

Who's Who In The Kitchen

WBTV's Beatrice Thompson Liked Watching Her Grandmother Cook

By Audrey C. Lodato
Post Staff Writer

As Beatrice Thompson tells it, "at festival time, the preacher always came to my grandma's house. She was like a black Betty Crocker." Annie Belle Thompson, or "Big Mama" as WBTV's news reporter called her, was an inspiration to her granddaughter. "I always liked to watch her cook," Thompson recalls.

Her mother's biscuits are something else Thompson remembers. "Whenever I had a slumber party, everyone wanted to know if my mother was going to fix biscuits in the morning," she chuckles. "If I wanted to be a superwoman," Thompson adds, "I'd have to be like my mama. She can really make a dollar stretch."

The fourth of Johnny and Helena Thompson's six children, the 30 year old Charlotte native recounts that, when urban renewal tore up the family's old residence and her parents bought their first home, she helped out by working with her mother, cleaning offices. One of the places they cleaned together was Sluggs. "I told her I'd bring her back to eat there one day," she relates. "Four years ago, I did."

Herself a bit of a cook since elementary school, the television journalist wanted to be a home economics teacher when she was in the seventh grade, but her mother preferred something more lucrative for her daughter. The only one in her family to go to college, Thompson decided as a child, "If I couldn't be pretty, I'd be smart."

The eight-year WBTV veteran is often asked to speak to groups, a task which she enjoys. Her message varies with her audience. "I like to talk to young black kids about babies having kids. I think older black people for what they've done. If they were in charge of the money in

America, there'd be no deficit. I tell young brothers not to wear earrings in their ears." A nephew got the message when she threatened to withhold money unless the earring came out. It did.

A lot of her speaking engagements are in South Carolina. Although Thompson has lived in Charlotte since she was six months old, she was born in Chester. "My mom tickles me," she laughs. "She always wants to go when I speak there." Helena Thompson enjoys "showing off" her daughter to old friends.

Thompson got her start in television while in the eleventh grade at Olympic High School by trying out for the "News and Views" program on Channel 42. She went on to major in broadcast journalism, with a minor in Afro-American studies, at UNC. "I could've been a 'buppy' (black 'yuppy')," she says, "but I don't play those games well."

Hired by CBS as an intern trainee at WBTV, the station took her on after six months. Bill Ballard was her first news director. "I'll always love him," Thompson declares. "He gave me a chance; he believed in me. He wasn't a 'looks' person."

Her first five years at the television station were "a wonderful learning experience, and fun," Thompson recalls. More recently, she reveals, she has felt like "the angry black woman" at work. "If I don't say what I feel, it's very hard to deal with myself," she states.

Thompson says there's been a change in the company's commitment over the years and, in following the present trend into "yuppydom," she wonders if the station is running away from loyal viewers.

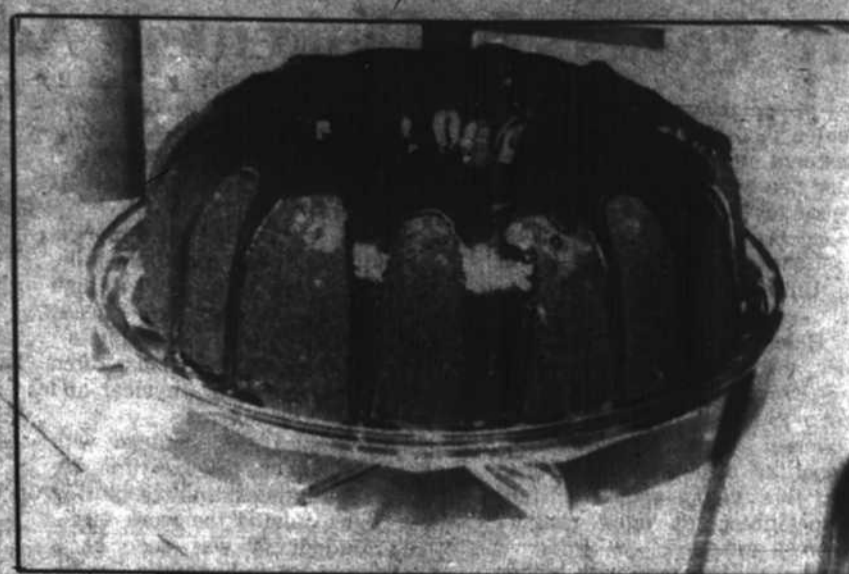
Thompson admits that the problem goes beyond WBTV. "There are very few black black people on television," she asserts. "If you're



