



Gravy

"I'm selling my pork chops, but I'm giving my gravy away." - Memphis Minnie

Number 9, Winter 2002

News from the Southern Foodways Alliance

Call for Entries: *Cornbread Nation 2*

Our first compilation of the best Southern food writing is selling well. We've received kudos from sources as varied as *Kirkus Review* and *Southern Living*. If you have not yet snagged a copy, we suggest you do so very soon. Looking ahead to *Cornbread Nation 2* - to be edited by Lois Eric Elie - the SFA seeks unpublished and previously published contemporary fiction, nonfiction, and a wee bit of poetry. If you have a suggestion or a submission (especially if it has to do with barbecue, which will be central to the text), please email us at sfmail@olemiss.edu.

Copia Symposium on the Culture of Cuisine

February 6-8, 2003, Copia: the American Center for Wine, Food and the Arts will host the first in a series of conferences that should be of interest to SFA members.

Entitled *Symposium on the Culture of Cuisine: Food as Power*, the gathering will ask chefs, authors, historians, and artists to explore the relationship of food and power from a variety of perspectives: economic, political, social, artistic, historical, and individual.

Among the speakers and performers are SFA members Randy Fertel who will read from his forthcoming memoir, *The Gorilla Man and The Empress of Steak* and Vertamae Grosvenor who will perform her folk opera *Nyam*.

Also of note is a performance of the *Galatoire's Monologues*, a series of dramatic readings based upon responses to the firing of long-time New Orleans waiter Gilberto Eyzaguiorre. For more information visit www.copia.org.

Symposium & Field Trip Programming Announced

For 2003, the SFA turns its attention to Appalachia. With this year's programming we seek to more closely tie the Field Trip to the Southern Foodways Symposium. Both the August 1-3 Field Trip to Asheville, North Carolina and the October 2-5 symposium here in Oxford will highlight the people, the places, the larder of the mountain South. So mark your calendars for 2003 and keep in mind that our programming for 2004 will explore foodways and racial reconciliation, beginning with a Homecoming Field Trip to Birmingham, Alabama.

For those of you chomping at the proverbial bit in advance of our August gathering, here are a few details on *A Taste of Appalachia: SFA Field Trip to Asheville and Environs*.

Our host will be Biltmore Estate. Probable highlights include daytrips to Sunburst Trout Farm and Hickory Nut Farm, dinner and dancing at the Orange Peel Social Aid and Pleasure Club, and wine tastings. Did we mention the game dinner that Elizabeth Sims and crew will stage? Or the screening of the cult classic film, *Thunder Road*? Here's hoping you can join us. Look for details in the next newsletter.

New SFA Board President's Letter

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

Last month, I stepped into a pair of shoes that will be a challenge to wear, hoping to muster a little of the style and grace with which Toni Tipton Martin has worn them for the last two years. Happily, Toni will remain close at hand to offer wise counsel when needed.

We also recently welcomed a fantastic new board of directors. Three of our guiding lights, Nathalie Dupree, John Egerton, and Marlene Osteen retired this year, and Donna Pierce has regretfully resigned because her new work at the *Chicago Tribune* conflicts with her board responsibilities, but I'm happy to report that Hoover Alexander, Carol Daily, Fred Sauceman, and Elizabeth Sims have joined our ranks. We'll be introducing these new members to you all in more detail, but know that they are already making their presence felt in a dynamic way.

As this new board leads SFA into its fourth year, I have two main goals. The first is to build a solid and diverse financial foundation of endowments by way of continuing corporate support and the generosity of our growing membership. The second is to build and enrich our programs, especially our ongoing work with oral histories.

My long-term vision goes beyond oral histories. Someday - and let's hope sooner than we think - the SFA will truly be the keeper of the flame, the national clearinghouse for all things connected with Southern food, not only as a keeper of cookbooks, journals, household diaries, letters, and oral histories (both audio and video), but as the source for information about other resources throughout our region and beyond.

Keep those skillets hot!

Damon Lee Fowler

Exhibit Debuts:

What's Cookin' in Cape Fear

Experience a taste of North Carolina's past at the Cape Fear Museum in Wilmington. Explore the development of the region's foodways during the 19th century by way of this interactive exhibit focusing on the role of the Cape Fear River and Wilmington's port. Visitors can track the import and export of food over time, from rice and sweet potatoes through molasses and muscadine grapes to peanuts and oysters. Learn about the original waterfront market, investigate the rise of mercantilism and agriculture, trace the changes in technology and transportation, and ponder the impact of the Civil War all from the perspective of the palate. For more information call 910-341-4350.

