

†JOKE JOHANNA MAMMEN

Ursula Heinzlmann informed me of the sad loss of Joke Mammen and also sent me this short appreciation by the American historian Keith Arbour, which I reproduce here: ‘Culinary history curator and bibliographer Joke Johanna Mammen, who retired in 2020 as the University of Amsterdam’s Curator of Special Collections (including the History of Food Collection), died in Utrecht on 10 August 2022 aged 68. At the University Joke oversaw the acquisition, use, and enlargement of the extraordinary culinary history collection amassed and donated by Johannes van Dam. She annually participated in the awarding of three important prizes: the Johannes van Dam Prize (for lifetime achievement in food history studies); the Joop Witteveen Prize (for outstanding publication on Low Countries food history); and the Prof. J. Marietje van Winter Stipend (for research in the University of Amsterdam’s food history collections). Starting in 2014 Joke helped organize and administer (as Registrar) the annual Amsterdam Symposium on the History of Food. Joke is survived by her husband François Caron and brother Werner Mammen. In the United States she is mourned by friends from Massachusetts to Kansas – the distance between which she and François covered several times by automobile as if it were a spin around the block. All fortunate enough to know this wonderful couple can attest to the modesty and grace with which Joke carried her subject expertise and organizational acumen, and the quiet good humour she and François have brought to every table and room that ever enjoyed their presence.’

†KAORI O’CONNOR

It is with great regret that I report the sudden and untimely death from cancer of Kaori O’Connor. The energy and enthusiasm she brought to any task allotted her, or chosen by her, were invariably impressive. It was a privilege to be associated with her, although my association extended little further than her work as a trustee for the Sophie Coe Prize. Other friends have reported the same galvanic characteristics in other situations. As a gauge of her achievements, I can do little better than reproduce her Wikipedia entry, which covers most bases: ‘Kaori O’Connor was born in Honolulu, Hawaii and grew up on Waikiki Beach. One of her great-grandfathers was a New England whaling captain turned sugar planter, another was one of Hawaii’s first Japanese immigrant entrepreneurs. She is also part Hawaiian and Native American. She graduated from Reed College (USA) with a BA in Social Anthropology and went on to Oxford University (St Anne’s College) to do a Dip.Soc.Anth and B.Litt in Social Anthropology, studying with the noted structuralist Rodney Needham and the Pacific ethnohistorian Peter Gathercole.

‘Following Oxford, she won a job on *Vogue* through the *Vogue* Talent Contest, going on to become the founding editor of *The Fashion Guide* and

author of a number of books on fashion including the best-selling *Creative Dressing*. Later, as editorial director of the-then independent scholarly publisher Kegan Paul, she was responsible for the acclaimed series Pacific Basin Books that reflected the cultural complexities of the Pacific in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Returning to the academy, she won ESRC doctoral and post-doctoral fellowships and her doctorate was awarded in 2004 by UCL where she is currently a senior research fellow. She appears frequently on radio and television, most recently *Woman's Hour*, *The Great British Bake Off* and *The Great British Sewing Bee* and contributes to newspapers and magazines including *The Times Literary Supplement* and *The Oldie*. In 2009 she won the prestigious Sophie Coe Award for Food History for her study of the Hawaiian Luau and in 2011 she won the Pasold Award for Textile History for her study of the Ladybird children's dressing gown in the context of the post-World War II baby boom.

Her literary output includes the following: *Seaweed: A Global History* (Reaktion Books, 2017); *The Never-ending Feast: The Anthropology and Archaeology of Feasting* (Bloomsbury, 2015); *The English Breakfast: the Biography of a National Meal* (revised edition, Bloomsbury 2013); *Pineapple: A Global History* (Reaktion Books, 2013); *Lycra: How a Fiber Shaped America* (Routledge, 2011); 'The Hawaiian Luau: Food as Transgression, Transformation, Tradition and Travel', *Food, Culture and Society*, 11(2), June 2008, pp. 149–172, Winner of the Sophie Coe Prize in Food History 2009; 'The Ladybird and the Dressing Gown: Cultural Icons of the "Golden Age" of British Childhood', *Textile History*, 42:1, 2011, pp. 22–49, Winner of the Pasold Prize for Textile History 2011.'

LEEDS FOOD SYMPOSIUM, 2023

The date for next year's Symposium, held as usual in York, has been fixed. It will be 20 May 2023 at the Quaker Meeting House on Friargate, York. The subject will be 'Celebrations', particularly apt as it is only a week or two after the coronation. Details of the programme are still being worked out and they will be posted on the website and the Facebook page in due course, <www.leedsfoodsymposium.org.uk>. See also, in Book Reviews below, a notice of the latest volume of proceedings from York, this time on the pig.

