

# THE RESEARCH CENTRE FOR THE HISTORY OF FOOD AND DRINK



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## Special Thanks

To Danielle Signorini for her administrative work with the centre. A graduate of the *Le Cordon Bleu* Adelaide University Masters Program in Gastronomy, Dani handled all new memberships, orchestrated a better mailmerge system and helped design and implement the new website. We wish Dani all the best, and will miss her valuable input and technical expertise.

## Cookery Books as History Art Gallery of South Australia 3-4 July 2006

The Research Centre is hosting this conference at the Art Gallery of South Australia. The response thus far has exceeded expectations; 35 scholars have offered to present papers, including Elizabeth Driver from Canada and Laura Mason from the United Kingdom. Elizabeth is an expert on cookery books who has published *A Bibliography of Cookery Books Published in Britain, 1875-1914* (Prospect Books, 1989) and the forthcoming *Culinary Landmarks: A Bibliography of Canadian Cookbooks (1825-1949)* (University of Toronto Press, 2006). She has also edited or co-edited five classic Canadian cookbooks, including the *Robin Hood Cookbook* (Whitecap Books, 2003), *The Home Cookbook* (Whitecap Books, 2002) and most recently *Edith Adams Omnibus: Classic Canadian Cookbook Series* (Whitecap Books, 2005).

Laura is a historian and cookery writer whose books include *Sugar Plums and Sherbet: The Prehistory of Sweets* (Prospect Books, 1998, PB 2004), *Traditional Foods of Britain* (with Catherine Brown) (Prospect Books, 1999), *Food Culture in Great Britain* (Greenwood Press, 2004) and *Farmhouse Cookery* (The

National Trust, 2005).

Enclosed is a registration form; you can also register online at the Research Centre's website (the url is listed above).

**\*Update:** All abstracts are in and with such a strong turnout sessions will be parallel and a full two-day program is now in preparation. The abstracts will be posted on the website by the end of April, along with more information about the programme, times, places, contacts, accommodation, etc. Those wishing to register can use the form enclosed or the electronic version on the website, but note that payments need be sent by June 02, or incur a 15% surcharge. On a lighter note, Barbara Santich will be compiling "a cookbook quiz" to be conducted during Monday evening (3rd July) at the National Wine Centre (food and drink provided). An exhibition of cookery books, old, rare, and collectable will also be on display in Adelaide University's Barr-Smith Library.

## The Future of Food Studies

The future of food studies has never looked brighter as a result of young scholars entering the field. Sarah and James Black celebrated the birth of Ben on 7 March in London, where Sarah is taking a break from her postgraduate research, and Roger Haden and Bronwyn Marks celebrated the birth of Thomas on 9 March.

## A Social and Cultural History of Alcohol

Berg has recently published this original collection of articles, edited by Mack P. Holt of George Mason University. It contains five articles written by members of the Research Centre:

Ken Albala, *To Your Health: Wine as Food and*

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AUSTRALIA

Medicine in Mid-sixteenth-century Italy.  
Mack P. Holt, *Europe Divided: Wine, Beer, and the Reformation in Sixteenth-century Europe*.  
A. Lynn Martin, *Drinking and Alehouses in the Diary of an English Mercer's Apprentice, 1663-1674*.  
Charles Cameron Ludington, "To the King o'er the Water." *Scotland and Claret, c. 1660-1763*.  
Diane Erica Kirkby, *Drinking the Good Life: Australia c. 1880-1980*.

## Conferences

### **Before You Can Cook: Acquiring Food-stuffs and Kitchenware in Early America, 24 March 2006**

This notice arrived too late to make the January newsletter, but I include it for your information. This symposium at George Mason University, Fairfax, Virginia, explored the great variety of foods available in early American homes and the many different methods of acquiring them. Presentations examined kitchen utensils and cooking technology, heritage and wild plants and animals, their processing and purchased provisions. Visit the website at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/collections/symposium.htm>

