality grass at the right time of year in order to produce large volumes of milk to fill the cheese-making vat. However, volume is very relative. Our Frisians will out-produce every other breed raised in the same way we raise our animals; but our herd produces close to the least, on average, of any herd in the area. What's the reason? We feed much less grain and give much more variety in lifestyle than most other herds receive. This mirrors the Dutch values of low-cost, yet high-efficiency production. The heat in the summer is generally less than other areas, allowing the low-heat-tolerant Frisians to thrive; and the large-bodied animal is more comfortable here where winters are sharp.

Learning by Doing

The washed-curd cheeses are suited to this breed for several reasons. I find that when the fat content of the milk rises with the quality and availability of grass in the summer, a good portion of the fat (where most of the flavor and nutrients are) is lost during the scalding process of making cheese. Don't let the word 'scalding' put you off; the milk never gets hotter than it was inside the cow. Other breeds all have higher butterfat and protein levels than Frisians, which would make this process even more difficult, as there would be even more loss of fat content. Frisians produce a steady amount of milk throughout their lactation, compared to other breeds whose quantity of production can differ vastly depending upon the season, climate, weather, and time in their lactation. With the quality (flavor and texture) of cheese seeming to peak at four months, then again at 18

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Below, Jesse and his nephew Anthony making cheese.

Right, the Dutch cheeses age in the Meerman's cheese house.



DUTCH CHEESES *continued from page 3*

months and again at five years of aging, the dependability of the Frisian cows for their milk quantity allows us more flexibility in making and marketing the cheese.

When we decided to start our cheese operation, my mother Sue and I traveled to Vermont, New York and Wisconsin to take classes and learn how to make cheese. We learned a lot that way, but a lot else was learned from hands-on experience. I spent a year experimenting and creating basic recipes for how to make aged cheese from raw milk, before we were able to sell our first cheese. Along the way, I have done several things just because they seemed easier, then later realized why they work perfectly and mirror the old ways. For example, we send most of our cows' milk off to the creamery to be sold as milk for drinking. So, just as in olden times, our cheese making is a way to preserve excess milk for consumption later in the season. Since we don't put all our milk into cheese, I have the unusual opportunity of picking not only the best milk, but also the freshest for cheese making. This reduces unwanted flavors from milk that is of lower quality or from cows that are not as healthy as at other times.

Even more importantly, I am able to acquire the milk before it cools. I'd often wondered why every recipe for aged cheese calls for milk at 30° C. Now I know why. When milk travels through the lines to the cheese house, it cools from 40° C. (the temperature inside a cow) to the precise temperature needed for ripening. Then during the "cooking" process, where the cheese curds develop from the coagulating milk, the highest temperature recommended is 40° C. Any higher temperature will begin to damage the microbes that I'm trying to culture. These bacteria have been developed over the centuries to make cheese at the precise temperatures that one finds in a farmstead cheese house. Since they originally came from the cows themselves, 40° C. will always be the highest temperature at which they thrive. Since we don't have to cool or heat our milk, it has always been in an ideal environment for lactic fermentation, and that has a big impact on the quality of the product. Of course, this is also much more energy-efficient and thus easier on the pocket book, affecting another important aspect of every cheese: the price.

"Every cheese yearns to meet its maker"

All cheese recipes handed down through the centuries had at least this one thing in common: they were handmade. Swiss cheese makers will swear by their copper kettles; French cheeses depend upon their specific caves; and I believe that the best cheeses are made by hand. I know that after three or four consecutive days of craftsmanship, my hands begin to lose the calluses and the skin is greatly affected. Whether there is something to the electrical field of our bodies, or there's an actual chemical exchange between the cheese and my skin, I don't know. I do think it's more than just love. Whether it be an artist's touch that must involve hand contact, or just that a philosophy that shuns machinery also fosters independence and accomplishment— whatever happens, there is a quality that cannot be matched by a stainless-steel process. Every cheese yearns to meet its maker.

One thing that has been my overriding mantra is, "If I don't understand why it works, I don't change it." This has forced me to leave many things exactly as they are, instead of trying to improve them. From the titratable acidity of the warm milk to the prediction of which cheeses will reach their peak at different ages, it seems the bulk of cheese making I really don't understand. In those cases, experience and the all-knowing eater of the cheese usually help me make the right decision. In these many areas, I believe our forerunners shared our discoveries. Some traits of the cheese or processes of making cheese will always be particular to an area or cheese room or craftsman or breed of cow. This is why every maker of Gouda cheese will have his particular story to tell, next to every cheddar house and cheese monger you meet. Cheese is a product of everything that contributes to it.

Yogi Berra says, "If you can't imitate him, don't copy him." Some folks from the Old Country say my cheese tastes just like they remember from their childhood. Occasionally, one will turn up his nose and walk away, I hope with constructive criticism in his wake. But I never started out to make it exactly as they did in the Netherlands. Sometimes it just happens. ■

APPALACHIAN GOAT CHEESES FROM A FAMILY FARM

by Chris Owen

Chris Owen operates the Spinning Spider Creamery from her goat farm, nestled in a cove on Bailey Mountain in Madison County, far western North Carolina. She and her husband Jeff have raised and home-schooled their three sons, who participate in the dairying tasks and in local 4-H activities. The family began production of goat milk in 1999, and cheeses in 2003. In 2005, Spinning Spider's aged white-rind Stackhouse was named the best goat cheese in the South by the Southern Foodways Alliance.

Cheese making can follow a wide range of traditions. Imagine the *fermier* cheese maker of Normandy combining her morning and evening milkings for the day's Camembert make. Then picture her hand-ladling the curd into the forms and eventually putting the cheeses to rest in the aging room to be inoculated by the *penicillium* molds growing on the walls and drifting through the air. This cheese maker's skills contain the wisdom of generations, and her cheeses reflect this. Next, imagine a Belgian monastery with its unwavering routine of prayer and work. See how beautifully this routine fits the needs of the sticky red rinds of the Trappist cheese. Daily the monks turn and wash the cheese with their own special formulation of yeasts and molds. Carefully the cheeses are tended and allowed to develop the fullest of flavor. Last, picture the Italian farmer of Valle d'Aosta tending his cows in an alpine pasture and heating his milk in a copper vat over an open fire to start his daily batch of Fromadzo.

I find myself identifying with all three of these traditions but following none completely. I have no long tradition of family or history of place to draw upon in my cheese making. Yet, I am influenced and inspired by these traditions to step forward and create my own at Spinning Spider Creamery.

A Family Operation

The basis for my traditional cheese making starts with my family. We work together to tend the goats and produce the finest milk. Our does are given access to fresh water, free choice hay and concentrate, and lush Appalachian mountain pasture. Our land is steep, with water at the bottom of the pasture, feeding-stations in the barn midway, and pasture at the top. I love watching my healthy, happy goats drift down to get a drink and then make the trek back up to the top field to browse on a variety of grasses, herbs and weeds, perhaps stopping midway for a bite of grain or hay. Exercise, fresh air, and variety in their food choices all combine to give them the health and vitality it takes to produce quality milk. Europeans have known for centuries that milk flavor is directly enhanced by forage consumed. Herein lies the reason I never try to exactly duplicate a cheese from another region. I simply take the idea or process of a cheese, apply



Gorgeous cheeses from Spinning Spider; in the background, one of the goat kids.
(Photos courtesy of Chris Owen)

the skills I've gained in years of cheese making, and understand that the end product will be highly influenced by the Appalachian mountain flavor of the milk my individual goats produce.

Working together as a family is a tradition long held on small farms around the world. My sons, now 8, 13, and 17 years of age, all help in the care and milking of the goats. Our small milking parlor enables us to look at each of our 60 milking does individually, twice a day, to make sure they are in good form. Sylas and Cullen, my two oldest sons, take turns with morning and evening milkings. My youngest son Morgan is often seen in his uniform— a duct-taped feed sack proclaiming him to be part of the Spinning Spider Elite Squad— helping feed animals while getting in a full measure of play. All three boys hold a deep love and respect for our animals.

Because our creamery has the milking parlor connected to the cheese kitchen by a small hallway, I was able to witness this first-hand during the evening milking several nights ago. It was Sylas' turn to milk. When I looked in, he had his eyes closed and his forehead pressed against the forehead of BlueBelle, the matriarch of our herd. She gently nibbled at his eyelashes, gave a contented sigh, closed her

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GOAT CHEESES *continued from page 5*

eyes and began to chew her cud. He rubbed her head, gave her a peanut and eventually got back to the business of milking. This middle son of mine is also a dancer, so our goats get to hear the sound of his feet blazing away in a series of clogging steps as he dances through his milking routine. The typical drudgery of a job becomes an outlet for joyful self-expression. Whether the sound track is BBC or NPR, gypsy punk-rock or Celtic world music, milking is never quiet, never dull, and reflects the mood of the family member doing the milking.