Chocolate cake gets finishing touches with a chocolate glaze-like icing. This one's not for calorie counters!

not a fair-skinned person, your chances are narrower." She thinks viewers will accept anchors who

don't "fit the look," but "the public is going to have to let management know," she says.



The finished product -- m-m-m-m!

CHOCOLATE POUND CAKE (HELENE W. THOMPSON'S SPECIALITY)

- 1 c. butter or Blue Bonnet Margarine
- 1/2 c. Crisco shortening
- 3 c. sugar
- 5 eggs
- 1 c. milk
- 2 Tsp. vanilla flavor
- 1/2 tsp. baking powder
- 5 Tbsp. cocoa
- 3 c. plain flour

Cream shortening and sugar together. Add eggs one at a time, beating each thoroughly. Add sifted dry ingredients alternately with milk. Add vanilla flavor at this point. Pour into a greased tube pan. Bake at 325 degrees for 1 1/2 hours. (Important: Do not open oven door until within last 10 minutes of baking time for best results.)

ICING FOR CHOCOLATE POUND CAKE

- 1/2 stick butter
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 1/2 box confectioner's sugar
- 3 Tbsp. cocoa
- a little milk (remember - this is mom's recipe!)

Over low heat, melt butter and add each of the other ingredients. Use just enough milk to give a smooth consistency. Icing should not be too runny. It's best if you use an electric beater to make icing smooth. Spread over cake. Enjoy...enjoy!

BAKED BEANS

- 1 can pork and beans
 - 1 med. onion, chopped fine
 - 1/2 c. catsup
 - 1/2 c. brown sugar
 - 1/4 c. green pepper, chopped fine
 - 4 hot dogs, cut in small pieces
 - 2 slices bacon
- Combine all ingredients except bacon in casserole. Top with bacon slices. Bake 1 hour at 300 degrees.

FREEZER SLAW

- 1 Tbsp. salt
 - 1 c. vinegar
 - 1/4 c. water
 - 1 1/2 c. sugar
 - 1 carrot
 - 1 bell pepper
 - 1 large cabbage
 - 1 tsp. celery seed
- In pan, mix first four ingredients and bring to boil. Meanwhile, grate carrot and chop cabbage and pepper. Mix together. Pour vinegar mixture over vegetables and let stand one hour. Drain. Toss with celery seed. Place in freezer. "This will keep a long time. It's good on hot dogs or by itself."

Summer's Fresh Fruit Tops All In Popularity

There's nothing like the fresh fruits of the season, even though so many fruits are now available year-round—whether frozen or shipped fresh from sunnier climates. But summer's fruit tops all—eaten out of hand or turned into fabulous desserts like Rosy Peach Upside-Down Cake, Strawberry Chocolate Mousse and Melon Bubble.

No one can deny the delicious simplicity of a bowl of juicy, sliced summer fruit topped only with a little sugar and perhaps some whipped topping, but even beautiful sun-ripened fruits like to dress up occasionally. That's why we've created these easy to make delectable desserts that showcase summer's fruits at their very best.



Peach upside down cake

ROSY PEACH UPSIDE DOWN CAKE

- 2 c. sliced peeled fresh peaches (or use 1 can (29 oz.) sliced peaches, drained)
- 1 pkg. (3 oz.) Jell-O brand strawberry flavor gelatin
- 1 pkg. (3 oz.) Jell-O brand peach flavor gelatin
- 1 tsp. cinnamon (optional)
- 1/3 c. butter or margarine
- 1 pkg. (2-layer size) yellow cake mix or pudding-included cake mix
- 1 c. thawed Cool Whip whipped topping.

