

CHoW Line

Culinary Historians of Washington, D.C.

October 2009

Volume XIV, Number 2

Renew Your Membership in CHoW NOW!

The membership year runs from September 1 to August 31. Annual dues are now \$25 for an individual, household, or organization for those who choose to receive printed copies of *CHoW Line* in the mail. Dues are \$20 for members who choose e-mail delivery of *CHoW Line*.

Dues for students are \$15 to receive printed copies of *CHoW Line* in the mail (\$10 for e-mailed delivery of *CHoW Line*). Individual and household members are eligible to vote, hold office, and serve on committees.

Benefits include the newsletter *CHoW Line*, all meeting notices and a membership roster.

CHoW/DC publishes *CHoW Line* eight times each year. More information can be found at www.chowdc.org.

An annual subscription to the newsletter only is \$10 for e-mailed delivery (\$15 for printed copies via U.S. mail). No other membership benefits apply.

SEE PAGE 7 to join or renew your membership.

“Wine in Virginia”

Speaker: Patrick Evans-Hylton

**Sunday, October 11, 2009
2:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.**

Bethesda-Chevy Chase Services Center,
4805 Edgemoor Lane, Bethesda, Maryland

Patrick Evans-Hylton is a chef, food journalist, food educator and food historian. A native of Atlanta, he has called Norfolk-Virginia Beach, Va. home since 1991. Following a 13-year career in banking and finance, Evans-Hylton attended the (now closed) Norfolk campus of Johnson & Wales University.



Since 1995, he has been writing and teaching about food. He is senior editor for food and wine at *Hampton Roads Magazine* (www.hamptonroadsmagazine.com), as well as the executive editor for *Virginia Wine Lover* magazine (www.virginiawinelover.com), a statewide wine and food magazine. Evans-Hylton also contributes to *Edible Chesapeake* magazine, and is co-host the first Friday of each month on Food Friday (topical food news/people) on “HearSay” with Cathy Lewis on WHRV, public radio in Norfolk.

(continued on page 4) Also, see Virginia Wine Region Map on page 6.

Calendar of CHoW Meetings

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|--------------------|---|
| September 13 | Susan Pinkard, “A Revolution in Taste: The Rise of French Cuisine 1500-1800” |
| October 11 | Patrick Evans-Hylton, “Wine in Virginia” |
| October 17 | Field Trip to Alexandria Archaeology Center. Saturday, 2:00 p.m. |
| November 8 | Joan Bacharach, “Curating Culinary Exhibits for Museums: Behind the Scenes” |
| December 13 | Nongkran Daks, “Beyond Curry & Pad Thai: Regional Thai Cuisine” |
| January 10 | Tom Weiland, “The Search for the Elusive Schnitzel” |
| February 14 | Nancy Baggett, “Emergence of the Romantic Shape and Flavors of Valentine Confections” |
| March 4 | Special Tour: Library of Congress’s rare book holdings on gastronomy by Mark Dimunation, Chief. Thursday, 4:00 p.m. |
| March 14 | Fred Czarra, “Spices of Life: The Savory Story of the First Global Marketplace” |
| April 11 | Cooperative Supper (Note: time change 4:00 to 6:00 p.m.) |
| May 2 | Barbara G. Carson, “Ambitious Appetites” — political aspects on dining in D.C. during the Federal period. (Note: <u>first</u> Sunday) |

Culinary Historians of Washington, D.C. (CHoW/DC) founded in 1996, is an informal, nonprofit, educational organization dedicated to the study of the history of foodstuffs, cuisines, and culinary customs, both historical and contemporary, from all parts of the world.

www.chowdc.org

What Happened at the September 13 Meeting?

GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

The Meeting was called to order by **Katherine Livingston**, CHoW President, at 2:45 PM.

There were 53 members and guests in attendance.

Treasurer's Report: Treasurer **Bruce Reynolds** reported that the past fiscal year ended with a deficit of \$440.62. Major expenses fall into three categories: 1) *CHoW Line*; 2) Room Rental and 3) Speaker honoraria. Thus far this year income in the amount of \$340.00 has been received. Treasurer Reynolds stressed the importance of early dues payment in a humorous manner by awarding gold stars to two members (**Clara Raju** and **Nancy Eagles**) who were the first to renew their membership. He also informed the attendees that he was in the process of developing a fitting award for those whose dues are received late...perhaps a red L or some other appropriate label.

