Deirdre A. Scaggs 00:00

So how are you all? Don't worry if you didn't get tea, there's plenty of more tea. I just couldn't stand here anymore and have food and not share it with anyone. So Well, thank you so much for coming. In my experience of talking about the cookbook, the audience tends to have a lot of questions. So I'm happy to answer any questions at the end. Or if you think of something while I'm talking, please don't hesitate to ask me during the talk or save it till the very end. I won't mind either way. So, so because the one of the most common questions that I've been asked is how the idea to put together a cook book like this came about. So hopefully, if nothing else, that will make sense to you by the end of my talk today. So first and foremost, I do love to cook myself, I'm not a professional cook. I've never been formally trained. But I do love to cook food and share food with other people. And I tell lots of I tell everyone, really, if they'll listen that I don't like to cook for myself. I only like to cook for other people. And so when you're putting together a cookbook that requires tasters, it's the perfect situation because I was constantly going out and getting people to convincing them to share food with me. The second big reason is that I'm fascinated by studying the implications of the history of food and the way it's shaped our lives and our culture. And it's also a commodity that we all have in common. It doesn't matter what social class we may be, what race we are, what age we are, or even what gender so I love that aspect of this this book is that I think it relates or can relate to people of people from anywhere. So when I was a little girl, I spent most of my summers with my grandmother, I should say I'm from Kentucky. I'm from Northeastern Kentucky, a small town called Vance Burg and my grandmother lived one mile away from me. So that's where I spent my summer vacations. And she cooked lunch for us every day. My mother worked as a nurse in the Health Department five miles down the road. So she would come up on her lunch breaks. And we would always eat lunch together. The dining room table was in the kitchen. So we were you know, always right there in that space. We always had iced tea in there was always a bowl of cucumbers and vinegars and sliced tomatoes from the garden and summer. And if it was out of season, there were always pickles that my grandmother had made and canned beans. Of course, all of our holidays were centered around a huge meal. My grandmother would almost always wake up in the middle of the night to start the yeast rolls to bake her apple cake or to put the turkey or ham in the oven. And so by the time we got there for our dinner meal, there
was no trace that she had done anything in that kitchen it was astounding. So I spent today just you know making these buttermilk cakes and spice tea. And you can definitely tell that I made those I don't know how she did it. My grandmother also had something special for every person who came to those holiday meals. So for my Uncle Bob, it was Coca Cola and glass bottles. My Uncle Jim it was brown beans and onions. For me it was yeast rolls. And like I said she would make this abundance of food leaving no trace behind. And those meals are really special memories for me. And it's not just the way it tasted and you know the quality of the food, and that it was a home cooked meal but what it symbolizes for my family and how it helped to develop the person that I am today and the values that I have. So I searched for years for my grandmother's handwritten recipes after she had passed away but she didn't write very many of them down. She did nearly everything based on how it tasted or how it felt. And I have found a few some of the ones that fortunately mean a lot to me her apple cake Her salt brine pickle recipes and her zucchini bread. She made these fried potatoes that no one can recreate. we've all tried to recreate them but it's impossible so it completely eludes me. She could cut them perfectly and cook them so that there were lots of crispy bits and tender pieces all at the same time. And she of course used bacon fat and a cast iron skillet. The bacon fat I'm sure contributed a great deal to the success of those. But I do have to say that the closest that I've ever come to having potatoes that tasted like those is from a recipe that's included in this cookbook. I did use her cast iron skillet to make it so I think that that helped a bit too but it's a dry hash recipe and the cookbook. Another big food of influence in my life was my father and he and I have had a bond over food I'm ever since I can remember, he did a lot of the cooking when I was growing up and he still does a lot of the cooking. He continues to make me breakfast every time I come home, which I'm very thankful for even though I have my own child now. And he likes to tell stories, and he doesn't care to tell the same story over and over again, which is fine. It's also endearing. But apparently when I was in elementary school, it was the weekend and he proclaimed that he was the egg sandwich expert. And he wanted to know if I would like an egg sandwich. I did. But he asked me what I wanted on the egg sandwich. And being a little precocious. I said, Well, you just said you were the egg sandwich expert, how should I know? So if you