

THE ROADKILL CAFÉ

"The Roadkill Cafe" is a chain of restaurants where, "Eating food is More Fun When You Know It Was Hit on the Run". We ate in one of these cafes in Plymouth, Massachusetts, and I seem to remember a beef item on the menu, "Centre Line Bovine, tastes real good straight from the hood".

This is all in good fun, but we might think about taking this a little more seriously given the abundance of roadkill in the County of Prince Edward. While acquiring a calendar from Stacey Wilson in the No Frills Pharmacy, we discussed a calendar with roadkill recipes for each month. This could be a killer of a fund-raiser for some organization. We couldn't figure out what organization would want to sponsor such an idea, but if the Women's Institute in England and Olympic Athletes can pose in the nude for calendars, the Roadkill Calendar doesn't seem too far fetched.

Our economic circumstances might not always be as affluent as they are now. Think of the large amount of good protein left by the roadside for the vultures and crows. Perhaps we should compete for this food. Speaking of crows, the cookbook "Eat Like A Wild Man" states that, "Most of us think of the crow as a pest, but when properly prepared, crows are good to eat." There are recipes for Crow Stew, and Crow Sandwich Spread. Oh boy, my mouth is watering already.

Who hasn't hit a beautiful songbird with the car? It's unfortunate, but it happens. We usually heave a sigh of compassion, then keep right on whizzing down the highway. But wait! Could I change your mind with some songbird recipes? I have a cookbook called, "Bull Cook and Authentic Historical Recipes and Practices", which is a mouthful of a name, sure, but contains many mouthwatering recipes. In a section titled, "Birds Saint Thomas Aquinas", the author says that in the old days Pennsylvania Germans concocted a fine meat dish from fat bobolink breasts, French New Englanders made Pate de Allouette of meadowlark breasts, and the Irish prepared delicious meat pies from blackbird breasts. The author says that songbirds are a real delicacy, particularly robins

in the early summer when they have been feeding on fruits. Local wine growers would be in favour of this in the fall, when the robins raid their vines. "Bull Cook" includes several recipes, including the one used and recommended by Saint Thomas Aquinas, who grew so fat he was forced to saw a half circle out of his dining room table so he could reach his plate. Boy, if a person can get that fat, these birds must be delectable.

Now, just hold on a minute before you get angry with me. I am NOT encouraging people to slaughter songbirds for food. That's illegal, by the way, as songbirds are protected by statute. But having inadvertently hit one with the car, if you had the "Roadkill Calendar", why you could pick the bird out of the grill and freeze the it until you amassed sufficient misfortunes to make a meal.

It's not simply birds that are road kill, of course. The ubiquitous raccoon would form the main source of protein for roadkill dinners. There's a joke that goes, "Why did the chicken cross the road? To prove to the raccoon it can be done."

In the "L.L. Bean Game and Fish Cookbook", the authors provide a number of coon recipes, all of which "... have been tested by raccoon aficionados. A delicious meat much neglected save by a few country people." I confess that I don't know of any country people around here who particularly savour the raccoon, but one of the books recommends raccoon that has been feeding in a corn patch as most tasty, and I'm sure few farmers would object if you inadvertently struck one of those on the road. Be careful though, because while raccoon rabies isn't prevalent around here, some raccoons carry a roundworm which can cause blindness and is potentially fatal. Raccoon roundworm is carried in the feces and can exist in the soil for years. So be careful.

There are many recipes for squirrel, including the famed "Brunswick Stew". I have eaten squirrel because my mother used to occasionally cook the ones Dad picked

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