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Collection Overview

Repository: Archives Center, National Museum of American History
Title: Frances S. Baker Product Cookbooks
Identifier: NMAH.AC.0612
Date: circa 1900-1993
Extent: 0.5 Cubic feet (2 boxes)
Creator: Baker, Frances S., 1911-1999
Language: English
Collection is in English.

Summary: Small cookbooks, primarily in pamphlet form, produced either by the manufacturer of one of the ingredients or by the manufacturer of appliances used in preparing the recipe. These cookbooks also advertise the products represented. Collection includes pamphlets on canning, canning labels, recipes from newspapers, and several regional cookbooks, including Canada and the Pacific Northwest.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Most of the collection was acquired in a random fashion by Mrs. Baker though some items were given her by her mother-in-law and sister-in-law. Mrs. Baker had corresponded with the Smithsonian Libraries in 1991 about a possible donation of the cookbooks, but it was not until the summer of 1997, as she was moving into an assisted-living facility, that Mrs. Baker actually donated the collection. A few items, including almanacs, have been added to the Dibner Library.

Processing Information

Collection processed by Susan B. Strange, 1999.

Preferred Citation


Restrictions

Collection is open for research.
Biographical / Historical

Born March 3, 1911, in Tacoma, Washington, the donor was known as Frances Jensen before she was adopted by her stepfather and her name was changed to Bjorkman. She graduated with a BS degree from the College of Puget Sound (now the University of Puget Sound) in 1932 and then taught high school before earning a Masters Degree about 1939 in botany from the University of Washington. After working as a lab technician in Sedro Woolley, Washington, for several years, she moved to Ketchikan, Alaska, in 1944. In 1945 she married Alfred Baker, and he joined her in Alaska after his war-time service in the Navy. In 1965 Mr. Baker retired, and the couple, who had no children, moved to Sumas, Washington, where Mr. Baker had grown up. Mr. Baker died in 1982 and Mrs. Baker continued to live in the family home until mid-1997 when she moved into an assisted-living facility.

Mrs. Baker claims she did not set out to collect product cookbooks, but that “anything that's paper sticks to me,” and that “it's easy to make a collection if you never throw anything away.” Some cookbooks were gathered by her mother-in-law and sister-in-law. While Mrs. Baker rarely used recipes from the booklets she gathered, she said she was “quite competitive” and regularly entered jams, jellies, and pickles in the Whatcom (Washington) County Fair where she won enough "blue and red ribbons" to fill a shoe box. She had a vegetable and flower garden every year from 1946 through the summer of 1997, and flowers from her garden also won awards at the fair. The information in this section was obtained during a telephone conversation on October 14, 1997, between Mrs. Baker and Susan Strange. Mrs. Baker died June 11, 1999.

Scope and Contents

The bulk of the collection is product cookbooks published by food and kitchen appliance manufacturers. One of the strengths of this collection is its inclusion of pamphlets from regional manufacturers located in the Pacific Northwest and Alaska along with a few items from Canada. Also included are pamphlets on canning, canning labels, recipes clipped from local newspapers, and several regional cookbooks. The collection is divided into three series. Product cookbooks, alphabetized by manufacturer, comprise the first series. The second series consists of cookbooks, filed alphabetically, not associated with a specific manufacturer, and the third series contains three folders of ephemera sorted by type (labels, refund packaging, newspaper clippings, etc.)

Arrangement

The collection is arranged into three series.

Series 1: Product Cookbooks

Series 2: General Cookbooks

Series 3: Ephemera
Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:
- Cookery -- 1900-1990 -- Canada
- Cookery -- Pacific Northwest style -- 1900-1990
- Food -- 1900-1990
- Home economics -- 20th century
- Advertising -- Cookbooks -- 1900-1990

Types of Materials:
- Cookbooks -- 1900-1990
- Pamphlets -- 20th century
Container Listing

Series 1: Product Cookbooks, 1900-1993

Box 1, Folder 1  All-American Steam Pressure Cooker
Box 1, Folder 2  Amaizo Oil
Box 1, Folder 3  American Dairy Association
Box 1, Folder 4  Arm & Hammer
Box 1, Folder 5  Armour and Co.
Box 1, Folder 6  Betty Crocker

Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 7  Borden
Box 1, Folder 8  Brazil Nut Association
Box 1, Folder 9  California Fresh Plum Promotion Advisory Board
Box 1, Folder 10  Campbell's
Box 1, Folder 11  Canned Salmon Industry
Box 1, Folder 12  Carnation

Image(s)

[Page of Special Menus beside page showing a toaster and relish tray : product cookbook], 1937
1 Item (Ink on paper.; 9.25" x 12").
Image(s): [Page of Special Menus beside page showing a toaster and relish tray : product cookbook].
Carnation, Advertiser
Special Menus for such occasions as Washington's Birthday Afternoon Bridge Party and May Day Breakfast, with reproductions of color photographs as illustrations. Photographer of toaster and relish tray unidentified.