Fine Cheese is Made in Small Batches

Cheese making at Spinning Spider Creamery varies throughout the season, depending on the stage of lactation of my goats and what the protein, solids, and butterfat content of the milk is. This is highly influenced both by the seasonal variation of forage and by the hormones of the does in milk. During the milking season of March through December, cheese is made every day in small batches.

The foundation of my business is fresh chèvre, which is produced midseason 3-5 days a week. Traditional imported cultures are used to create the consistent flavor profile I'm looking for. For each batch of fresh chèvre, 50 gallons of milk are pasteurized and cooled. The culture and rennet are stirred in by hand, and the milk is allowed to sit undisturbed at room temperature for 12 to 24 hours while acidity slowly develops. When ready, the curd is carefully hand-ladled into muslin bags or small molds and drained at room temperature for another 24 hours. Whey is captured and fed back to our milking does as well as to our pigs. When fully drained, the cheese is tipped out of the individual molds and hand-salted with sea salt or removed from the muslin bags, mixed with herbs and packaged in tubs.

For bloomy rind cheeses, such as our Camille (a Camembert type) and Stackhouse, the method is more detailed and batches are seldom over 20 gallons. Here the milk is cultured with an addition of *geotrichum* and *penicillium* (the bloom). These cheeses are considered semi-lactic and require more rennet and a shorter set-time. Our method involves carefully hand-ladling thin layers of curd into the forms. Draining is spontaneous, meaning no pressure is applied. With our Stackhouse cheese, I also add a layer of applewood ash that I prepare from cuttings from an old apple tree outside my bedroom window. Monitoring temperature and acidity is important, as is hand-turning the cheeses. Once the cheeses are salted and properly dry, and the *geotrichum* starts to show its velvety pale yellow-pink bloom, they are transferred to the aging room. Our aging room is actually a tiny cave dug into the mountain behind our cheese kitchen. Here bloomy rind cheeses develop their final white *penicillium* covering, then are wrapped in a special breathable paper and allowed to finish out their aging.

While I make much of the cheese on my own, I have help when I need it in the cheese kitchen. My oldest son Cullen has aspirations of being a cheese maker some day and is always ready to jump in and participate when I need him. This Spring, he worked up a lactic bloomy cheese that



Chris Owen fashioning fresh chèvre

he sold as a fund raiser to finance his exchange trip to Finland. Raw-milk cheeses such as our blue, Gouda, and tomme tend to be more labor-intensive. Due to our cheese kitchen set-up, they continue to be crafted in small 50-gallon batches. Because we have no mechanical stirring system, all three boys know what it takes to stir a batch of Gouda or blue while I'm busy taking readings, making charts, or setting up molds and presses. The aging process falls to me and creates a wide assortment of jobs to be accomplished on a daily basis. This can include everything from a daily hand-rubbing of salt and flipping the blue cheese, to washing the rinds of the tomme and packaging the fresh chèvre for market sales.

Face to Face at Farmers' Markets

Marketing is the last link in the full circle of raising goats and making cheese on our farm. Because we are small and because we have access to a viable market, we sell as much cheese as we can directly to our customers by way of farmers' markets.

Our city of Asheville, NC is small but progressive. We sell our cheese directly to our customers at five neighborhood farmers' and tailgate markets throughout the week during our peak market season. Again, family contrib-

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IT SOARS WHEN IT MELTS

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ALPINE RACLETTE

FROM LEELANAU

by Anne Hoyt

Anne Hoyt and her husband John Hoyt are proprietors of the Leelanau Cheese Company, a creamery located at the Black Star Farms winery on the Leelanau Peninsula in northern Michigan. Originally from France, Anne met John while they worked as cheese makers at Eison, a co-op in Switzerland; John had recently completed his studies of cheese making at the Chateaufort School of Agriculture. Together, the couple worked as cheese makers for several other Swiss co-ops, including Thyon and Vaysonnaz, before relocating to Michigan. In March 2005, ten years after they founded their company, their Raclette took the second-place prize in the hotly contested U.S. Championship Cheese Contest in Milwaukee, WI.

Every cheese has a story behind it, and they taste even better when you know their story! I come from France and I take for granted my “cheese education”. I like to think I know my cheeses, where they come from, why they are made. So after talking with editor Randy Schwartz, I got very excited about the project on traditional and artisanal cheese making.

When we started Leelanau Cheese Co. in 1995, in an old gas station located in the hamlet of Omena on West Grand Traverse Bay, a few miles from our current location, I was often surprised by people’s comments or questions. They would ask if we made any orange cheese, or if white cheese had less fat than yellow cheese, or if the batch of cheese being made at the moment was sharp. When we started, I didn’t know that a part of my job would be to educate my customers.

We make the cheese we make because we were trained in Switzerland, in the alpine Valais region where Raclette comes from. We fell in love with the cheese, the people and the traditions of that part of Switzerland. This is what we wanted to bring to the U.S.

Raclette was born and is only made in the Valais of Switzerland, just like Roquefort comes from Aveyron, France, and Gouda from Holland, or Camembert from Normandie, France. It is important for people to understand that there is a reason for each cheese to be made in a particular area, and the reason is *tradition*; without tradition we lose our roots. In what follows, I will also share some of the information that is presented in our company brochure.

What is Raclette Cheese?

Raclette is, *par excellence*, a cheese for melting. Its name comes from the French verb *racler* meaning “to scrape”. It is believed that Raclette began on the hillsides of the Valais as the



Anne Hoyt and an employee extract curds from whey, in a vat at Leelanau Cheese Co. (Photos from Black Star Farms)

wine harvest was coming to an end. Grape gatherers took from their sacks a small loaf of brown bread, some cheese and a bottle of wine. Legend has it that one of the men stabbed a piece of cheese with a large buck knife and approached a crackling fire. It started to melt and run with a crisp, golden texture. As he slowly scraped the melting cheese, the others tasted this novelty. It was indeed excellent, and there begins Raclette.

Raclette is delicious in quiches and soups, and wonderful in pasta, lasagna and pizza. It can be used in *fondue* alongside other Swiss cheeses. Leelanau Raclette can be melted on potatoes, fish, meat, eggs, vegetables and apples by topping these with thin slices of the cheese, and placing them under the broiler until the cheese is golden and crisp. Raclette is also a great cheese for sandwiches or served on crackers with a glass of wine.

Turning Cow’s Milk into Raclette

Our milk comes from the Garvin Farm, about 10 miles to our southwest in Cedar, MI, where the cows graze happily along beautiful Lake Leelanau. We pick up the milk in the morning in our milk truck, called “The Milky Way”, and bring it to the creamery. There, it is gently pumped into a kettle, then pasteurized and cooled for the start of cheese making.

Cultures, or lactic ferments, and then rennet are added to the cheese. Cultures are good bacteria that help develop flavor and aroma, giving the cheese its personality. Rennet is a natural enzyme coming from calves’ stomachs and is responsible for coagulating the milk. After adding the rennet, the milk in the kettle will become a solid mass called curd. The cheese maker will cut this mass into smaller pea-sized curds, and then the curd will be stirred and slowly heated to eliminate the whey. Whey is a liquid byproduct of cheese making and can render the cheese acidic. The curd, now cheese, is formed into micro-perforated molds where it is pressed overnight with heavy weights to help squeeze out the remaining whey.

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BACK TO THE OLD COUNTRY

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COMING FULL CIRCLE AT FISCALINI FARMS

by John Fiscalini

John Fiscalini is owner/manager of Fiscalini Farms in Modesto, central California, and the adjacent Fiscalini Cheese Company, an award-winning cheese producer that he founded. He was assisted in writing this article by his wife, Heather Fiscalini, who is marketing director for the cheese company.

Although I am a fourth-generation California dairy farmer, I had no practical experience with cheese whatsoever when I started my cheese making venture in the year 2000. Nevertheless, by creating cheeses produced in small quantities and handcrafted the old-fashioned way, in just six years we have met with outstanding success, including winning prestigious awards at the state, national, and international levels.

We are a relatively small company, producing about 250,000 pounds of aged cheese per year. We sell in upscale markets across the country. Cheese shops, restaurants, and small and mid-sized local chains account for most of our sales, but a few large chains have recently added Fiscalini products.

So far, we produce three basic kinds of cheese: Cheddar, San Joaquin Gold, and Lionza. We make 60-pound wheels of premium Bandage Wrapped Cheddar, crumbly and straw-colored, aged 18 months to give it a nutty, earthy cheddar taste; 40-pound blocks of a creamy white cheddar, fruity and sharp, made the traditional way with a cheddar mill; and a line of seven herb-seasoned cheddars. The white cheddar is used further to make two additional products: “Purple Moon”, a Cabernet Sauvignon-soaked cheese, naturally smoked; and “Horsefeathers”, a cheddar and horseradish spread. San Joaquin Gold is an original California creation that can be eaten as a table cheese or melted or grated for use with other foods; it is a semi-hard cheese, tawny and sweet when young, turning golden and nuttier with age. Our just-released Lionza pays homage to the cheeses of my ancestral home in the Cento Valley of the Swiss Alps; it is aged only six months, leaving it with fruity caramel hints.

