

# International Cooking Historical Notes

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Members of International Cooking

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*1988 Greek Dinner, Table Setting at the Cleveland's Home  
(Photo by Astrid Cleveland)*

**IN THE BEGINNING.** International Cooking was started in 1971. By the 1973-1974 year there were at least 27 members in the group including Deena Allen, Ann Duderstadt , Sandi Cooper, Carolyn Wiseman, Ellen Saalberg and Elaine Owsley. Originally this group was part of the Newcomers section. It regularly had at least three

**international-theme dinners, a tailgate party in September, a Holiday Party in December and a barbecue at the end of the year either in May or June.**

**Co-Chairmen Anne Duderstadt and Kay Outcalt wrote the following in 1973:**

**“International Cooking meets once each month alternating planning meetings (Thursday night) with dinner parties (Sunday evening). At the planning meeting we discuss the menu and recipes which have been prepared by the menu committee. We then break up into groups of 4 couples and the following month we prepare and eat the menu we have planned at simultaneous dinner parties at members’ homes. Each member has an opportunity to be on a menu committee and to be a hostess for one dinner party during the year.**

**“Dues: \$1.00 payable at the first meeting.”**

**There is a note for 1974 that 45 copies of the menus were made in order to distribute the menus to members. Sue Nisbett, Jackie DeiPerna and Doris Miller hosted, among others..**

**By 1975 Becky Horvath’s name appears on the planning meeting information. April 1976 includes Lucy Chin on the listing for participating in the French Provincial dinner.**

**The themes were, and continue to be, picked by the group either at the June party or at the September party. Individual members volunteered to help create a particular menu and associated recipes. The section organizer would do the couple assignments before each dinner.**

**In order to introduce the dinner menu and any different ingredients or techniques, the group used to have Planning Meetings a couple of weeks before the actual dinners. The hostess and volunteers would make several or all of the dishes on the menu and the members would attend, often on a Monday evening to taste and discuss any problems or answer questions.**

**In 1978 there were 22 members in the group that figured out from the menu selection sheet compilation where all members had 6 votes each (per ballot) to vote on the menu selection for the upcoming year 1978-1979. Also in 1978, the cost of attending the Lobster Bake at the Owsley's was \$20.00 per couple unless the members brought their own steak to be cooked. According to Don Cleveland, he remembers that lobsters were ordered from New England and were picked up at Detroit Metro airport just prior to the event. The Owsleys owned a 6 foot diameter cauldron which was perfect for cooking the lobsters.**

**There were 33 members in 1980.**

**In 1980, Elaine Owsley and Pat Davis were the organizers and wrote the following:**

**“Dear International Set,**

**“Another year, our tenth if I’m not mistaken, is beginning. We have had a slight change in plans, but have established the following calendar for the year and the menus as based on your voting in the spring.**

**“Remember to pay your Faculty Women’s dues.... and try to bring your section dues along to the first meeting. WE have to put them up to \$3.00 this year as the cost of printing and postage pretty well ate into what dues were paid last year and just won’t stretch too far.**

**[Paragraphs deleted]**

**“You will notice the absence of an Owsley finale to this year. After 10 in a row, we are taking a sabbatical this year. (The Clam Bake was followed the next week by a graduation open house for son Clay and on August 23 by our daughter Julie’s outdoor ‘in the garden’ wedding....we need a break) Besides, after 10 straight sunny outings (11 if you count the wedding), we are not sure we should push our luck weatherwise.**

**“Also, if you haven’t hosted a dinner or a planning group in the past year or so, please take your turn. That’s really part of the bargain in this group, your agreeing to take turns, so if you haven’t, and you know you have not, please call Pat Davis or myself and volunteer....”**

**By the Tenth Anniversary of the group in 1981, the chairman, Abby Bauland, wrote the following:**

**“This is the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the group which began as a Newcomer’s unit in the fall of 1971. Over the years we have explored the cooking of approximately 30 countries or areas. The majority of the dinners have been excellent, some have been superb and once or twice we have discovered that we really didn’t like the cuisine of a particular country. Many more winners than losers, credit to the planning committees who have researched the countries and their cooking specialties.**

