

## BARBARA SANTICH, AM

I am sure we would all like to congratulate Professor Barbara Santich for her appointment to a membership of the Order of Australia in the Queen's birthday honours, 'for significant service to tertiary education, to gastronomy, food culture and history.'

## GOOD FOOD GUIDE

I was shocked to read of the abrupt closure of the *Good Food Guide* after almost exactly 70 years of publication. Not so shocked, perhaps, as I was by the apparent refusal of the current owners, Waitrose and the John Lewis Partnership, to allow anyone else to grasp the torch and keep the flame alight. It may be true that the role of a printed restaurant guide is difficult to maintain in these times; and that the business model of the *GFG*, which was stringently opposed to any form of advertising or pecuniary relationship between itself and its subjects, would need radical adjustment to allow alternative sources of finance to the revenue from a much-reduced sale in bookshops. However, there is surely a place for an informed voice of the consumer (more informed, certainly, than that found on websites such as Tripadvisor). Press coverage of restaurants is markedly better than it ever used to be, both more plentiful and usually better informed, but it suffers from stridency, over-cleverness and *parti-pris*. Michelin is grand but is better seen as a trade publication. The *GFG*, when gracefully yet soberly written, was a welcome companion to many an expedition and it will be missed.

## ONLINE SUMMER UNIVERSITY, IEHCA, TOURS

So this item is as late as are most of ours, but those interested should perhaps look further on the IEHCA website, which contains a profusion of activities and ventures. This is the text of their announcement: 'The European Institute for the History and Cultures of Food (IEHCA) and the University of Tours have been working together since 2003 to organize a summer university devoted to the history and cultures of food.

'The uncertain context linked to the health crisis forced us to cancel the 2020 edition. But, we are pleased to announce the next call for applications to participate in our 18th summer university which will take place entirely in distance learning from Monday, August 23 to Friday, September 3, 2021.

'Our online summer university is open to candidates with a research background in food studies (master's level or higher). All discussions will take place in English and no knowledge of other languages is required. Our capacity will not exceed 20 students.

‘We are currently working on the finalization of the program which we hope to be as ambitious scientifically as ever. We’ll also provide a digital platform which will guarantee the quality of the exchanges and the fluidity of the interactions throughout the duration of this edition.’

## PEN VOGLER’S *SCOFF*: A COMMENT

I received the following note from Malcolm Thick as a rider to Jesse Dart’s review of this book in the last issue: ‘I can’t decide whether this is an academic book with a popular book inside struggling to get out or a popular book that nevertheless wants to be taken seriously. On balance I suspect the latter. It is a big book – over 400 pages long – with an impressive bibliography. It is written in an engaging style, and the subtle double meaning of the title is inspired. Despite its length it is selective in the parts of the history of British food and class it narrates and there are gaps in the topics chosen. The chapter on vegetables, for instance, does not mention the lasting effects of the introduction of root vegetables into the diet of the poor because of the poor harvests of the 1590s. The chapter on peas does not mention the vast price difference between the earliest peas and the main crop in London markets in the eighteenth century, the most obvious example of early vegetable snobbery. When valid points are included, the hesitant use of footnotes means that many facts or opinions gleaned from reading around the subject are not referenced or acknowledged. This is particularly galling to this reviewer who reads a summary of his work on Sir Hugh Plat on page 187 with no reference to the book it comes from. The author uses the 2000 edition of William Ellis’s book on country living to talk of, amongst other things, food supplied to harvesters in the 1750s. This is referenced but no doubt the author read comments on this in the introduction to this edition, the writer of which is not mentioned in the bibliography. And to describe the four o’clock snack in the field as a picnic is just wrong – a man who had spent many hours of back-breaking work harvesting would not regard this meal in such terms with its overtones of jam and cream scones and attendant wasps. I do not believe that the Duchess of Bedford invented the 5 p.m. tea. My researches in the reports of proceedings at the Old Bailey indicate that tea, as a light meal between dinner and supper was alive and well in the late eighteenth century. Despite the bibliography there are some gaps – no mention of *PPC*, the foremost periodical of food history, and no use of the *Old Bailey Online* site – a treasure trove of social history in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Despite these niggles the book is fun to read and full of interesting facts, intelligent conjecture, and cheeky digs at present-day food class-consciousness – who does not enjoy poking fun at politicians and newspaper editors?’

## A LINGUISTIC RESOURCE

Gilly Lehmann alerted me to the existence of a French blog <francaisdenosregions.com> largely written by a French linguist at the Sorbonne, Mathieu Avanzi. It is very strong on the creation of maps showing the geographical variations in the usage of French words and expressions, not only about food, but with food figuring quite highly. See, for example, <francaisdenosregions.com/2020/10/17/tartiflette-un-exemple-de-faux-regionalisme-authentique>. It reminds me of the excellent blog by the late Peter Graham, to which I have adverted in earlier issues. This latter site, providentially, continues to be accessible on the Internet.