Genesis of a Cheese Company

I was born into a traditional California dairy family. Ever since the family farm began in 1914, we Fiscalinis have always shipped our milk to only two companies: Nestlé and Safeway. Both companies have high standards of quality and have paid their producers a bonus for superior milk.

At a young age, I followed my father to work on our 200-cow farm. After school I would feed the baby calves, and by the

age of 10 I was driving tractors, feeding the cows, and learning how to milk them by hand. I spent every summer on the farm, and by the age of 16 I was able to manage the dairy alone for a few weeks when my parents and sisters took a two-week vacation.

After graduating from college, I became a partner in the farm with my father and grandmother. The herd size grew from 200 to 500 cows, and in 1992 we built a new dairy facility to help the farm keep pace with the fast-growing California dairy industry. When my father passed in 1993, I finished the expansion project and gradually increased the herd size to its present 1,500 Holstein milking-cows. Fiscalini Farms is internationally known today for its high quantity and quality of milk production and for numerous innovations in dairy management, especially in cow comfort and cleanliness. Ours was the first dairy in the country to be certified by Validus, an independent auditing company, as an “animal friendly” dairy farm. Our cows are truly happy California cows. Visitors and dairy students from many foreign countries and all 50 states have toured our facility.

As the 1990’s drew to a close, I began plans to market a portion of this high-quality milk myself, eventually deciding to produce gourmet cheeses. In the year 2000, a friend and I went to Italy and Switzerland, touring dairy areas and visiting many small, family cheese operations. In Switzerland we found the tiny hamlet where my ancestors had lived high in the Alps, in the Cento Valley near the Italian border. Mateo Fiscalini, my great-grandfather, had left Lionza in the 1880’s and started a new life in America, settling in California.

That was the defining moment for my plans to make cheese, and I knew I wanted to produce a cheese similar to what my forefathers had made in Switzerland, with similar techniques and skills. Later that year, as an equipment storage building was constructed at the dairy, I converted a portion of it into a cheese making facility. Finding the right equipment for a small cheese company was a problem, especially in California. But after months of searching, we were able to rescue a used stainless-steel vat from a scrap pile and recondition it for our use. I also installed a boiler and a refrigerated aging room, and made other parts from scratch.

Our First Cheeses

Tom Putler was our firm’s first cheese maker. Together, he and I created San Joaquin Gold by mistake in the course of our attempts to make fontina. The result was an original cheese that we began to produce in 32-pound wheels, and it won immediate national acclaim. Later, at the World Cheese Awards in London— a competition open to any and all cheese makers on the planet— it would take gold medals in 2004 and 2005, and silver in 2006.

Four months after releasing our first batch of cheese, a great opportunity arose when Mariano Gonzalez joined our team as lead cheese maker. Mariano had already made a name for himself as the cheese maker at Shelburne Farms in Vermont, specializing in traditional aged cheddar. After returning to his native Paraguay for a few years to make cheese there, Mariano decided to come back to the U.S. and continue making his



Fiscalini's 18-month-old Bandage Wrapped Cheddar

Cheese Company we certainly accept any and all divine intervention, and we try never to rely on good luck. We attempt each and every day to strive for perfection, to learn from our training and past successes and failures to make a better cheese than we made yesterday. We realize that every vat of milk is a totally unique opportunity to create a perfect cheese, so we never view cheese making as a “recipe” or a timed event. We check the pH and TA (titratable acidity) of each vat throughout the entire cheese making process. We determine when to add bacterial cultures and rennet, when to cut, when to drain, and when to perform the various cheddaring functions on each individual batch of cheese by using the time-honored and traditional methods that our Swiss ancestors used centuries ago. The most important element is the care and dedication of the cheese maker.

We start with the freshest milk possible, less than two hours old, yet chilled within moments of having been harvested from the cows. It goes without saying that all the equipment that we use, both in the collection of milk and in the making of cheese, is cleaned and sanitized to exacting specifications. We modify nothing about the milk; we don't pasteurize, homogenize, fortify, or skim the milk; we simply take it from the cow, cool it, and transport it to the cheese making vat. We add no colors, preservatives, or other artificial ingredients to our cheeses. By not pasteurizing the milk, we allow the natural bacteria present in it to express additional flavors. Interestingly, that is how cheese was originally produced: raw milk was poured into calfskin bags (made of young calf stomachs) and then transported by camel or horse to a destination. Upon arrival, what was expected to be milk had become cheese. The natural bacteria in the milk, the natural rennet present in calf stomachs, and the motion of the walking animal were all that was needed to turn the milk into cheese.

After each 1,000-gallon batch of milk is condensed into 850 pounds of curds, the cheese is pressed overnight, and then aged in our refrigerated aging rooms. Our Bandage Wrapped Cheddar is aged for 18 months, San Joaquin Gold for 16 months, and Lionza for six months. Each type is aged at a different temperature and humidity than the others, and for a time period that the cheese maker determines to be optimal. While aging, the cheese is inspected, brushed, and turned, all by hand, on a routine schedule.

While I manage the dairy farm and the cheese company, all daily decisions for the cheese are handled by Mariano. That is important because he is the cheese maker and knows what is best for the cheese. Other important team members include Ryan Mattingly, who manages the daily operations of the dairy farm and is responsible for the milk quality and composition; his crew of 20 workers who milk, feed, and care for the cow herd; Mariano's four assistant cheese makers (Danny Rodriguez, Rick Machado, Chris Montez, and Jorge Godinez); our packaging crew, led by Dave Snyder and Lana Valencia; my wife Heather and her sales force; and my oldest daughter, Laura Genacsi, who does the accounting and record keeping.

We look forward to the future at Fiscalini. Among our forthcoming new projects is the release of a new product, a long-aged Parmesan. In addition, we are planning a new facility that will include an underground cheese-aging cave and a visitor center. ■

trademark cheddar. He chose to work with us because of our high milk quality and the way we treat our cows.

At Fiscalini, Mariano Gonzalez began producing his “bandage wrapped cheddar”. He makes it in 60-pound wheels that are bound in cheesecloth to promote mold growth. Mariano submitted his very first batch to the American Cheese Society's annual competition, and won “Best Farmhouse Cheddar in America”. In the following four years Mariano won that same award again three times. The “farmhouse” designation means that the cheese was produced on the same farm where the milk was produced. Other accolades for his cheddar include two silver medals in London at the World Cheese Awards. Winning silver awards in London for cheddar is a pretty prestigious accomplishment for an American cheese maker.

After attending a Slow Foods conference in Turin, Italy in 2004, Mariano and I and our wives drove to Switzerland to visit members of the Fiscalini family and to observe traditional cheese making near the town of Lionza. Dining in the Lionza home of Dante Fiscalini one evening, Mariano and I finalized our plan to make a cheese reminiscent of my Swiss family roots. That cheese, aptly named Lionza, was just released this past October.

Care is More Crucial than Luck

How does one produce spectacular cheese? Obviously the raw products need to be of top quality, and the people involved must be dedicated professionals, but is that all that is needed? The transformation from milk to cheese takes place in only 8-10 short hours, and the conversion is nothing short of miraculous.

On any given day, milk is transferred into an open vat, heat is applied, bacterial cultures are added, additional heat, rennet, and salt are supplied, labor for stirring, cutting, draining, and hooping is applied, and the end result is cheese. But each day is different from the previous, and no two vats are exactly the same. Cheese makers in the same area can make completely different tastes of the same cheese. Some might be exquisite; others might be classified as failures. Some might age gracefully, some not.

Is there a common thread for making great cheese? Is it divine intervention, or is it simply good luck? At Fiscalini

GRAFTON VILLAGE: VERMONT CHEDDAR WITH A HISTORY

by Melissa Gullotti

Melissa Gullotti is communications director at the Windham Foundation, a philanthropic organization that owns the Grafton Village Cheese Company and other preservation sites in Grafton and around Vermont.

The folks at the Grafton Village Cheese Company know a bit about enjoying the finer things in life. Their handcrafted aged cheeses capture the old-style cheddaring process that has long been forgotten by many of today's larger cheddar companies.

The company was founded in 1892 as the Grafton Cooperative Cheese Company, which converted surplus milk from local dairy farmers into cheese. Years later, in 1912, a fire destroyed the original factory. Then, in 1963, a new era for the town was born when the Windham Foundation was established with a three-fold purpose: to restore buildings and economic vitality in the village of Grafton, to provide financial support for education and private charities, and to develop projects benefiting the general welfare of Vermont and Vermonters. With those goals in mind, The Windham Foundation re-established the Grafton Village Cheese Co. Much of the company's profits are used to fund the Foundation's various philanthropic programs.