**“The gentlemen join us for the dinners in groups of four or five couples at the homes of various hostesses. The final dinner of the year will be Saturday, June 5, 1982---location to be announced.**

**“Section dues for the group are \$3.00 (used for printing and mailing and special events).**

**“ALL MEMBERS ARE EXPECTED TO TAKE PART IN AT LEAST ONE PLANNING GROUP OR/ARRANGEMENT COMMITTEE AND ARE EXPECTED TO SERVE AS DINNER HOSTESS AT LEAST ONCE. PLANNING MEETINGS ARE IMPORTANT TO ATTEND TO MAKE SMOOTH DINNER ARRANGEMENTS.”**

**The planning sheet for the year 1981 to 1982 includes the following information:**

**PLANNING COMMITTEES:** Planning committees must get together before the planning meeting to do their thing, select recipes, try out dishes, whatever. It is nice if they bring along some representative food of the country – part of the dinner or not—for the planning meeting refreshments. The planning meeting hostess will serve beverages.

**CHRISTMAS PARTY:** Arrangement committee: Paulette Grotrian, Julia Lingo, Martha Krumm and Pat Davis

**RUSSIAN DINNER:** Kay King, Penny Ashe, Betty Anderson, Astrid Cleveland

**“ORIENT EXPRESS” DINNER:** Becky Horvath, Lucy Chin and Janine Easter

**LOBSTER BAKE:** Ellen Saalberg, Pat Davis, Florence Leslie and Elaine Owsley

**The tenth anniversary of International Cooking was celebrated by repeating the Italian Dinner from October 1971 and the Russian Dinner from December 1971. From notes in the archive file, Indonesian Meal from 1972 was considered the “worst” dinner at that time.**

**While the Planning Meetings were always fun and well received, they became a burden to the group and in about 1998 or 2000. The Planning Meetings were discontinued. Since then the menu and recipes have either been handed out as paper copies at the Tailgate meeting in September (as many as were ready). Even more recently, with our members all receiving information by email, we have been sending out the menu and recipes for upcoming events by using pdf files.**

**Group parties have taken place in people’s homes as well as clubhouses and in parks.**

**The Owsleys hosted the Lobster Bake at least 22 years (1972 to around 1995), the Clevelands hosted the September Tail Gate for 28 years (1987-2015) and Becky Horvath has been inviting the group for the Holiday Party for at least 15 years (our records show 2002-2016 ongoing). The 1986 Christmas Brunch was held at the home of Pat Davis and 55 people attended (28 members). At that brunch there were 16 main dishes and 12 desserts. There is a handwritten note that for following parties people should be asked to make enough to serve**

**10 to 12 people, not less. Also at that Brunch, there were 9 bottles of champagne, 9 12-ounce cans of orange juice, 8 bottles of sparkling cider as well as 45 cups of coffee.**

**The group has had events in the Woodland Garden Clubhouse, the Georgetown Country Club, the Domino House in Dixboro, the auditorium at Matthaei Botanical Gardens and the Geddes Park Clubhouse.**

**The current President and Vice President of the Faculty Women's Club are traditionally invited to attend the September Tailgate. It was the Chairman's duty to handwrite a nice invitation to both dignitaries; these days, in 2017, an email works just as well.**

**An example of the invitation written by Florence Westrum:**

**“Dear Fran, [Fran Wiley, 1992-93]**

**“Please accept an invitation to you and your husband to be guests of the Faculty Women's Club International Cooking Group at a tailgate party on Saturday afternoon, September 19<sup>th</sup>.**

**“It will take place after the football game with Oklahoma at the home of Astrid and Don Cleveland.**

**“Would you please let Astrid or me know if you can attend.”**

**At the Christmas Brunch of 1984 the group was buying plastic tablecloths, plastic plates, napkins and \$60 worth of champagne, \$8 worth of orange juice and \$2 of 7 Up. Apparently 2 cases of champagne was purchased but only 17 bottles were actually used.**

**In 1984-1985, the group had 40 members and the dues had risen to \$7.50 per couple (that year FWC dues were also \$7.50). The Tailgate was held at the home of Rhona Meislik. Since there was no email at that time, the organizers had to call members and ask about participation in meetings, parties and dinners.**

