



ST. ALBERT AND AREA RETIRED TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION BULLETIN

January 17, 2021

Editors: Peggy Bergmann (pbergmann@shaw.ca)
and Marian Oberg (mroberg@telusplanet.net)

We wish all of you a Happy New Year and hope you are staying safe! Hopefully, this will be our BEST year yet, as we apply what we have learned through our Covid-19 experiences to better ourselves, our relationships, and our commitments to others.

It can be challenging to find ways to vary our activities when we are staying home and not socializing. Here are a few things you could try in the next 30 days:

- January 19th is Popcorn Day. This might be time to enjoy popcorn and a movie.
- January 23rd is both Pie Day and Write a Letter to a Friend Day. Writing a letter and sending it to a friend might make them feel good. Imagine your friend going to the mailbox for the usual bills and advertising and finding the unexpected treat of a handwritten letter. Baking and eating a pie would be fun (particularly the eating part!).
- January 25th marks the anniversary of the first Winter Olympics, held in 1924. Soon the weather will be nice enough to get outside and be active. The 25th is also Robbie Burns Day. There might be some virtual celebrations to investigate.
- February 3rd is known as the Day the Music Died. To honour the memory of Buddy Holly, Richie Valens, and the Big Bopper you could sing and dance along to their music.
- February 12th is Chinese New Year and marks the beginning of the Year of the Ox. Ordering Chinese takeout is a possible idea for this event.
- February 16th is Shrove Tuesday this year. The traditional pancakes will be served that day in our house. Remember to continue to practice the advice of the health practitioners to keep yourself safe during the pandemic.

 WE DON'T WANT TO LOSE TOUCH WITH YOU!  

While we are not meeting in person for breakfasts, our Member Contact Committee has not had regular contact with STARTA members. If you have changed your phone number or your email address, we may not have your new information on our Contact Lists. Please send any changes of your contact information to Wendy Poirier rwpoirier19@gmail.com or text me at 780-232-9663. It will help our Committee greatly if we have all the correct information when we do start back with our monthly messages for STARTA meetings.

Wendy

PS. Did You Know... that your executive members still meet the first Tuesday of the month at 12:30 for an executive meeting (by Zoom of course!)?

MEET your STARTA Executive - Introducing our Secretary: Emilie Keane

I was born in Morinville to Emile and Rita Prefontaine, and we moved to Legal to take over the family farm when I was one year old. I am the eldest of six children and was raised as part of a very large extended family. My father came from a family of twelve children and my mother from a family of eight children, all of whom lived within easy visiting distance from our farm. We spent many happy summers with cousins who would holiday on the farm and with whom we played on the haystacks, learned how to garden and preserve our vegetables and fruit, and played lots of baseball and Hide and Seek. My parents taught us the values of sharing, of being good neighbours and friends, of community responsibility, and of being stewards of the land - values which we honour and promote within our own family. I graduated from Legal School where I had many opportunities to develop leadership skills, skills which have served me well throughout my life.

Gerry and I married 51 years ago, and we were blessed with three children who have grown our family with ten grandchildren and one little great granddaughter born during this pandemic. Sadly, our eldest child developed brain cancer and died at the young age of 44, leaving a wife and five children. That was an exceedingly difficult time for our family.

We have moved 11 times during our marriage. Gerry worked for the bank for the first five years of our marriage during which time he was transferred to different branches several times as part of an accelerated training program. He then joined the RCMP and enjoyed a wonderful career for 25 years with them. We also moved a couple of times during this time but his final transfer to Edmonton enabled me to attend the University of Alberta where I graduated with a Bachelor of Education, majoring in Special Education. I was fortunate to get a job with the Catholic Board in St. Albert as a Special Education teacher in the French Immersion program and had the pleasure of serving many students during my 25 years with this Board. During this time, I also earned my Master of Education in Administration and worked as a teacher, school-based administrator, Division Principal and Assistant Superintendent. A couple of years after I retired, I “failed retirement” and took a position with Parkland School Division as their Associate Superintendent of Learning Services. I enjoyed working for a new school division and did so for five years.