take time to look at the book. That's why the cookbook is dedicated to Roger Skaggs, the egg sandwich expert, and Dorothy Wilson and her cast iron skillet. So so that's a little bit about my history. And the reasons that creating a cookbook based on Kentucky cooking traditions was important to me. And so even though the recipes that are included in this cookbook aren't from my family, they are from our collective Kentucky families. And the traditions that we share today were handed down from people just like them. And I believe that there's still a part of us. And I hope that by taking taking these recipes out of the archives, manuscripts and of themselves that have never been published, that it's going to continue that for future generations. So to tell you a little bit, though, about the process of taking a passion and turning it into a book, I'll tell you the story of how that came to be. It's my co-author, Andrew McGraw, who is not here because he has twins who are six months old, and he works in a kitchen. So he has very little time to do things outside of those. But at the time, he was getting his master's and master's in library and information science from the University of Kentucky. And he was working in Special Collections. I was a supervisor. And he was processing the English family papers. And he had some questions about processing. But he had also found a selection of recipes. And so we were talking about processing, but soon got distracted talking about the actual recipes that he had found. And we both had a passion for food. And so it didn't take long before we were really diverted and talking about those recipes. So we started talking about how interesting it would be to take take a recipe to bring it to life today to see what it would taste like. And we just kept talking about it until I started talking about another collection that I knew of that had a large set of recipes. The Francis Joel McVeigh papers, had a bound volume full of handwritten recipes. And so before we knew it, we were attempting to make a White Mountain cake. So the White Mountain cake was the first recipe that we made. For this
cookbook, it was not the first successful recipe that we made for this cookbook, the White Mountain cake was a disaster. And it was it quickly took the romantic ideas that I had about creating a cookbook out of historic recipes and nearly destroyed it. So the first, the first attempt, like I said, was disastrous, but we tried two more times, both immediately following the first attempt. And each one was a complete failure. At the same time this cake was uncooked it was overcooked and it had no taste. So it was it was bad. I was determined though, that we could turn this into a success and a positive experience. So we had another recipe that we had found the lemon custard pie. And in doing this process, I've done a lot of research on pies and cooking in general and have thought a lot about the anatomy of a pie in itself. And so for me, I think the anatomy of a pie should be very simple. And I find it can be a little transcendent. But like I said, I really liked food. We found also a plain paste recipe in in our collection, which was a recipe for a pie crust. So I tried as best as I could to channel my grandmother to trust the way the pie crust felt, the way that it looked the way that it smelled. And we also made it a point to try and use as many local and fresh ingredients that we could. A lot of these recipes are so simple. And so if you're not using those fresh ingredients, you can really tell a difference, I think. So that day we had local fresh eggs, we had organic lemons and we had milk and that's just about all He needed to make this lemon custard pie. So we decided we could do it. So I remember distinctly putting the pie in the oven and still feeling a little hesitant about how successful it was going to be. But I was still hopeful. And as the pie cooked, you could smell it permeating through the house, and you could smell the tartness and the sweetness, and you could smell the butter. And so I've described that as filling the kitchen with the aroma of hope. So we pulled it out. And it was a custard pie. So we couldn't just slice into it, it needed it needed to set, which was really hard as a test of patience. But we finally waited almost long enough and sliced into it. And it was delicious. So that was the true first success and the true beginning of the historic Kentucky kitchen. So after we had a success, we had to really think about what we were going to do, you know, how are we going to take things that we liked, something that we were feeling really romantic about and turn it into a cookbook that other people would hopefully feel a little bit of that as well. So we felt really strongly about focusing on the handwritten recipes in the collections at UK. And I had already mentioned that these handwritten recipes are manuscripts. And in doing research, I found there were several culinary historians who talked about manuscript collections and recipes and the fact that those aren't, it's very uncommon for those to be published. So we felt like we were taking a part of this family's history because it was handwritten and so connected to the family's life and culture, and that we were breathing new life into it by testing them and cooking them. So what we wanted to