

THE JEWISH COMMUNITY IN AUSTRALIA

2026 HERITAGE WEEK PRESENTATION



DR GILLIAN POLACK

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in Australia
2026 Heritage Week Presentation

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Introduction

Whenever I talk about history (any history) someone in the audience wants recipes.

I understand this entirely.

As I thought you might like some background on the recipes, I took the easy route and shared an essay I wrote earlier. It was published in the US, in a virtual magazine called *Judith*.

The second question I'm asked every time is where can you buy my books. To help you find those books (online or locally) I will share a list of what is in print (See Books in Print)

Food and Family

Essay Published in 'Judith', USA, August 26 2025

One of life's great mysteries is why an historian who writes fiction, or a novelist who writes history, should spend her spare time in the kitchen, experimenting with historical recipes. Except... it's no mystery.

Food is comforting. Food is also a very good way to work out some of the complexities of culture. My background is a little uncommon these days. I'm Australian, where only 0.4% of us are Jewish. I'm from a minority within our community because I'm Anglo-Australian Jewish. The mishpocha conversation for Anglo-Australian Jews is "Who are your relatives?" This is the same as most other conversations except in my family's case, we're finding out who married whom and if we're cousins, connected, or part of only four families who have not yet become cousins or connected. When I investigated a Jewish whaler in a place called Eden last month, I discovered that my grandmother's aunt might be one of his relatives. It's tricky and fun and part of who we are.

Of course, the reason I think it's fun is because an expert in Australian Jewry worked out which of the families I belong to and told a friend, "She's in the nice family." I come from the poor but charming

clan, and we all cook. How my family cooks tells me more than finding out if I'm related to a nineteenth century whaler named Solomon.

Like the rest of the Diaspora, we face antisemitism. It's easier to fight hate with shared stories. When we share culture and stories we create a diaculture (like dialect, except for culture) and that diaculture supports us when things are bad and often helps us reach the other side of the hate with our identity intact. Everyday, we can maintain our identity by sharing stories and foodways.

The stories we often share in public are those that partly match the experiences of other Jewish cultures, especially those of US Jewish cultures. Sharing our the stories from the less-common aspects of our diacultures is not so easy. My fiction-writing self gives me an advantage, and so does my historian-self. I use the Anglo-Australian in novels (infamously, in *The Wizardry of Jewish Women* where I pair it with Jewish magic) when I teach food history, and, right now, on Patreon, where I'm sharing many family recipes with my patrons.

Prior to 1788, Australia had the longest history without anti-semitism of any settled continent. The first Jews arrived here in 1788 and from that moment, Australia had antisemitism. Since August 3 and the Sydney Harbour Bridge march and that terrible day at Bondi, that antisemitism has become cultural sharing.

I'd rather the haters swapped recipes, myself. If we swapped recipes, those who hate would understand more about our shared culture. Some of the hate is insults and accusations. Much of it is not hate in the minds of those who instruct me. They want to teach me about Judaism and its evil. They invent Satanic rituals and know nothing of honeycake. It's about time I explore a safer way of sharing. I'm skipping talk about what's kosher (mostly), and giving some very special household hints.

The great popular belief about Australia is that we're all either Anglo-Saxon by birth – except for those few lucky souls who were here before Europe decided that sun, sand and sheep were a good idea – or of Irish descent. This has not been the case from the moment Europeans began to arrive on the First Fleet. I have a reprint of 1851 British Parliamentary papers which reports on immigrants to the colony of New South Wales from India, China and Germany, and en passant notes arrivals from places like Mauritius and Guam. Modern Australia tried to create a White Australia and some are trying that yet again, but it's invented.

Furthermore, Jewish Australians have never been considered White, especially not during the heyday of the White Australia Policy. I've told people for years that I'm off-white. Recently I've seen other Jews describing themselves as off-white, too. I love ironic Jewish self-descriptions as a path to sharing almost as much as I love recipes.

My family came out between 1858 and 1918. The nineteenth century family was from London and Leipzig and was a mixture of Sephard and Ashkenaz. We had no idea of this. We knew we were Australian and from the Jewish Australian culture that dominated until the 1940s. Our food had some of the dishes other Jewish cultures had, but not all. Ours was very Australian, but with some classic recipes for festivals. People ask me for recipes for Eastern European dishes that our family never made, and are very disappointed when I ask, "Wouldn't you rather make pudding?"