### **The Mediterranean Diet: Fact and Fiction, The Case of Italy, 21-26 May 2006**

The Steinhardt School of Education at New York University and the James Beard Foundation invite scholars to come listen, learn, eat, drink and tour at this gourmet academic conference at Villa La Pietra in Florence, Italy. During the early 1950s, when epidemiologists were beginning to worry about the elevated incidence of heart disease in America, venerable nutritionist Ancel Keys undertook the landmark Seven Countries Study to compare the diets of Mediterranean countries and their incidence of heart disease. From the results of this study grew the dietary concept, lifestyle and powerful marketing tool now known as the Mediterranean Diet. The program for this joint international conference, conducted in English, will assemble Italian and American experts on nutrition, food culture, eating and lifestyle behaviours, public health, government regulation, wine and other beverage, and artisanal and commercial food production to discuss the concept of the Mediterranean diet using Italy as a case study. Among the highlights are samplings of Florentine farm produce and street foods, tastings of artisanal cheeses, salume

and chocolate, an introduction to the "Italian Paradox" and conversations with one of the original collaborators on Keys' study and Frances Mayes, author of the best-selling *Under the Tuscan Sun*. For details, schedules, speakers, optional field trips, registration forms, hotel information and more visit <http://www.education.nyu.edu/conference/tuscandiet>

### **Food Systems and Food Security in the Twenty-First Century, 1-2 June 2006**

This is the first annual meeting of the Canadian Association for Food Studies; the venue is Toronto. Unfortunately, the deadline for the submission of abstracts was 15 February 2006. Papers have to fit into one of the thirteen session themes:  
Agri-food standards and rural restructuring in Southeast Asia.  
Innovations in teaching about (agro-)food system issues.  
Politics of fat: critical perspectives on the "obesity" epidemic.  
Politics of the plate: the possibilities and contradictions of consumer activism.  
Food culture: constructing "race," gender, and the "other" in Canadian food geographies.  
A sense of taste.  
"Artificiality" in food and eating.  
Lost in translation: the disconnection between food security research and practice.  
Food security and food system indicators, mapping and evaluation research.  
Food localism and bioregionalism.  
Organic foods and the Canadian consumer.  
Alternative models of food distribution and retailing.  
Food policy: history, politics and practice.

### **Food: Production and Consumption, 4-8 August 2006**

The Institute of Advanced Studies of The University of Western Australia is hosting this symposium in Perth with a lively group of international and Australian scholars, including Peter Barham, Sidney Mintz, Alan Warde and Barbara Santich. For details contact Wendy Were, Deputy Director, at [wwere@admin.uwa.edu.au](mailto:wwere@admin.uwa.edu.au)

### **Eggs, 2-3 September 2006**

Eggs is the theme of this year's **Oxford Symposium on Food and Cookery**; the venue is St. Catherine's, Oxford. Registration forms and guidelines for authors wishing to submit papers are at

<http://www.oxfordsymposium.org.uk>. The deadline for submissions is 15 April; send them to the Editor, Richard Hosking, at [Richard@Rhosking.com](mailto:Richard@Rhosking.com). Based on feedback from Symposiasts in 2004 and 2005, the Trustees decided that the Symposium should be based much closer to Oxford's town centre, and that the annual meeting would be better in Oxford's collegiate atmosphere. The Trustees have also allocated a small fund to support attendance at the Symposium by people who would otherwise be unable to attend. Please email the Chairman of the Trustees, Jane Levi, at [jane@jlevi.org](mailto:jane@jlevi.org), if you would like to be considered for this assistance with fees. For those thinking ahead, the symposium theme for 2007 will be Food and Morality.

### **The Nature and Function of Water, Baths, Bathing, and Hygiene from Antiquity through the Renaissance, 5-7 October 2006**

Northern Arizona University at Flagstaff is hosting this conference that will explore depictions, discussions and interpretations of water from antiquity to the Renaissance. The focus will be on how the discussions and descriptions of water and all things associated with it, including baths, bathing, hygiene, dams, water rights, agriculture, pollution and rites, influenced the politics, literature, religion and architecture of early cultures. Send proposals of 300 to 400 words in length to Dr. Anne Scott ([Anne.Scott@nau.edu](mailto:Anne.Scott@nau.edu)) or Dr. Cynthia Kosso ([Cynthia.Kosso@nau.edu](mailto:Cynthia.Kosso@nau.edu), 928-523-9305). The deadline for proposals is 30 April.

