Sandwich Memories

Red Inside Bread

FOLLOW your own recipe for red beets, then pour the warm, red beet juice into a container with the beets and hard-cooked eggs.

Let sit in the refrigerator overnight so the eggs become colored.

Slice the eggs; serve them on bread with lettuce and a little mayonnaise. Add beet slices if you wish.

—Jacqueline H., Red Lion, Pennsylvania

She Was a Fan of This Club

YOUR INVITATION to tell about a favorite sandwich jolted me back to the late 1940s.

I was at a Woolworth's lunch counter and tried their ham and egg salad club. Using three slices of bread, there was ham salad between the first two slices of bread, and then it was topped with egg salad and a third bread slice. It was cut in quarters and stood on the crust sides. It was the best ever.

—Lois M., St. Petersburg, Florida

Sharp Memories

…RAW POTATO with sliced raw onions and sprinkled with salt and pepper with real butter on the bread. It brings back memories of when I was a kid.

—James B., Kenosha, Wisconsin

Yum!

ARRIVING HOME from school, we smelled Mother's fresh-baked bread. Nothing was better than a warm slice with homemade butter and good wild gooseberry or chokecherry jelly. Yum!

—Elizabeth D., Moore, Montana

And a Great Lunch, Too!

MANY YEARS AGO, I was working for a local farmer who was paying the unheard-of price of 5¢ a box to pick strawberries.

A bunch of us kids signed on and picked awhile, but it was a hot day and we all got hungry.

The farmer's wife called us in for lunch, and she brought out a big platter of hot bologna sandwiches on homemade brown bread.

I still think of them.

—Walter G., Westville, Nova Scotia

She Loved Those Lumps

MY MOTHER grew up in the Depression and, with nine children, money was tight. Our parents didn't have money for cakes, cookies and pies, so they improvised.

For a quick treat, Mom used to fix me a brown sugar sandwich with a slice of bread, a little oleo and a few teaspoons of dark brown sugar.

I used to love biting into a lump of brown sugar and feel it melt in my mouth. Today, I occasionally fix myself this treat and remember my mother as I bite into the little lumps.

—Mary Catherine W., South Bend, Indiana

Mom Dealt with Rationing

DURING WWII, my favorite sandwich was pecan halves on two pieces of bread smothered with Miracle Whip salad dressing.

I'm sure it was my mother's way of getting protein into me during the war when we couldn't get meat and I became anemic.

—Lyn H., Little Rock, Arkansas

Try a SPAM-wich

MY FAVORITE old-time sandwich filling was a can of SPAM, ground with four or five sweet or dill pickles, then mixed with salad dressing.

—Marjorie M., Hamburg, New York

Salad Made Great International Filling

MY DAD was Syrian, and my mother is Italian. Mom has always made a great salad, combining lettuce, tomatoes, scallions and red peppers from our garden with garlic, mozzarella cheese, feta cheese, lemon juice, olive oil, Syrian or Greek olives, oregano and bulgur wheat.

As children, my sister Chris and I loved to made salad sandwiches with this delicious salad in Syrian pita bread.

—Weda M., Phillipsburg, New Jersey

Memories as Sweet as Sandwiches

MY MOTHER made my favorite sandwich for my best friend, Jeanne Oddy, and me in Springfield Gardens, Queens, New York.

We ate our banana sandwiches on white bread with crispy lettuce and mayonnaise at my table-and-chair set, either in our empty garage or in our backyard.

Every time I make one of those sandwiches, I think of Jeanne, who now lives in Maine, and those wonderful summer days in the early 1940s.

—Georgina K., Brooklyn, New York

Rationing Was No Bother

I GREW UP in Ambridge, Pennsylvania, north of Pittsburgh. In the 1940s, my father grew green peppers, tomatoes and yellow onions.

Mom would saute the onions, add the green peppers and tomatoes and cook until they were all tender. After dipping Mom's homemade bread in the sauce, we mounded up the peppers, tomatoes and onions on the bread. Delicious!

There weren't many vegetarian sandwiches at that time.

—Jean V., Annandale, Virginia

He Liked 'Em Plain

IN THE 1930s and '40s, I enjoyed salt-and-pepper sandwiches, which we usually made using bread spread with mayonnaise.

My favorite for breakfast was toast generously spread with real whipped cream.

—Clifford P., Ogden, Utah

Who Was Duke?

WHEN I WAS a girl, in the early 1940s, Mom sometimes fixed a sandwich from leftover milk gravy from the previous night's dinner.

She'd mix chopped green onions into the cold gravy and spread it on bread. For some reason, she called the gravy-and-onions pairing "Duke's mixture" if eaten with a spoon, or "Duke's Spread" if it was put on bread.

—Donna S., Yakima, Washington

Medicinal Benefits?

BACK in the 1950s, our family ate onion sandwiches. Mom marinated slices of sweet Spanish onions in diluted vinegar for several hours in the refrigerator, then spread bread with margarine and added the onion slices.

