

ALERT

VOLUME 42 NUMBER 7

NOV 2020

RECIPES FROM THE PAST GENERATIONS

1203 N. Main
P.O. Box 1121
Wichita, KS 67201

316-264-3611

info@mhgswichita.org

mhgswichita.org

Library Hours:

Tuesday & Saturday

10 a.m. to noon

Inside this issue:

- Latest Library Additions
- Items of Interest
- Calendar of Events

Sometimes the research we do chasing down the rabbit hole causes more questions than answers. My wife lost a cousin a couple of months ago. She was the only child of my wife's aunt, and her only child died many years ago. In other words, she was the last in that branch of the family. My wife's grandparents had moved to south Texas in the 1920's after living in Kansas and Florida. The cousin had been the collector of family artifacts for the three generations living in the area since. Her wish was for my wife to take stewardship of the family history she had collected. The cousin's best friend began sending a package every few weeks soon after the cousin's death. While much of it was specific to her parents, a lot of the artifacts were for her grandparents and their siblings. Pictures of my wife's grandmother, great grandparents and 2nd great grandparents. Treasure.

My wife's grandmother was a big influence on my wife, teaching her first cooking skills and revealing recipe secrets she still uses to this day. Imagine the excitement of receiving a package packed with 3"x 5" index cards hand written by her grandmother. Recipes handed down from her ancestors, their siblings, neighbors and friends. Many were noted in a corner with the name of the contributor. This was the stuff of legend. Since many of the recipes had duplicates, it was obvious more than one collection was included. Probably grandmother, mother, and daughter all together. One card caught my eye. It was the only card for chili, from Melvin, the grandmothers' younger brother. Dated 1935, it had been saved for generations by a Texas family who were obviously into cooking. The ingredients were listed by name, but quantities were hazy, "for flavor", "enough to make it hot", etc. The secrets of Melvin's chili were in the eclectic mix of seasonings no one would have thought to use. I just knew I was onto something of great family importance.

Chili - melvins 3-1-35

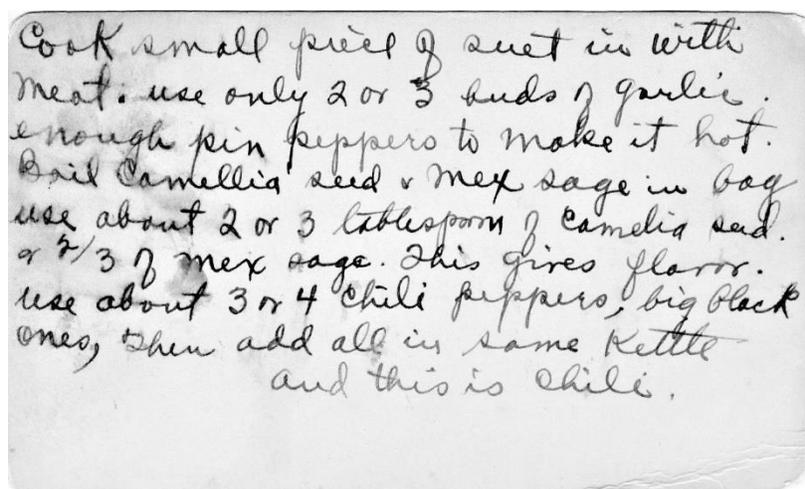
Small chili beans	.25¢
Camelia seed	.10
Mex sage	.10
garlic	10
Red Pin Peppers	10
Chili peppers	.10
Chili meat (Hamburger)	.35
	1.25

This makes 1/2 gal chili. (over)

I started looking for "camellia seed" and when I found it was "out of stock", I assumed someone was hoarding a great deal of it for their own chili. I began researching substitutes and was gratified to find the Japanese pressed Camellia Oelifera seeds for a vegetarian cooking oil. The problem was that it was described as having "very little flavor" and seemed to caution against using any other species of Camellia as toxic, as they were ornamental plants only. The leaves were used to make tea, and thus the oil was "tea seed oil" or "tsubaki". The toxic "tea tree oil" from Melaleuca Alternifolia was for topical use only. Seemed like a bad choice. The "Mexican Sage" Salvia Leucantha called out was also described as "not used in any culinary application". Not poisonous, but again having no flavor. For planting, not eating.