Announcements: President Livingston announced the new dues structure: Membership including printed copies of *CHoW Line* via U.S. mail (Individual, Household or Organization) \$25.00; Student \$15.00. Membership including copies of *CHoW Line* via e-mail (Individual, Household or Organization) \$20.00; Student \$10.00. Newsletter only: E-Mail delivery \$10.00; printed via U.S. Mail \$15.00

Katherine Livingston announced that **Anne Whitaker** has taken over the coordination of Refreshments for the monthly meetings. Anne asked that should anyone have questions about bringing food or drink to any of the meetings that she can be contacted at annewhitaker@hughes.net. Felice Caspar was thanked for her many years of outstanding service in coordinating this enjoyable aspect of the monthly meeting.

Dianne Hennessy King, *CHoW Line* Editor, announced that **Tom Weiland** would be developing an experimental column titled "Culinary Humor" for the newsletter. Tom asked members to share humorous food related items and the items' histories by emailing their stories and research to CHOWHUMOR@COMAST.NET.

Shirley Cherkasky, coordinator for the Field Trip to the Alexandria Archaeology Center on October 17, 2009, shared highlights of the tour of the Center. The Center is located in the Torpedo Factory building at the corner of King and Union Streets. The Program will begin at 2:00PM and last for approximately one hour. There will be a \$2.00 entry fee and the program is limited to a maximum of 25 participants. Questions regarding the Field Trip should be sent to Shirley at shircher@cs.com.

Kay Shaw Nelson shared with the attendees information about a PBS television program, "A Taste of History," that

will feature four episodes of cooking in Thomas Jefferson's restored kitchen at Monticello. Chef Walter Staib prepares dishes served in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries to people such as Jefferson, George Washington and Benjamin Franklin. The series will air this Fall.

Whatzits (see page 3)

Program: CiCi Williamson, ChoW Vice-President, introduced today's speaker, Susan Pinkard. Her talk was titled "A Revolution in Taste: The Rise of French Cuisine."

Meeting adjourned at 4:25 PM.

Respectfully submitted by **David Bender**, Recording Secretary

REFRESHMENTS

Kari Barrett brought A Spinage-pan-pie from *The court & country cook*, faithfully translated out of French into English by J. K. A. J. Churchill, London, 1702, p. 261 (see note below).

Francine Berkowitz brought Madeleines and Coconut Macaroons.

Kathleen Carrington brought Boeuf Bourguignon.

Claudia Kousoulas brought Korova Cookies and Croq-Tele (cookies) from *Paris Sweets* by Dorie Greenspan.

Jane Olmsted brought Herb and Flower Cottage Cheese Spread.

Clara Raju brought Yellow Squash Bread.

Pat Reber brought Biscuits de Chocolat from Menon.

Angela Silverman brought Biscotti Regina.

CiCi Williamson brought Salade de Boeuf à la Parisienne from Julia Child's *Mastering the Art of French Cooking*, 1961.

Note: To Make Spinage-pan-pie: "Take Spinage-leaves, and scald them in Water, or else stew them in an earthen Pot, with half a Glass of white Wine, to take away their Crudity. As soon as the Wine is consum'd, let the Spinage be drain'd, and chopt very small, season'd with a little Salt, Cinnamon, Sugar, Lemon-peel, two Macaroons* (Macarons) and sweet Butter. Then let them be put into fine Paste, and cover'd with Slips of cut Pastry-work; adding some Sugar and Orange-flower (water), as it is serving up to Table."



Salade de boeuf a la Parisienne

September 13 Program: A Revolution in Taste: The Rise of French Cuisine 1500-1800

Dr. Susan Pinkard's fascinating talk transported us from ancient Rome, Persia, and Greece to Paris in the 17th century, and from the heavily spiced pan-European "tastes like Moroccan" cuisine to the *nouvelle cuisine* that uses herbal flavors to show off the foods themselves.



Left to right: Clare Cassidy, Clara Raju, speaker Susan Pinkard, William Jonach, and Randy Clarke. Photo by CiCi Williamson

Along the way, she debunked the two reasons most often cited for the emergence of what we know today as "French food": (1) that Catherine de Medici's cooks from Italy taught their cuisine to the French; and (2) that the influx of ingredients from the New World transformed the cuisine.