### **Food and Culture, 27-29 October 2006**

The annual conference of the Mid-Atlantic Popular/American Culture Association in Baltimore, Maryland, will have food as its theme. The organisers invite scholars from all disciplines to address the intersection of food and the human experience. Topics might include the politics of food, culinary tourism, gender and food preparation/consumption, food in literature, health and diet, food in advertising and restaurant culture. For more information about the Mid-Atlantic Popular/American Culture Association go to <http://www.wcenter.ncc.edu/gazette/>. To submit a paper/panel proposal send an email by 15 June to Monika Bolino at [foodandculture@gmail.com](mailto:foodandculture@gmail.com)

### **Consuming Italy: Consumption in Italy and the Consumption of Italy, 17-18 November 2006**

The Association for the Study of Modern Italy is hosting this conference in London. It will consider the history and practices of consumption in Italy and the consumption of goods, products and services that have been encoded as "Italian" outside the country itself. The conference will be open to papers on all aspects of consumption (broadly defined) in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, including those employing economic, social, cultural, theoretical and political approaches. The deadline for proposals was 31 March 2006. Contact the organisers Jonathan Morris at [j.2.morris@herts.ac.uk](mailto:j.2.morris@herts.ac.uk) and Claudia Baldoli at [c.baldoli@herts.ac.uk](mailto:c.baldoli@herts.ac.uk)

### **Beyond the Supermarket: Learning to Overcome Gastronomic Poverty, 29 April-2 May 2007**

This is the theme of the 15th Symposium of Australian Gastronomy; the venue is Southern Tasmania. The organisers wish to explore the right of every person to expect sustenance from fresh and flavoursome food, regardless of social status or background, and they wish to promote the concerns of the anti-globalisation lobby on labelling the provenance of food. The venue nestles between rugged mountains and the wilderness of the South West National Park World Heritage Area. To check out the venue see its website at <http://www.farsouthwilderness.com.au/> Send proposals of papers to Philip Mead at [p.mead@utas.edu.au](mailto:p.mead@utas.edu.au).

### **Environmental Connections: Europe and the Wider World, 5-9 June 2007**

The European Society for Environmental History invites proposals for panels and posters for its upcoming fourth conference, hosted by the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam. Environmental historians increasingly work on a global scale, addressing global issues or comparing local and national experiences with other locales. Given the interconnectedness of all parts of the planet in matters ecological, this makes excellent sense. Europe has had longstanding relationships with the rest of the world from the beginning of historical time, causing both enrichment and deprivation of biodiversity and habitats. Lively exchanges of men and other biota and of environmental ideas, techniques and practices existed with Asia and Africa already from Antiquity onwards,

with the Americas, Australia and New Zealand from the end of the Middle Ages onwards. Proposals for panels, individual papers and posters should be submitted through the on-line registration facility provided by the conference website, [www.eseh.org](http://www.eseh.org).

## Famous First Lines

“It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife.” Thus Jane Austen began her most popular novel, *Pride and Prejudice*, published in 1813.

But in 1803 Grimod de la Reynière began his *Almanach des Gourmands* with the following:

“Tout le monde est d’accord qu’il est peu de mois en France plus favorables à la bonne chère, que celui de janvier, qui, en dépit du calendrier républicain, commence toujours l’année gourmande, depuis Charles IX,”

which could be translated as:

“It is a truth universally acknowledged that in France there are few months more favourable to good eating than January which, in spite of the republican calendar, has always, since the time of Charles IX, initiated the gastronomic year.