Arrange peaches in buttered 13x9-inch pan. Combine straw-

berry and peach gelatin and cinnamon in small bowl. Sprinkle about 1/4 of the mixture evenly over peaches; dot with butter. Prepare cake mix as directed on package. Pour 3/4 of the batter into pan. Stir remaining gelatin mixture into remaining cake batter; blend well and pour into pan. Zigzag spatula through batter to marble. Bake at 350 degrees for 45 minutes, or until cake tester inserted into center comes out clean. Cool 5 minutes in pan; then invert onto serving platter and cool. Garnish with whipped topping.

STRAWBERRY CHOCOLATE MOUSSE

- 2 sq. Baker's semi-sweet chocolate
- 1/4 c. water
- 2 pkgs. (3 oz. each) cream cheese, softened
- 1/4 c. milk
- 1 Tbsp. sugar
- 1 container (8 oz.) Cool Whip whipped topping, thawed
- 1 pint strawberries, sliced

Heat chocolate and water in saucepan over low heat, stirring constantly until mixture is smooth. Remove from heat and cool. Beat 1 package of the cheese until smooth. Add milk and sugar and blend well. Fold in 2 cups of the whipped topping and 1 cup of the strawberries. Spread evenly in 1 1/2-quart souffle dish. Beat remaining cheese until fluffy. Gradually blend in chocolate mixture and fold into remaining whipped topping. Spread evenly over strawberry mixture. Chill about 3 hours. Dip dish in warm water for a few seconds and unmold onto plate. Garnish with remaining strawberries and additional whipped topping, if desired. Makes 5 cups or 6 to 8 servings.

MELON BUBBLE

- 1 pkg. (3 oz.) Jell-O brand lime, lemon or orange flavor gelatin
- 1/4 c. boiling water
- 1/2 c. orange juice or water
- Ice cubes
- 1 cup melon balls

Dissolve gelatin in boiling water. Combine orange juice and ice cubes to make 1 1/4 cups. Add to gelatin, stirring until slightly thickened. If necessary, remove unmelted ice. Measure one and one-third cups gelatin; fold in melon balls. Spoon into 6 individual dessert glasses or a serving bowl; chill until set but not firm.

Then whip remaining gelatin with rotary beater or electric mixer until fluffy and thick and about double in volume. Pour over clear gelatin in glasses. Chill until firm, about 1 hour. Garnish with additional melon balls and mint leaves, if desired. Makes 3 1/2 cups or 6 servings. Note: Recipe may be doubled.

Deep Frying Appeals

For such a quintessentially American form of cooking, deep-frying has surprisingly international appeal.

From pommes frites, the Gallic original of that American favorite, french fries, to golden zeppole, deep-fried morsels of dough garnished with a sprinkling of powdered sugar, to crispy fried wontons and a host of other dim sum fare, nations around the globe have made significant contributions to this fast and flavorful form of cookery, which improves upon acquaintance and never ceases to charm.

But, the same foods which, when fried carefully and correctly, are just this side of mana, can be greasy, stale and unpleasant when mistreated.

Almost more than any other cooking method, deep-frying requires flying attention on the part of the cook, an understanding of the chemical processes involved, and close scrutiny of ingredient quality, beginning with the oil to be used.

A variety of factors influences the choice of oil. Do you want it to be flavorless, or to impart a specific flavor to the food being cooked? Vegetable oil is virtually tasteless; peanut, sesame and olive oils all add a particular savor to those foods cooked in them.

At what temperature are you deep-frying? Certain oils, such as walnut oil, cannot withstand high heats, and should be used only for dressing, not cooking. Others, while fine up to a certain temperature, have relatively low smoke points, limiting their versatility.

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God said, When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die; if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand.

Ezekiel 3:18

God said, So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereunto I sent it.

Isaiah 55:11