At that time, the "DNA" of Italian food was a match to all the countries of Europe. From ancient Rome through the Renaissance, cooking was pungent, spicy, and sweet or sweet/sour. And New World ingredients were spottily accepted — later more than sooner.

During the Middle Ages and Renaissance, European cooks used local ingredients and imported spices to fuse layers of flavor into complex sauces, the end result being that individual ingredients were indistinguishable. Dr. Pinkard explained that quite suddenly, French cooks broke with this ancient tradition. The aim of what was

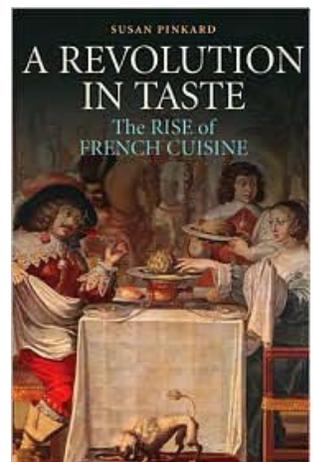
called "the delicate style" was to cook and serve ingredients in a manner that preserved the qualities with which they were endowed by nature. Instead of being cooked into amalgamations of flavors, French food began to taste like what it was.

She described a medical, an economic, and a social factor that drove the change in style. Medicine in the 17th century abandoned a centuries-old belief that foods had to be made with ingredients that balanced "humors" in the main ingredient and in the people being served, freeing food to be prepared without mandatory ingredients. Increased competition in the spice trade lowered prices, which made heavy spicing financially available to more people. As a result, heavy spicing lost its panache, and the fashionable upper class turned toward a more natural approach.

In pursuit of this new aesthetic of naturalness and simplicity, cooks developed many techniques and recipes that continue to define French cuisine to this day. The impact of the French culinary revolution reverberated far beyond the borders of France.

The fact that so many of us moderns wish to eat and drink in a manner that represents the variety of nature reflects our lasting attachment to the idea of authenticity that first emerged in the kitchens of the *ancien régime*.

Dr. Pinkard, holder of a Ph.D. in modern European history from the University of Chicago, has been a full-time visiting member of the Department of History at Georgetown University since 2005. She is also an avid cook, and, not surprisingly, *cuisine bourgeoise* forms the backbone of her culinary repertoire. To read more about the evolution of French cuisine, read Susan Pinkard's book, *A Revolution in Taste: The Rise of French Cuisine 1500-1800* (Cambridge University Press, 2008). —CiCi Williamson

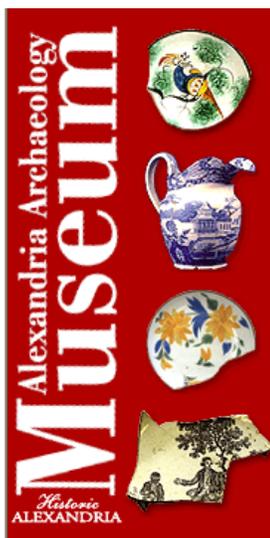


Whatzit!

There was one whatzit this month. CiCi Williamson brought a pair of wooden paddles that she had purchased in Chinatown but didn't know what their use was. Several individuals said they were butter paddles while others felt they were cookie molds. Their actual use remains a mystery. After the meeting, a CHoW member speculated that they are rice molds; however CiCi purchased them in a baker's store so she thinks they are for making some kind of Chinese cookies. She also posited that butter isn't a usual condiment on the Chinese table, so it's not likely they are butter molds.

Upcoming Events

Special CHoW Field Trip to Alexandria Archaeology Museum



Saturday, October 17, 2:00 p.m.
Fee: \$2, collected at museum
Torpedo Factory Art Center (3rd floor, suite #327); elevators available. **Attendance limited!**
105 N. Union Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
(just off King Street, at the waterfront) 703-838-4399
www.alexandriarchaeology.org

To make a reservation, e-mail Shirley Cherkasky shircher@cs.com

Join other CHoW members for a tour, talk and demonstration during an hour-long visit to

Alexandria Archaeology Museum. Look at www.visitalexandriava.com for a map of Alexandria as well as lists of nearby restaurants, galleries, shops, historic sites such as Gadsby's Tavern or the Leadbetter-Staebler Apothecary, plus transportation and parking information, in case you would like to explore Old Town on your own before or after the museum tour.