Since retirement, Gerry and I have travelled a lot more, visiting Europe, Africa, Mexico, Costa Rica, Belize, Hawaii, Florida, California, and South America. We are blessed to travel most of the time with my brothers and sisters and their spouses, creating many fun memories. I am very anxious for the end of Covid-19 so that we can socialize and travel again.



We have had a cottage at Long Island Lake for almost 30 years. There we have a good-sized garden, enjoy boating and fishing, and have spent much treasured time with our family and friends. Gerry and I have been living at our cottage during this pandemic as we feel that the possibility of exposure to the coronavirus is much less than in the city. Cottage life is very quiet, and has enabled us to “stop and smell the roses” much more – something to be grateful for!
Emilie



Emilie is in her second term of service as Secretary with STARTA. A secretary is vital to any organization. Thank you to Emilie for helping to keep all executive members on track and organized.

STARTA ‘Zoom Coffee & Chat sessions:

Jan. 14th Review by Janet Kiriakides:

On January 14, 2021 a group of us met for a coffee social. We discussed what we had done for Christmas and some New Year’s traditions. Customs included opening the back door for ten minutes before midnight to send away the old year, and then opening the front door at midnight to let the new year into the house (an Irish tradition). There was another Gaelic tradition that the first person to cross the threshold in the New Year should have dark hair. An interesting custom came from Peru where people sit under a table and eat grapes, giving thanks for events of the past year with each grape consumed. We also talked about concerns regarding Alberta legislation and management of our pensions. There was some discussion about Zoom and resources to help people use the app. We successfully tried using Zoom ‘break out rooms’ which allowed participants to visit and have a discussion in smaller groups. The conversation eventually turned to discussion of Covid-19, testing procedures and the difficulties the pandemic is creating. Several participants brought up issues about the values and factors at play in making decisions about who should be vaccinated first. In the West it has been determined that those who are of an advanced age are scheduled to get it first while in some SE Asian countries, younger working adults are at the front of the queue.

It was lovely to chat with various members again. Until we can get back to our regular meetings, we encourage ALL our members to join these 'Coffee and Chat' opportunities!

A FOLLOW-UP note from our December social when we had discussed caring for very elderly parents. An interesting article on this topic appeared in the Wall Street Journal recently. While most of the article references American resources there are some interesting tech ideas. Some of the resources may have Canadian equivalents which might prove helpful. This article can be accessed by doing an internet search for the title, "How to Care for Elderly Parents When You Can't Be There" OR the following is a link to this article:

<https://apple.news/AcNH-8L4ZTZiZVAD9K7cE1A>

We hope to see you at our **NEXT ZOOM SOCIAL** on **February 11th at 10:30 a.m.**

The RATIONALE for another ZOOM event... Engaging with others is a very effective way to help diminish the effects of aging on the brain. It has been shown to be more effective than crosswords, sudoku and other brain games. While we cannot at this time meet with another to go for a walk and socialize, we can certainly engage socially with others through Zoom or FaceTime. The following article from CNN suggests various ways we can help to protect our brain. This article can be accessed by doing a search for the title, "Memory Fades as we age, but it doesn't have to" OR by this link:

<https://apple.news/A5nBTBkr9S3S44JkQxy1E3g>

The suggested TOPIC of conversation: How are we supporting local businesses during these restricted times? What experiences have you had with takeout and delivery, or curbside pick-up at local restaurants, or with any other food services that people have tried during the pandemic? As with all social events, we will go where the conversation takes us.

Mark Your calendar: Our next STARTA Coffee & Chat will be on February 11th, 2021 at 10:30 a.m. The first 10 days of February will still be time for hot chocolate and diet pills, so grab your veggies and your hot drink of choice, and connect with friends near and dear through the following Zoom invitation.

