

## Who's Who In The Kitchen

# Maria Stowe Justly Deserves Her Reputation As An "Excellent" Cake Baker

By Audrey C. Lodato  
Post Staff Writer

It's hard not to be enthusiastic about Marie Stowe. This energetic mother of three took a vacation day to prepare a scrumptious spread of treats the day of my visit. I think I gained five pounds before I even tasted the first bite!

Mrs. Stowe has a reputation—and justly deserved, I can tell you—as a baker of wonderful cakes. "My cakes always turn out so pretty, they make me smile," she reveals. "I love to cook for people who enjoy it. To see their faces does me good."

In explaining what makes her cakes special, Mrs. Stowe states that she usually sticks to the recipes, with one major exception: "A lot of time I substitute butter for shortening. That makes the difference. Others can try the same recipe and it doesn't come out the same as mine."

Noting that her mother is a good cook, she declares: "If you tasted hers before mine, you wouldn't eat mine!" Her mother, Claree Stitt, lives just a couple of doors away.

"Cooking has been a part of me all my life," Mrs. Stowe continues. "All we had to buy was flour. My mother even made her own shortening. I started baking when I was real small. I would stand on a chair to help her. Then I took home economics in school. My friends told me my cooking was good, and that boosted me on."

Her fan club has since grown to include her husband and children, her church, co-workers, children's schools, and anyone else who has had the opportunity to taste her culinary gems.

A lock-box clerk for Wachovia Bank, Mrs. Stowe is called upon to bake "anytime someone is going to have a baby or a wedding shower or going away. They're my second family," she says of co-workers. Her 10 year old son, Gerrard, a student at Our Lady of Consolation School, is an avid supporter of his mother's cooking. What's his favorite dish? "Her coconut cake!" he enthusiastically replies. "She puts in pineapple juices, coconut, and white icing. The cake is about that big!" he exclaims, holding his hand about 10" off the table.

"And she lets me lick the beaters." Then he lets out a family secret: "She wants the cake perfect. She always says, 'don't walk hard. If you walk hard, you won't walk hard again!'"

Husband Lee, who comes in looking for some pecan pie, comments, "Everything she makes is good. I love it all!" When Mrs. Stowe remarks that she tries to make something sweet at least once a week, one wonders how the family manages to maintain its figures. "We stay active," she replies.

The talented cook has never entered any contests but admits she has often thought about it, especially at fair time and Christmas. She has been known to give gifts of fruit cookies, peanut butter cookies, and pound cakes, and sometimes takes orders for baked items.

A member of Matthews-Murkland Presbyterian Church (she grew up in the Murkland community), Mrs. Stowe bakes for church dinners and sings in the choir. "I love to sing," she reveals.

Another thing she loves is flower arranging, which she began only about a year ago. "A friend asked me to do the flowers when she renewed her wedding vows. I had never done that before, but she had faith in me and they turned out well." Figuring that if she could do well without any experience, she'd do even better with some training, so she took courses at Rapers and Creative Florist Training School. Her dream? "I would love to have my own business surrounded with flowers growing and arranging them." Already she's done weddings, and her family is supportive of her goal. "I'm dreaming real hard," she discloses.

Mrs. Stowe also enjoys macrame and is involved with her son's Scout

and school activities. Her two older children, Jacqueline and Maurice, are out on their own.

Following are some of this gifted woman's favorite recipes. The "Cornbread Pot Pie" is surprisingly light-textured, as well as tasty. The "Peanut Butter Cookies" are moist and chewy. (Her husband doesn't care for peanut butter but loves these.) And the cakes are too scrumptious for words. So, if you're not counting calories, give some of these a try!

### PEANUT BUTTER COOKIES

- 1 c. shortening
- 1 c. brown sugar
- 1 c. gran. sugar
- 1 c. crunchy peanut butter
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 2 eggs
- 3 c. flour
- ½ tsp. salt
- 2 tsp. baking soda

Cream sugars with shortening. Add next 3 ingredients and mix well. Mix dry ingredients and then blend well with peanut butter mixture. Drop by spoonfuls on ungreased cookie sheet. Press with fork. Bake 10 minutes at 350.

### MARIE STOWE'S SPECIAL POUND CAKE

- 2 sticks butter
- ½ c. Crisco
- 3 c. sugar
- 7 eggs
- 3 c. flour
- ½ tsp. baking powder
- 1½ c. sweetened condensed milk (or evaporated milk)
- 2 tsp. vanilla
- 3 Tbsp. cocoa

Cream butter and Crisco. Add sugar, beating constantly. Add eggs, one at a time, blending well after each egg. Sift flour, then measure. Add baking powder. Add flour mixture alternately with milk. Add vanilla. Pour half of batter into greased and floured tube pan. Blend cocoa into remaining batter and pour into pan. Bake 1½ hours at 325.



Marie Stowe looks up recipe for her peanut butter cookies. Notice how high her pound cake has risen!