Barbara Santich

## Publishing Opportunities

### Reading Callaloo, Eating Callaloo

Guest editors of the journal *Callaloo* are seeking material for a special issue in celebration of its 30th anniversary, to be published in January 2007. The issue focuses on the cultural, social and political meaning of callaloo as food and its significance for and relationship to the journal. In its exploration of the dish the journal is not limited to the food callaloo but its manifestations as, for example, cararu in Brazil and other dishes that, like gumbo, boast a similar mélange of historical, material, and cultural ingredients. The deadline for submissions is 1 July 2006. Direct questions or other correspondence to the guest editors: Shona N. Jackson (Texas A & M University) at [soursop\\_at\\_tamu.edu](mailto:soursop_at_tamu.edu) or Karina L. Cespedes (University of California, Berkeley) at [lisette\\_at\\_uclink4.berkeley.edu](mailto:lisette_at_uclink4.berkeley.edu)

### Local Food Systems and Direct Marketing. The journal, *Local Environment: The International Journal of Justice and Sustainability*

seeks submissions for a special issue focused on direct marketing initiatives and their place within local food systems. More specifi-

cally this means initiatives, practices and conceptual ideas focused on bringing producers and consumers more closely together, with the longer-term goals of more sustainable and just food systems. The editors welcome the submission of papers that address one or more of the following themes: the place of the farmers’ market; community supported agriculture; other direct marketing avenues; social embeddedness (sic) and relations of regard; beyond direct marketing. The deadline for submissions is 31 July 2006. For background on this journal and instructions for authors go to <http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/carfax/13549839.html>

## Ecology of Food and Nutrition

The editors of this international journal are planning a special issue in tribute to Christine S. Wilson (1919-2005), a founding mother of nutritional anthropology. The theme of the issue is *Nutritional Anthropology: A Biocultural Approach to the Study of Human Foodways, Diet and Nutrition*. The field of nutritional anthropology has integrated the premise that what, when and where we eat is an expression of both biology and culture. Its biocultural approach is concerned with our cross-cultural, ecological and evolutionary relationships with food in prehistoric, historical and contemporary contexts. Nutritional anthropologists also act as advocates and educators, seeking ways to promote food policy and public health on a global scale. The deadline for submissions is 15 May 2006. Contact Barrett P. Brenton, Co-Editor, [brentonb@stjohns.edu](mailto:brentonb@stjohns.edu). Specific instructions for authors are at <http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/authors/gefnauth.asp>

## Food Politics

The editors of the journal *Cultural Studies* are planning a special issue devoted to Food Politics. They request papers that offer theoretically informed perspectives on the articulations among food, politics and science. They wish to create a space for alternative theoretical perspectives and to extend beyond those often evoked in sociological and anthropological discourses about food (theorists like Bourdieu, Elias, Douglas, de Certeau tend to be cited quite frequently). The editors aim to probe the following kinds of questions: In what ways are discourses of and around food challenging or reinforcing traditional boundaries between nature and culture, human and nonhuman, natural and unnatural, culture and science? What new forms of politics are emerging over food? How are scientific discourses mobilized and/or destabilized in relation to food politics? How

what insights can discourses about food give us into our contemporary political moment? The deadline for submission is 1 September 2006. Submit papers via email to both Jessica Mudry at [jmudry@cse.concordia.ca](mailto:jmudry@cse.concordia.ca) and Gwendolyn Blue at [gblue@email.unc.edu](mailto:gblue@email.unc.edu)

## Seminars

### Research Centre Seminars:

#### The Globalization of Wine

**GO3 Napier Bldg, University of Adelaide, Wednesday, June 7, 5-00 for 5.30pm (8.30 finish)**

Members are invited to the latest seminar hosted by the research centre. Guest speaker Rob van Zanten of Adelaide University's School of Agriculture, Food and Wine will introduce a screening of the film *Mon-dovino* and the evening's theme: the **Globalization of Wine**. A discussion and question time will follow before **food and wine!** (with pairings matched according to variety, country and style). All welcome. Donation at the door.

#### Sidney Mintz: August visit

Esteemed anthropologist, Emeritus Professor Sidney Mintz will have a brief stay in Adelaide from August 9-11. A Research Centre Seminar will be held to coincide with Sid's visit. Details will be in our next newsletter.

## Websites

### Social and Cultural Food Studies

Peter Scholliers announces the launch of the English version of the website of the Research Group "Social and Cultural Food Studies" of the Vrije Universiteit Brussel: <http://www.vub.ac.be/FOST> It includes information about the research projects, publications and initiatives.