STARTA Coffee Time

Time: Feb. 11, 2021 10:30 a.m. Mountain Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/96659172067?pwd=KzRYM1ZyRjhjMnpzT1NMZlBYazdVQT09>

Meeting ID: 966 5917 2067

Passcode: 674382

TELEPHONE ACCESS

+1 587 328 1099
Meeting ID: 966 5917 2067
Passcode: 674382

Then comes ‘Valentine’s Day’ with dreams of chocolate, chocolate, roses and more chocolate...and then of course comes the guilt and the NEED to exercise... SO...

Join us on February 26th, 2021 at 10:30 a.m. for our next STARTA EVENT!

‘At Home Exercises and Stretching During Covid-19’

Gyms are closed indefinitely. It is so difficult to find videos on the internet that seem to fit our needs. Are you getting stiff or sluggish? Do you need to move because you have been sitting so much? (in some cases, way too much!) Unfortunately, Covid-19 may well be with us for quite a few more months. STARTA is here to help!

On Feb. 26th at 10:30 a.m., there will be a presentation on ‘at-home’ exercises. Hailey Dame, an experienced wellness and exercise specialist from Servus Place, will host a ‘How to’ demonstration for us. She is well versed in our diversified needs... some want to be able to exercise while lying in bed or sitting, while others want to be a little more active. To that end, a variety of exercises as well as simple stretching moves will be featured. You do not need any special exercise equipment. Walls, door frames, chairs, stairs, and groceries work very well. Hailey will also be available for follow-up questions. This demonstration promises to be a program that will help us through difficult months ahead.

Here is the Zoom invitation:

Topic: STARTA PROGRAM

Time: Feb. 26th, 2021 10:30 a.m. Mountain Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/93094546025?pwd=TjJzRWhkcGZoc0o4N3k5bHB5TElyUT09>

Meeting ID: 930 9454 6025

Passcode: 553809

TELEPHONE ACCESS

+1 587 328 1099

Meeting ID: 930 9454 6025

Passcode: 553809

Find your local number: <https://zoom.us/j/91710000000>

DID YOU KNOW?

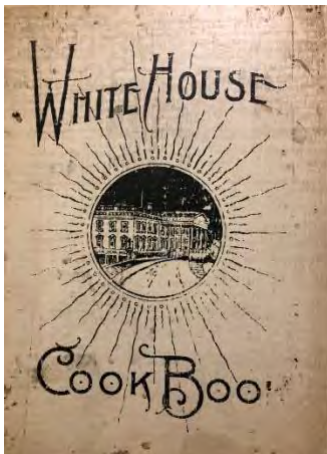
Maelynn and Megan at Servus Place have now arranged to have a number of classes for older adults on-line through Zoom...just go to the Servus Place website to view the list of drop-in or registered classes.

The doors at Servus Place are locked, so all classes are only available on Zoom.

ARTA Benefits

A reminder that **you should have received a new ARTA benefits card** in the mail. Place this card in your wallet and ensure that you show it to your health care practitioners and your pharmacy. If you did not receive an ARTA benefits card call 780-822-2400 or 780-989-8709. Once you have received your ARTA benefits card you can then register with myarta.net and also download the ARTA Benefits app. This is available for both Apple and Android devices. Make sure you have the card before you go to myarta.net or download the app. Janet

January is often the month for reviewing and remembering the past and so we take a little time to look back – on simpler times, maybe slower days, and certainly different but delicious recipes! Here are some “oldies but goodies”!



RECIPES, RECIPE BOOKS, and MEMORIES:

From Janet: The ‘White House CookBook’ was given to my mother-in-law by her mother-in-law on the occasion of her marriage near the end of WWII. Bob’s mother gave it to us when she moved into assisted living. The pages are very fragile and I have never cooked from it.