News Flash:

The James Beard House in NYC will host a tribute to the late Jeanne Voltz on December 21. Reservations for the dinner, highlighted by smoked North Carolina trout and hosted by SFA member Bret Jennings of Elaine's on Franklin in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, can be secured by logging on to the website www.jamesbeard.org.

New Editorial Team for Gravy

Beginning with the next issue, *Gravy* will benefit from the experience of a new editorial team headed by Tom Head of Washington, D.C. Sharing editorial duties with Tom will be Krista Reese of Atlanta, Georgia and Jeff Siegel of Dallas, Texas. They have been charged with rethinking our quarterly letter. Look for articles on Southern food books, restaurants, people, markets, and the like. Look for *Gravy* to function as an insider's take on the best of the South. Look for your copy of the new, improved *Gravy* in March.

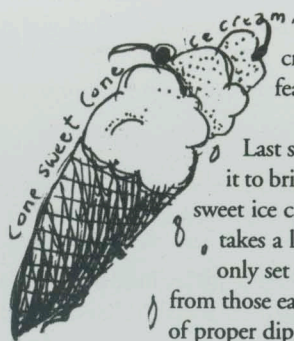
Meet the Editorial Team:

* Thomas Head's is the *The Washingtonian* magazine's executive wine and food editor, one of its restaurant reviewers, and writes regularly for *The Washingtonian* and other publications on food, drink, and travel. A native of West Monroe, Louisiana, Head is a graduate of Centenary College of Louisiana and holds M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in English literature from Stanford University.

* Krista Reese, a former editor with both *Atlanta* magazine and the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, is a widely published freelance writer who has contributed article to *People*, *Bon Appétit*, *Southern Living*, and *George*. She holds an M.A. degree in English from the University of Georgia.

* Jeff Siegel, a graduate of the Medill School of Journalism at Northwestern University, brings a unique perspective to the SFA. He grew up in Chicago, married a woman from south Louisiana, and has lived in Texas for two decades. Siegel has authored six books, and his writing has appeared in *Sports Illustrated*, *Gourmet*, and *Travel & Leisure*.

Atlanta Exhibit Debuts – *Ice Cream: The Whole Scoop*



A little nip in the air can't quench a Southerner's craving for all things cool and creamy. From December 26, 2002 – May 26, 2003, The Atlanta History Center will feature the exhibit *Ice Cream: The Whole Scoop*.

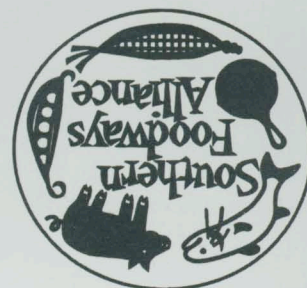
Last summer, the Western Reserve Historical Society in Cleveland, Ohio, created the exhibit to bring to light the history, art and technology of American ice cream. Noting that smooth, sweet ice cream is as common and convenient as the grocery store that carries it, this exhibition takes a look at ice cream's past. In fact, this dish was once so costly and laborious that it was only set before Renaissance kings and courtiers. All aspects of ice cream's history are explored, from those early beginnings to the secrets of the great soda jerks, the origins of the cone, and the art of proper dipping.

According to the USDA, the total U.S. production of ice cream and related frozen desserts in 2000 amounted to more than 1.6 billion gallons, translating to 23 quarts per person. But this isn't a recent phenomenon. Our nation's affection for ice cream has been a long love affair. It is said that George Washington served ice cream, still a labor-intensive treat, at state affairs. In 1812, Dolley Madison served a strawberry ice cream creation at President Madison's second inaugural banquet at the White House.

As the industrial age took hold in America, ice cream production was facilitated by technological innovations. Restaurateurs of the late 19th century introduced new creations, the ice cream soda and ice cream sundae. And ice cream became a symbol of celebration when WWII ended and the dairy ban was lifted. In 1946 alone, Americans consumed over 20 quarts of ice cream per person. Today, ice cream still reigns as one of the South's desserts of choice. For more information, point your browser to www.AtlantaHistoryCenter.com.

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