Through the years, quality and taste have continued to be the hallmark of Grafton cheddar. As one of more than two dozen quality cheese makers in the small state of Vermont, the 25-person company creates eight varieties of artisanal cheddar that are recognized worldwide for their excellence and taste. The cheeses are available in grocery and gourmet shops nationwide, including Whole Foods, Zingerman's Deli, Fresh Markets, and other retailers. We also sell online and by mail order.

How Cheddar Cheese is Made

The process of making our cheddar takes nine hours, followed by months or years of aging. Our master cheese maker is Scott Fletcher, who has served that function for 39 years now. On a yearly basis, Grafton Village Cheese produces 1.5 million pounds of finished cheddar cheese from 15 million pounds of milk.

Milk is delivered to the plant once daily for the two daily "makes" of cheese. The milk comes from Vermont farms that raise Jersey cows, a rich milk known for its high protein and high butterfat components. A sample is taken from each milk load and tested for antibiotics prior to being pumped into the large storage tank. All milk used for Grafton Village Cheese is free of rbST (a synthetic bovine growth hormone that is often injected into dairy cows to increase their milk production) and is all-natural.

Upon leaving the storage tank, the milk is heated to 100° F. (38° C.), then moved into a vat where bacterial culture is added to it. When the vat is full, a non-animal-based rennet is also added as a coagulant. After approximately 30 minutes, the consistency of the milk is similar to custard. At that point, the curd is cut with wire "knives". The latter are frames with twin sets of stainless-steel wires, one set horizontal and the other set vertical. The knives are pulled up and down and side to side of the vat to separate the curd from the whey.

The curd is slowly agitated by large paddles, and it cooks for approximately one hour. At the end of the cooking period, whey is drained and pumped into a tank truck, which will distribute it to local farms for use as animal feed and fertilizer. Meanwhile, the cheese maker "banks" the curd to the sides of the vat, making a trench down the middle.

After the vat is drained, cheese curd is cut into slabs. The slabs are turned 3-4 times in a period of 2-3 hours. This is known as *cheddaring*. While the slabs are being turned, samples are taken of the residual whey still draining from them. A test checks the whey's acidity, and when it has reached the correct level, the slabs are stacked on the side of the vat. They are then put through a milling machine, which dices them into pieces. During this operation, smaller paddles are used to keep the curd from sticking together.

After the cheese slabs have been milled, salt and any flavors are added. Flavoring is used at this point to make two of Grafton Village Cheese's flavored cheddars: sage, using a natural sage rub; and garlic, using garlic crystals. The cheese curd is then shoveled into hoops that have been prepared with a disposable nylon liner. The hoops are weighed, covers are put on them, and they are placed on a press where they remain overnight.

The next morning, the fresh cheese is removed from the hoops, and is wrapped and sealed into cardboard cartons. These boxes of cheese are then moved to a cooler to be aged a certain number of months, according to the type of cheddar. Our flavored cheddars are generally aged to a minimum of six months, while the other cheddars are aged from one to six years, each year delivering a more sophisticated and pronounced flavor. Grafton's maple-smoked cheddar is smoked in a maple-chip wood smoker following its six-month aging period.

The finished cheddar cheeses are sealed in wax. No artificial coloring is added; the cheeses are neither white nor orange, but a light yellowish color.

The Final Product

Grafton cheddar is best enjoyed at room temperature. The types available, along with general serving suggestions, are as follows:

- **Premium:** Aged for one year and sealed with red wax, the Premium delivers the full flavor of old-fashioned farmhouse cheddar. A perfect cheese for sandwiches.
- **Classic Reserve:** Aged for at least two years and sealed in black wax to keep the cheese fresh, Classic Reserve is the signature product of Grafton Village Cheese Company and boasts 13 different cheese awards.

continued on next page

POINT REYES: CALIFORNIA'S FIRST ARTISANAL BLUE CHEESE

by Lynn Giacomini Stray

Lynn Stray is a managing partner at Point Reyes Farmstead Cheese Co., a business that her father founded, in Point Reyes Station on the coast just north of San Francisco.

Our family's commitment to producing superior-quality, farmstead dairy products began over 100 years ago in the mountains of Italy. Today, we continue the family tradition at our Point Reyes dairy, where my father Bob Giacomini and the rest of our family began milking cows in 1959. Over the years, my parents Bob and Dean, and we sisters Karen, Diana, Lynn and Jill, had nurtured a dream of bringing an all-natural farmstead product directly from our ranch to the consumer's table. That dream was realized in August 2000 when we founded Point Reyes Farmstead Cheese Company and produced the first vat of our creamy, full-flavored Original Blue™ cheese.

We chose to make blue cheese out of a two-fold love of food and cooking. As a family that shares a passion for all things "gourmet", blue cheese was a natural because of its versatility in the kitchen and its ability to stand alone as a table cheese. At the time, there was no blue cheese produced in the state of California, and to this day Point Reyes Original Blue is California's only blue cheese produced in the state using California milk. Our mission is plain and simple: to produce the nation's premier brand of high-end, blue table cheese.

Original Blue is a farmstead cheese, meaning it is made from milk obtained from animals on the farm where the cheese is produced. Only Grade A raw milk from our own cows is used to make Original Blue. And, because the cows graze off the land, much of the flavor in the cheese comes directly from the land.

The French have a word for it, *terroir*: from the land, about the land, of the land. Being an artisan producer means we care for the land, the animals, and the food we put on the table. Because it all starts with the cows and their milk, we treat our animals with the utmost respect, analyze their health and nutritional needs, and provide a diet that yields the most milk while avoiding any feed that might adversely affect the flavor of the cheese. For a large part of the year, the cows graze on local indigenous pasture grasses. At times, it's necessary to supplement the grasses with silage made from chopped rye grass, also grown on the farm. Along with the grass and silage, cottonseed, almond hulls, corn, and barley are mixed together with the whey from our cheese-making process and fed to the cows. We believe in recycling food products that still have nutritional value and feeding our cows based on responsible environmental practices.

What Makes a Blue Cheese Blue?

Master cheese maker Monte McIntyre supervises all of the operations at our cheese company. He is a veteran of the well-known Maytag Dairy Farms (Newton, Iowa), which had been founded in 1941 to produce quality blue cheese using a process developed at Iowa State University. Monte's assistant cheese maker is Rob Prokupek.

Cheese production begins with the morning milking of the cows at about 2:00 a.m. Around 4:00 a.m., the fluid milk is pumped directly into a 1,500-gallon stainless-steel vat in the cheese production facility adjacent to the milking barn, guaranteeing a freshness that can't be duplicated. The raw milk is heated slightly. Then, several natural ingredients are added: cultures for flavor and to increase acidity, enzymes in order for the curd to form, kosher salt for flavor, and a mold, *Penicillium roqueforti*, to make blue cheese what it is!

When the milk reaches a specific pH level (acidity) and the curd feels right—a combination of science and art—the curd is cut, the whey is drained from the curds, and the curds are hooped, i.e., poured into forms to make the wheels of cheese. The following day the cheese is removed from the forms and goes to a curing room for about three weeks. In the curing room the wheels are salted by hand, turned numerous times by hand, and punched with stainless-steel needles to introduce oxygen into the body of the wheels. The oxygen is needed to activate the mold and create the blue veins found in Original Blue cheese. The last step is the aging room, where the wheels are left for 4-6 months. During this long aging process the creamy texture and full flavors develop.■

GRAFTON VILLAGE *continued from page 10*

- **Four Star:** Aged for a minimum of four years, the Four Star cheddar has a pronounced flavor and smooth finish. Drier and slightly crumbly, the cheese is best accompanied with dried fruits and nuts, crusty breads and big wines. A 2006 bronze World Cheese Award winner.
- **Five Star:** Aged for five years, the flavor of Five Star Cheddar Cheese is overwhelmingly robust with an extended, pleasant finish. A dry cheddar, the Five Star provides a "melt-in-your-mouth" taste sensation appreciated most by educated palates. *Available only online, from our retail catalog, or from our Grafton retail store.*
- **Stone House Cheddar:** This dry, crumbly cheddar is the longest-aged cheddar in Vermont, with a six-year aging process. *Available only online, from our retail catalog, or from our Grafton retail store.*
- **Flavored:** We make three popular flavored cheddars by adding natural seasonings to our premium cheddar. Garlic and Sage are great for cooking. The award-winning Maple Smoked cheddar holds its own in sandwiches, omelets, or on crackers or burgers.

The success of Grafton Village Cheese has meant that our supply hasn't been keeping up with the demand. An expansion is in the works, but not at the risk of eliminating the hand-crafted process. The plan is to begin building a second plant early next year, 25 miles down the road in Brattleboro, VT, on the site of the Windham Foundation-owned Retreat Farm. Once the site is up and running in about two years, it should double the company's current purchase of Vermont milk to 30 million pounds annually. Company Vice President Peter Mohn has emphasized, "Our process won't change. We will continue making cheddar by hand at both plants. Quality and taste continue to be the mainstay of this company." The plans also include an on-site retail shop and cheese-related educational programs for the community.