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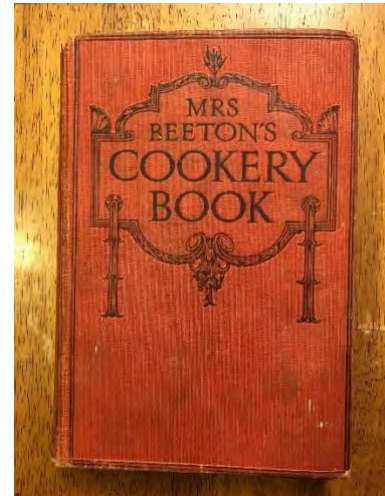
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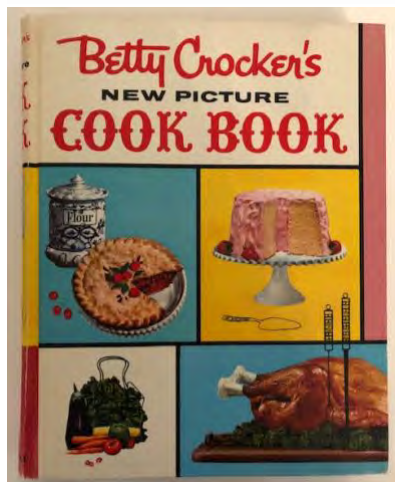
TO THE
WIVES OF OUR PRESIDENTS,
THOSE NOBLE WOMEN WHO HAVE GRACED THE
WHITE HOUSE,
AND WHOSE NAMES AND MEMORIES ARE
DEAR TO ALL AMERICANS,
THIS VOLUME
IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED
BY THE AUTHOR.

Also from Janet: 'Mrs. Beeton's Cookery Book' also belonged to my mother-in-law. She inherited the book from her mother. I cannot find the date of its printing but from reading the preface I believe it is from shortly after the end of WW1. It may be the 1923 edition. Mrs. Beeton's books were first published in 1861. Bob's grandmother likely brought it with her when the family immigrated to Canada from England.



One more from Janet: 'The Joy of Cooking' is a cookbook that my grandmother, mother, sister and I have all used. It was the first cookbook that I ever used.





From Joyce: 'Betty Crocker's Cook Book', published in 1961, has an interesting history. We gave this cookbook to my Grandmother Keltie later in her life. I am not sure if she was insulted but I don't think she ever used it.

I have cooking

information in it but the only recipe I used is for Christmas cookies. I bought lots of cookie cutters but just used a plastic bag to apply the icing. I gave most of the cookies away.

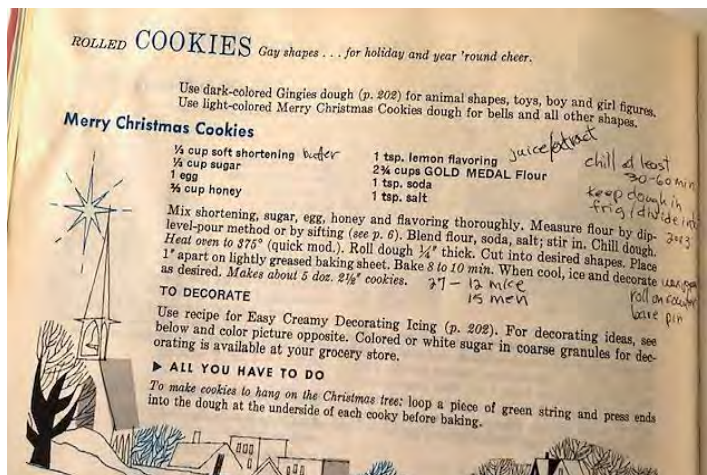
Included here is a recipe that I used for several years. As usual, in all the books I use, I've written notes to myself all over the recipe. Now I make choc. chip cookies from a newer cookbook.