**The tailgate for 1985 and 1985 was at the home of Mary Olsen. Judy Compton’s name appears on the Holiday Brunch planning committee for 1984. Jane Lieberthal, Val Rasmussen, Marcelle Gross and Liz Mohrenweiser were also participating Barbara Buckley and Gwen Stevens appear in 1985-1986.**

**The Clevelands hosted their first tailgate in September 1987. Raya Brown’s name appears on the hostess list for the 1988 Scandinavian dinner along with Alice Roe and Penny Ashe. Marilyn Menlo is helping with organization in 1989. Lois Solomon appears in 1990-91.**



*1987 Tailgate at the Clevelands: Astrid Cleveland and Florence Westrum.  
(Photo by Don Cleveland)*

**Section dues were reduced to \$5.00 per couple for 1987-1988. This year the planning meetings were held only three times to plan the dinners. By June 1989, delinquent members were asked to pay their**

**dues of \$7.50 as soon as possible. 50 copies of the Tailgate announcement were mailed to members in September of 1988 for the cost of \$2.50. Three gallons of wine were purchased for the tailgate (\$14.20) and some wine was left over. Other drinks included four 2-liter bottles of 7 Up, 5 small Diet Cokes, 4 Meier ciders, 2 beers and 2 frozen raspberry juice cans.**

**Astrid's report from the 1989 tailgate party includes the following:**

**“Members should be urged to respond to the invitation. Astrid had to call 30 members to find out whether they would participate. When members receive the invitation they should immediately check their calendars and if they plan to come, immediately choose what they would like to bring and tell the hostess when they respond what their choice is. An Interesting phenomenon: We had two of the same potato salads, two of the same melon salads and three chocolate desserts. Even though every one of the dishes was delicious, a variety of foods would have made the meal more interesting.”**

**Photos were taken at various events through the years by Astrid Cleveland (our historian) and by Edgar and Florence Westrum.**

**In the fall of 1990, the section dues had raised to \$10 per couple and FWC dues were \$12. Chairman Gwen Stevens writes in the Fall of 1990:**

**“Our first event will be the Tailgate Party at Astrid and Don Cleveland’s home... after the opening UM [home]football game on September 22. The game starts at noon, the party about 2:30 pm. If you are going to the game you can drop off your food early and walk to the stadium from there. Weather permitting, we will be outside so you may want to bring lawn chairs and/or sweaters....**

**“On Thursday nights, ten days before the dinners, we will hand out copies of the complete menu, set the guest lists and apportion the responsibilities. Should dishes require exotic or expensive ingredients these will be distributed then. The planning commit will call to advise you of the meeting dates. Please try to attend. Volunteer to plan and be hostess for dinners....**

**Laura Caplan was Chairman for 1996-1997. Bonnie Ion, Ginny Dawson and Bernice Merte are on the signup sheets for hosting a dinner. Section dues had risen to \$15 per couple. 1997 was the year that Bonnie started working on the compilation of all the menus and recipes for International Cooking. Earlier attempts had been made but there was a thought that we would**

**perhaps create a book out of the menus and recipes.**

**March 1999, Bonnie sent an email to Lucy Chin and Elaine Owsley from her sabbatical home in Strasbourg, France, asking for help to find missing menus and recipes. This was one of the first emails of many to come for the group's communications.**

**For 2002 to 2003, there were 17 members and dues were \$10.00. Liz Messiter and Mary Ann Faeth had joined the group recently. Becky and Bill Horvath hosted the Holiday Party in December at their home.**

**By 2005 – 2006, our section had 20 members and dues were \$15.00 per couple.**

**Bonnie Ion and Raya Brown were co-Chairs for the year and were inviting people by email.**

**The 2005 Tailgate at the Clevelands included 6 bottles of wine, 3 bottles of beer and lots of sparkling cider and soft drinks. In 2006 according to an email from Faye Longo we were still phoning people about their dinner assignments.**

**Section dues went up to \$25 per couple (from \$15 the previous year) in the Fall of 2006 since there was only \$30 left in the treasury from the previous year. Mary Lynn Thomson joined around 2006.**