Julia found the site listing "Antique Chili" recipes (<https://www.prismnet.com/~wallen/chili/antique.html>) and I was particularly interested in "San Antonio Chili". It differed in ingredients by using beef and pork shoulder, rather than hamburger, but much of the rest of the list would fit Melvin's. No onions are in Melvin's recipe, but some people don't like onions. He put in beans, what's chili without beans? The seasonings were "comino seeds" and "Mexican oregano". When I researched comino, I found it is Spanish for cumin. Whole comino or cumin is second only to black pepper in seasoning use. Mexican oregano is commonly used in chili.

While Melvin boiled his spices to get the flavors, rather than add them directly, I now think he had a chili recipe that had no "secret" ingredients. He was probably not a cook, just a brother who wrote down a recipe as he could remember it. Sage or Oregano, they're all the same. Comino sounds like camellia. Grandma knew what he meant. I think she saved the recipe because it was Melvin's, not because she used it as written.



Cook small piece of suet in with
meat. use only 2 or 3 buds of garlic.
enough pin peppers to make it hot.
Soil Camellia seed & Mex sage in bag
use about 2 or 3 tablespoon of Camellia seed.
or 2/3 of Mex sage. This gives flavor.
use about 3 or 4 chili peppers, big black
ones, then add all in same Kettle
and this is chili.

Jim Scharnhorst

TOPEKA HEARTLAND FAMILY HISTORY CONFERENCE

The Topeka Genealogical Society has reconfigured its genealogy conference to be virtual and it starts on October 31! The virtual conference will include a full day of live-streamed presentations from Lisa Alzo, plus on-demand access to dozens of other pre-recorded presentations until January 31, 2021. Check out the details and register for the conference here: <https://tgstopeka.org/cpage.php?pt=9>

Julia had fun recording her presentation.

They have already put out a request for proposals for next year, so if you have a presentation, submit your proposal here: <https://tgstopeka.org/cpage.php?pt=81>.

ADDITIONS TO THE LIBRARY

The History of Grayson County, Texas	R-440 080 V2
Marriage Records of Grayson County, Texas 1846-1877	R-440 081
Bennington	R-460 019
Historic and Memorial Buildings of the Daughters of the American Revolution	R-600 094
Coastal Ghosts & Lighthouse Lore	R-600 095
Painted Ponies: American Carousel Art	R-600 096
Supplement to Torrey's New England Marriages Prior to 1700	R-605 003 2 nd
Ever New England	R-605 021
St. Stephen Rural Cemetery St. Stephen, N. B.	R-620 283
From Scotland to Prince Edward Island	R-620 284
Maine Indians "The People of the Early Dawn"	R-631 078
A Guide to the Indian Tribes of Oklahoma	R-631 079
Native American Directory of Me, Ma, RI, Ct, NY, Wi	R-631 080
Slavery, Secession, and Southern History	R-632 09
Immigrants to New England, 1700-1775	R-650 089
Loyalists to Canada: 1783 Settlement of Quakers and others at Passamaquoddy	R-650 090
Battles and Leaders of the Civil War	R-670 272 V 1-4
Fort Fisher: Gateway of the South	R-670 273
Civil War Handbook	R-670 274
The Diary of an Unknown Soldier	R-670 275

2019-2020 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President: Rex Riley (president@mhgswichita.org)	Alert Editor: Micki Wright Stephans (alert@mhgswichita.org">alert@mhgswichita.org)
Vice President: Barb Myers (vp@mhgswichita.org)	Building & Grounds: Open
Treasurer: Jim Scharnhorst (treasurer@mhgswichita.org)	Computer Technology: Vincent Hancock (tech@mhgswichita.org)
Secretary: Michelle Pickett (secretary@mhgswichita.org)	Publicity: Francene Davis Sharp (publicity@mhgswichita.org)
Librarian: Julia Langel (library@mhgswichita.org)	Register Editor: Ann Hathaway Boll (register@mhgswichita.org)
	Membership: Bev Jackson (members@mhgswichita.org)

Library open limited hours only in November: Tuesday and Saturday, 10 to noon.

Library closed Saturday November 28, 2020

Please see the Google calendar or our Facebook page for details.

POWER-UP SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP	RESEARCHING THE HISTORY OF A HOUSE, BUSINESS OR A FARM
Second Tuesday @ 1:30 to 3 pm	Third Saturday @ 1:30 to 3 pm
Led by Julia Langel	Led by Julia Langel
ON HIATUS	ON HIATUS
PHOTO MYSTERIES	AFRO-AMERICAN SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP
Third Tuesday @ 1:30	Fourth Saturday @ 1 pm
Led by Rex Riley	ON HIATUS
ON HIATUS	

Midwest Historical & Genealogical Society

P.O. Box 1121

Wichita, KS 67201

Change Service Requested