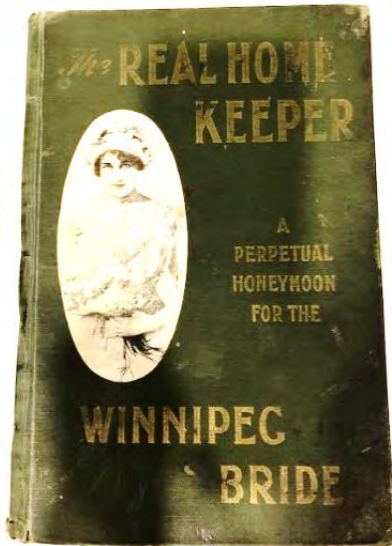


used some of the



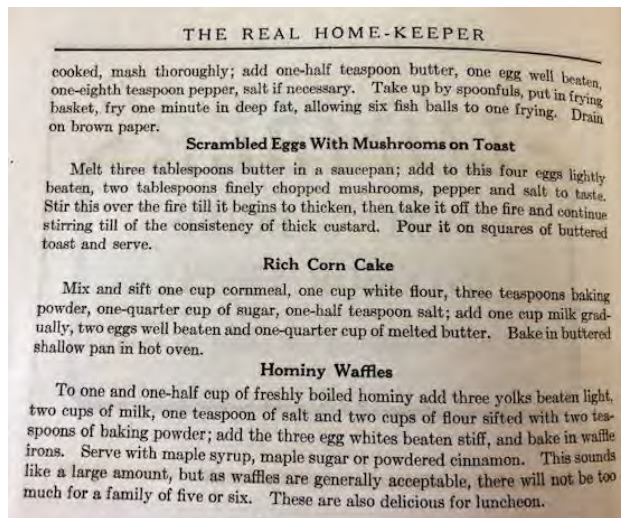
My Mom's high school Cooking Notebook is this hardcover notebook with pages & illustrations she glued in, probably around 1930.



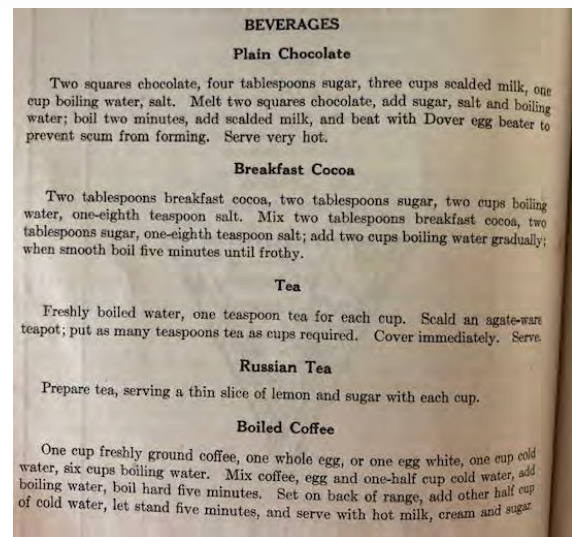
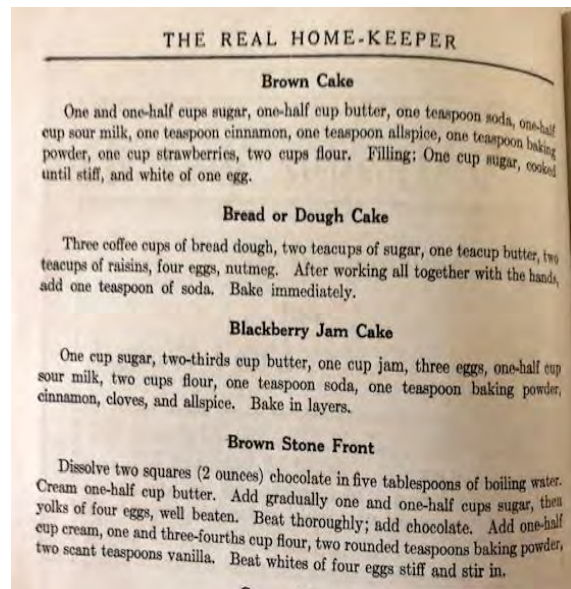


Also from Joyce: Grandmother Keltie's green cookbook.