I.E.H.C.A., TOURS, 2023

The Institut Européen d'Histoire et des Cultures de l'Alimentation has called for submissions to its organizing committee in preparation for its eighth annual convention on food history in Tours from 31 May to 2 June 2023. I reproduce here the English translation of its circular: 'All proposals pertaining to Food Studies will be considered and all researchers are welcome (doctoral, post-doctoral, research lecturers, independent scholars, etc). Ultimately the

conference aspires to be a multi- and cross-disciplinary event, covering all historical periods. We would like to draw your attention to the fact that this is an in-presence event, so anyone applying must be able to be physically present. Only the evolution of the health context could lead us to revise this decision. Two types of submission, with free choice of subject, will be accepted: individual submissions, or submissions for ‘panel’ sessions on a given theme. Submissions will be reviewed and selected by the IEHCA’s academic committee. The deadline for sending submissions is 15 December 2022. Any questions should be sent to Loïc Bienassis or Allen Grieco: <loic.bienassis@iehca.eu> or <allengrieco@gmail.com>. Acceptances will be sent in January 2023.’

FOOD & RELIGION IN EARLY-MODERN EUROPE

June will be a busy time for those who fancy a little *Small World* tourism as there is a conference on this topic organized by elements of the Institut de Recherches Historiques du Septentrion which will be held at the University of Lille (Pont-de-Bois campus) on 5 and 6 June 2023. Proceedings will be in English and French. Unfortunately I am too late to alert you to the terminal date for submissions, which was 10 November 2022. Enquiries may be addressed to <marjorie.meiss-even@univ-lille.fr> or <florent.quellier@univ-angers.fr>, or more information will be posted at <<https://irhis.univ-lille.fr>>.

A TALE FROM FRANCE

Di Murrell, who has a house on the Saône, has sent me this account of a happy end to a tale of refuge and asylum that terminates in Tournus, the birthplace of the painter Greuze and home of the abbey of St Philibert. I print as received.

‘The restaurant is tiny and you could easily walk straight by without even noticing it. Which would be a huge shame because not only is the food pretty tasty but it also has a story to tell; a story that is refreshingly heartening. The clue is in the name – ‘Délices d’Alep’ – named for the city from which the present owners fled with their children. It’s hard to imagine that people like ‘us’ could ever be displaced from our homes, our jobs; our normal daily lives destroyed; forced to leave all behind and travel halfway across the world to find some place where our children will be safe and we can live an ordinary life once more. And we don’t really trust people who have had to do just that, do we? Carelessly dismissed as ‘refugees’, ‘migrants’, ‘whatever’, we characterize them as poor and uneducated masses, looking for charity, wanting hand-outs, needing to be cared for, a drain on resources, dangerous too, and definitely not the same as ‘us’. But they are.

‘César Asfar and his wife, Rima, once lived in the city of Aleppo in Syria. When they finally decided they must leave their destroyed country at the end of 2014, César had been a commercial director of a Japanese car company for some years and Rima an art teacher. Good jobs, good income and a nice home too – yet when they left, they had nothing but what they stood up in. They flew, with their two children, to Paris, entering the country on a simple tourist visa.

‘When César and Rima came to France, they were desperate. Months followed when they found it impossible to find jobs, César needed to learn to speak French. They had two small children to care for, nowhere to live. It was six months before they gained status as refugees. Then by chance, when they had finally found somewhere to live in Toul, in Lorraine, though still without jobs, they saw something amazing on the Internet: someone wanted to give away a restaurant!

‘L’Étape, a restaurant in the Saône-et-Loire town of Tournus, was owned by Nahiza and Robert Kunz. When they decided to retire from the business, they agreed that rather than sell they wanted to pass it on to someone in need. So, they told the local paper, and from there the story spread to the World Wide Web. The Kunzes were inundated by dozens of worthy applicants and though Rima and César knew nothing of how to run a restaurant and their cooking skills were not great, nevertheless they applied, and in the end, they were the Kunzes’ choice.

‘Délices d’Alep’ opened for business on Tuesday, 27 December 2016. Other than its new name little else was changed; as yet there was no money for improvements. A few pictures of their home town adorned the walls but that was about it. The menu was short, simple and offered dishes that were typically Middle Eastern. César told me he was able to keep in contact with his mother, still living in Syria. She taught him to cook over the ‘phone! And what a good student he turned out to be. On the menu was falafel, hummus, baba ganoush, mechoui lamb, tabbouleh and more – all cooked by César in the tiny kitchen behind the bar. Rima, who already spoke excellent French, quickly established herself as a friendly, efficient, front-of-house.

‘Since they first opened, the menu has expanded and food, though still simple, is beautifully cooked and generously served. They stock the delicious wines of Château Kefraya, the grapes grown in the biblical land of Canaan, now Lebanon, and they have a dessert to die for – *knaféh au fromage*.