### Candlestick Salad

A recent topic of discussion in the ASFS listserve has been the candlestick salad, a popular recipe in the United States in the 1950s, made with a slice of canned pineapple with a half a banana stuck into the hole, topped with a maraschino cherry to imitate the flame, and with dribbles of mayonnaise to imitate melted wax. If you think I'm joking, a picture is at

<http://www.sherrijilek.com/candle.jpg>

### American Heritage Chocolate

This website contains material on the history of chocolate as well as recipes from colonial America. It is sponsored by the multinational corporation Mars and its Historic Division of Mars, Incorporated. Mars initiated the formation of the Colonial Chocolate Society with the University of California, Davis, Fort Ticonderoga (in upstate New York) and Colonial Williamsburg (in Virginia) to pull together all the research and historical information on cocoa and chocolate during the decades leading up to and during the American Revolutionary War period. <http://www.americanheritagechocolate.com>

### The World's Best Foodie Cities

According to ShermansTravel they are

1. Barcelona
2. Brussels
3. Hanoi
4. Las Vegas
5. Lyon
6. New York
7. San Francisco
8. Rome
9. Tokyo
10. Vancouver

<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/12097181/>

## Blog

Research Centre member Janet Clarkson has created a blog that focuses on her huge Food History Almanac which features the food history of days of the calendar. For example, the entry for 2 March notes that on this day in 1933 the United States Navy revised its daily food rations; Clarkson then lists the quantities of each food item and for the sake of comparison includes the rations for 1794. She ends each entry with an appropriate recipe, this time one entitled "To Dress a Military Omelette," dated 1854. The url for the blog is <http://theoldfoodie.blogspot.com/>

## Publications

### The Future of Children, Childhood Obesity

The journal *The Future of Children*, published by the Woodrow Wilson School at Princeton University and the Brookings Institution, has recently released a special issue on childhood obesity.

This issue features nine articles on the high and rising rates of overweight and obesity among U.S. children, presenting evidence on the multiple causes, consequences and methods of dealing with the growing problem. For information contact [FOC@princeton.edu](mailto:FOC@princeton.edu).

## Food and History

The latest edition of this journal, published by the Institut Européen d'Histoire et des Cultures de l'Alimentation, contains the following articles:

Robin Nadeau, *Les manières de table chez Théophraste*.

Susan Weingarten, *Mouldy Bread and Rotten Fish : Delicacies in the Ancient World*.

Laura Prosperi, *Il latte e il miele: ragioni e fortuna di un binomio alimentare*.

Paul Delsalle and Laurence Delobette, *L'approvisionnement en poissons de mer d'une province continentale: le cas de la Franche-Comté aux XVe, XVIe et XVIIe siècles*.

Gregorio Saldarriaga, *Maíz: cosmología, gusto y necesidad en el Nuevo Reino de Granada, siglos XVI y XVII*.

Huw Beynon and Stephen Quilley, *The Guernsey Tom : The rise and fall of an Island economy*.

Danny Crauwels, Ghislaine Vlieghe-Steps, and Jo Van Caenegem, *Philippe Cauderlier (1812-1887), Belgian chef and culinary author: A short biography, his (cook)books and their authorship*.

Stefano Magagnoli, *L'invenzione "industriale" della tradizione: il cartello dell'aceto balsamico tradizionale di Modena*.

## Words

### Mango

This word originated from Malayalam, one of the major languages of India, spoken by about thirty-five million people. Malayalam is also the origin of copra (dried coconut meat, 1584), teak (1698) and jackfruit (1830). Several sixteenth-century English books mention fresh mangos, but for centuries Europeans only experienced them in pickled form. Because Americans first knew mangos as pickles, they sometimes used the term to mean any pickled fruit. An American recipe from 1847 noted in the Dictionary of American Regional English calls for "melon Mangoes" to be stuffed with horseradish, cucumbers, green beans, nasturtiums, onions, mustard seed, peppercorns, cloves, and all-spice before being pickled.

Muskmelons, cucumbers, and green peppers were all made into "mangoes." Even today green peppers are sometimes called mangoes or mango peppers in the middle of the United States because they used to be pickled that way.

