Stirring Up MMMMemories

Readers recall the flavors they savored in the good old days.

Sounds Better Than "Mush"

DURING WWII, I spent a lot of time at my aunt's home. She always kept a large cobalt-blue jar on the shelf over the stove filled with cornmeal, which she used to make cereal for me and my three cousins. Whenever she asked what kind of cereal we wanted, we would all say "blue cereal." Even now, we still talk about blue cereal.

—Claudette Howard, Schenectady, New York

Pickled Rooster Combs?

IN the early 1900s, my grandpa opened a delicatessen in Jacksonville, Florida. I was always fascinated by the three enormous jugs he kept on top of one of the counters. One contained pickled eggs; another, pickled pigs' feet; and the third, pickled rooster combs! I never had the courage to try that delicacy.

—Marilyn Tomlinson, Jacksonville, Florida

Czarnina, an Annual Affair

EVERY year, my grandmother and I made a trip to Hamtramck, Michigan, the "Polish" city, to select the duck we wanted to make czarnina, blood soup. In Hamtramck, there was a butcher shop with a fenced-in backyard where ducks and chickens ran freely. Customers had their choice of bird; the butcher caught it, butchered it and poured the blood into a jar, and we were on our way.

When we got home, Grandmother cleaned the duck, put it in a pot

filled with water and started cooking. I remember prunes were added later and the final step, making potato dumplings.

—Barbara Schwartz, Ortonville, Michigan

Sandwich Was Unusually Healthy

IN the ’20s, my mother used to surprise me with a garden variety sandwich…bread, mayonnaise, radishes, nasturtium leaves, salt and pepper. It was one of my favorite lunches—and healthy, too.

—Mary LaRae Dakis, Moreno Valley, California

Girls Love a Tea Party

MY great-aunt Lucille Tumey is entertaining guests on her front porch in 1916 (below). Lucille is the girl, 8 years old, on the right. She made the dress she has on. She later graduated from Iowa State University with a degree in home economics and was a teacher for 43 years. —Pat Sorgenfrey, Lisbon, Iowa

Early “Meals on Wheels”

MY PARENTS, Floyd and Harriet Roder, farmed just west of the small town of Marathon, Iowa.

During the oat harvest season, my mother would load up our 1936 Chevy with a card table and a hot dinner and head out to the field at noon to meet my father.

As soon as they were done eating, Dad was back harvesting and Mother was left to load up and head back home.

Getting the crops in at the proper time was, and still is, an important

consideration.

A real luxury was being able to listen to the noon news on my brother Charles' portable Montgomery Ward radio. My brother was in the Army, stationed in Germany in 1949, so his radio was available.

Today, my brother's son, Shannon Roder, lives on and works the century-old farm.

—Richard Roder, Aurelia, Iowa