



ALL Baldwin County News, Sports and Events -- Neighborhood, Community, Local, State, National & International -- ALL from a Baldwin County Perspective Baldwin County Non-Stop News Now (www.nonstopnewsnowBC.com) is a Community Media USA News Site

Saturday, SEP 08, 2007

Cake with History, Tradition and a Literary Mention



By Cece Redmond

MOBILE: August 15 – The Lane Cake originated in Clanton, Alabama back in the late 1920's when its creator, Emma Rylander Lane won a prize for it at the state fair.

In July of 2005 the Lane Cake was featured in Oprah's magazine. Harper Lee's book "To Kill a Mocking Bird" says "a Lane Cake is given as a thank you gift."

Childhood memories bring back the taste of this Southern traditional cake. The Lane Cake is so decadently rich and full of flavor and history.

Grandmother always had Lane Cake at Christmas for over 50 years. Why should I think about it in August? The longer this cake sits the better it gets, as long as you keep it cool. It is like an English Christmas pudding. It gets better with age.

After both Grandmothers passed on I have become the family official gumbo, cake, scrambled eggs and biscuit maker. The ladle, spoon and mixing bowl were handed down to me. House bound by heat I thought to share this cake tradition.

Some recipes say to serve it the same day, some say it is best three weeks out. Grandmother always made them in the summer and would wrap them in cheese cloth, put it in a tin and keep it cool. Once a month she would open it and drizzle a ¼ cup of brandy or bourbon over the cake.

It calls for four 8" pans and you can frost with Seven Minute or Butter Frosting, or cover the whole thing with the filling, which is what Grandmother did.

Ingredients

General ingredients follow-

1/2 lb Butter, at room temperature

2 c Sugar

3 1/2 c Flour, all-purpose sifted

3 1/2 ts Baking powder

1/2 ts Salt

1 c Milk

8 Egg whites

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C). Lightly grease and flour four 8 inch round cake pans.
2. Cream 1 cup of the butter or margarine, 2 cups of the white sugar, and vanilla together until light and fluffy.
3. Combine flour, baking powder and salt. Add flour mixture to the butter mixture in three parts alternately with the milk in two parts, beginning and ending with flour.
4. Beat the egg whites until stiff. Gently fold the egg whites into the batter. Spread the batter evenly into the four prepared pans.
5. Bake at 350 degrees F (175 degrees C) for 25 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean. Allow cakes to cool. Once cool; spread Lane Cake Filling between layers.

FILLING (This makes enough to cover the cake)

12 Egg yolks

1 1/2c Sugar

1/2 tsp Salt

1/2 lb Butter, at room temperature

1/4 c Brandy or Bourbon or use flavoring

1 1/2 c Candied cherries, finely chop

1 1/2 c Raisins, seeded, coarsely chop

1 1/2 c Pecans, chopped

1 1/2 c Coconut, shredded

1. To Make Lane Cake Filling: In a double boiler over medium heat cook yolks, sugar, salt and butter until mixture is thick and translucent about 30 to 40 minutes. Add 3/4 cup of liquor and whisk quickly till fluffy, and creamy. Stir in pecans, raisins, coconut, and cherries then allow mixture to cool.

ASSEMBLE

Drizzle remaining liquor 1/2 cup over each layer then spoon the filling/icing mixture over each layer. Stack layers using fingers apply icing all over the outside of the cake. You may want it to ferment for a while before serving if so wrap it in either cheesecloth or aluminum foil, place it in an airtight container and keep it cool. I do not recommend the refrigerator as the condensation as it warms up can make it very soggy. Once a month or so open the container and drizzle 1/4 cup of liquor over the cake very slowly. Reseal the container and when Christmas arrives the cake will be stout and ready to