### Smellfeast: A parasite, a greedy sponger, a freeloader.

Such a person has a good nose for the scent, literal or figurative, of a good meal in the offing. The word has vanished from the active language but was very common in the seventeenth century and didn't die out altogether for another couple of hundred years. The prolific writer and translator Sir Roger L'Estrange published an English edition of *Aesop's Fables* in the 1690s. Some fifty years later a sentence from it was borrowed by Dr Johnson to illustrate the word in his Dictionary: "The ant lives upon her own, honestly gotten; whereas the fly is an intruder, and a common smellfeast that sponges [sponges] upon other people's trenchers."

With thanks to Cara De Silva

## Marcus Apicius

Apicius was the first-century Roman gourmand who is considered the author of the only surviving recipe collection from the ancient Mediterranean. Containing 500 recipes, the collection was assembled and hand copied in the fourth century. In the ninth century monks at the monastery of Fulda in Germany recopied the recipes in a simple manuscript adorned by red letters. This ninth-century manuscript has amazingly survived through twelve hundred years of wars and natural disasters and is believed to be the earliest copy of Apicius. During the Reformation the monks shipped the manuscript to the Vatican Library, which also owned another, slightly later set of the collection. The Vatican sold the Fulda manuscript to a private collector, and it eventually was donated to the New York Academy of Medicine.

The 1,200 year-old manuscript is falling apart and needs to be rebound. The New York Academy of Medicine approached a professional manuscript restorer; the estimated cost of rebinding is \$15,000. The Culinary Trust of the International Association of Culinary Professionals has taken on the task of raising the necessary funds and launching a public relations campaign around the importance of preserving our culinary heritage. For information go to [www.culinarytrust.com](http://www.culinarytrust.com)

Andrew F. Smith, [Asmith1946@aol.com](mailto:Asmith1946@aol.com)

## European Summer School

The François-Rabelais University of Tours and the European Institute for the History and Culture of Food are organising a summer school on the theme *The Significance of Eating: Food and Social and Cultural Hierarchies*. The dates of the school are 3-9 September. For information contact Marie-Claude Piochon at marie-claude.piochon-ieha@wanadoo.fr or check out the Institute's website at www.ieha.asso.fr The target group is European Union and international students with at least a master's degree and those with PhDs wishing to achieve greater depth on the relevance of history and culture of food. The school's languages are French and English, a good knowledge of both is essential. Applications are due by 31 May.

## Reviews

by Barbara Santich

**Gina Mallet, *Last Chance to Eat: The Fate of Taste in a Fast Food World* (Milson's Point, NSW: Random House Australia, 2004), pp. 236 plus index.**

The doom-laden title demands immediate attention; who among us has not, at some stage, bemoaned the lack of flavour in tomatoes and peaches, the blandness of most Australian cheddar, the vapidity of characterless chicken breasts? Not that Gina Mallet gives any answers or any cause for optimism in this book, whose message seems to be that things ain't what they used to be and we'd better enjoy what we can now, because they will only get worse. Her conclusion is that "unless consumers stick up for taste, there won't be any" (p. 218).

According to the back cover, *Last Chance to Eat* is a "provocative and evocative account of the fate of food." Certainly, the author has had plenty of wonderful food experiences to evoke and writes about them with verve and humour, for example, Dover sole at a birthday lunch at a Parisian brasserie, a properly aged porterhouse at a traditional New York steakhouse. But provocative? Pessimistic would be a better description. Perhaps this is an apt analogy for "the fate of taste," but I would have found this book more provocative and more challenging if it recognised that the past is passé and directed its focus towards what can be done in the present to affect the future, and what we, as eaters, might do to "stick up

for taste." Instead, the epilogue, set some 50 years in the future, assumes that we simply continued to accept what we were given and, like characters in a Greek tragedy, did nothing to change the fate of taste.

