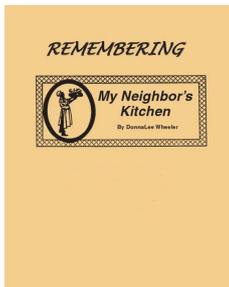


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REMEMBERING MY NEIGHBOR S KITCHEN EBOOKS 2019



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After living in large and medium sized cities all over the U.S. and England we found ourselves in a very small town in central Illinois. Instead of a choice of food stores I found one store, which didn't carry many products I was used to buying. That started the adventure. Often there was someone who would stop me and point to something and ask, "What is that and what do you do with it?" So I found myself standing in the aisles explaining what something was and giving out recipes. One day I got a phone call from Steve Hoffman, the Editor of the Farmer City Journal. He said he wanted me to write a food column for the paper. "What would you want me to write?" I asked. "Anything you want," he said. "You know recipes and such, I guess." "How many words?" "Whatever you need." I called my friend, Pat, and said, "what have you gotten me into, and what will I call this column?" She quickly said, "My Neighbor's Kitchen." I was actually going to be paid for talking? My husband said that should be easy, and won't take much time, so why not? Beware of such comments. Where would I find the time I asked myself. I'm already swamped trying to keep up with my work as a photo restorationist. And there was always genealogy research and lectures, the filming of several hours of genealogy research lectures to be shown on the local TV station, working in the Family History Center, the family newsletter I was trying to get started, and all the things around the house that were getting short shrift. It wasn't easy and it did take a lot of time, but I also learned I liked writing whatever I wanted. Well, the ideas started rolling. If I imagined I was sitting in a neighbor's kitchen, talking about this and that, we would end up talking about recipes. What if I started the column the same way---hmm---It might work. So that's how it started. At the beginning of each column I would have a little topical essay that would segue into a food and nutrition column. As with most things the idea was easier than the action. The essays came easily, but testing recipes appropriate for the season was time consuming. Many of the things I had cooked for years I found I knew what to do, but I couldn't come up with exact measurements. You can't write "two galoops of molasses and salt up to the first wrinkle". Many times I had to watch carefully as I made something, write it down, and then make it again to be sure my measurements were correct. Sometimes I would have to make adjustments and then make it again. Over the years I have learned there are people in this world who don't cook "by ear". They want $\frac{1}{4}$ t and $\frac{1}{2}$ C plus exact temperatures and times. They did not want to read, "cook until it looks right or smells right". I had a new computer, a Tandy 1000, so now I just had to learn how to use it. I felt I was doing well if I could go a whole day without wanting to put my fist through the monitor. I will never forget the day the Indiana Editor called to tell me of a survey that found more men read my column than read the sports page. He also mentioned 2.5 million readers. That made me so nervous I had my first experience with writer's block. I finally decided I had to forget all about that number and just continue to talk to my neighbors. Now, umpteen years later, I am putting a number of those essays, and some new ones, into this book. I wrote over three hundred essays, but a large number of them, both disc and hard copies, were lost in a move, and like the proverbial fisherman, of course the best ones got away. I've picked 72 from the rest to include in this book, plus some of my poetic scratchings and short stories just to prove I wasn't idling away my time, in spite of rumors to the contrary. One day I had finished the

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