do was to test the recipes, we didn't want to change them, we didn't want to alter the way that they the to alter the intent, the true intent of the recipe. But we did want to standardize them so that they could be used by a home cook today. So we gave them cooking times or standardized measurements, things that many of these recipes lacked, which was an extreme challenge. So what we ultimately hope is that individuals can create their own memories around today's table in in today's Kentucky kitchen. So I thought I would share some of the other learning the growing pains we had with this cookbook. Another disaster that did not end well was the vinegar pie. And it is fairly common to see a little bit of vinegar in a in a cake or a pie. But this was a lot of vinegar, and it was a lot of cream. And those two things don't mix very well. So I cooked it the way that I thought based on the instructions that were included in the handwritten recipe, and I took it out of the oven, and it smelled good. It did not look good. However, it looked like baked cottage cheese is the nicest way that I could describe it. So I felt compelled to taste it. I shut my eyes. And it tasted very good. It didn't taste like it was just a pie made of vinegar and cream and sugar. But I just I could imagine the book being published and that first person to look through it and say, vinegar pie. That's unusual, I'm going to make that and then it would come out of the oven looking like that and my reputation would be ruined. So I did some research. You know, I tried to find perhaps alternative cooking
methods that wouldn't have been included in the instructions because it would have been common knowledge at the time. And there was nothing that I could do to make this pie turn out any other way than a curdled mess. So it did not make the final cut into the historic Kentucky kitchen. There were certain things that I felt like had to be included in the cookbook. I felt like we had to have a fried chicken recipe that we had to have a variety of biscuits and cornbread, that there had to be a pound cake that for two for the book to appeal to southerners as a region was southern food history, especially there needed to be a mayonnaise recipe, a boiled coffee recipe and things like that. So I also felt there needed to be things that had bourbon in them as well. So I found a recipe for bourbon pudding pie. And this particular handwritten recipe came from a delightful woman who had terrible handwriting. And her collection had not been kept well prior to coming to our special collection. So the paper was deteriorated. It was incredibly yellowed. There were ink stains all over it. So it was hard, it was hard to decipher this recipe. One of the benefits though of technology in scanning these recipes is that we could enlarge pieces of the handwriting and really start to analyze the individual handwriting and some people are amazing at that. And I am not amazing at analyzing historic handwriting. So just determining, trying to figure out what the recipe had in it was my first challenge. And this was a particular recipe that had very little instruction, I knew that it was a pie only for the fact that it said to bake it in a sweet crust. So pie wasn't actually in the name, it was just bourbon pudding. So the first time that I made this pie again, it was sort of a custard base pie and I waited and I waited and I waited and it never turned into a custard it was it just fell everywhere. But again, it tasted very good. So I tried it. I did a lot of research with this when looking at you know historic puddings and then sort of the transition of English style putting in an American putting and then uploading as a pie. And found a technique that would have been similar to that era that time period of making and putting, cooking the putting first so that ended up being a success and was very good and I took that particular pie to a dinner party the night that I made it so one it was great that it turned out successfully, but to my neighbor requested another one the next weekend. The the third success it is a success story at the end, but I there's a restaurant in Maysville Kentucky called Chandler's and Chandler's restaurant has a pie. That's hickory nut pie. And I've never had hickory nuts in a pie before. And I don't love pecan pie. But the flavor of the hickory nuts is just different enough that it's a little more savory, and it balances out the sweet and so I really fell in love with his hickory nut pie. So I found an 1880 handwritten recipe in the Marion Peter collection for hickory nut cake. We're super excited. But I didn't know how to acquire hickory nuts. They're not commercially viable. So you're not going to find them in in the store. It wasn't the time of year for hickory nuts to be fallen from a tree for me to start calling people asking if anyone had a hickory tree and had nuts. I've done enough research to know that they're not commercially viable because they're really, really difficult to get out of their shell. So I called Chandler, of course, because he was the only person I knew that had a food commodity with hickory nuts in them. And he wasn't there that day. But someone else in the kitchen said well, he gets them online. And I said, Okay, I have a degree in information science. I can find these online, so we'll be fine. And