We're Anglo-Australian Jewish. We were the least exotic of Jews in twentieth century Australia. My mamaloshen (ancestral language) is Australian English. Our accents were standard Melbourne (Eastern Suburbs) and I still blink very quickly and try not to laugh when someone tells me that I speak English very well for someone whose native language is Jewish.

A few of us who debate culinary niceties in terms of social behaviour call it the “chops and three veg culture.” This is not a scholarly definition. When I was a child, we ate chops or sausages and three veg and a nice green salad for dinner most nights, with steak as the alternate special treat, and a roast on Friday night. The Jewish element of the chops and three veg is how kosher it is and that pudding never has milk after the meat meal. The 1960s is my gold standard decade for chops and three veg.

Food is good quality but seldom exciting and never exotic. One brings a bottle of wine, a bunch of flowers or a box of chocolates to a dinner party. One rings the hostess up next day to say thank you. One uses “one” instead of “youse” if one has been to university. At parties there was a beer keg out the back and all the men in the kitchen, and if one ignores those parties, it was a very civil culture.

Documenting this culture is fiddly. Recipes were for posh dinner parties or for special picnics. Everything else we were taught without books.

Before I was ten, I could boil a potato and cook carrot with a little caraway seed. By the time I was twelve, I could cook a three course meal for six people. I was no genius chef. There are not a lot of savoury recipes that need much more than common-sense (although we eschew the English custom of boiling things for a long time), but the sweets and desserts are often fabulous. In other words, the cuisine of my childhood was good, solid cooking, without too many of spices that go to the brain (an aunt said this to me, when I wanted to change her favourite recipe) or the need for more than one or two cookbooks around the place. Mind you, there were always cookbooks around. We read them for fun. My family still does.

We also wrote down small compilations of recipes for the stuff that took a bit more memory than boiled vegetables. When I was in my

thirties, my aunt let me borrow the compilations she had inherited. I discovered then that the special dishes were not plain or at all dull. They were very much Anglo-Australian from the nineteenth and early twentieth century (and were often variants of dishes from the earliest Jewish cookbooks), but with splashes of colour from continental Europe. We made the everyday biscuits that always filled the jar from our memories of making them most days, and made soluthas from these notes. We had recipes for seed cake and sponge and butter cake and Madeira cake for ordinary, and the most amazing European cheese-cakes and upside down cakes for special occasions.

I've traced the 'ordinary' back to England in the early nineteenth century, and the 'special' to Continental Europe a bit later. Maybe I became an historian because I've been cooking with history since I was four?

'Anglo-Australian' has a distinct feel to it. It calls forth memories of afternoon teas at my cousin Clara's place (two generations older than me, but still a cousin), with its enormous untidy garden, and me sitting at the table for hours listening to family stories while my sisters played with cousins at the other end of the garden. I would sit at a big wooden table and try to remember not to lean my arms on the table. Leaning was very tempting, but I was on my best behaviour, and had to struggle constantly between decorum and comfort.

Memories of Clara's house have taken a sepia tone. My memory tells me that her house was yellow or brown, and slightly faded at the edges, except for the garden, which was luxuriously green. A big old stove took up a lot of one wall in the kitchen, and doors led to most of the rest of the house. The kitchen was very much the centre of all things indoors. The stove was always warm, even in midsummer, and the kettle was always hot.

I don't recall being offered coffee when we visited, only cordial or tea. The tea was brewed properly in a pot. One heaped teaspoon for each person and one for the pot, brewed for three minutes before first pour. Milk first, tea after, and then sugar for those who needed sweetness. When I stopped putting sugar in tea, I was taught to explain, "Thank you, but I'm sweet enough already." I still say that when offered sugar in tea.

We drank around an old wood table inside, or the one in the backyard, and gossip abounded.

My cousin Linda (my father's first cousin) hosted very formal afternoon teas. We sat on comfortable 1930s armchairs around an elegant coffee table. We used fine floral tea sets and I'd compare the flowers on the teaset with the ones on the carpet. Cakes and sandwiches sat on tiered plates and flat plates, alongside a silver teapot and tea accessories. At the other end of the lounge room was a piano and on that piano was a signed photo of Louis Armstrong. At Linda's we would discuss family, of course, but also music and the arts, for Linda was a composer and music critic.