MICHIGAN PRODUCERS OF HANDCRAFTED CHEESE

Compiled by Laura Gillis

New CHAA member Laura Green Gillis is a culinary arts student at Oakland Community College (Auburn Hills, MI), as well as a caterer. Formerly, she did graduate work in the Popular Cultural Studies program at Bowling Green State University in Ohio. She is interested in culinary history, cultural foodways, reading cookbooks, current food trends, and the development of the food scene in Michigan. Over the years, she has researched artisanal cheese makers in Michigan and other states in which she has lived, notably New York and Virginia, with a particular interest in chèvre, French-style fresh goat cheese. Laura and her husband live in Northville.

I have enjoyed researching and putting together the following information on cheese producers in our state. These are small producers of fine handcrafted cheeses; naturally, I have not included the very big cheese producers, nor the makers of cheese spreads.

One of my aims in compiling this list is the hope that it will encourage further interest in locally produced cheese among *Repast* readers. There is a growing market for these cheeses, and by enjoying them we can help support the growth of this food industry in our state.

Name: Leelanau Cheese Company
Address: 10844 E. Revold Road
 Suttons Bay, MI 49682
Phone: 231-271-2600
Website: <http://www.blackstarfarms.com/>
Cheeses: Three types of Raclette: Mild, Aged and Peppercorn. 2006 Grand Champion Cheese at the Michigan State Fair. Part of Black Star Farms winery.

How to Buy: Cheeses are available at the Leelanau Cheese Company creamery or the Tasting Room at Black Star Farms winery. Orders may be place by calling or faxing/mailling the printable order form found at the website.

Name: Steve-N-Sons Grassfields Cheese
Address: 14238 60th Avenue
 Coopersville, MI 49404
Phone/Fax: 616-997-8251
Website: <http://www.grassfieldscheese.com/>
Cheeses: Gouda, Edam, Leyden, Cheddar, Sharp Cheddar and three spiced Goudas: Gouda with Chives, Gouda Spiced Blend, and Habañero Gouda

How to Buy: The on-farm store is open all year Thursday and Friday 1 - 6 p.m., and Saturday 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. Cheeses are also available at stores, food co-ops, farmers markets and restaurants in Michigan. See the website for a complete list.

Name: Zingerman's Creamery
Address: 3723 Plaza Drive
 Ann Arbor, MI 48108
Phone: 734-929-0500
Website: <http://zingermanscreamery.com/>
Cheeses: Cow's milk cheeses: Cream Cheese (2006 American Cheese Society winner), Argyle, Bridgewater, Liptauer and Manchester Cheese. Goat's milk cheeses: Pressed Goat Cheese with Tarragon, City Goat (fresh goat round), Aged Chelsea, Little Napoleon, Detroit St. Brick, Lincoln Log, Goat Cream Cheese.

How to Buy: Zingerman's Cheese Shop is open Monday - Saturday 10 a.m. - 6 p.m., and Sunday 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. Cheeses are also available at Zingerman's Deli, Bakehouse, and Roadhouse (all in Ann Arbor), and at stores and restaurants in Michigan, Virginia, California, and Illinois. To place a mail order, call 888-636-8162.

Name: Old Europe Cheese, Inc.
Address: 1330 East Empire Avenue
 Benton Harbor, MI 49022
Phone: 616-925-5003
Website: www.oldeuropecheese.com or www.renypicot.com
Cheeses: Brand name Reny Picot features Brie, Gouda (2006 Michigan State Fair winner), Reny Picot, Fontina,

How to Buy: Manchego, Spanish Bleufort, Edam, Picotina, and Double Camembert (2006 Michigan State Fair winner). Available at Kroger and Gordon Food Service stores, among others. Website has complete list of U.S. distributors.

Name: **Traffic Jam & Snug**
Address: 511 W. Canfield
 Detroit, MI 48201
Phone: 313-831-9470
Website: www.traffic-jam.com
Cheeses: Cheddar (1st Place Cheddar winner, 2006 Michigan State Fair), Colby (also a 2006 State Fair winner), Asiago, several flavored Jack cheeses.
How to Buy: Available only at the deli case at the Traffic Jam & Snug restaurant.

Name: **Turner Cheese Company**
Address: 1210 South M-65
 Whittemore, MI 48770
Phone: 989-756-2709
Website: www.turnercheese.com is under construction.
Cheeses: Colby, Cheddar and Sharp Colby (all 2006 Michigan State Fair winners) and 21 other varieties.
How to Buy: Sold at IGA stores and at the Turner Cheese Company retail store (address above).

Name: **Michigan Farm Cheese Dairy**
Address: 4295 East Millerton Road
 Fountain, MI 49410
Phone: 231-462-3301, or toll-free 877-6-CHEESE
Fax: 231-462-3805
Website: www.andrulischeese.com
Email: cheese@andrulischeese.com
Cheeses: Several varieties of flavored Farmers Cheese including Garlic and Onion, Dill, No Salt Added and Horseradish. Also produces Feta.
How to Buy: Order by phone, fax or email using order form at website.

Name: **Country Dairy**
Address: 3476 South 80th Avenue
 New Era, MI 49446
Phone: 231-861-4636 or 800-243-7280
Website: www.countrydairy.com
Cheeses: White cheddar, smoked cheddar, flavored cheddars and Monterey Jack cheeses.
How to Buy: The on-farm store is open all year Monday through Saturday, 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. Cheeses can be ordered by phone or online, or check website for a list of retailers in Michigan.

Name: **Farm Country Cheese House**
Address: 7263 Kendalville Road
 Lakeview, MI 48850
Phone: 989-352-7779
Website: Under construction.
Cheeses: Colby, Monterey Jack (several flavors), Cheddar (several flavors including Sharp Cheddar and Christmas Cheddar).
How to Buy: By phone. Will soon be distributed in gourmet shops in western Michigan.

Name: **Harb Dairy**
Address: 7841 Wyoming Avenue
 Dearborn, MI 48162
Cheeses: Three Middle-Eastern cheeses: Ackawi, Chives (Ackawi cheese with chives), and Nabullssi (a salty cheese that originated in Nablus, near Jerusalem).
How to Buy: Available in Wayne County only at bakeries and small grocery stores under the Green Cedar brand label.

Name: **Torres-Hillsdale Country Cheese**
Address: 6211 Dimmers Road
 Reading, MI 49274
Phone: 517-368-5990
Cheeses: Muenster. Will soon be producing Asadero, a Mexican string cheese.
How to Buy: The retail store at the plant is open Monday - Friday 7 a.m. - 3:30 p.m., Saturday 7 a.m. - 3 p.m. Also available in grocery stores throughout Michigan.

CHAA THEME MEAL



THE WORLD IS A SALAD BOWL

The world is a salad bowl, or so it seemed at the Culinary Historians' participatory theme meal last July 30. About 50 CHAA members and friends congregated at the Earhart Village Clubhouse in Ann Arbor, bearing salads representing the various continents and cultural regions of the world.

Special thanks go to CHAA member Harriet Larson, who headed organizing the meal, assisted by Nancy Sannar and Julie Lewis.

A salad is by nature a mixture of diverse elements, but there was also great diversity *among* our salads. We chose from salads savory or sweet, warm or cool, made with fish, meat, pasta, vegetables, legumes, or fruits. To accompany our salads, we had fresh pita bread with olive oil and *za'tar* (the Middle Eastern herb mixture of thyme, ground sumac, and sesame seeds) made by member Pat Cornett, and homemade picnic-style beverages—lemonade and various kinds of iced tea and hot tea.

South and East Asia

Interestingly, more of our salads were made from Asian recipes than from those of any other continent. An example was the *kosambari* contributed by Padma Prasad, a guest of CHAA member Pam Dishman. She made the salad by combining husked, split mung beans; raw carrot and cucumber; and mustard seeds popped in hot mustard oil. She then added a dressing of olive oil, lemon juice, lemon zest, salt, pepper, fresh coriander leaves (cilantro), and asafoetida.

Padma is originally from the city of Bangalore, in the state of Karnáataka, southern India. She explains that the mustard and asafoetida are especially characteristic flavors of her home region. Salad greens are difficult to grow in the intense heat of southern India, so salads were traditionally more often made from legumes and seasonal fresh vegetables or fruits. *Kosambari** is the term for a whole class of "little salads"; a few tablespoons are placed directly on the dinner plate as a light relish, providing a refreshing contrast with the other foods there. Distinct from *kosambari* is a class of salads used as side dishes or separate courses, which has come to be known as *salaad* in India.

* The word *kosambari* has many cognates and alternate transliterations, such as *kosumbri*, *kosambri*, *kosamri*, *kachumber*, and *kachamber*.