The museum has excavated one of two sugar refineries that operated in Alexandria during the early 1800s. Hundreds of earthenware shards of ceramic sugar molds and syrup jars used in the refining process were uncovered on the site of the 5-story tall Sugar House. Documents that provided insight into how an early refinery operated and how the sugar pottery was produced and used also were examined. The slave-grown Caribbean raw sugar was shipped to refineries in America and Europe. In Alexandria it was used to refine white sugar loaves and molasses. The loaves of white sugar were then wrapped in blue paper and sold.

The Alexandria Archaeology Museum also has a lot of other food- and beverage-related objects. The three bakeries in the city and their workers who produced sea biscuits for sailing ships and confectionery for local consumption also will be discussed.

How To Get There

By car: There will be some street parking, and there is a parking garage across the street from the Torpedo Factory. There is also parking at Founders' Park at King and Union Sts.

Metro: Get off at the King Street Station and take the free King Street Trolley that runs on a frequent schedule between the Metro and the Waterfront (19 blocks). Riders may get off and on at any corner on the route but the trolley's main points are the Metro Station and the Waterfront, 1/2 block from the Torpedo Factory.

The New Age of Chocolate Exhibit

U.S. Botanic Garden
100 Maryland Ave. SW
Washington, DC 20001
202-225-8333
Until November 15
10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Free



Scientific research is revealing new information about chocolate, including health benefits, genetic variation, disease susceptibility, determinants of flavor, and factors that promote sustainable harvest of this rainforest crop. If you feel like you need a "consumers guide" to chocolate, this exhibit may help.

www.usbg.gov/plant-collections/The-New-Age-of-Chocolate.cfm

Fall PBS-TV Series Filmed at Monticello

Watch for a PBS television series airing this fall, "A Taste of History," that will feature four episodes of cooking in Thomas Jefferson's restored kitchen at Monticello. Chef Walter Staib prepares dishes served in the 18th and early 19th centuries to people such as Jefferson, George Washington and Benjamin Franklin.



Producer Ariel Schwartz (from left), makeup artist Linda Trigo, chef Walter Staib and cameraman Bob Terrio prepare to film in the Monticello kitchen for the PBS cooking series, "A Taste of History."
Media General News Service



FOOD FOR THOUGHT: A STUDY OF THE PAST THROUGH FOOD

Saturday, October 24, 2009 8:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m. at Enfield Shaker Museum. Enfield, NH. Reservations: Required for both the Symposium and dinner. Please call 603-632-4346 by October 19. For complete information, go to www.newhampshirefarms.net/recent-features/food-for-thought-a-study-of-the-past-through-food.html or 603-727-9251

There will be two Keynote speakers, each followed by a panel, then a New Hampshire Growers Dinner.

Sandra Oliver [*Food History News, Saltwater Foodways*] "Every Dish Has a Past: Doing a Recipe's Genealogy": Researching recipes and culinary history through cookbooks, narratives, letters, newspapers, account books, and other primary resources



10:35 a.m. - 12:00 noon Panel: "Adventures in Researching Culinary History: Research Sources": Speakers on oral histories, diaries/correspondence, Farm Implements, Culinary Herbs of the Shakers

Anne Mendelson [author of *Milk*; and *Stand Facing the Stove*] "Back to the Future with Small Scale Dairy Farming"

2:30 - 4:15 p.m. Panel: "Bringing the Past Forward: methods and experiences from the past that today's farmers have studied and are refining to pass on to the next generation." John Porter, Anne Mendelson, Doug Erb, Landaff Creamery, Landaff, NH, Representatives of fluid milk, buffalo milk, puddings, yogurt, and butter

Cheese and Wine Reception; Tour the Enfield Shaker Museum and visit with kitchen equipment artisans, cheesemakers, wine, cider, and cheese makers.

Fees:

- \$75.00 per day includes all activities except the Growers Dinner
- NH Growers Dinner: \$40 symposium registrants \$45 museum members \$50 non-members
- Overnight stay: \$85-\$125 for single and double occupancy, includes deluxe continental breakfast



Culinary Humor

By Tom Weiland

How many chefs does it take to screw in a lightbulb? We find humor in everyday things, and one of the most basic things to everybody in every culture is food.