Alas, at eleven I knew I had a perfect memory, and so a lot of the stories I heard over tea are lost. I remember the classic way of making tea: how hot the water should be, how many scoops of what sort of leaf, and when to turn what. Except that Dad always used to say I was wrong, and that his mother would have told me that the tea should be scalding and the teaspoon should stand up. Dad was from country Victoria. My grandmother belonged to the old school, where the threat of tannin poisoning was a sign of a good pot.

I drank city tea. The tea bags I use most of the time now would have been total sacrilege in my childhood kitchen. I have good tea to go with my fine china, but that good tea is often seasonal green tea from Japan or a fine oolong from China. Dad would be horrified.

During my school days, when someone visited and showed themselves to be nervous about a Jewish home, I'd make them tea and tell them it was Jewish. They would taste it cautiously and say, "It's different." When I made the second pot, they watched. When that grew tedious, my sisters and I would ask, "Do you take it white, black, or indifferent?" 'Indifferent' required the use of milk and food colouring. This was one of our early methods of fighting antisemitism.

Anglo-Jewish Oz did not have only one cuisine. You already know this, from the *soluthas*. We didn't have a steady state food culture, either, we had a dynamic one. How did this work?

My father's first cousin married one of my favourite people, Edith. She and her mother-in-law (Auntie Gussie) completely misunderstood one another. Edith escaped Vienna just before the Australian border closed. She was a doctor, but had to earn her living in Melbourne as a private nurse, which is how she came to Auntie Gussie's home. She found my family's foodways extravagant. She also missed Viennese cakes. One day, she deplored the fact that she had been forced to leave behind her books when she fled, and so couldn't make those missed dishes. My great-aunt quietly complained to the family that this showed how uneducated she was in the culinary arts, for who needed a printed cookbook? When Edith told me this story, she gave me some of her own family recipes. They have their own stories, and I tell them whenever I make them. I also reflect on the fundamental differences in cooking style between Jewish Vienna and Jewish Melbourne.

Let me explore the Melbourne side a bit more closely, through Great-Aunt Clara's little book. Clara was Gussie's sister. I had access to her book for a few days in the 1980s.

Clara's book is a neat-sized (to fit in a large pocket, one feels) red leather softbound volume, speckled and a little battered, with old

newspaper cuttings creeping out of the edges. It was more a place where she took notes than a cookbook. For instance, the recipe for Almond Pudding (1/2 lb ground almonds, 1 lb eggs, 1 lb sugar, 1/2 lb ground rice) has no instructions. It is simply a reminder of the proportions of the key ingredients.

Clara's writing was careless most of the time, because it was for her, not even for her many siblings. Her spelling occasionally missed a beat. She added useful stuff at the back, like a few weeks of her chickens' laying, and details of the material she was sewing with at the time, which included lots of *crêpe-de-Chine*. Foodways for her were part of her everyday life.

Her little book was fascinating. She documented dishes that she felt it necessary to add or didn't trust to her memory. The names repeat and the recipes interweave, using a very limited range of ingredients. I was taught many of them as a child – from it, you can see how the family taught food and how we ate food until Australia's big cultural shift in the 1970s.

Only one hint of decoration appears, when Clara glued in a clipping from a newspaper, covering the crucial topic of royal icing.

What is particularly interesting about this, is that Great-Aunt Clara was a single woman who made her own living in the days when that was not very common. Mind you, it was not that uncommon on that side of my family (and a significant proportion of my generation never married, says the single author, unabashedly), but what she did was not what I would have expected from the sister of the grandmother who, in family photos, bears a striking resemblance to a dignified battleship. Clara ran, along with the other single sister, Miriam, an exclusive haberdashery and clothing shop in Royal Arcade, Collins Street, Melbourne. If Phryne Fisher were real, she would have shopped at the Misses Polack. The sisters went to France for supplies and to keep

up with the latest. One traveled one year and the other the next. On their return they were interviewed about the latest by the trend-setting journalists. The family tried to put them in their place, because we have a culture of the importance of marriage. They responded, of course: they came to family functions in a chauffeur-driven and rather nice car. When the same happened to me, I wrote it into fiction.