K. T. Achaya, the great food historian who passed away in September 2002 at his home in Bangalore, mentioned *kosambari* in his classic *Indian Food: A Historical Companion*. He wrote that these were uncooked relishes of southern India that were generally made with either *chana* (chickpeas) or mung beans, soaked in salted water to soften and swell. They were garnished with salt, mustard seeds, and cilantro. He also provided drawings showing exactly where, in a meal served on a banana leaf, the *kosambari* would traditionally be placed relative to the other portions of food, first for the Tamil Nadu region and then for Andhra Pradesh. The earliest written mention that Dr. Achaya found is a reference to chickpea *kosambari* in a manuscript from 1700, the *Mauneshwara Bála Leelé*, written by Ayyappá in Kannada, the language of Karnáataka.

Other Asian salads at our meal included:

- Japanese *chirashi gohan* ("scattered rice" salad) [Howard Ando and Jane Wilkinson], made with brown rice, sushi rice, soybeans, egg, pickled vegetables, and other ingredients
- Korean *muu saeng chae* (chilled radish salad) [Suki Cho], made with *daikon* radish, fresh oysters, crushed toasted sesame seeds, sesame oil, garlic, green onion, cilantro, ginger juice, sugar, rice wine, rice vinegar, chili powder, and salt
- Chinese *bang bang ji* ("bon bon" chicken shreds) [Gwen and John Nystuen], made with shredded chicken breast, scallions, sesame paste, sesame oil, chili oil, Sichuan peppercorn powder, garlic, ginger, sugar, vinegar, and soy sauce
- Vietnamese minted lemon beef salad [Eleanor Hoag], thinly-sliced and marinated strips of beef sirloin served atop a slaw of red cabbage, bean sprouts, carrot, cucumber, red onion, and fresh mint and basil, dressed with a sauce including *nuoc mam* (fermented fish sauce) and chilies, and garnished with peanuts and lemon slices
- Thai *yam taengkwa* [Pam Dishman], made with thinly-sliced cucumber, water chestnuts and radishes, and cooked shrimp, dressed with a sauce of lemon juice, *nuoc mam*, and sugar, and garnished with cilantro
- Thai chicken salad [Joann and Ned Chalat], made with shredded poached chicken, cellophane noodles, grated carrot, chopped cucumber, dressed with a sauce of lime juice, oil, garlic, ginger, honey, salt, soy sauce, crushed peanuts, peanut butter, toasted sesame seeds, and red pepper flakes, and garnished with whole scallions
- Thai potato salad [Marjorie Cripps], made with boiled potato, green beans, carrot, peanut butter, chili oil, and sesame oil.

Western Asia

We enjoyed sampling two versions of the popular Arab bread salad called *fattoush*. This dish arose, and endures, among people of the Levant as a way to make a salad into a heartier meal, or simply a way to use up stale flatbread. Cucumber and other raw vegetables are dressed with olive oil, lemon juice and/or ground sumac, and mint and other herbs. The pieces of bread, often toasted first, are added just before serving so they remain crisp (unlike the otherwise



Gwen Nystuen’s *bang bang ji*, a Chinese chicken-shred salad, was decorated with a frog carved from a cucumber. (Photos: Randy Schwartz)

similar Tuscan *panzanella*, in which the bread is allowed to soften). The *fattoush* brought by Pat Cornett and Mel Annis was made from a Lebanese recipe by Mary Salloum, calling for romaine lettuce, sliced radish, scallions, and diced cucumbers and tomatoes. Jan and Tavi Prundeanu used a simpler Syrian recipe calling for cucumber, scallions, and black olives. Their cookbook placed the recipe in the category of *salata siyaami*, literally “ordained salad”, i.e., a salad approved for Christians during Lent.

Ann Larimore’s Turkish green-olive salad was made with a recipe from Ayla Algar. The meaty olives are pitted and chopped, then combined with scallions, walnuts, pomegranate seeds, and a dressing of olive oil, pomegranate syrup, and pomegranate juice. This dish is famous in Gaziantep, a town in southeastern Turkey near the Syrian border. (Our Silk Road meal last December included green-olive *börek* pastries, also from Gaziantep, made by Art and Joanne Cole; see *Repast* Winter 2006, p. 15.)

The other Middle Eastern salads at our meal were:

- cold marinated eggplant [Myrthe Naparstek and Rod Doll], made with strips of boiled eggplant combined with chopped celery and pimento, then marinated in the refrigerator in an herb-rich vinaigrette

- an Israeli chopped salad [Rita and Jim Goss], made with tomato, cucumber, bell pepper, Russian-style dill pickle, lemon juice, olive oil, and seasonings.

North Africa

A couple of different types of couscous salad graced our meal. Although steamed couscous is usually eaten warm—notably with stewed meats or vegetables, where it is moistened with their cooking juices—its use in chilled salads has become popular, too, especially in the West.

Couscous, a form of pasta and the most distinctive food of the Maghrib (Northwest Africa), was already a staple there among Berber and African nomads and villagers prior to the Muslim conquest in the 7th Century. In that earlier period, however, it was made with grains like barley, millet, sorghum, or *fonio*. What the Arab and Jewish newcomers took with them across North Africa, and on to Italy and Spain—along with other key foods like olives, citrus fruits, spinach, eggplant, and sugar cane—was durum wheat, enabling couscous to be made with the now-standard semolina flour for the first time (for more information, see *Repast* Summer 1999, p. 4).

Judy Goldwasser tossed her couscous salad with chopped fresh spinach and cherry tomatoes, minced garlic and scallions, olive oil, lemon juice, and seasonings. Marion and Nick Holt brought a Moroccan salad made with the larger-size “Israeli” couscous*, which Marion toasted in an oven before simmering in boiled water. After it cooled, she tossed the couscous with chopped bell peppers, red onion, dried fruits and nuts (apricot, fig, raisin, pistachio), cilantro, and orange zest. Her dressing included lemon and orange juices, lemon oil, honey, and seasonings (cumin, cardamom, cinnamon, ginger, salt, and pepper).

Fran Lyman, who once worked with the Peace Corps in northern Morocco, brought *shlada bi felfa wa matesha* (salad of bell peppers and tomatoes). She explained that this salad is a common accompaniment to tajines and fish dishes. Fran topped hers with salt-preserved lemon, an important ingredient in Morocco found at its ubiquitous olive-vending stalls.

Europe

A couple of our salads showed that Arab, Jewish, and Berber ways of eating had leapt across the Strait of Gibraltar. For much of the medieval period, two successive Muslim Berber dynasties, the Almoravid and the Almohad, united the Iberian peninsula with northwest Africa.

continued on next page

* Although “Israeli” couscous has become a common term in the West thanks to an Israeli exporter, this large type of couscous, which is often toasted before being cooked, probably originated in Tunisia, where it is common and is called *muhammas* (“toasted”). In Israel and the rest of the Levant, where it has also been popular since the 1200’s, it is usually called *maghribiyya*, meaning “from the Maghrib”.

SALADS REPORT *continued from page 15*

Joanne and Art Cole brought a delicious *remojón*, a festive salad of salt-cod and sliced orange that is classic in Andalusia, the southern part of Spain. Adapting a recipe from a restaurant in Córdoba, they combined Valencia oranges, kalamata olives, red onions, and fruity olive oil along with the cod. The salt-cod, or *bacalao*, initially plank-hard, must be soaked (*remojón* in Spanish) in water for several hours to be desalted, then shredded. Centuries ago, this salad was made with bitter (Seville) orange, which was the type that the Arabs introduced to Spain; the sweet orange was brought later from China by Portuguese navigators. Another version of this salad, called *esqueixada* (“shredded”), is eaten today in Catalonia (northeastern Spain) where it is made with tomato instead of orange.

In Moorish Spain, dishes made from salt-preserved fish, and other humble dishes such as *gazpacho*, enabled peasants and muleteers to sustain themselves even in mountainous regions or when they were far away from kitchens and way-stations (for more information, see *Repast* Winter 2001, pp. 8-9). The heyday of Spanish salt-cod began after 1481, when British and French fishermen began to shift to Newfoundland shoals, and Basque fleets supplanted them in the cod-rich North Sea. Even after Christians retook the Iberian peninsula and expelled Muslims and Jews who refused to convert, *bacalao* remained an important food, inextricably linked to Lenten eating.

In the Spanish mind, however, dishes such as couscous were so deeply associated with the former Moorish presence that suspicion of eating them was cause to be hauled before the Inquisition. Another such incriminating dish was brought to our meal by Marjorie and Maxwell Reade: chickpeas and onions simmered with honey and spices (thyme, cardamom, and cilantro). Marjorie used a recipe from *A Drizzle of Honey: The Lives and Recipes of Spain’s Secret Jews*, whose authors David M. Gitlitz and Linda Kay Davidson describe a 1520-23 inquisition in which Isabel García, a converted Jew, was accused of making this one-pot Sabbath dish. (For more information on this aspect of the expulsion from Spain, see *Repast* Winter 2001, pp. 7-8.)