I guess I was so excited when I found them. And they weren't incredibly overpriced. I bought them. And they arrived and I was very excited. I opened the box and they were in their shell was such a disappointment. Yes. Well, you know, sometimes I'm a little hard headed and stubborn. And I was determined to make this cake. So I tried every way I could imagine to get the hickory nuts out, I tried hammering them, I tried boring holes in them. And finally, in my frustration, I took my grandmother's cast iron skillet and I wrapped them in a cloth and I beat them on my concrete steps. And I got them all open. And then I spent the next hour and a half removing the shell pieces from the hickory nut itself. And when I got done, I barely had a cup of hickory nuts, which was what I needed to make this cake and I had calmed down and I was really excited again and then I realized that the cake could turn out to be a disaster and that I would have to start all over again and I didn't have any hickory nuts. Fortunately, the cake
turned out great on the first try and the hickory nut cake tasted incredible, barring the stray few shells that made it into the cake. So if you make the hickory nut cake, please buy shelled hickory nuts. I went to eat Chandler's restaurant again. And I took him a copy of the book and I told him about my hickory nut cake experience and he just died laughing at me and he walked to the back of the restaurant he came back out with a Ziploc bag have perfectly shelled beautiful hickory nuts. I was so upset. But now I know exactly how to get them well, there's like there's a vise like, cranked thing that you can purchase that holds them. And it has enough pressure that it'll force the shell open, but it requires a tremendous amount of pressure. So a normal, you know, nut cracker isn't going to do it. Yeah, I don't have one of those. So I will continue to buy them online but shelled. This project was great for me, because you know, I'm an administrator now, and I don't have direct contact with the stuff anymore. And you know, the stuff is often what doors people like me into this profession. And so it was a lot of fun just to be able to research the archival collections and, and be a user instead of the administrator of the collections. It was also amazing to, to get to explore the family collections that we have. And look for something like handwritten recipes, I compare it a lot to in archival literature, you know, we talk about lots of things, but one of them is, you know, how do you anticipate what a user will need? And you can't, you can never predict research trends. At one point, women's history wasn't an area of study. And so archival collections weren't described to accommodate that sort of researcher. And it was really hard for those early women's historians to do that research. They could do it, but it took a lot of time. And the same thing with food history. It's not. It's a perhaps not new, but you know, things come in cycles. And so I think that the interest in, in Food Studies and local foods movements, is similar to that, that the challenge presented by archival description and not describing something as saying, well, there's all these handwritten recipes right here in this particular folder. We were really lucky because we had a lot of collections that had big compilations of handwritten recipes big enough so that they were described in an inventory. But every now and then, we would find just individual handwritten recipes tucked away somewhere. So for our process of archival research being insiders, to the system, we also had a project going on where we had about eight student assistants who are going through our earliest archival collections and describing them better. So conveniently, we would tell all of them, if you find any recipes, please let us know. So that really helped a lot. And then I also did a great deal of research into southern food history to Kentucky food and food history, cooking techniques, of course. And then I include cooking itself as part of the research process. It was June of 2010, Andrew and I took a sample of 10 recipes that we had prepared, not the recipes, the the type two written versions of what we did. And we took it to the University Press of Kentucky to see if they were interested. And they were and so they encouraged us to to move forward. And so two years later, we turned in a completed manuscript with over 100 recipes that had all been tested. It's presented as a contemporary cookbook with you know, divisions of egg and cheese dishes, side dishes, main courses, desserts, beverages, accompaniments, and then our notes are included with if we had to make a substitution, something that happened during the process and just what it tasted like and what we would pair the food with. And then the book also has a bibliography at the end describing the Kentucky families that are represented in the collection. Okay, so there's only been a couple of times where I've had the cookbook and I haven't had food, the Kentucky Book Fair being one of those times. So today I do have samples so the first thing that some of you have tried and I hope the rest of you will is Francis jewel McVeigh's spice tea. It's a recipe from the 1920s the tea can be served hot or it can be served cold. I think it's really delicious. I hope that those of you who have tried it think so well as well. So this is what it has in it because I know that there was a little speculation. So the tea is cinnamon, cloves, orange, lemon, black tea and sugar. And for instance, Shawn McVeigh was known for her entertaining Eating and dining and gardening. And she was also she wrote great deal on the topic that and many others. But in one article that was published in New York, she's quoted as saying, dining in