What did Clara feel needed noting to run her Jewish home? Here are the titles from her little red book (the comments in brackets are my own):

- floor polish
- jam (a type of marmalade, from the ingredients)
- cream cakes
- almond pudding (the one mentioned earlier)
- pudding (not the most exciting recipe I've ever seen, but it does get boiled for 2 ½ hours)
- almond biscuits
- prepared flour
- jelly
- suet pudding (and I hope she used kosher suet, but I doubt it)
- asthma cure
- bachelor's billions (a biscuit)
- self-raising flour

- cocoanut biscuits (her spelling – a very Victorian way of spelling coconut – in fact, her little book is redolent of Victorian Australia)
- cough mixture
- to remove mildew
- tea cake
- self raising flour (I wonder, did my Great-Aunt really have that much trouble getting things to rise?)
- lemon syrup
- ammonia biscuits
- fruit cake
- queen cakes
- how to preserve eggs (don't even ask ...)
- Othellos and Desdemonas (a cake)
- short crust
- lemon sponge
- plain seed cake
- ribbon cake
- white cake
- nice biscuits (or it could be rice biscuits?)

- Amali's cake (I could very well be wrong in the name, which is not very legible)
- Victoria biscuits
- 1, 2, 3 cake (now, for your information, what my mother calls her European Plum Cake within the immediate family is actually the "2, 4, 6, 8 cake")
- biscuits (a generic variety)
- champagne biscuits (not quite so generic)
- queen cake
- cornflour cake
- cream cake
- white cake (she listed several recipes that were very similar and had identical names)
- carrot cheesecakes
- pine apple jelly
- scones (sic)
- tea cake
- almond biscuits
- stuff monkeys (we knew them as stuffed monkeys when I was a kid, they were a London recipe)
- carrot pudding

- ginger bread
- Mr Michelson biscuits
- butter biscuits

After these recipes, she left most of the book blank, except for some newspaper cuttings. Then she has mostly household hints. I feel quite strongly that you need a sampling of the household hints. Why? Because they say as much about life in an early twentieth century Australian Jewish household as the recipes:

Great Aunt Clara's household hints:

#1 floor polish

- 3 oz beeswax
- 1 oz Castille soap
- 1 pint turpentine
- 1 pint boiling water

Cut wax and soap up very fine. Add the turpentine and leave for 24 hours (don't let the cat get at it!). Add boiling water.

#2 Fly poison

Mix together $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp black pepper, finely ground with 1 tsp of sugar and sufficient condensed milk to make into a paste. Place this charming mixture on pieces of paper where flies tend to congregate.

Great-Aunt Clara says about this hint: "The flies will eat it, and will dye almost instantly." If you make this, please let me know what colour they dye.

#3 Mustard Lotion

Mix 2 oz mustard with 1 pint spirit of arnica and 2 drachms of camphor.

Let stand 2-3 days. Carefully crush in a bowl. Pour off the clear lotion and cork tightly.

Can be used for rheumatism. If you have a chest cold, then rub the lotion on the chest directly.

#4 Lavender sachets

use a mixture of ½ oz lavender flowers

½ tsp powdered cloves

Grandma Polack's little book was not quite as full as Great-Aunt Clara's and it almost entirely lacks important household hints. As befits the owner of that famous budgie, Tiger Polack, Belle Polack's book is a very dignified green, with "Recipe Book" printed elegantly on the front.

Her use of it was individual. As befits my chop and three veg theories, there were no recipes under meat, soups, fish, poultry, entrees or vegetables. Oddly enough, until one looks at the entries themselves, my grandmother wrote nothing under puddings or jellies either. There are recipes for these things crammed in other sections. Many of her entries are jams or preserves.

I was concerned when I found an entry under "Pickles Sauces" for homemade soap. Also about the family penchant for alcohol.

My grandmother made raisin wine. This is an Anglo-Australian tradition that has definitely decayed, raisin wine was not that unusual in the 19th and first half of the 20th century. My grandmother's recipe was given by a friend who made it professionally, and it was, I'm told, absolutely superb. Grandma Polack promised to never give the recipe away. She guaranteed this through writing three different raisin wines in three different collections of notes and, I checked with a winemaker, none of them are complete. The recipe was for Passover, presumably popular because there was not very much kosher wine available in Australia during World War II.