## †LYNNE CHATTERTON

It is with much regret that I report the death at the end of March of Lynne Chatterton, on the farm and olive grove where she lived with her husband Brian in the town of Castel di Fiori in Umbria. Her contributions to *PPC*, and indeed to my *Three Course Newsletter* in earlier years, were always informative, entertaining and thought-provoking. Brian's role as Minister of Agriculture in the great South Australian government of Don Dunstan is a matter of historical record, as is his subsequent partnership with Lynne in the development and explication of dry-land farming in Australia, South Asia and particularly North Africa (I recall with much pleasure her report on their stay in Libya). When they finally settled in Umbria, they continued so much activity, culturally, in publishing (see the site <pulcinipress.com>), in producing olive oil and tending olive groves. Her cookery books, replete with personal memoir, *From the Ground Up: Home Cooking without Fear* and especially *Red Herrings*, are first class. Our condolences go out to Brian, who survives her.

## ARISTOCRATIC COOKS IN FRANCE

I have adverted in a previous issue, I think, to the intriguing facts surrounding George Sand's return to her château in Berry at Nohant when, rid of duties to anyone but herself, she lived there for a while in splendid isolation. So alone, indeed, that she might wander the corridors *en déshabille* without fear of interruption or intrusion. While congratulating herself, in her memoirs, on her self-sufficiency, her lack of personal servants, of third-person cossetting, she did admit that her meals were cooked for her by the wife of an old servant who still occupied the lodge at the gates. Contrast this to Marquise de la Tour du Pin who recounted her long life in memoirs that were translated for the English reader in 1913, then abridged and edited by Felice Harcourt in 1969 (Harvill Press). Having navigated the Terror safely, the la Tour du Pins found themselves in the state of New York on a farm near the town of Troy. Unlike George Sand, she wrote, 'One day, towards the end of September, I was out

in the yard, chopper in hand, busy cutting the bone of a leg of mutton which I was about to roast on the spit for our dinner. As Betsey did not cook, I had been left in charge of everything concerned with food and, with the help of the *Cuisine Bourgeoise*, acquitted myself as best I could. Suddenly from behind me, a deep voice remarked in French: “never was a leg of mutton spitted with greater majesty.” Turning round quickly, I saw M. de Talleyrand and M. de Beaumetz.’ Perhaps Mme Sand should have taken lessons.

## AMSTERDAM SYMPOSIUM ON THE HISTORY OF FOOD, 11-12 FEBRUARY 2022

For once we are in time. If you go to the website <[allardpierson.nl/en/events/amsterdam-symposium-on-the-history-of-food](http://allardpierson.nl/en/events/amsterdam-symposium-on-the-history-of-food)> you will find an explication of the event and its topic which runs like this:

‘FOOD AND THE ENVIRONMENT: THE DYNAMIC RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FOOD PRACTICES AND NATURE

‘Ever since hunters and gatherers made the switch to sedentary forms of farming some 13,000 years ago, the way people produce and consume food has profoundly shaped the world in which we live. Although the idea of the ‘environment’ – which we now use to describe the scale and scope of this human impact on the planet – is a relatively modern concept, historians, archaeologists and ecologists have carefully traced the continual interconnectedness of food and the environment. Indeed, changes in dietary patterns have been intrinsically linked to climate change and demographics throughout history, and the question of how to feed a growing population has been at the centre of major developments in food production innovations from the Neolithic Revolution onwards.

‘The concern about the limits of food production and consumption has similar long historical roots. Agricultural innovations and colonial explorations, which allowed humans to grow and eat more and more diverse foodstuffs, also prompted worries about the adverse consequences of rapid population growth and environmental degradation. From Thomas Malthus’ 1798 *An Essay on the Principle of Population* to the warnings of post-WWII scholars such as William Vogt and Paul Ehrlich – the concern that food production could and can never keep pace with population increase has been central to many heated scholarly debates.

‘Although the 1960-1980s Green Revolution has thus far managed to avert a ‘Malthusian disaster’, worries about the intensive use of nature’s resources coupled with booming population growth continue to persist. At the same time, more people have become aware of the dynamic, two-way relationship between humans and their environment, and of the fact that natural conditions have always shaped and endangered human life. This year’s Amsterdam

Symposium on the History of Food traces this far-reaching transformative impact of food production and consumption practices on the environment – and vice versa – both in history and today.’

People wishing to submit papers to the organizers have until 15 September. The address for correspondence is <Foodhistory-ub@uva.nl>.

## CHAMPAGNE AND ALL THAT

Browsers through this issue will detect the presence of the author James Crowden, man of Somerset and man of cider. His article on the early history of making a sparkling drink, wine or cider, in a robust bottle and the development of what we now know as the *méthode champenoise* can be found below, as can his review of Andrew Skelton’s book on the same subject in the Book Review section. I wanted here to alert or remind readers to or of the excellent article on this topic that can be found in *PPC* 103 of 2015. It was written by Dr Garritt Van Dyk, now of the University of Newcastle in Australia, and the essay won the Sophie Coe Prize for 2014. James Crowden has delivered some comments on its relevance to his contribution as an appendix to that article, below.

And further to this story – readers can only applaud our timeliness – there is a film now on release telling the story of champagne entitled *Sparkling*. Had the producers incorporated some of James Crowden’s incontrovertible findings, it would have been more accurate.