Kentucky is an art and as an artistic expression it has been created by an intern creates the vibe acity ardor, frankness, generosity. Yeah Even courage of the people of the bluegrass state. For instance, Joe McVeigh was born December 23 1889, in Harrison County, Kentucky, but she grew up in Lexington. She received a bachelor's degree from Vassar and a master's from Columbia. She came back to Lexington and eventually became Dean of Women at UK from 1921 to 1923. And at that point, she married Frank midfoot Frank McVeigh who was then president of the University of Kentucky, so she was highly regarded as her role of first lady of Maxwell Place. And her interest in and recipes for traditional Kentucky and other sudden southern foods were well known and publicized. The biggest challenge with Francis jewelmint vase handwritten recipes, she was often trying to feed 100 people. And so scaling her recipes down into something that was manageable not only for a test purpose, but for my wallet was sometimes incredibly hard. The cake is Seaton family's buttermilk cake, it's a recipe from the 1880s the Seaton family played a dominant role in the development of both River and rail transportation and in the formation of Ashland, Kentucky. The recipe book that was in that collection, I don't actually know who it belonged to. It wasn't identified, I suspect that it will actually belong to a woman and the means family, the the means and seat and family were connected by marriage. And it was a just a hugely densely packed scrapbook, have clipped recipes and handwritten recipes as well. And some of the other families that you will find in the cookbook. John Sherman Cooper, there are recipes from him. I really wanted there to be men represented in the cookbook as well, especially since my father played such a big role in my culinary history. I mentioned the English family papers earlier, Logan English was a folk singer and poet. His recipes represent the most contemporary in the cookbook, his are from around the 1950s. And so in his recipes, you'll see ingredients that we're more used to today like soy sauce after World War Two things like soy sauce were making their way into an American market. His folk songs are actually really amazing. And so I encourage you to investigate that as well. If you're not familiar with him, he lived in New York for a long time as well. They're also the and they called her nanny nanny clay McDowell of the Henry Clay family. Her cookbook is in the collection as well. I found that when very late into the process, actually, long after the final manuscript had been turned in. But it was such a rich cookbook that I was determined to slide some of them in and she also had the boiled coffee recipe, the mayonnaise recipe and the eggnog recipe which gave me bourbon and mayonnaise and boiled coffee, which were things that I desperately wanted to include. There's also Parrish family papers, Hart family papers, Breckinridge family papers among several others, as well. And so it does, you know, our collections tend to be focused on central Kentucky. And so geographically you get a lot of representation of central central Kentucky, but there's also Woodford County Ashlyn I believe that's round County, as well. So that is the end of my formal presentation, but I'm happy to answer any questions that you all might have. Okay,
family, which was part of the Hart family papers. It's 1835 to 1856. It was really hard to speculate what the actual age of those recipes were so potentially 1830s is the first First, the lemon custard pie as data to the 1850. So it's certainly one of the oldest as well, as far as just collections in general. Um, some of those go back to the late 1700s. But predominantly the, you know, the first part of the 19th century. Okay. Second question trends. I didn't have a lot of preconceived. That's probably a lie. I'm sure I had preconceived notions going into this of what kinds of recipes I would find. And you know, I have friends, we all experienced the stereotype of Kentucky, I'm sure who their first comment was whether or not there were squirrel or, you know, other forms of stereotypical roadkill included in the book. And you know, there were some early recipes where there were squirrel, but I squirrel as a child, I mean, when you're when your family hunts, that's part of the repertoire of your diet. No roadkill, but so the trends that I saw, were, the biggest thing that stuck out to me was the really heavy influence of French cooking and English cooking in our recipes. And I mean, I guess that makes sense when you take all the people who came over and migrated from Virginia to now what was Kentucky, but you'll see so many recipes in here that start with a roux. And to me anyway, the you know, I've eaten in restaurants all over the United States and other countries. And there are some recipes in here that are very sophisticated, not necessarily