Despite the fact the raisin wine for Passover, my grandmother was intriguingly almost-kosher. Why almost? She taught her oldest daughter to peel her spuds, cut them, then dip them into lard before roasting. And then there is a recipe that contains bacon. These two things are perfectly normal for 19th century Jewish London.

When some tales are better left untold, our food and foodways can still explain to others who we are.

Eating together is a lot safer than arguing politics.

Belle Polack's Recipes

I used these recipes as part of the family foodways in *The Wizardry of Jewish Women*. They are my grandmother's. Through them I did some historical detective work and discovered a lot about my family. This selection tells you quite a bit about Jewish Australia prior to the 1940s.

Most of these recipes were written down in the 1950s and reflect the measuring systems of that time. I've also kept her formatting, though I have, on occasion, modernised her spelling.

Pancakes

Ingredients

2 eggs

$\frac{3}{4}$ pint milk

$\frac{1}{4}$ pound flour

$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon baking powder

1 saltspoon salt

Beat eggs. Mix in flour and a little milk till you have a smooth paste, add the rest of the milk and salt, let it stand for 1 hour. Just before frying add the baking powder. Fry in a very little butter rubbed on the bottom of a hot pan. Roll and serve hot!

Ice Cream

Ingredients

2 eggs

Scoop of sugar

1 Pint of milk

A little vanilla

Beat eggs and sugar, add milk and vanilla. Stir over fire until it thickens, but do not boil. Let cool add a little cream and fruit if liked. Freeze.

Fig jam

Ingredients

4 lb figs

1 pt water

4 oz. ginger syrup

4 lb sugar

1 cup vinegar

Stew figs, vinegar, water until soft. Chop ginger, measure pulp add 1 lb to a pint (sugar) boil till thick.

Royal Icing

Ingredients

1 lb icing sugar

2 whites eggs

1 dessertspoon lemon juice

For piping: add 1 more white of egg.

Beat whites of eggs to a froth. Add to the sifted sugar and lemon juices. Stir until mixed and then beat well.

Chocolate Souffle

Ingredients

2 oz butter

½ oz flour

1 ½ oz chocolate

vanilla flavouring

3 eggs

1 gill milk

1 tablespoon castor sugar

Melt butter, add flour, add chocolate & milk, then sugar while on the fire, let cook. Beat in the yolks of eggs one at a time and vanilla. Beat white very stiff add the rest. Put into a greased souffle dish. Bake in a quick oven for ½ hour. Serve with cream

Rum Cream for Plum Pudding

Whip cream and when nearly whipped add rum very slowly until sufficiently flavoured.

Fruit Punch

Combine the juices of three oranges and two lemons and mix with a cup of pineapple juice.

Just before serving, add a quart of dry ginger ale & serve very cold.

Cherries add to the look of punch.

Apple crumble

Ingredients

2 lbs cooking apples

3 tablespoons golden syrup

3 tablespoons of minced ginger

1 small cup SR flour

½ cup brown sugar

3 tablespoon butter

Vanilla

Stew apples in little water & golden syrup & ginger. When apples are soft, pour into buttered pie dish to cool. Rub flour, sugar & butter till they look like breadcrumbs. Put on top of apples & sprinkle with coconut

Bake 25 mts.

Cheese Straws

Ingredients

2 oz grated cheese

2 oz breadcrumbs

2 oz flour

2 oz butter, salt and cayenne.

Mix roll thin cut into fingers and bake a pale brown.

Wholemeal Date Scones

Ingredients

2 cups fine wholemeal flour

2 tablespoons cream tartar

1 teaspoon cinnamon

2 tablespoons butter

2 tablespoons brown sugar

½ cup chopped dates

½ cup milk

Sift flour, cream tartar and cinnamon. Rub in butter. Add brown sugar and chopped dates and mix into soft dough, using milk. Cut into shapes and bake in hot oven for 15 minutes.