This is a new column, an outgrowth of the idea to hold a community dinner on "Foods with Funny Names." The concept is to collect culinary humor from the membership of CHoW, and print some of it most months. **The trick will be to trace the history of the humor.** Some ideas:

- Foods with Funny Names ("Ants on a Log")
- Notable Quotables ("A hot dog at the ball park is better than a steak at the Ritz" -Humphrey Bogart)
- Waiter jokes ("Waiter, there's a fly in my soup!" "Sorry, sir, I'll send to the kitchen for a spider...")
- Knock-knock jokes (juvenile but oddly effective at times)
- All manner of puns ("Time flies like an arrow; fruit flies like a banana.")
- Toasts ("May you die an old man in bed....shot by a jealous husband!")
- Bar jokes (A man walks into a bar...and knocks himself out.)
- Palindromes ("Ana nab a banana")
- Epic dining stories (those stories of a particularly disastrous dinner that had you rolling with laughter)
- Etc., etc., etc.

Food humor is not all fun and games. You have some seriously hard nuts to crack. How many of you can come up with a really good joke about turnips? Quark? Baba Ganoush? Yes, you know that somewhere in there is a really good joke trying to get out, but that does not mean you can come up with it at your next dinner party. Even better, can you come up with one that was told by a famous character in history?

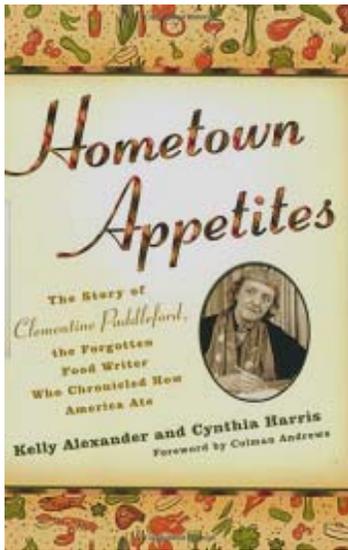
The hardest part is finding the history behind food humor. A lot of these jokes have been recycled for a very, very long time, with details changed to suit the present. "A guy walks into a bar..." was probably once "A varlet walks into a publick house..." or "A Viking walks into a mead hall..." or even "A merchant walks into a Bacchanalia..." But there's no reason not to try to research food humor history, we just need to start hanging around in the humor section of used book stores and libraries. Bring your suggestions for culinary humor to the next meeting or send your ideas to CHoW Line Editor **Dianne King** at tuckking@aol.com.

Book Review

Hometown Appetites: The Story of Clementine Paddleford, The Forgotten Food Writer Who Chronicled How America Ate By Kelly Alexander and Cynthia Harris

Reviewed by Jane Mengershauser

Clementine Paddleford, gone now and almost forgotten, has been brought to mind again in a new book, *Hometown Appetites: The Story of Clementine Paddleford, The Forgotten Food Writer Who Chronicled How America Ate*, by Kelly Alexander and Cynthia Harris. (Gotham Books 2008, 318 pages with recipes, \$27.50)



There are those of us (mostly of a “certain age”) who, in spite of the years, well-remember Clementine, food writer extraordinaire, who died in 1967. We miss her still, and mourn the fact that now it’s “stunt chefs,” with their bizarre recipes, who rule this current crazy World of Food, and get all the ink. They never knew Clem, never read about her, never even heard of her.

Too bad! They may have liked her, for she was quite

a character in her own way. In the new biography, she is revealed as an energetic workaholic, a party girl, a “fashion plate” who flew her own plane, and (it’s no secret), one who took many lovers. It is doubtful that her men friends were after her for her recipes. Beginning in the 1920s until her demise in 1967, “Clem” covered and reported in great detail the who, where, when, why, and how, of American cooking and eating. She wasn’t doing it all from the confines of her desk at the *New York Herald Tribune* where she reigned as recipe queen. She wrote a column, “How America Eats,” for *This Week* magazine, a Sunday supplement in the *Tribune* and 42 other major U.S. newspapers. She traveled 800,000 miles by train, plane, muleback, and on foot to get her stories. According to her biographers, “What Paddleford wrote, thirteen million households read.”