Nevertheless, the book describes clearly and candidly the changes that have occurred in food production and processing practices and the reasons for these changes (essentially, health, hygiene, economics and politics). Mallet explains why steak and kidney pie has become steak and mushroom pie, why the number of different varieties of apple has diminished, why hydroponic tomatoes might be better than organic ones. Writing in a strong and authoritative voice, she is firm in her opinions, as when she states that Béchamel and Velouté are really the only worthy sauce accompaniments to fish (p. 216). In her discussions researchers and scientists are not spared, usually with good reason, for example, the scientists who decreed wood unhygienic and recommended plastic chopping boards; it was later discovered that wood has natural anti-bacterial properties (p. 82). She can be equally scathing about the FDA, which decreed that children should not lick the bowl and beaters when raw eggs have been used in the cake batter (p. 59) and supermarkets that "don't listen to customers ... but buy the apples that make the best profit" (p. 160).

It is not difficult to agree with Mallet's arguments and to be swayed by her sentiments. Yet, persuasive as the book is, it has a number of serious flaws that cast doubt on its probity and ultimate worth. One of these is its reliance, especially in the chapter on fish, on a limited selection of resources. I can accept that Bill Gerencer is very knowledgeable about fish and the fishing industry, but I would have expected a reputable writer to corroborate his information by referring to other sources. Bill might be correct when he says that shrimp are soaked in sodium-tripolyphosphate to plump them up before freezing, but surely this could have been confirmed by other industry or government sources (I'm sure Jeffrey Steingarten would have!).

The second serious flaw is the number of factual errors. A prestigious publisher such as Random House presumably employs skilled editors and fact-checkers, so how can it happen that Carême is credited with creating a dish called Chevreuse de perdreaux (p. 33) when the great chef actually named this masterpiece Chartreuse de perdreaux. Or that the chump chop is described as coming from the neck (p. 136), when, according to the English (and Australian) system, the chump is situated between the leg

and the loin. Or that it states categorically “sugar is more fattening than fat” (p. 200); depending on how much of each you eat, this might be valid, but weight for weight fat contains more kilojoules than sugar. Finally, I have doubts about a recipe in which 2-3 cm potato cubes are boiled for 30 minutes and then cooked for another 40 minutes in a 190o oven.

Third, I wonder about omissions. Surely, in a discussion of modern slaughtering and meat processing practices and the risks of contamination by E. coli it would have been pertinent to mention Eric Schlosser’s recent exposé of the American meat industry in *Fast Food Nation* (2001).

The idea behind *Last Chance to Eat* is admirable. It is disappointing to me that a book that promised so much did not live up to expectations.

**Susan M. Rossi-Willcox, *Dinner for Dickens: The Culinary History of Mrs Charles Dickens’s Menu Books Including a Transcript of What Shall We have For Dinner by “Lady Maria Clutterbuck”* (Totnes: Prospect Books, 2005), pp. 376 plus appendices, notes and index.**

Catherine Hogarth was born in 1815, married Charles Dickens in 1836 and died in 1879, nine years after Charles’ death and 21 years after he effectively ditched her in favour of a much younger actress. During her marriage she bore ten children, suffered two miscarriages, kept house and entertained in England, France, Switzerland and Italy and, under the pseudonym of Lady Maria Clutterbuck, wrote a book of menus (“Bills of Fare”) first published in 1851 and republished with revisions and additions in 1852, 1854 and 1857. It is this slim volume, *What Shall We Have For Dinner*, that engaged the attention of historian and museum curator Susan M. Rossi-Willcox.

The first half of *Dinner for Dickens* describes the life, travels and entertaining of Charles and Catherine (Kate), while the second half discusses the ingredients of the menus, noting Catherine’s predilection for mutton and lamb, French beans and asparagus and the ubiquity of potatoes, of which Londoners ate on average one pound per person per day in the 1850s (p. 279). The ingredients are, as Rossi-Willcox remarks, neither expensive and luxurious nor cheap and low status but precisely the kinds of foods appropriate to a reasonably well-off middle-class family that ate well but not extravagantly. Rossi-Willcox also documents the evolution of the menus

in successive editions of the book and emphasises their seasonality; oysters feature in March, green peas and asparagus in April, fresh eggs and butter in May, whitebait in June, and game—partridge, pheasant and woodcock—in September.