Orange Butter Sponge

Ingredients

3 eggs

¾ cup sugar

½ cup cornflour

¼ cup flour

1 teaspoon baking powder

1 tablespoon orange juice

2 tablespoon melted butter

Filling:

1 orange

Butter

Icing sugar

Beat eggs & sugar until light, then add sifted dry ingredients, then orange juice & melted butter. Bake in well-greased tins in moderate oven for about 20 minutes.

Filling: Grate orange rind finely and put it into a saucepan with the juice and butter. Warm until butter melts, then add sufficient icing sugar to make a spreadable paste.

Banana Cheese Toast

Ingredients

1 egg

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup milk

$\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon of salt

1 teaspoon sugar

Beat slightly and add milk, salt and sugar. Dip 6 slices of bread in this mixture & fry a golden brown. While hot, cut into squares & cover with sliced banana & then thick grated cheese.

Passionfruit Flummery

Ingredients

One tablespoon gelatine

1 cup cold water

1 tablespoon flour

2 cups cold water

1 cup sugar

juice of 2 oranges and 1 lemon

Pulp of 7 passionfruit.

Soften gelatine in 1 cup cold water. Blend flour with little of remaining water. Heat remainder of water and sugar, stir in flour and cook over boiling water for 10 minutes. Add gelatine, stirring until dissolved. Add pulp of passionfruit and whisk until thick and creamy.

Marshmallow Ice Cream

Ingredients

2 oz marshmallows

½ cup milk

½ cup strong coffee

1 cup cream (whipped)

salt to taste

1 tsp vanilla essence

Cut the marshmallows into quarters, add them to the milk and melt in a double saucepan. Add coffee. Chill until slightly thickened. Whip cream, add salt & vanilla and beat into the cold marshmallow mixture. Turn into a freezing tray for 2 to 3 hrs. If preferred, 1 cup of fruit juice may be used instead of the coffee & milk.

Lemon Chiffon Ice Cream

Ingredients

4 egg yolk

½ cup powdered sugar

Juice of 2 lemons

1 cup cream.

Beat egg yolks until very thick, then add gradually the sugar, beating continuously until sugar is dissolved. Stir in the lemon juice. Whip cream until fluffy, but not stiff. Fold into the egg mixture and spoon

into freezing tray. Freeze for about 2 hrs. Requires stirring only once after first hour. Any other fruit juice may be used instead of the lemon.

Plum Pudding Ice Cream

Ingredients

- ½ lb maraschino cherries (chopped)
- ½ lb dates
- ½ lb figs
- ½ lb raisins
- ½ candied pineapples
- ½ lb walnuts

Chop fruit and nuts. Put all together in an earthenware bowl with a cover. Pour over sufficient brandy to cover the fruits and stand overnight in a cool place. Make ordinary ice cream foundation, whisk with cream, and freeze. Add the soaked fruit with the liquor and freeze until firm. Pack in ice & salt for at least an hour before serving. Serve with wafers.

Christmas Pudding

Ingredients

- (Medium Rich)
- 1 lb suet
- ¾ lb fine breadcrumbs
- ¾ lb brown sugar
- ¼ lb flour
- 1 lb sultanas
- 1 lb currants
- ¼ lb mixed peel

½ teaspoon mixed spice

Pinch salt

1 lemon

4 eggs

½ pt beer or milk

½ gill of brandy

Prepare all the ingredients. Sieve flour and mix with crumbs and finely chopped suet. Add fruit, chopped peel, grated rind of lemon and sugar. Mix in the beaten eggs, beer or milk. Stir well. Cover a clean and put away until next day.

Add the brandy, turn into greased basins and cover with the greased paper and pudding cloths.

Boil for 8 to 10 hrs. Remove the paper and cloths. Let puddings cool and recover with fresh paper and dry cloths.

Store in a cook, dry place. Boil for a further 2 hrs before serving.

Grape Juice Lemonade

Ingredients

4 lemons

1 ½ pts water

1 pt grape juice

1 cup sugar

Mix lemon juice and other ingredients. Turn into a pitcher and stir thoroughly. Add ice.