in preparation. Because these are very, they're simple to prepare, simple to a home cook, I think that they would be it would be easy for us all to cook them. So for me, it was I was surprised by the trends that I was seeing the complexity of flavor. I was surprised also by how many waster recipes there were in the cookbook. And there was a there was a restaurant in DC that existed for a very brief period of time, it wasn't meant to last any longer than a few months. And it was connected to an exhibit at the National Archives that was about food history. And so they were doing historic recipes. And I was in the midst of this cookbook, and I went to eat there. And it was incredible. So I got a lot of great information, especially about oysters when I ate there. And oysters as far as the they were really cheap. They were really, you know, they were served in pubs and working class people ate them a lot. And then you know, it sort of spread and became more popular, and more acceptable to be an upper class person and eating oysters. And so the canning process allowed oysters to be shipped as far west as St. Louis by the 1850s. So it was very common to see wasters and all varieties certainly in Kentucky by the 1820s and 30s. So that explained to me, you know why there were so many oyster recipes that I was finding and the fried oyster recipe that's in this cookbook was from the Breckinridge family papers. And in the she had this beautiful handwriting in the top right corner of the recipe she wrote Excellent. And they really were excellent. So that was a great, a great thing to experience and to, you know, I knew that she had had those oysters and enjoyed them. And I did too. So the trend surprised me there were also things that I noticed throughout all of the handwritten recipes. And if I wasn't so stubborn, and still mad at the White Mountain cake, I would make it again because that White Mountain cake showed up in several of the different family collections. And so did other things like rusks and different varieties of corn breads. So there was a lot there was a lot of similarities and the sophistication and trends that I saw, I think too when I was thinking about a lot of these recipes, you know, when I was little we had tomatoes in the summer. If it wasn't summer then we had canned tomatoes like as a juice or you know, they were put into a soup. And I didn't know that tomatoes could be bad until I came to college and got a salad here when I was a freshman and so I think that that's part of the key you know, people were cooking more with what was fresh and what was available at the time. And so I wanted to say before I there was one time that I got lazy when I made he'd actually this particular cake with, you know, regular sort of pale eggs and buttermilk, from Kroger and all of those things are fine. So I'm not suggesting that they're not. But, you know, today I went back and I made them with Kentucky, buttermilk, and Kentucky eggs and organic butter, and sugar. And those are, let's see, and Kentucky flour from Weisenburger Mills, those are the only five ingredients in this buttermilk cake. And you can certainly tell a difference when you're using those really good ingredients.
Beaten biscuits. That was the last question. John Sherman Cooper had a recipe for beaten biscuits in his manuscript collection, and that is in the cookbook as well. And I am so glad that those worked out the first time because beating biscuits for 30 minutes with a wooden rolling pin is exhausting. Yeah, well this one told us to beat them. And so I was faithful. So I beat them. And I'm not ambidextrous, although I tried. They came about because the lack of leavening agents. And so the thought was that when you beat them, it incorporated air pockets. It would make them a little lighter. I mean, but they're still very dense cracker like things. But yeah, it was I'm glad I didn't have to do that twice. Yes.

Question 36:31
Yesterday once recreated a meal from the gay 912 course meal. And they discovered and they were going to make it in its original methods and everything, original pops and such. And they discovered that their ovens were 700 degrees and higher. And I thought that because you're Lineker cake, it seems to me to melt the cottage cheese, higher degree of melting. I know what I'm trying to put it in the crock pot, because it never gets to the heat that will melt the cottage cheese.

Deirdre A. Scaggs 37:13
Well, I am going to research that more. Because that one really does taste good. Yes. Candy recipe, you know, there there isn't i I'm trying to think of I ran across anything similar to that. For cream candy. There's Do you know the only there are truffles, and that's the only I mean, which isn't a candy. But there aren't any any like that. And I had a woman at a talk who had her she was she was probably in her 80s. And she had her mother's and grandmother's all of their candy recipes and ran a candy shop out of her home. And so it did inspire me to look more in some of those recipe books for particularly for candy recipes. But that's one thing that's definitely not in here. Is there a final question here? So you've never succeeded in making the cake so far? Which one? No, no, and I'm still mad at it. But I'll try it again eventually. They works. Yeah, I could probably work that out for you. Yes.