Mary Lou Unterburger made a French variety of fruit salad called a *macédoine*. Adapting a recipe from Julia Child, she combined peach, orange, mango, pineapple, blueberries, strawberries, cherries, and grapes, and she let these macerate in a mixture of lemon and lime juice and apricot brandy. She also strained some *rumtopf* that she’d made previously and added this (*rumtopf*, translated as “rum pot”, is a German mixture made by steeping berries and other summer fruits with rum and sugar in a big pot). At the last minute, she added some sparkling Italian wine. *Macédoine* is a term that arose in France in the late 1700’s to describe a mixture of finely cut fruits or vegetables, either raw or cooked, served hot or cold; the analogy is to Macedonia, a land of disparate territories and ethnic groups.

Other European salads at our meal included:

- two German salads from family recipes [Maryann and Hans Sudhoff]: thinly-sliced cucumber with dill, sugar, and vinaigrette; and sliced tomato and onions with



Thai chicken salad (rear), Pennsylvania Dutch macaroni salad (left), and Peanut Butter Chicken salad (right)

rosemary, basil, and balsamic vinaigrette

- two Finnish beet salads [Nancy Sannar], one with herring and one without
- Swedish *böckling röra* [Kay and Steve Oldstrom], a salad of smoked fish, chopped apple, onion, vinegar, and sugar. Swedish *böckling* (German *bucklinge*, English *buckling*) are hot-smoked herring, although Kay substituted chub, a freshwater fish.

North America

Salads in North America have long been notable for their diversity. At our meal, Julie Lewis read us a passage in which a British gardener comments, “When I was in America I was very struck with their salads. Not only are they far more varied than ours, but they were served in such pleasing ways.” (Eleanor Rohde, *Gardens of Delight*, 1934). Rohde went on to describe the kinds of salad decoration she observed, from the various festive containers to the practice of garnishing with edible flowers.

We can probably thank the same historical patterns of immigration that brought about America’s ethnic diversity for having brought about its salad diversity, too. Consider the Pennsylvania Dutch (actually Deutsch, i.e., German) settlers, with their sweet and sour relishes and salads. To make her Pennsylvania Dutch macaroni salad, Harriet Larson cooked some shell macaroni, combined it with chopped onion and “mangoes” (bell peppers)*, and dressed this in a sweet,

* “Mango pickles” is a term that arose in 17th-Century England, referring originally to pickled stuffed mangoes imported from India, then to ersatz versions made by stuffing cucumbers, unripe peaches, melons, or bell peppers.

creamy white dressing made from condensed milk, sugar, and vinegar. The Pennsylvania Dutch poured similar rich dressings on their cucumber and potato salads. Notwithstanding, they always considered these salads as mere side dishes. Especially famous was their boiled bacon dressing (sugar, vinegar, salt, and bits of fried bacon, all cooked in sour cream, or in water or milk thickened with beaten eggs), which they would use for wilting dandelion greens or the shredded leaves of endive, lettuce, or cabbage, garnishing these with hard-boiled eggs. Those German immigrants were hearty eaters!

Simulating these rich German-style salad dressings was one of the goals of a pair of booklets, both issued in 1914, by rival peanut-butter makers Nut-Let (in Virginia) and Beech-Nut (in New York). Beech-Nut claimed that its "Peanut Butter Salad Dressing" imparted a "German effect for potato salad" and could also be used to good effect on fruit salads. For its part, Nut-Let included a recipe for chicken salad, which is reprinted by Andrew F. Smith in his book *Peanuts: The Illustrious History of the Goober Pea*, reviewed by Steve Oldstrom in our last issue. For our meal, Randy Schwartz followed that recipe by coating dices of celery and cold boiled chicken in a cooked dressing made with peanut butter, raw eggs, vinegar, mustard, salt, and pepper, boiled "to consistency of cream". The salad is served on lettuce leaves and garnished with celery and hard-boiled eggs. Since the Nut-Let brand wasn't available, Randy substituted Crema (manufactured in Columbus, Ohio since 1898), an especially creamy brand of pure peanut butter.

Smith's book also includes an interesting overview of mainstream American salads. He writes that prior to the 1880's, these usually consisted of poultry and cooked vegetables bound with a thick sauce. Only the upper classes enjoyed more daring salads, such as lighter European styles or those that included the peanut, ironically a food once associated with the African slaves who were instrumental in its introduction to what became the U.S. In the 1880's, salads became more popular among the middle classes, being light dishes that were better suited to the nutritional requirements of an increasingly urban, sedentary population. Salad designers began to select from a much wider range of ingredients. Molded or congealed salads of vegetables or fruits, made with gelatin or aspic, were especially popular. CHNY member Laura Shapiro describes the broader significance of the gelatin salad in her *Perfection Salad: Women and Cooking at the Turn of the Century* (1986; reprinted 2001).

Other North American salads at our meal included:

- a fresh fruit salad [Jan and Dan Longone] of watermelon, Crenshaw melon, cantaloupe, pineapple, red and white grapes, blueberries, strawberries, and raspberries, garnished with mint leaves and served elegantly in the hollowed-out watermelon shell
- a simple tossed salad [Rich Kato] of lettuce, tomatoes, carrots, green peppers, and celery
- a two-tortellini salad [Toni Hopping] from the *Silver Palate Cookbook* by Sheila Lukins and Julee Rosso.

Latin America

Phil and Barbara Zaret contributed an *ensalada rusa* (Russian salad) based on a recipe from the Dominican Republic.

continued on next page

GOAT CHEESES

continued from page 6

ution is vital and everyone has a role to play whether selling at market, packaging cheese, or milking goats on market day. This is where my husband Jeff gets to add weekend work to his already full-time employment off the farm.

Each market where we sell has its own unique set of customers with their own expectations. Our closest market is a few miles from our farm in rural Madison County. Customers here range from tourists passing through to traditional old-time tobacco farmers who seldom travel outside this mountain county. Contrast this with the upscale customers of the wealthier Asheville neighborhoods who are likely to stop by our market booth and discuss their last trip to France and how our cheese stands in comparison to what they sampled there. Then, place this alongside the downtown co-op market where dreadlocks are a common sight and the scent of patchouli fills the air. All are viable markets where customers come to see the colorful displays in the market booths, to hear the music and to join in the atmosphere of shopping for their food in an Old World-style setting.

These face-to-face sales allow us to keep direct contact with our customers. It also gives us an opportunity to tell them the story of our farm. When Cullen sells at his market, customers are often astonished to hear a 17-year old speak of his involvement in all aspects of the dairy. Not only has he learned fine marketing skills (along with an assortment of expansive hand gestures well-documented in market vendors around the world), he also gets positive feedback on choices he's making involving his work on our family farm.

Our customer base continues to grow as people strive to find a connection to their food. We provide them with an artisan product produced locally. We also provide them with a way to feel good about their food-buying choices. They know that buying local food means that their purchasing-money stays in the community. They also know that in the bigger sense, this means another chunk of agricultural land is staying in agriculture instead of falling to the developer's subdivision. We are given an opportunity to sell our product for the best possible price while building our customer base. Coincidentally, this marketing of our cheese and our family farm translates directly to an increase in sales of our product in local specialty and health food stores. Local restaurants follow suit, finding that their customers appreciate the fact that local products are on the menu when seasonally appropriate.

The end result is a picture that my husband and I feel fortunate to be a part of. We are connected to our community, our land, our business, and our family. Our goal is to continue to nurture these connections while providing a strong family business allowing for love of the land and our animals, artistic expression in our cheese making, and solid roots for our children. ■



In the cheese cellar at Leelanau Cheese Co., wheels of Raclette age on wooden boards

In the morning, the wheels of cheese are unmolded and taken to our cheese cellar, where they will be soaked in a salt-brine bath for 24 hours. The salt helps the cheese to develop flavor, and forms the natural rind that protects the cheese from drying out.

Aging in a Cheese Cellar

The cellar is a cave-type environment that holds a certain temperature and humidity level. In that environment the wheels of cheese develop flavor while aging. Cheeses get sharper as they get older. In French, mild cheese is called young, and sharp is called old.

Sitting on wood boards, it will take at least three months for our mild Raclette to ripen, eight to ten months for the sharp, and two years for the extra-sharp variety. The wheels are turned, washed and brushed with salt water every day, by hand.

The flavor develops through aging; this is not a step to rush. The work in the cellar can be very labor-intensive, but this is all worth it.

Artisanal cheese making using authentic recipes is becoming more popular in the U.S. People travel more and they are always happy to find the flavors of their trips when they come back home. They also understand better what makes a good cheese: the quality of the milk, the skills of the cheese maker, and the aging and curing of the cheese are, to me, the three most important parts of artisanal cheese making.