Pompadour Cream

Ingredients

1 pt milk

1 ½ oz cornflour

Boiling water

2 oz sugar

Grated Lemon rind

1 oz preserved ginger (cut into small pieces)

Fresh cherries or diced pineapple

1/2 cup whipped cream

Passionfruit, strawberries (as garnish)

Measure 4 tablespoons of milk and put aside in a cup. Place remainder in saucepan to heat. Blend cornflour with the cold milk. Pour boiling milk over cornflour, stirring constantly, and return to saucepan with warmed milk, adding sugar. Stir until the mixture boils, simmer for three minutes.. Add a little grated lemon rind and the preserved ginger. Allow to cool. When cold, fold in pieces of stewed or fresh cherries, diced pineapple and whipped cream. Serve in individual dishes, adding a little passionfruit, and garnish with a whole strawberry.

Bubble Bread

(Basis for savouries)

Ingredients

12 ozs flour

2 tablespoons grated cheese

Salt

1 tablespoon butter

Water

Mix flour, grated cheese and salt. Rub in butter and work into a dry paste with water. Roll out very thin and cut into small oblong biscuits. Prick well and bake in moderate oven for about 10 minutes.

Ginger Nuts

Ingredients

3 oz butter

¼ lbs sugar

1 beaten egg

3 tablespoons of treacle

½ lb flour

1½ teaspoon of ground ginger

Cream butter with sugar. Add beaten egg and treacle. Add flour and ground ginger gradually. Roll into small balls, place on a buttered tray and bake gently for about 10 to 15 minutes.

Fruit Salad Tart

Short Pastry:

½ lb SR flour

¼ lb butter

pinch salt

2 ozs sugar

yolk of 1 egg

and 1 tablespoon milk

Mix as you do as ordinary paste. Cook Pastry.

Filling:

2 thick slices of pineapple grated

2 large bananas mashed

sugar to taste

1 apple grated or finely cut

Mix juice of 1 orange with a little cornflour and add to fruit mixture stir over a slow fire until it boils, then put into the tarts. Beat egg white with one tablespoon sugar until stiff. Put on top of tart and place in oven till brown.

Remove cooked pastry from oven. Put filling in, baste with egg white and return to oven until cooked.

Hot Tomato Scones

Ingredients

- 3 cups SR flour
- 1 egg
- ½ cup tomato pulp
- 2 tablespoon grated cheese (strongest)
- 1 dessertspoon butter
- ½ egg
- spoon salt
- milk to mix

Make a well in the flour, pour in beaten egg and melted butter then tomato pulps which has been salted and pepper together with a pinch of soda to prevent milk from curdling. Stir well and add sufficient milk to make a light dough roll out cut into shape and bake in a quick oven.

Health Scones (for Indigestion)

Ingredients

- 2 tablespoons Olive Oil
- 2 tablespoons treacle
- ½ cup milk
- ½ cup chopped preserved ginger, dates or raisins

- 1 cup bran
- 1 egg (optional)
- ½ cups flour
- 1 small teaspoon baking soda
- 2 small teaspoon cream of tartar.

Mix well together oil, treacle and milk also the egg, add bran, flour, sifted with soda and cream tartar add ginger (dates or raisins) and mix into scone mixture roll out to about 1 inch thickness and cut into squares and bake in a good oven.

Honey Comb

Ingredients

- 4 tablespoon sugar
- 2 tablespoon honey or syrup
- 1 teaspoon baking soda.

Put sugar and honey in a saucepan and stir until it boils, boil five minutes then add soda slowly stirring the mixture well. Pour into a buttered plate.

(See that all lumps are well out of soda use pie dish when you put in mixture.)

Cornish Meat Rolls

Ingredients

- ¾ topside steak
- 1 onion
- 1 large potato
- 1 tomato
- 2 cups flour

1 teaspoon baking powder

Pinch salt

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup dripping

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup cold water

1 teaspoon lemon juice

Salt and pepper.

Remove fat from steak. Peel potato, tomato and onion, and put through mincer with meat or chop each very finely and mix together. Season with salt and pepper. Sift flour, salt and baking powder. Rub in dripping and add water and lemon juice and mix to a stiff paste. Roll on floured board to oblong shape, about $\frac{1}{4}$ inch thick. Spread with mixture, and fold into a neat roll. Bake in a moderate oven 40 to 50 minutes.