Fortunately, food history buffs who appreciate Paddleford’s down-home-style works can, if they can find and afford a copy, turn to her circa 1960 five hundred-page cookbook, a compilation of earlier works found on newsprint. The title is, *How America Eats*. Her only other bound work is *A Flower for My Mother*, a gem that sparkles

with Clem’s words. It’s not a cookbook but a bouquet of memories of the family table during her childhood on a Kansas farm.

But back to her newly issued biography: The authors do a thorough and fantastic job of following Clementine Paddleford’s news-hungry trek across America and far-away places. In a short review it is impossible to even try to do justice to fascinating details of her personal and professional doings, especially of one who has been described as “a flaky and adventurous original.”

The biography is crammed with many juicy and hilarious tidbits. Chapter headings such as “Just Watch My Footsteps” and “What Men Eat on a Submarine” are an invitation to the reader to soldier on through the 300 pages. For example, in July 1960, Clem talked her way on to the USS Skipjack, the fastest nuclear submarine in the world. “I had asked for it - a dive to the ocean floor,” she reported, and she got it. Not only that, she got an answer to her question on the touchy issue of the sub’s method of garbage disposal. She reported, “It is packed in sacks, weighted down, put in a projector like a miniature torpedo tube and fired out to the fish.”

Fifty five recipes gleaned from Paddleford’s works for inclusion in *Hometown Appetites* were tested and, in some cases, updated by Andrea Reusing, chef and owner of the Lantern restaurant in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. She chose them because they sounded “curious and delicious.” Among them are directions for making Schokoladeplätzchen (Little Chocolate Drops), *Oeufs Sardou*, and House of Schwarzenberg Pot Roast. Pages of the book are chock full of historical, gustatorial and gossipy delights. This book is as “meaty” as a butcher’s table.



Charicature of Clementine Paddleford by Dick Kirschbaum, food editor, Newark News, while in France in 1946. From Clementine Paddleford Papers, Dept. of Special Collections, Kansas State University.

The Land of Virginia Winegrowing



The landscape and climate of Virginia offers countless choice sites for vineyards. Each of the state's five main land regions – the **Appalachian Plateau**, the **Appalachian Ridge and Valley Region**, the **Blue Ridge**, the **Piedmont**, and the **Atlantic Coastal Plain** – boasts vineyards and wineries. Granite-based soils in western areas of the state and sandy loam soil in the eastern both offer prime grape-growing ground. And good drainage can be found on all landscapes at all elevations

Virginia's Climate Regions

Virginia's five distinct climate regions – the Tidewater, Piedmont, Northern Virginia, Western Mountain and Southwestern Mountain – provide a temperate climate that's not too hot or cold for extended periods. Virginia's varying weather patterns see the mountainous southwest and Shenandoah Valley average a 160-day growing season; and east of the Blue Ridge, an average of 200 days.

American Viticultural Areas

Six of the United States' 187 American Viticultural Areas, or AVAs – grape-growing regions defined by geographic features that influence the wines they produce – are in Virginia: **Eastern Shore**, **Monticello Northern Neck**, **North Fork of Roanoke**, **Rocky Knob**, and **Shenandoah Valley**. Given Virginia's preponderance of well-situated grape-growing sites with ideal soil conditions, fine wines now come from all over the state.

Patrick Evans-Hylton bio (continued from page 1)

Evans-Hylton has written two food history books - one on Smithfield ham and the other on Virginia peanuts - as well as the book Popcorn. Having founded the Hampton Roads chapter of Slow Food USA, he volunteers time promoting local foods and foodways, with an emphasis on regional and state food history.

Evans-Hylton is on the advisory board for the culinary program at Tidewater Community College in Norfolk, as well as the advisory board at Culinary Institute of Virginia, where he is an adjunct professor.

He also serves on the board of Hampton Roads chapter of Careers through Culinary Arts Program (C-CAP), which includes time mentoring at-risk youth interested in culinary arts as a profession and coordinates the student dining out club at Culinary Institute of Virginia.

Evans-Hylton serves on the board of the March of Dimes of Southeastern Virginia Signature Chef Auction; is chairman of Chow! Hampton Roads which promotes local foods and foodways as well as raising funds for the Samaritan House; and is a member of the Southern Foodway Alliance (SFA) and International Association of Culinary Professionals (IACP).

The chef blogs at: www.patrickevanshylton.com