‘The place is still a little shabby except for one splendid addition. Fixed high on the wall facing in to the restaurant for all to see there is now a wooden sign, and upon it, written in words of gold, it says:

“From one of the most ancient continuously inhabited places on earth, we give you the scent of the Orient and cast the spell of our thousands of years of history. We have come from a city with one of the largest and oldest fortresses in the world (some 3000 years old); the longest covered market (12 kilometres);

not to mention its ancient and unique olive soap, known to all four corners of the land; and the school of music whose exalted reputation is undisputed throughout the Arab world.

And today We are here to help you discover the taste of its famous cuisine whose renown goes hand in hand with its ancient history. Aleppo – where the past began.”

“These are proud people who lived in one of the oldest cities in the world. They want us to know who they are. They don’t ask or expect it, but we should treat them as honoured guests, welcomed if they decide to stay, though happy for them if ever the time should come when they are able, if they so choose, to return to their homeland. We are blessed to have known them.’

†GLYN HUGHES

I report with regret the death of Glyn Hughes, an enthusiast of the history of British food. I am grateful to his friend Neil Buttery who has sent this notice of his life and career.

‘Glyn Hughes’ interest and enthusiasm for English food, culture and history were borne of his own lack of knowledge in the area: curious, he began to collect, collate and research foods indigenous to his home county, Derbyshire. Intrigued, he cast his net further to include the whole of England. Little did he know that almost a quarter of a century later he would still be knee-deep in his self-appointed, never-ending task. He captured the fruits of his labour in the *Foods of England Project*, a website now containing over 3,400 entries and receiving over one million hits per month. This project led to the publication of several books: *The Lost Foods of England*, *The Lost Feast of Christmas*, and most recently, *The Very Surprising History of Fish and Chips*. He published too a modern translation of *Forme of Cury*, so to say he was tenacious in his quest to describe English cuisine, would be an understatement. He created other projects too: in his *100 Books* project he wrote a collection of abridged classical texts, and in his *Squashed Philosophers* he produced a series of condensed treatises of every major philosophical thinker. A talented artist, he created the sculpture of Alan Turing that sits in Sackville Park in Manchester City Centre. He was also a gifted engineer, specializing in fuel burners; when I met him to discuss *Foods of England* in July 2022, he told me had just applied for a patent for a zero-emissions wood burner.

‘But it would be the success of his *Foods of England Project* that would cast him as a food historian, and if one takes but a cursory glance at his website, his knowledge, enthusiasm and his predilection for launching himself into his work completely, are instantly very obvious. He may say that the research is down to ‘dozens of contributors’, its success is very much down to him and his voice as a writer - whether it be a book or a two-sentence entry for

some obscure regional dumpling. He took what he did seriously, but never himself. He revelled in pointing out other nationalities whose quintessential dishes seemed to have an English origin (e.g. haggis). He wasn't afraid to turn his tongue-in-cheek humour inward either: reminding us that when discussing English cuisine, we should be referring to 'receipts' not 'recipes' and 'master cooks' not 'chefs': they are French words. All of this belied a serious and scrupulous attention to detail and extensive research: he showed his workings, fully referencing every single post. He spent a great deal of time, energy and money, even hiring students to scour libraries and other institutions for evidence (or a lack thereof) to show that there is no such thing as brown Windsor soup. When he appeared on British television in 2020 to tell BBC presenter Gregg Wallace that there is nothing particularly Cornish about a pasty, saying "people have been folding pastry over fillings for 2000 years." As a consequence, *The Sun* newspaper ran the headline 'Historian sparks uproar by claiming the pasty was NOT invented in Devon', an article he regarded as a badge of honour, safe in the knowledge that his research was watertight. Negative reviews were water off a duck's back, like the one-star Amazon review he received for the *Lost Feast of Christmas* which was given because there were apparently too many recipes for mincemeat, was something that really made him chuckle. With his mix of confidence, humility and self-deprecation mixed with his quick wit and remarkable recall, he became in demand as a speaker; indeed he was invited to speak at the 2022 Leeds Food Symposium where he presented a paper on fish and chips. So enthused was he by the feedback he received, he distilled it into his final book.

'Glyn's contribution to the research in English food and social history is substantial and will certainly endure, something, if told no doubt, he would brush off. He was so pleased with his new book and enthusiastic about its release that the news that he had taken his own life in late September came as such a shock to me, and the rest of the food history community and our thoughts are with his partner Vicki, his family and friends.'

ATLAS OBSCURA

As the urge appears to take us to travel to more unlikely spots, eat in more recherché restaurants and consume more arcane foodstuffs, a website that lays out the possibilities (with a strong emphasis on the edible) is <<https://www.atlasobscura.com>>. Whether you approve is by the way – for my part, I disagree with space travel and most other displacement – there is a wealth of information that may prove useful to the more intrepid.