Question 38:47
Can you research? What would you say that percentage of the recipes that you found you found the archives pertain to accompaniments vegetables as opposed to Senator the plain proteins and such?

Deirdre A. Scaggs 39:01
It's a good question. And that's also you'll find if you look at this cookbook that there are some recipes that came from really early Kentucky printed cookbooks because it needed to be filled in so that it could be a complete cookbook for today. There were tons of cakes and pies definitely. I mean I could have done an entire cookbook of just desserts. It was harder to fill in sides the way we are at least the way I think of sides more maybe vegetable heavy sides. There were you know there was there were things called salads that I don't really think of salads so much today. So that was actually a challenge trying to fill in the the the sides
category. And I really because I'm not set up to do it. There were so many recipes used for, you know, different pickles and catch ups and things that required canning that I would have really liked to have included. So that was that was a real challenge. There were lots of the main courses and desserts, those were the two that from the very beginning, you know, rose to the top as far as having the most recipes that we could find in the collections. And so we had to work harder to find other collections and sort of temper our enthusiasm over a lot of the main courses that we were finding. And just to give you a sense, you would need 50 sticks of butter to cook every recipe in the cookbook. And 144 eggs, give or take. Yes, when

**Question 40:44**

you found open recipes, because my grandmother used to write her recipes for a dash and a pinch. How did you do have a new book,

**Deirdre A. Scaggs 40:56**

you know, there was a whole area of my research devoted to butter, the size of a hen's egg butter, the size of a walnut, how much a goblet full was a tea cup full a coffee cup? A wine glass as opposed to a goblet? So yeah, that was a whole area of research. And so I did several different things and found inconsistent answers across the board. I started with the historic cookbooks that we had, because some of them actually had equivalents. I tried, you know, in journal articles about culinary history and cooking. And so, you know, finally I had to go with the, the answers that I found most consistently. And then also, for instance, with the the butter the size of a hen's egg, because that when I found inconsistent responses, so I did research on how big a hen's egg would have been at the time. And then I formed my butter to that size. And then I weighed it. So those are the kinds of things that I had to do. But that was an there's a there is a chart in the beginning so that you know if you find or have your own historic recipes, that there are equivalent measurements Why still have just folders and folders full of potential recipes. And you know, there were there were lots that didn't make it. And I didn't really want to put things in the cookbook that I thought were just okay. So I really wanted all the recipes to surprise me and tastes really good. And so a lot of things didn't make the cut because they were just Okay, so we tested well over 200 I would say recipes. Yes. I have so many favorites. I really do. I have a lot of favorites. You know, I think because of the the season that it is there's a recipe in here for partridges, which I did substitute Cornish hens for, but it's stuffed with chestnuts and sweet potatoes and has bacon on the outside. It's that was one of those recipes that I thought was very sophisticated and was delicious. But there's a mushroom soup that I've made several times since the first time that I made it that was one of those that I had to scale down. So it would only feed probably 20 people instead of 100. But yeah, I have lots and lots of favorites. Yes, determine the baking temperatures from didn't have adjustments, like I generally started with similar contemporary recipes based on you know, the kind of filling and what it was and went from there. So there was a lot of trial and error especially with the the pies and the baking. So I baked and baked and baked so many things. And so that was most of it is researching, trying to find an equivalent contemporary recipe or a fairly equivalent historic recipe that maybe would at least say a fast oven, or a slow oven or moderate oven to give me some some starting point. And I got I got my grandmother would have been proud because I got so much better at trusting my intuition and being able to look and see if it was cooking too fast or not fast enough in some cases. So it was a lot of trial and error. Thank you now that we're all sufficiently hungry, Brian and right here at this table. Thank you so much. Hi