'The Real Home Keeper: A Perpetual Honeymoon for the Winnipeg Bride'. Along with recipes, this cookbook also contains health and beauty care suggestions as well as instruction for general home management. It was given to brides as a gift from the businesses of the city. It was issued under different covers for several major Canadian cities of the time and used as a vehicle to introduce the brides to businesses in their city that might be useful to them in managing their homes. The book pictured here was distributed to brides in the city of Winnipeg, Manitoba.



This cookbook was published in 1914, the year my grandparents married. The cover and pages look very old, but I am not sure how much my grandmother used it. No pages are covered with food the way my favourite recipes are. I have never used any of the recipes; it is a family heirloom. I will pass it on to my niece.





From Ardyth:

This is my mother's 'Purity Cookbook' given to her for in 1945 by her brother Bert. From it I learned to bake my first cake: "Cream Cake". When I was packing up my parents' kitchen, I found it at the back of the cupboard. Thinking I would perhaps make my first cake again, I took the tattered book home. When I looked for the recipe for my cake, I discovered the relevant page was missing. However, we were able to find the recipe for that marvelous "Cream Cake", so I had the opportunity to make it again! It tasted just as it had when I first baked it many years ago!

Cream Cake Recipe: found in '**Farm Women's Union of Alberta Cookbook**' from 1956

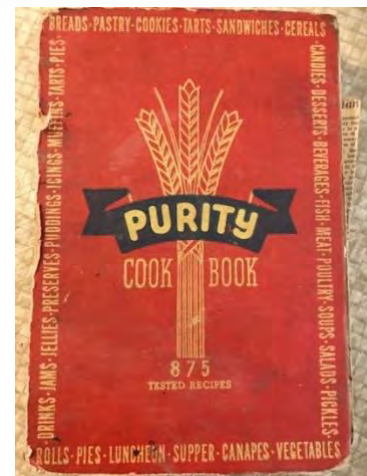
INGREDIENTS:

1 cup white sugar	2 eggs
1 1/3 cup sweet or sour cream	1 tsp vanilla
2 cups flour	3 tsp. baking powder
1/2 tsp soda in a little hot water	

METHOD: Put sugar and eggs in a bowl and beat well. Add cream and beat again, then add flour, baking powder and vanilla. Mix soda with hot water and add last. Bake in an 8" square pan for 30-40 minutes in 350° F oven.

From Marian:

This cookbook from my mother was copyrighted in 1932 by Purity Flour Mills Limited, revised in 1937 and again in 1945. When I did a search, I found reference to many other editions of Purity Flour cookbooks, one as recent as 2001. I enjoy reading the recipes, especially the ones with lots of splatters, meaning this was a recipe my mother used during my childhood. Another treat is the notes on blank pages, like "Started Threshing September 30, 1952" and "First Snow October 3, 1957." along with clippings from the Western Producer, the Free Press, and various other newspapers. The following recipe was always a favourite at our house. Mom would make it as a special treat on Sunday afternoon. I made it for my fiancé in 1965, and he's still around!



FUDGE

2 cups sugar	¼ teaspoon cream of tartar or 2 tablespoons corn syrup
2/3 cup milk	
1 tablespoon butter	½ teaspoon vanilla

For chocolate fudge, add 2 ounces grated chocolate or 2 tablespoons cocoa to the sugar.

Boil together sugar, milk and cream of tartar to “soft ball” stage (234° F). Add butter and boil one minute longer. Let stand until almost lukewarm, add flavouring and beat until smooth and creamy. Pour into a buttered pan to a depth of 1/3 inch or more. Mark in squares. Let stand until firm and dry.