Chocolate Chessboards

Ingredients

3 oz butter

2 oz castor sugar

4 oz plain flour

$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon baking powder

Vanilla

1 dessertspoon cocoa blended with a teaspoon of milk, 1 egg yolk.

Cream butter and sugar until fluffy. Add the egg yolk. Fold in the flour and powder mix well. Halve the mixture. Work one section into an oblong shape, about 1 inch by $\frac{1}{2}$ deep. Roll in greaseproof paper place in refrigerator. To the remaining half add the chocolate mixture. Mix thoroughly. Work in same shape and size as the plain loaf. Chill both until firm. Cut each into halves lengthwise producing four strips half inch square. Glaze each with egg white. Match a chocolate strip

with a plain until the four are joined. Re-roll in paper, chill for 5 minutes. Cut into thin slices. Bake on greased trays in moderately hot oven for 10 to 15 minutes.

Books in Print

Story Matrices: Cultural Encoding and Cultural Baggage in the Worlds of Science Fiction and Fantasy. Academia Lunare 2022 (My forever-bride book. It was long-listed and shortlisted all over the place, but won no awards. It's very handy for writers, however, and has supremely short chapters.)

The Green Children Help Out, Aggadah Try it, 2021 (Where I become very silly with the notion of alternate worlds and superheroes. This is not like other superhero books.)

Poison and Light, Shooting Star, 2020 (Imagine a future where we've colonised galaxies and fought terrible wars and ... one planet sulks. Its citizens decide to return to the 18th century. This novel contains duels, balloons, much plotting and was a finalist for a Ditmar award in 2021)

The Year of the Fruitcake, IFWG Publishing, 2019 (This novel is most definitely at the literary end of science fiction. It tells the story of a small group of perimenopausal women in Canberra and how they changed the universe. It won the best novel Ditmar in 2020, and was a finalist for an Aurealis award the same year. Critics loved it, but you need to read it slowly and with care – the narrators are about as trustworthy as women's bodies during perimenopause.)

Mountains of the Mind, Shooting Star, 2018 (A collection of short stories, both past – to the early 1980s – and more recent. Finalist, best collected work, Ditmar, 2019)

The Wizardry of Jewish Women, Next Chapter 2021 (Jewish Australia: family, food, and family magic. Albanese makes a cameo (unnamed) appearance. So do the Canberra bushfires, parliament House, and a demon in a lemon tree. Finalist, Ditmar, 2017)

History and Fiction, Peter Lang 2016 (How fiction writers use history in their fiction. My favourite part of this is all the interviews with authors. It's my most-quoted book and was short-listed for the William Atheling Jr Award for Criticism or Review, 2017)

The Time of the Ghosts, Next Chapter 2021 (Three women, not young, tackle the Canberra's strange beings with their teenage offside. This is my best novel according to academics. German university students have studied it, which was fun.)

The Middle Ages Unlocked (with Katrin Kania), Amberley Publishing, 2015 (Where my historian-self comes out of hiding. This volume was asked for by so many writers, and is a handy guide to English life in the High Middle Ages. It explores food and stories and farming and trade... but not kings and their doings.)

The Art of Effective Dreaming, Next Chapter, 2021 (Sleeping Beauty, but full of twists and dreams and the need to escape Canberra.)

Langue[dot]doc 1305, Next Chapter, 2021 (A time travel novel written by an historian – what could go wrong? A team of scientists go back to Medieval France. (CSIRO scientists read this before it was published. They praised my hydrogeology and told me that they had worked with scientists like the ones in my novel.)

Life through Cellophane/Ms Cellophane, Eneit Press/Momentum, 2009/2012 (A fantasy novel where everyone is trying to make sense of

Canberra. The evil boss does not help and nor does the magic mirror. This was a finalist for a Ditmar award, 2010)

Baggage, Borgo, 2014 (This was a finalist for a Ditmar in 2011, and is something I'm very proud of. I asked Australian writers to write about the cultural baggage they see and they wrote some of their best work.)

Two (possibly three) more books will be published this year or early next. The first is *After Empire*, a fantasy novel strongly influenced by the distance between Australia and the UK. The second is a volume very full of short essays about Australian science fiction and fantasy from the 1800s until the 1950s. The 'possible' one is called *Chocolate Redemption* and is set in Katoomba and in a world that looks like Medieval France.