The Dickens household included in 1844 Charles and Kate and five children (one still a baby), Catherine’s younger sister who lived with the family, a maid, a cook and a nurse-governess. Assuming this was reasonably typical, it is easy to understand why the nineteenth century produced such a flurry of books on household management, since planning, provisioning and delegating domestic chores were probably much more important than just cooking. Dena Attar’s, *Bibliography of Household Books Published in Britain 1800-1914* (Prospect Books, 1987) lists over 500 titles in the category of Household Books (excluding cookbooks, containing recipes only) published in the nineteenth century. Attar notes that, “women bought books in their millions seeking advice on household routines, managing servants, provisioning, decorating and furnishing their homes, marketing, planning menus and cooking, bringing up children, home nursing, entertaining and correct social behaviour” (p. 13).

It is also easy to see why a reasonably extensive household staff was necessary. A day’s meals included breakfast, lunch, tea, supper and other refreshments as well as special foods for the baby and for the children and invalid foods if anyone was ill. Catherine seems to have been more than competent in the kitchen, but after a second child was born the family employed a cook, though Catherine probably still oversaw the making of preserves, jams, jellies, sauces, cordials and the various condiments mentioned in her recipes. Given the extent of the Dickens’ entertaining one can only admire her organising skills and perhaps understand why a practical book of menus would prove such an invaluable guide in the mid-nineteenth century.

Rossi-Willcox gives many examples of the way Dickens included food in his writing and allows the reader to appreciate Dickens not only as a bon vivant but also as an extraordinarily prolific and broad-ranging author who, in addition to his short stories and novels, wrote journalism, travel accounts and countless articles on food that were published in *Household Words*, a weekly magazine Dickens launched in 1850. Nevertheless, he also appears as a man who, under the influence of a pretty actress and a mid-life crisis, callously abandoned a long-serving wife. Lady Clutterbuck’s menus might be 150 years old

but in many respects would be quite acceptable (if unexpected) today—for example, a summer menu starting with green pea soup, followed by roast leg of lamb, new potatoes and asparagus, and finally sweet omelette and macaroni. Or a winter menu of fried sole and whiting with shrimp sauce, roast hare with potato balls and macaroni; or another winter dinner for 8-10 guests, of giblet soup, baked and stuffed haddock, roast haunch of mutton with stewed onions and browned potatoes, roast pheasant, with pound puddings for dessert.

**Patience Gray, *The Centaur's Kitchen: A Book of French, Italian, Greek and Catalan Dishes for Ships' Cooks on the Blue Funnel Line* (Totnes: Prospect Books, 2005), pp. 137.**

The Australian connection to this book is not so much its Mediterranean focus but rather the Centaur herself, which as one of the ships of the Blue Funnel fleet carried passengers and livestock between Fremantle and Singapore in the 1960s. Patience Gray delivered her typescript to the company in 1964 but, as a private commission for the benefit of the Chinese cooks on the Centaur, it was never published. Written after her collaboration with Primrose Boyd, *Plats du Jour* (1957), it abandons a French theme in favour of a more eclectic and certainly more personal collection of recipes, all written from a thoroughly practical viewpoint and all perfectly appropriate to a domestic kitchen today.

**Elizabeth Cleland, *A New and Easy Method of Cookery*, Facsimile of first edition, Edinburgh, 1755, with introduction by Peter Brears (Berwick upon Tweed/Totnes: Paxton Trust/ Prospect Books, 2005).**

According to Peter Brears, Mrs. Cleland's book "is one of the most important sources regarding the culinary history of mid-eighteenth-century Scotland." Written for the young ladies who attended her cookery school, it reflects the English style of cookery adopted by Scottish gentry (many recipes were "borrowed," as was standard practice at that time, from such English classics as Hannah Glasse's, *The Art of Cookery Made Plain and Easy* and Eliza Smith's, *Compleat Housewife*) and contains very few of the dishes today considered to be typically Scottish. Nevertheless, as Peter Brears points out, the

range of oatmeal recipes and the variety of recipes for venison all testify to the book's Scottish origins and character.

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***The Centre needs volunteers -especially those who have an interest in the history of food and drink- to help with the monitoring and updating of the website. Anyone interested in unpaid work (a few hours each week) please contact our director: [roger.haden@adelaide.edu.au](mailto:roger.haden@adelaide.edu.au)***