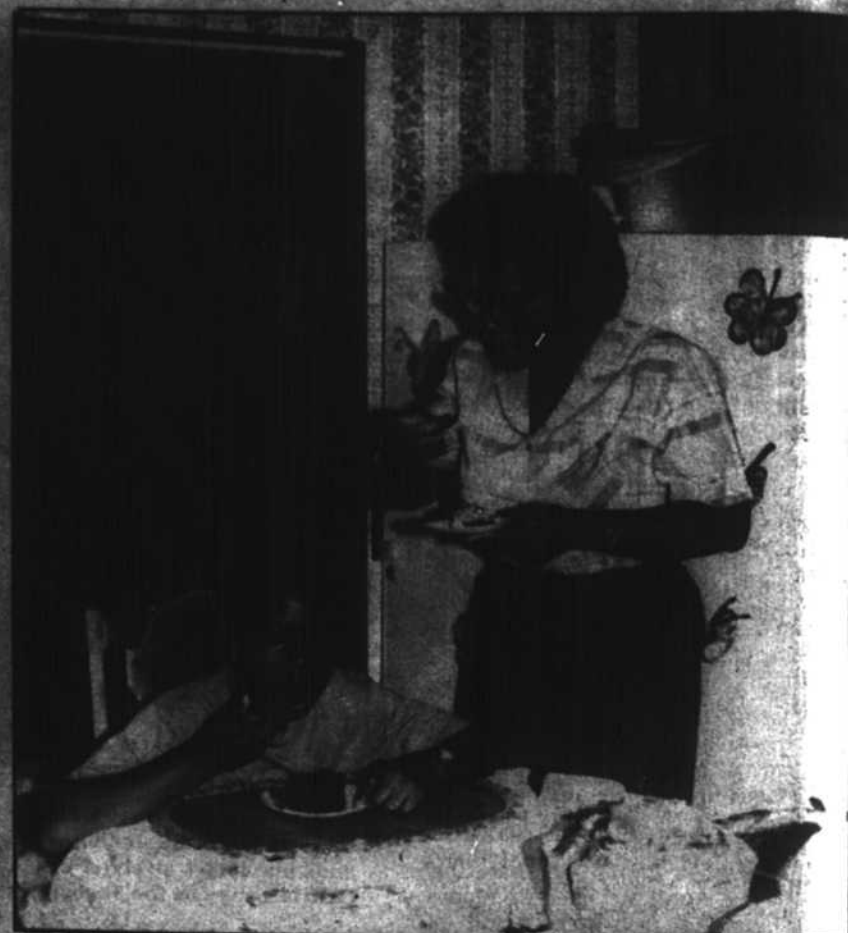
### CHOCOLATE SECRET CAKE

- 2 c. sugar
- 2 c. flour
- 1 stick butter
- ½ c. Crisco
- ¾ Tbsp. cocoa
- 1 c. water
- ½ c. buttermilk
- 2 eggs
- 1 tsp. soda

1 tsp. vanilla  
Dash salt  
Mix sugar and flour. Melt butter and Crisco. Stir in cocoa, add water, and heat. Pour over sugar and flour and mix well. Add remaining ingredients and blend well. Batter will be thin. Bake 45 minutes at 350. Frost with icing below.

- #### Icing
- 1 stick butter
  - 2½ Tbsp. cocoa
  - 1/3 c. buttermilk
  - 1 box. confectioners sugar
  - 1 tsp. vanilla
  - Nuts (optional)

Heat butter, stir in cocoa and buttermilk. Add sugar and vanilla, beating til smooth. If desired, stir in chopped nuts.



Gerrard and his mother enjoy some of the desserts she prepared for this reporter. Gerrard sinks his teeth into "Chocolate Secret Cake," while Mrs. Stowe tries the "Brown Sugar Nut Cake."

### CORNBREAD POT PIE

- 1 large (1 lb.) can tuna
- 1 (17 oz.) can peas, drained
- 1 (17 oz.) can creamed corn
- ¾ c. diced New York cheddar
- 1 tall can evaporated milk, divided
- ¼ c. chopped onion
- 1 Tbsp. Worcestershire sauce
- 1 c. buttermilk baking mix
- ½ c. cornmeal
- 2 Tbsp. sugar
- ½ tsp. salt
- 1 egg

Mix tuna, vegetables, cheese, 1 c. evap. milk, onion, and Worcestershire sauce. Pour into greased 2-qt. casserole or 8x12" baking dish. Bake 15 minutes at 375. Mix together remaining ingredients and two-thirds c. evap. milk. Pour over hot tuna mixture, leaving center uncovered. Spread to edges. Bake another 25 minutes or til golden brown. Makes 6 servings.

### BROWN SUGAR NUT CAKE

- 2 sticks butter
- ½ c. Crisco
- 1 c. sugar
- 1 box light brown sugar
- 5 eggs
- 3 c. flour
- ½ tsp. baking powder
- 1 c. milk
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 1 c. chopped nuts

Let butter, eggs, and milk stand to room temperature. Cream butter til light and fluffy. Add Crisco and continue to cream.

Add sugar and brown sugar, continuing to cream. Add eggs, one at a time. Sift flour, then measure; mix in baking powder.

With mixer at low speed, gradually add flour mixture, alternating with milk. Add nuts (which have been coated with a sifting of some of the flour) and vanilla.

Pour into greased and floured tube pan. Bake 1½ hours at 325.



"Corn Bread Pot Pie" is chock full of good, nutritious things to eat.

## Nutrition Building Blocks For Good Health

Special To The Post  
One of the factors needed to maintain good health is good nutrition. It is important to eat foods that contain the building blocks we need. It is equally important to avoid excesses of some foods. The three building blocks are protein, carbohydrate and fat. Some sources of protein are milk, meats, poultry, fish, vegetables, and sugar. We get fat from meats, eggs and oils used in salads or frying.

The most important building block is protein, but care must be taken in

selecting protein foods because we may get too much and possible harmful fat. Too much fat can result in excess body fat storage leading to obesity. The harmful fats are those high in cholesterol and saturated fats. These are found in eggs, liver, sweet breads, whole milk, cheese, butter and animal fats such as lard and the fat in meats.

There are two kinds of carbohydrates: complex and simple. Complex carbohydrates are needed for good nutrition. They are found in potatoes, grains, beans, and fruits.

Enjoy

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