

ROUND AND ABOUT

Reconstruction Of Old Kitchen Found Fascinating Experience

Historical Notes of Interest

By BETSY HALLIDAY

Recipe for reconstructing an 18th Century kitchen calls for a dash of documentation placed with a heap- ing amount of conjecture.

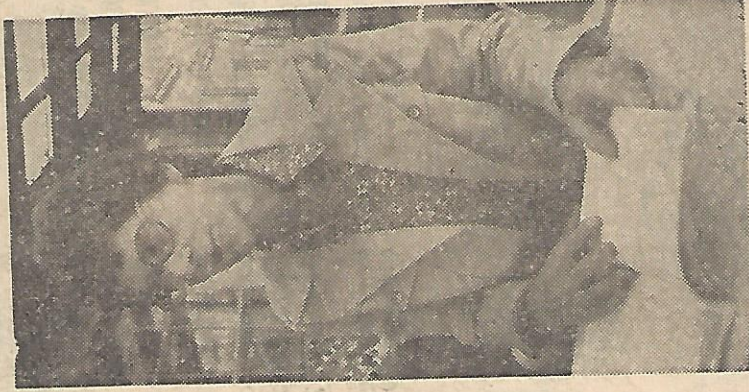
Persons who could write didn't stay around the kitchen. Consequently, not much was recorded about the environs of Colonial cuisine. "Kitchens were not family gathering places as they are to-



Mrs. Halliday says Mrs. Harley W. Rhodehamel Jr.

SHE IS CHAIRMAN of Gunston Hall's research committee, under whose hat an 18th Century kitchen was reconstructed at the Virginia plantation home of George Mason, author of the Virginia Declaration of Rights, the basis for the Federal Constitution's Bill of Rights.

The new dependency was unveiled during the October meeting of the



Up to her elbows in architectural sketches and research materials on 18th Century kitchens, Mrs. Harley W. Rhodehamel Jr.

Board of Regents, representatives of each of the states, societies of the National Society of Colonial Dames of America who administer the Commonwealth of Virginia property.

The 18 by 21-foot frame kitchen of re-sawn siding with a steep pitched roof over a sleeping loft is built on the original foundations where archaeologists uncovered kitchen scatter, animal bones and fragments of china.

The kitchens were constructed crudely. Since the plantations were isolated, the dependencies were never typical," says the Indiana regent. "Because of fires the kitchens often had short lives."

DUE TO HEAT and odors, cooking quarters were detached from the main house. "Servants were required to whistle as they carried the dishes back and forth so they wouldn't be tempted to eat the food," explains Mrs. Rhodehamel.

The regents have acquired an impressive collection of 18th Century cooking utensils for their kitchen since 1969 when the project was in the talk-

Women Running Banks

Paris (WNS) — Seven new all female banks run by and for women are to open shortly in Spain now that the first all-women's branch of the Bank of Bilbao has proven a success at Madrid under its pretty manager, Piedad Garcia de la Rasily Pineda.

Customers at her bank are given rose-tinted check books and served in a comfortable room.

Says Miss Pineda, "We're advisers as well as bankers, we try to make women find the way to make the most of their limited rights. If a husband gives trouble, we tell the wife how to obtain a legal division of the family assets, which gives her the same independence as a single girl."

discusses the new dependency at Gunston Hall, Lorton, Va. (Star Photo)

ing stages. Some of their finds include a peel, an iron or wood shovel for removing bread from an oven; treenware, hollowware made from wood, and pigginns, little casks for lard.

"I always get the firkins mixed up with the pigginns. Both were wooden containers," says Mrs. Rhodehamel. They are searching for a fireplace peninsula, an essential kitchen tool used to check chimneys while fires were kept going 'round the clock.

OTHER DEPENDENCIES on the regents' drawing board include wash, smoke, dairy, store and poultry houses and an herb garden. "We haven't found our 'necessary' yet," laughs Mrs. Rhodehamel.

The Gunston Hall regents have employed a rescue archaeologist from nearby Alexandria, Va., to help in the search.

"The best privies were built at Alexandria from 1750 to 1850. The pits were 50 to 60 feet deep, completely lined with brick. People used them as they would a garbage can," adds Mrs. Rhodehamel.

"Our rescue archaeologist could furnish a museum!" Some of his collection is on display at Gunston Hall.

Mrs. Rhodehamel notes that Helen Bullock of New Harmony, an authority on 18th Century kitchens, who was formerly with the National Trust for Historic Preservation, feels that true American cooking was conceived in the Potomac tidewater area where Gunston Hall is located. Corn, chowder and barbecues were some of the dishes.

"Cooking was a hot, nasty job," concludes Mrs. Rhodehamel. "It sometimes was done by indentured whites."

A. Swank Zodiac Jewelry puts h

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