Mom said that if we ate them, we wouldn't get a cold, and it seemed to work. No doubt! No one got close enough to us to give

us germs! —Romaine S., Bernville, Pennsylvania

Smashing Success

GROWING UP, in the late 1960s, my favorite sandwich was the one created by my older brother Kevin. He put bologna and potato chips between two slices of white bread, and then he'd crush the chips after the sandwich was made.

That I would eat this smashed creation proves how much I adored my big brother.

—Kelley N., Portville, New York

Ricotta Made It Special

MY GRANDPARENTS were from Italy and raised my two older sisters and me in the early 1940s in Sharpsburg, Pennsylvania.

My grandmother Anna Bernard would cut a thick slice of her home-made bread, cover it with ricotta cheese and sprinkle that with chopped walnuts.

That was the best sandwich I ever had.

—Lorelei G., Pahrump, Nevada

Returning Customers Had S'More

DURING WWII, in '42 and '43, I attended Buena Vista College in Storm Lake, Iowa and worked on the weekends at The Sugar Bowl restaurant.

One of their recurring specials was a grilled Hershey nut sandwich, made with half a plain Hershey chocolate bar and a teaspoon of chopped peanuts between two slices of bread, buttered on the outside, then grilled.

—Marjorie B., Marshalltown, Iowa

Liver for What Ailed Her Sister

WHEN MY twin sister, Marilyn, was diagnosed with anemia, in 1954, the recommendation was to eat beef four days a week and liver three days a week.

Our mom, Blanche McNally, thought that if liver was so good for anemia, why not grind some more for school lunches and a quicker recovery?

Since we were twins, she took no chances and made me eat beef and liver, too.

For the next 6 months, Mom mixed liver with diced onions and mayo, buttering both slices of the bread.

When it was time for lunch at George Washington High School in Manhattan, New York, the cafeteria reeked of liver.

—Blanche M., Schenectady, New York

Homegrown Favorite

DURING THE DEPRESSION, when I was growing up, my favorite sandwich was sliced radishes from our own garden, on bread that my mother made. The bread had plenty of butter that had been churned from cream that was skimmed from milk from our cows.

—Lucille K., Winona, Minnesota

He's a Maine-iac

MY FAVORITE SANDWICH originated in Maine in about 1920 at Amato's, a mom-and-pop grocery store in Portland.

Their "Original Italian Sandwich" was made with a 12-inch Italian-style roll and filled with white American cheese; boiled ham or cotto salami; chunky, sliced tomatoes; sliced green pepper strips; sliced sour pickles; chopped sweet Spanish onions; pitted Italian or Greek

olives; salt; pepper; and blended olive, corn and soybean oil.

In the 1940s, it sold for 90¢. Don't try to eat it in a car, only at a table. It was always sold wrapped in waxed paper.

—Robert D., Gorham, Maine

Let's Be Precise

MY FAVORITE homemade sandwich was a true triple-decker club sandwich made with Mom's sliced meat loaf and plen-ty of Heinz Spicy Brown Mustard.

The other filling layer required a slice of jumbo bologna, hard salami, pimiento cheese, lettuce, garden (not hothouse) tomato, onion and mayonnaise.

These cold ingredients had to be ready to apply immediately between the three slices of toast as soon as they popped up from the toaster.

—Ron S., Edinboro, Pennsylvania

Her Hash Was Served Sliced

WHEN MY MOM made a beef roast, it became the next day's hash. She baked the roast, cooked boiled potatoes and sauteed onions.

Then she ground the roast, added the chopped potatoes, onions, and salt and pepper, and added cream to the proper texture.

Then she cooked the mixture in a skillet, adding more cream if needed, then cooled it and put it in a loaf pan in the refrigerator to cool.

The next day, we enjoyed slices of the hash on homemade bread with a dash of salt and mustard, if desired.

—Betty S., Avondale, Arizona

She Craved This

WHEN I WAS carrying our first child, I loved a sandwich made of apple butter and sharp cheese—very tasty and different.

No wonder our daughter, now 54, loves cheese so much!

—Inge W., Ooltewah, Tennessee

Favorite Was the One He Didn't Eat

IN THE 1940s, I'd get deeply involved in radio shows such as The Shadow and The Lone Ranger. Mom would come in the kitchen after cleaning up after dinner and ask us if we'd like a sandwich.

I was so engrossed that I said, "I don't care, Mom. Anything," which wasn't what she wanted to hear.

Once, she brought a sandwich for me, and I noticed it was the way I liked it—sliced diagonally.

As I picked up the first half, still deeply involved in the story, she reached out and grabbed my arm.

"Before you take a bite, look at what I made you…just as you requested, anything," she said.

The sandwich looked fine but when I lifted the top slice of bread, there were horse droppings. Mom had gone to the neighbor's yard and picked up just enough to make my sandwich.

That sandwich taught me two valuable lessons: I never used that expression again and always paid attention to Mom when she spoke.

—Bill J., Elsinboro, New Jersey