From Wendy Poirier: COOKBOOKS! Oh my gosh...cookbooks! Don't get me started! I LOVE cookbooks! My oldest cookbook is a ‘Five Roses Cook Book’, first published in 1913. I do not see the publication date of my copy, because the red cover and part of the introduction is missing. The yellowed, worn pages hang by a thread to a wire binding. They are splotted with vanilla, molasses, and other ingredients. This gem, I believe, originally belonged to my grandmother (Nanny). The first page lists regulations for the health and sanitation of the household, as directed by the Dominion

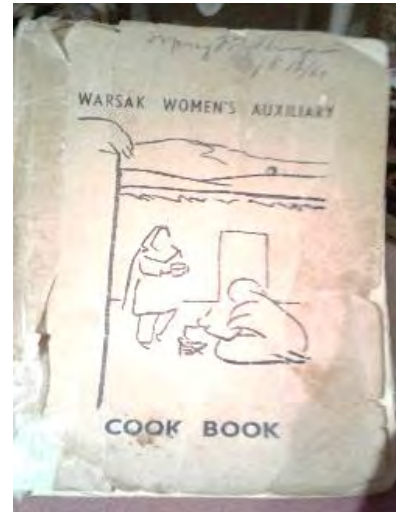


Government, through the Department of Pensions and National Health in Ottawa. Seven rules are devoted to preparing “Economical and Well-Balanced Meals for Your Family” and were likely the first hint of a Canada Food Guide. The first rule is to allow 1 pint of milk daily for each adult and 1 ½ pints for each child. The seventh rule warns not to consume more than 2 cups of tea or coffee daily, and that tea and coffee must not be given to children who are not fully grown. Of course, electric mixers were not in use so there are very detailed instructions on three ways to properly combine ingredients: stirring, beating, cutting and folding. Every page in this book has a banner across the bottom reminding the reader to “sift Five Roses flour before measuring”, and that “all dry measurements must be level”. However, truth be told, cookbooks were not the true treasure of our family kitchen. There was a small yellow tin, with a bouquet of red flowers embossed on the lid, that contained a multitude of neatly filed recipe cards and clippings from Women's Day and Chatelaine magazines. This was the prize that held my family's recipes. The best ones were titled: Nanny's Scones, Split Pea Soup, Frogs Legs (they're cookies), Dad's Welsch Rarebit and my favourite, Chocolate Banana Cake. When my parents sold their house and moved to a retirement home, my daughter, Allison, claimed that small yellow recipe tin. She loves to scrapbook. All those handwritten cards and magazine clippings are now wonderful memories mounted in a beautiful scrapbook she gifted me entitled, “Nanny's Family Recipes”.



From Mary O'Neill:

On September 16, 1960, the day before my marriage to Brendon O'Neill, my stepmother gave me a cookbook, authorized by Warsak Women's Auxiliary. The following recipe is one of my favourite recipes from this favourite, much used cookbook.



PS. My parents, (Pat and Helen Mulligan) had just returned to Canada after spending five years in West Pakistan where my father had been Superintendent of Construction, building a dam in the Kyber Pass, between West Pakistan and Afghanistan. Incidentally, I lived there for two years, (1955-57) and began my first job as a Dictaphone typist in their construction office.

Matrimony Cake

<p>1-1/2 cups all purpose flour ½ tsp Baking soda 1 tsp Baking powder ½ tsp salt 1 cup butter 1 cup brown sugar 1-1/2 cups oatmeal</p> <p>Sift flour, baking powder soda salt. Rub in butter with fingertips, add sugar and oatmeal, and mix well. Spread ½ crumbs in greased shallow pan (about 8 by 14) pat to smooth.</p>	<p>DATE FILLING: ½ lb chopped dates ½ cup cold water 2 tbsps brown sugar Orange rind from ½ orange 2 tbsps orange juice 1 tsp lemon juice</p> <p>Cook over low heat until thick and smooth. Cool. Cover the crumbs with date filling, then cover with remaining crumbs.</p> <p>Bake at 325° F for 30-35 minutes. Cut in squares while hot, and cool in pan.</p>
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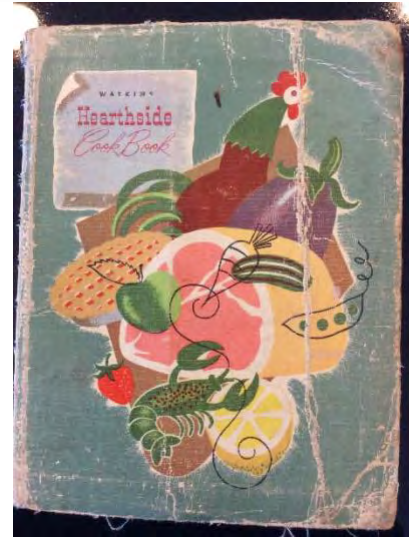
From Mike Dickenson:



'Blue Ribbon' recipe books were first published in 1905. This one, from 1944, is the 18th edition and was given to my mother-in-law in 1948. It was well used as you can see. It has an inscription in the front cover wishing her good cooking. 144 pp. Many refer to this Cookbook as vintage.

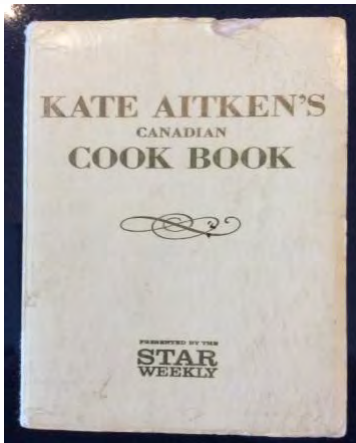
Also from Mike:

Published by Watkins (the door-to-door people) in 1952, this 'Heartside Cook Book' belonged to my mother-in-law. It has many classic recipes in the 256 pages. (Both of these are still available at Amazon.ca.)



One more from Mike:

This 'Kate Aitken's Canadian Cook Book' was put out by the Star Weekly in 1964. Kate Aitken, producer of the book, was a famous Canadian radio personality of the 1930s, 1940s and 1950s. My favourite recipe from this book is the best-ever Butter Tart recipe, used by my mother-in-law and her children for many years,



Butter Tarts: (adapted version): You will need 12 prepared tart shells. Set oven at 450° F.

1 cup corn syrup

2/3 cup brown sugar

2 eggs slightly beaten

¼ cup butter

¼ tsp. sea salt

2/3 cups raisins

½ tsp. vanilla

Cook corn syrup and brown sugar over medium low heat for 5 minutes. Pour over slightly beaten eggs, beating continuously. Stir in remaining ingredients. Fill tart shells and bake for 10 minutes, then reduce heat to 350° F, and bake another 15 – 20 minutes until set. Enjoy!

Six Little Stories to Consider

1. Once upon a time, all the villagers decided to pray for rain. On the day of the prayer, all the people gathered, but only one boy came with an umbrella. That is FAITH.
2. When you throw babies in the air, they laugh because they know you will catch them. That is TRUST.
3. Every night, we go to bed without any assurance of waking up the next morning, but we still set the alarm. That is HOPE.
4. We plan big things for tomorrow, although there is no guarantee of a future. That is CONFIDENCE.
5. We see the world suffering, but still, we get married and have children. That is LOVE.
6. On an old man's shirt was written, "I am not 80 years old; I am Sweet 16 with 64 years of experience." That is ATTITUDE.

Your homework for next Bulletin - to be submitted to pbergmann@shaw.ca by Feb. 10th, 2021 Please!

February is Kindness month – Take a moment to find and identify some 'Acts of Kindness' around you. Perhaps a task that needed to be done, and someone stepped up to the plate, but remains in the background, getting little thanks or recognition for a job well done. (ie. Shovelling a neighbour's sidewalk!) Because of Covid-19 restrictions, it may take some extra effort to discover these small gifts, whether they be to individuals or for the good of many! Please send in anything you find, so we can all celebrate these together!

Just a REMINDER: Mark your calendar

Feb.11th, 2021 at 10:30 a.m. Coffee and Chat

with STARTA members via ZOOM

AND

Feb.26th, 2021 at 10:30 a.m. Exercise & Stretching Session

with Hailey from Servus Place via ZOOM

Thank you to everyone who contributed to this News Bulletin!