

What's Cookin': Fond memories of a grandmother's tutelage

Gerry is writing this week...

I am remembering my grandmother MacPherson this week, especially because my Scottish heritage is surfacing around Robbie Burns' birthday.

Grandma Mac had a huge influence on this passion I have for food and all things related. If one can absorb and learn by osmosis, this was the way with our relationship.

In the 1950s, when I was a young girl, after school I got to go to the Station Hotel in Acton (now Mill Street Crossing) or the Dominion Hotel (where Giant Tiger now sits roughly), where my grandmother was a cook for many years. I would assist her in the kitchen preparing dinner and desserts (always homemade pies). I was never allowed to venture into the dining room, where the

Lori Gysel & Gerry Kentner



guests, travelers and residents who stopped by for a wholesome homemade meal were.

This is where my first attempt at pie pastry took place except for playing my mom's

scraps. Under grandma's tutelage I was allowed to maneuver the rolling pin— what bliss! I knew I had found my true happiness, covered in flour and drooling over the warm pies grandma pulled from the oven for supper. But my samples were never allowed out of the kitchen!

The real treat was after the dinner service and a mountain of dishes, we would sit and eat together, then I was offered my choice of all the pies and there were many kinds to choose from. I always have had a sweet tooth!

Grandma lived with us off and on in Acton and in Georgetown, and we spent many hours together in our home kitchen where I watched her make many dishes, never from a recipe! Right now, I can see and feel that day when she gave me a lesson in spaghetti sauce, always wearing an apron, feeling her soft, firm hands and loving her warm, fuzzy personality. Nice memories.

At her knee, so to speak we made meat pies, soups, cloutie dumpling and lots of desserts. We often made the 10 p.m. tea together.

My mother, Dorothy Calder, was also an excellent cook and I remember the first day I took over the kitchen in Acton— I was 15. My mom was in the Guelph hospital, having just given birth to my little sister, Kathryn. Well, after school that day, I made my first two pies all by myself, an apple and a lemon meringue for my dad and siblings.

With that success under my belt, I made a pan of homemade from scratch fudge, which I took to my mom in the hospital the next day. I grew up that week and my rolling pin and I have never looked back.

Have fun and keep cooking!

Email questions and comments to whatscookin@independentfreepress.com

Scottish Meat Pies

Makes 6

These pies are traditionally made in straight sided 3-3.5" moulds, but they can be made in regular meat pie pans. The pastry lid covers the meat just below the rim. This leaves room at the top of the pie for gravy, peas, mashed potatoes. This recipe is equally as good made with ground beef and pie pastry.

Filling ingredients

- 1 pound ground lamb
- 1 cooking onion, diced
- 1/2 cup beef gravy
- salt and pepper to taste

Hot water pastry ingredients

- 4 cups all purpose flour
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 3/4 cup lard
- 3/4 cup to 1 cup hot water

Method

1. Sauté lamb and onions until cooked through. Add salt and pepper and gravy just to incorporate.
2. Sift the flour and salt into a warm bowl. This pastry should be kept warm while making all pies.
3. Melt the lard and add the

flour to it and mix. Blend in the hot water. Keep extra pastry on top of warm stove and begin to line pans and cut the tops (same size as diameter of pan).



4. Fill pastry shells about three-quarters full. Moisten pastry tops and place over pies. Press slightly and join top to the bottom

crust. Cut a slit in the top of each pie.

5. Brush with milk and bake in a pre-heated 375 degree oven for 40 minutes.

Community dinner

A Groundhog Supper will be held on Thursday, Feb. 3, 6 p.m. at Huttonville United Church. Adults: \$15, children: \$6 (10 and under). Tickets: limited to 90 tickets; call 905-455-8449 or 905-451-1892. Take-outs available too.




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