**There were 23 members in 2006-2007, 22 members the following year and 23 members in 2009-2010.**

**Wine costs for the 2007 tailgate were down to \$9.00 and \$3.20 for 3 bottles of beer.**

**Judy Brandle and Pat Redman were new members in 2007.**

**Menu suggestions for 2008-2009 included the possibility of the Last Meal of the Hindenburg. It is funny since this has continued to be suggested and finally we will be having the Last Meal dinner in April 2017. Thanks, Bill Anderson, for your persistence!**

**Our 2008-2009 dinners had a theme of Regional French. Previously we had had a Regional French year in 1994-1995. We followed Regional French with Regional Italian in 1995-1996.**

**In 2009 the menus and recipes for the dinners were being attached to emails as pdf files. This made things much easier for the organizers since copying the multi-page set, stuffing them into envelopes and mailing out the letters took time. Inta Ertel joined the group in 2009.**



*September 2009 Tailgate at the Cleveland's home: Lucy Chin, Becky Horvath and Betty Anderson survey the buffet table. (Photo by Astrid Cleveland)*

**There were 20 members in 2010-2011. When we voted at the end of the year in 2011, the most popular idea for a dinner was “Men’s Gourmet.” This was Patrick Ion’s idea but when the men who voted for this idea realized that they would have to do the menu, find the recipes AND do the cooking, the idea was withdrawn and has not reappeared since. [NB: Patrick would like all to know that he still would like to do this dinner.]**

**The cost of dinner for a couple has always been quite reasonable. One dinner around 2010 cost \$17.31 per person or \$34.63 for a couple. Back in the late 1990’s there was a surf and turf dinner**

**that the writer remembers cost over \$30 per person but that was very unusual (and quite delicious since we had barbecued steaks that dinner....) the British Isles dinner in 2016 cost \$11.00 per person or \$22.00 per couple.**



*Bonnie Ion presenting the main course, Fish (Salmon) in Cloak from the Julia Child/James Beard dinner in February, 2010. It was delicious. (Photo by Astrid Cleveland)*

**Dinners in the experience of the writer have always been the highlights of the year. The company is always congenial and the conversation stimulating and interesting. The food sometimes surprises everyone with how delicious an easy combination can be but we would never have thought of making it otherwise.**

**By 2013 International Cooking members were down to 16 members.**

**In 2014, the Clevelands celebrated their 27<sup>th</sup> Tailgate hosting. The following is an extract of an article that appeared in the FWC newsletter in 2014:**

**27<sup>th</sup> Year Hosting Our Tailgate – September 28, 2014**

**Sunday, September 28, 2014, was the 27<sup>th</sup> consecutive hosting of our International Cooking group's annual tailgate by Astrid and Don Cleveland. Rain or shine, good game or bad game, Astrid and Don have cleaned the house, borrowed and moved chairs, brewed coffee, and cleaned up the dishes after hosting the 25 to 30 members and partners of the FWC International Cooking section.**

**Astrid has always volunteered for this duty with the reasoning that she hosts once at the beginning of the year and then everyone else has to host for the rest of the year. And that is how it has worked for the past 27 years. She was an early member of the International Cooking group (along with current FWC President Lucy Chin and Becky Horvath who are still in our group).**



*Left to right: Bruce & Lucy Chin, Astrid & Don Cleveland at the recent tailgate. (Photo by Bonnie Ion)*

## **THE International Cooking DINNERS**

**During the 45 years of existence of International Cooking we have enjoyed at least 270 events from 1971 to 2016 with at least 150 menus and associated recipes.**

**Most frequent cuisines were French menus (17), American menus (12), Italian menus (12) and Theme meals (10). That said, the group has tried many types of cuisine, often mirroring the travels of individual members.**

**Here is the theme frequency breakdown by general category:**

<b>African (1)</b>	<b>Jan-76</b>
<b>American (12)</b>	
<b>Becky's Soups</b>	<b>Dec-08</b>
<b>Cocktail Party</b>	<b>Oct-74</b>
<b>Hors d'Oeuvres &amp; Booze</b>	<b>Dec-80</b>
<b>Party</b>	
<b>Iowa Dinner</b>	<b>Oct-91</b>
<b>Pennsylvania Dutch</b>	<b>Mar-75</b>
<b>Regional American</b>	<b>Nov-86</b>
<b>Southern Colonial</b>	<b>Nov-74</b>
<b>Southern (U.S.) Dinner</b>	<b>Apr-14</b>
<b>Southwest U.S</b>	<b>Apr-93</b>
<b>Spring Potluck</b>	<b>May-98</b>