Local Numbers
00061201.tif (AC Scan)

In Box 1, Folder 12.
Topic:          Cookery -- 1930-1940
               Menus -- 1930-1940
               Product cookbooks

Genre/        Cookbooks
Form:         Menus -- 1930-1940
               Photographs -- 1930-1940 -- Color -- Reproductions

Box 1, Folder 13  Centennial Flouring Mills Co.
Box 1, Folder 14  Certo
Box 1, Folder 15  Cho-Chin Oriental Food Products
                  Image(s)
Box 1, Folder 16  Clabber Girl
Box 1, Folder 17  Colman's Mustard
Box 1, Folder 18  Corning Glass Works (Pyrex)
Box 1, Folder 19  Crescent
Box 1, Folder 20  Darigold, Whatcom County (WA) Dairymen's Assn
Box 1, Folder 21  Delmarva Poultry Industry
Box 1, Folder 22  Dromedary (Hills Brothers Co.)
Box 1, Folder 23  Duncan Hines
Box 1, Folder 24  Fairbanks-Morse Conservador Refrigerator
Box 1, Folder 25  Famous Flours
Box 1, Folder 26  Fleischmann's Yeast
Box 1, Folder 27  Fisher Flouring Mills Co.
Box 1, Folder 28  French, R. T., Co.
Box 1, Folder 29  Fresh-Kept Fruits and Vegetables
Box 1, Folder 30  Fruit Dispatch Co. (Unifruitco)
| Box 1, Folder 31 | General Foods |
| Box 1, Folder 32 | Ghirardelli's Chocolate |
| Box 1, Folder 33 | Gillett, E. W., Co. (Magic Baking Powder) |
| Box 1, Folder 34 | Hamilton Beach |
| Box 1, Folder 35 | Hirsch Bros. |
| Box 1, Folder 36 | Jaques Mfg (KC Baking Powder) |
| Box 1, Folder 37 | Karo, Div. of Corn Products Co. |
| Box 1, Folder 38 | Kellogg's |
| Box 1, Folder 39 | Kerr |
| Box 1, Folder 40 | Kitchen Craft |
| Box 1, Folder 41 | Knox Gelatine |
| Box 2, Folder 42 | Kraft |
| Box 2, Folder 43 | Leslie |
| Box 2, Folder 44 | Libby's |
| Box 2, Folder 45 | Lipton Tea |
| Box 2, Folder 46 | MCP Foods, Inc. |
| Box 2, Folder 47 | Maca Yeast |
| Box 2, Folder 48 | Metropolitan Life Insurance Co. |
| Box 2, Folder 49 | National Distillers Prod. |
| Box 2, Folder 50 | Natural Food Co. |
| Box 2, Folder 51 | Nestle's |
| Box 2, Folder 52 | Roman Meal |
Box 2, Folder 53       Pillsbury
Box 2, Folder 54       Puritan Malt Extract Co.
Box 2, Folder 55       Ralston
Box 2, Folder 56       Reynolds Metals
Box 2, Folder 57       Royal Baking Powder
Box 2, Folder 58       Sears, Roebuck & Co. (Coldspot)
Box 2, Folder 59       Shield's Date Gardens
Box 2, Folder 60       Southern Comfort Corp.
Box 2, Folder 61       Sperry Flour
Box 2, Folder 62       Spry
Box 2, Folder 63       Standard Brands
Box 2, Folder 64       Tupperware
Box 2, Folder 65       Van Houten's Cocoa
Box 2, Folder 66       Wesson Oil & Snowdrift Co.
Box 2, Folder 67       Wine Advisory Board

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Series 2: General Cookbooks

Box 2, Folder 68
"Body Building Dishes for Children" and "Bicentennial 1776 Cookery"

Box 2, Folder 69
"The Cook's Book"

Box 2, Folder 70
"Washington Centennial Vintage Vittles" and "California Bi-Centennial Cookbook"
Series 3: Ephemera

Box 2, Folder 71  Refund packaging and recipes cut from packaging
Box 2, Folder 72  Canning ephemera, labels, facts about food
Box 2, Folder 73  Newspaper clippings

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