Artisanal cheese making reminds us where we come from. It keeps the traditions alive and best of all, it puts real food, full of flavor, on the table. ■

Anne’s Croûte au Fromage

From Anne Hoyt of Leelanau Cheese Co.

- ½ teaspoon olive oil
- 2 eggs, separated
- 1 cup milk
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- Pinch of salt & pepper
- Pinch of nutmeg
- 8 ounces Raclette cheese, grated or thinly sliced
- 1 cup dry white wine
- 2 large slices day-old dense bread

Preheat oven to 425° F. Grease an 8-inch-by-8-inch baking dish with the olive oil. Set aside.

In a small bowl, blend egg yolks with milk, garlic, salt, pepper, and nutmeg. In a separate bowl, beat egg whites until firm. Fold egg whites and cheese into egg yolk mixture.

In a shallow dish or pie plate, pour wine and very lightly soak bread. Place bread in bottom of baking dish. Cover with egg-cheese mixture.

Bake for 10-15 minutes or until slightly puffed and golden on top.

Serve immediately.

354 calories (61% from fat), 24 grams fat (including 13 grams saturated fat), 10 grams carbohydrates, 23 grams protein, 375 mg sodium, 177 mg cholesterol, 669 mg calcium, trace of fiber.

SALADS REPORT

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lic. This Franco-Russian salad, *salade russe* in French, has spread around the world but is especially popular in the Dominican Republic, being one of the standard items served for Christmas dinner in that Caribbean nation. The original version, developed by a chef Olivier at the Hermitage Restaurant in Moscow in the late 1800’s, and still known in Russian as *Salade Olivier*, was a salad of cold game (or salmon during Lent) served in a vinaigrette. As it evolved internationally, by the mid-1900’s it took the form of a salad of cooked vegetables and mushrooms, sausage, cured ham or pickled tongue, and lobster or crawfish meat, all bound with a thick mayonnaise. This would be presented on the salad dish in a dome, sometimes molded in aspic, and garnished with capers, gherkins, anchovy filets, truffles, etc. In the Dominican and similar modern recipes, the salad is a far simpler meatless *macédoine* of cooked potatoes and carrots, with peas and boiled egg, perhaps some diced red onion and some corn kernels, all bound with mayonnaise.

Jane and Herbert Kaufer brought us a Mexican “desperado salad” made with mixed rice, zucchini, beans, tomato salsa, and other ingredients. Famous in Mexico is the *ensalada de Noche Buena*, a medley of fruits, vegetables, and nuts, arranged on a bed of shredded lettuce and served at the meal preceding midnight mass on Christmas Eve (see *Repast* Spring 2003, pp. 9-10).

MORSELS & TIDBITS

Due to an error by the Editor, the drawing on page 4 of our last issue was a mismatch with the caption provided for it. The drawing, which accompanied **Fran Beauman's** article on the pineapple, was not in fact the original drawing from a 1535 work by Oviedo, the earliest known European illustration of a pineapple; instead, it appeared in an 1851 version of Oviedo's work, published by the Royal Academy of History in Madrid. To correct the record, we show the original 1535 drawing to the right.

Readers might recall that **Edgar Rose**, in his article on the pecan in our last issue, stated that the first published recipe for "Pecan Pie" did not appear until 1899 in a charity cookbook in St. Louis. Just after we went to press, Edgar relayed some interesting new information he'd just received from Andrew F. Smith (who wrote the article on the wild turkey in that same issue): although the 1899 charity cookbook is the earliest known *book* containing a Pecan Pie recipe, the first known such published recipe of *any* kind had appeared earlier, in a monthly magazine in the 1860's. It is notable that both of the recipes in question originated in Texas.

Jan Longone informs us that the Second Biennial Symposium on American Culinary History, focusing on "Regional and Ethnic Traditions", is scheduled for May 18-20, 2007 at the Longone Center for American Culinary Research, William L. Clements Library, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. It promises to be a stimulating and informative event. The featured speakers are Alice Arndt, John T. Edge, Marcie Cohen Ferris, Larry B. Massie, Michael and Jane Stern, Dan Strehl, Toni Tipton-Martin, William Woys Weaver, and Jacqueline B. Williams. Attendance will be limited to 200. For more details, go to the Clements Library website, www.clements.umich.edu, and click on the link to the Janice Bluestein Longone Culinary Archive and then "Symposium".

Cynthia D. Bertelsen, co-chair of the Peacock-Harper Culinary History Committee at Virginia Tech in Blacksburg, VA, announces a symposium scheduled for April 20-21, 2007, "From Jamestown to the Blue Ridge: Cooking Up 400 Years of Culinary History in Virginia". The symposium commemorates the 400th anniversary of the first permanent British settlement in North America, at Jamestown. Keynote speakers are Barbara Haber on "Food as a Force in Virginia History" and John Egerton on "Pork and Corn . . . and the Rest is History". For more details, visit <http://www.culinarycollection.org/id18.html>

A TV series "Seasoned With Spirit: A Native Cook's Journey" began airing on PBS this November. The series celebrates Native America's culinary heritage by depicting history, culture, and the preparation of healthy dishes that utilize indigenous foods. One of its goals is to confront the alarming rise of obesity and Type 2 diabetes among many tribes by encouraging Native and other people to reconnect with natural foods. The creator and host is **Loretta Barrett Oden**, a chef, ethnobotanist, and Native food historian. She learned cooking as a child on the Citizen Potawatomi Reservation in Oklahoma, and later ran the Blue Corn Restaurant in Santa Fe for many years. Episodes have included one on buffalo and related foods, filmed



The earliest known European illustration of a pineapple, from Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo y Valdés, *La Historia General de las Indias* (Seville, 1535)

on the Cheyenne River Sioux Reservation; one on wild-rice harvesting with Winona LaDuke, taped on the White Earth Reservation; and one on "the original gumbo" of the Houma people of Louisiana. Five episodes are being televised now, with plans for a possible eight more in the works. The series has been produced jointly by Connecticut Public Television and Native American Public Telecommunications.

Olivia White, Director of the Amistad Center for Art & Culture (part of the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art in Hartford, CT), announces an exhibit "Soul Food! African American Cookery and Creativity", running Nov. 15, 2006 to Apr. 22, 2007. The exhibit of art and artifacts traces the history of foods such as rice, sugar, collard greens, and okra, and their interconnections with the slave trade and other economic and cultural factors; fraught cultural symbols such as Aunt Jemima and fried chicken; and the emergence of new culinary traditions and their impact on the major currents of Black culture.

"Communal Cuisine: Community Cookbooks 1877-1960" is an online exhibit at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign (<http://www.library.uiuc.edu/learn/Exhibit/>). The exhibit draws on a collection of over 2,300 cookbooks, including 700 community cookbooks, that was donated to the university library in 2000 by Mrs. **Hermilda Listeman**, a businesswoman who has collected cookbooks her entire life. The community cookbooks, representing almost every state in the country, were published as fundraisers by church groups, ladies' aid societies, garden clubs, libraries, YWCA's, junior leagues, and political groups. The online exhibit highlights 62 of these cookbooks, grouped chronologically into six virtual "display cases". Examples are *Tried, Tested, Proved: The Home Cook Book*, originally published for the benefit of the Home for the Friendless, Chicago, 1882, and *The Neighborhood Cook Book*, compiled by the Council of Jewish Women, Portland, Oregon, 1914.

On the Back-burner: We invite ideas and submissions for these planned future theme-issues of *Repast: Food and Children* (Winter 2007), and *Regional and Ethnic American Cuisines* (Spring 2007). Suggestions for future themes are also welcome. ■

CHAA CALENDAR

(Except where noted, programs are scheduled for 4-6 p.m. at Ann Arbor Senior Center, 1320 Baldwin Ave.)

Sunday, December 10, 2006

4-7 p.m., Earhart Village Clubhouse
(835 Greenhills Drive, Ann Arbor)

Holiday participatory dinner,
“A Salute to Our Friends on the Gulf Coast”

Sunday, January 21, 2007

“Raise Your Fork: A Tribute to Local Food Producers”
Taylor Rutledge and Heather Leavitt, University of
Michigan Seniors in the School of Art and Design and
organizers of the exhibition “Raise Your Fork”

Sunday, February 18, 2007

“The History of Hot Chocolates and Coconuts”
Emily “Duff” Anderson, “The Chocolate Lady at
Zingerman’s Deli”

Sunday, March 18, 2007

TBA

Sunday, April 15, 2007

“Glamour Torte and Pink Perfection Peppermint Cake:
Women, Creativity, and Convenience Foods in the 1950’s”
Sherrie A. Inness, Professor of English,
Miami University of Ohio

Friday, May 18-Sunday, May 20

Second Biennial Symposium on American Culinary
History – “Regional and Ethnic Traditions”
The Longone Center for American Culinary Research
William L. Clements Library,
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor
(see page 19 for more information)

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Culinary Historians of Ann Arbor

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First Class