<b>West (Pacific) Coast</b>	<b>Oct-13</b>
<b>Cookery</b>	
<b>Western Shore</b>	<b>Jun-78</b>
<b>Asian and Oriental (2)</b>	<b>Nov-03 and Apr-82</b>
<b>Austrian (1)</b>	<b>Apr-80</b>
<b>Bolivian (1)</b>	<b>Apr-07</b>
<b>Brazilian (2)</b>	<b>Nov-75 and Oct-89</b>
<b>British (3)</b>	<b>Feb-78, Feb-12 and Nov-</b>
<b>Caribbean (1)</b>	<b>Feb-11</b>
<b>Chinese (5)</b>	<b>Jan-73, Nov-77, Apr-88, Mar-13 and Nov-80</b>
<b>Creole (3)</b>	<b>Feb-74, Apr-89, Oct-04</b>
<b>Cuban (1)</b>	<b>Jan-84</b>
<b>Eastern European (1)</b>	<b>Feb-03</b>
<b>Eastern Mediterranean (1)</b>	<b>Mar-81</b>
<b>Ecuadorian (1)</b>	<b>Feb-93</b>
<b>Egyptian/N. African (1)</b>	<b>Feb-00</b>
<b>French (17)</b>	<b>Mar-73, Feb-77, Jan-78,  Feb-81, Jan-85, Feb-89,</b>
<b>Alsace (French)</b>	<b>Nov-94</b>
<b>Bistro</b>	<b>Mar-95 and Nov-01</b>
<b>Bordeaux (French)</b>	<b>Feb-09</b>
<b>Meal for an Emperor (Napoleon)</b>	<b>Apr-05</b>
<b>Monet's Table</b>	<b>Apr-00</b>
<b>Perigord (French)</b>	<b>Apr-95</b>

<b>Provençal (French)</b>	<b>Apr-76 and Mar-09</b>
<b>German (5)</b>	<b>Jun-74, Feb-83, Feb-92</b>
<b>Oktoberfest</b>	<b>Oct-12</b>
<b>Greek (5)</b>	<b>Nov-72, Apr-79, Nov-83,</b>
	<b>Feb-99, Apr-12</b>
<b>Hawaiian (3)</b>	<b>Jun-72, Oct-99, Jun-77</b>
<b>Hungarian (7)</b>	<b>Oct-73, Dec-76, Feb-78,</b>
	<b>Feb-90, Oct-96, Mar-01</b>
<b>Indian (3)</b>	<b>Mar-85 and Nov-09</b>
<b>Indian Vegetarian</b>	<b>Feb-94</b>
<b>Indonesian (3)</b>	<b>Apr-72, Nov-79, Apr-91</b>
<b>Israeli (Jewish) (3)</b>	<b>Apr-78, Oct-05, Feb-15</b>
<b>Italian (12)</b>	<b>Oct-71, Dec-73, Nov-76,</b>
	<b>Apr-86, Feb-05, Oct-07</b>
<b>Bologna (Italian)</b>	<b>Apr-96</b>
<b>Northern Italian</b>	<b>Feb-80, Oct-93</b>
<b>Sardinia (Italian)</b>	<b>Feb-96</b>
<b>Tuscany (Italian)</b>	<b>Oct-95</b>
<b>Jamaican (1)</b>	<b>Mar-98</b>
<b>Japanese (2)</b>	<b>Apr-74 and Feb-86</b>
<b>Korean (1)</b>	<b>Oct-14</b>
<b>Latvian (1)</b>	<b>Oct-10</b>
<b>Macedonia (1)</b>	<b>Jan-06</b>
<b>Madagascar (1)</b>	<b>Nov-97</b>
<b>Mexican (6)</b>	<b>May-73, Feb-76, May-</b>
	<b>Jun-99, Oct-11</b>
<b>Moroccan (3)</b>	<b>Mar-10, Oct-77, Oct-82</b>

<b>Netherlands (1)</b>	<b>Feb-01</b>
<b>NZ/Australian (1)</b>	<b>Apr-94</b>
<b>Persian (1)</b>	<b>Feb-08</b>
<b>Polish (2)</b>	<b>Oct-98 and Mar-17</b>
<b>Polynesian (1)</b>	<b>Feb-87</b>
<b>Portuguese (1)</b>	<b>Oct-85</b>
<b>Russian (4)</b>	<b>Dec-71, Apr-77, Jan-82</b>
<b>Scandinavian (6)</b>	<b>Feb-72, Oct-84, Jan-88</b>
<b>Scandinavian</b>	
<b>Smorgasbord</b>	<b>Sep-75 and Oct-78</b>
<b>Scottish (2)</b>	<b>Feb-91 and Feb-07</b>
<b>South African (1)</b>	<b>Oct-15</b>
<b>Spanish (3)</b>	<b>Jan-75, Apr-92 and Apr-</b>
<b>Swiss (2)</b>	<b>Oct-90 and Feb-15</b>
<b>Tahitian (1)</b>	<b>Apr-06</b>
<b>Thai/Indonesian (3)</b>	<b>Apr-83, Feb-97 and Apr-</b>
<b>Theme Meals (10)</b>	
<b>Cook's Illustrated</b>	<b>Apr-08 and Oct-06</b>
<b>George Washington's</b>	
<b>Birthday Party - 1799</b>	<b>Feb-04</b>
<b>Goodbye Gourmet</b>	<b>Mar-15</b>
<b>Julia Child/James Beard</b>	<b>Feb-10</b>
<b>Last Meal of the</b>	
<b>Hindenburg</b>	<b>Apr-17</b>
<b>Last Meal of the Titanic</b>	<b>Apr-99</b>
<b>Oscar Party</b>	<b>Apr-04</b>
<b>Penthouse</b>	
<b>Potluck</b>	<b>Nov-04</b>
<b>(Modern Maturity)</b>	

**Roman Repast**  
**Thomas Jefferson**  
**Turkish (1)**

**Feb-02**  
**Apr-13**  
**Apr-16**

## **THE PRESENT**

**In 2016-2017, International Cooking has 20 members and continues having three group parties and three dinners. We will end this year with the “Last Dinner on the Hindenburg” which will certainly be interesting and fun.**

**Happily, Bonnie Ion was able to finally get all the menus and recipes assembled and scanned into a 144 MB computer file that is available to all members of International Cooking. It only took 20 years to complete this project.**

**Many members have come and gone and come back over the years. While we have been saddened with the loss of several members or spouses, we continue to celebrate our friendships with good food and congenial dinner discussion.**

**Astrid and Don Cleveland continued to host the Tailgate until September 2015, their last Tailgate event. 28 years of hosting the International Cooking Tailgate is certainly a milestone. Thank you, Astrid and Don!! Raya and Mort Brown hosted the Tailgate in September 2016.**

## **IN CONCLUSION**

**Paraphrased from an email from Raya Brown:  
“What is important is the uniqueness of the group. One of the reasons we joined this group in 1981 (or actually the newcomer group) soon after we came to Ann Arbor, was the fact that it included husbands. That allowed us as a couple to meet people from other departments at the university, and the meetings were in the evenings and weekends. The other groups met during the days and since we worked we could not participate.**

**“After participating for about 10 years as newcomer, we decided to join the ‘real’ international cooking group. The turnout among the newcomers was high as most of the member stayed here for a year or two, and as time went by, membership became younger and younger, while we became older and older. We didn’t have a lot in common with them anymore. It was a hard decision because the newcomers’ perception of the members of the ‘real’ group was that they were very particular about the dining etiquette and settings.**

**We found out that the group was very welcoming, friendly and easy going, and as you know, we are still members and enjoy the food and the company.”**

**It is the congenial dinners and parties which include spouses or partners as well as singles which keeps people coming back to International Cooking.**

**We look forward to another 45 years of interesting meals and company.**