

► FOOD GLORIOUS FOOD ◀

A middle-class family living in a town house usually had an extensive kitchen. There was the kitchen proper, many ancillary rooms, which may have consisted of a scullery, larder, washhouse and a butler's pantry. The butler's pantry was a necessity as the kitchen area was as a rule, far away from the dining room and was usually some where in the basement area. Kitchen was adequate for cooking, but not for cleaning nor for usage. At that point in time there were usually many people looking for work and being 'in service' was available to those. Abroad, especially in English-speaking countries there was not a vast supply of such cheap kitchen-type labour available, so labour saving kitchens came in to being much sooner overseas than in England.

Few housewives today (c1959) have help in the home and also often hold down a full time if not part time job so ease of time and energy in the kitchen is a must. This is when Time and Motion experts came into their own. Designing kitchens so fewer steps needed to be taken and equipment was easy to use and easy to clean. The laundry was also included in the kitchen and I can remember far far far back my mother had laundry tubs, and a copper in the kitchen, then later on a washing machine which had a agitator and attached to the machine, a hand wringer We thought we were so posh, but Mum still boiled everything first, then into the machine, through the wringer into a rinse, then from there through the wringer into the blue rinse then wrung again, into the basket and hung on the line. This line I might add went from one side of the back yard to the other held up by a cross arm system and the middle part propped up by a wooden prop which was bought from the 'prop man' who came around once or twice a year yelling out his wares. The panic that ensured if the wind or some wayward kid knocked this prop down as the washing then was in the dirt and the whole process gone through again. My Mum also used the copper to cook the Christmas ham and the plum pudding. How did she put up with the heat? This was in Sydney.

All equipment has improved especially stoves, from an open fire place to a closed-in fire place to having a pot of sorts hanging over the flames, tri-pods, to a fire-heated oven to gas and electricity. We have come a long way. Sinks were another piece of equipment that changed rapidly once metal became common. So from deep concrete tubs or troughs to sleeker models to the stream-lined, different shaped and coloured ones that abound today.

As equipment became modern so did utensils. Once made from wood, metal was the order of the day. Simple things like graters, sieves, peelers, funnels, mashers and etc., all were made in metal. Today they can be found in multi-coloured plastic. Implements as the fridge, a big step up from the ice-box, to machines that grate, slice, cut, dice, mix, liquefy, grind, and sieve can be found sitting on kitchen benches or maybe in the cupboards. We enjoy our very own coffee making machines which not only gives us fresh coffee but can and does make cappuccinos. Unheard of a few years back. People thought they were advanced if they had a coffee percolator or the fancy glass suction gadget. Italians brought their own coffee machines with them when they migrated to Australia, a whole new way for most Australians who had only an instant coffee and chicory mix.

Good storage space is essential in a good kitchen. Cupboards both floor and wall are usually found, once in very plain cream coloured paint now in many types, colours and kinds of laminate. Bench tops, once wooden which had to be scrubbed on a nearly daily basis, are now found in laminates, granites, concrete, stainless steel, and what ever else takes your fancy.

Another advancement has been a continuous supply of hot water. Once the kettle on the open fire was it, now there are many methods available. From off-peak electrical storage tanks to instantaneous gas/electrical to solar, just turn on the tap and out it comes.

From nothing, going to bed at sun-down and rising at sun-up, firelight, to tapers, to candles to lamps to gas, to electricity to light the kitchen and houses. From incandescent bulbs to neon to halogen, and to-day, the new energy-efficiency globes, the Compact Fluorescent Lamp (CFL). 'All the better to see you, my dear', said grandma to little Red Riding Hood.

With the modern day kitchen with all its time and work saving devices, mustn't miss mentioning the micro-wave nor the dish washer or the self-cleaning oven, the washing machine, the clothes dryer, the deep freeze, the fridge that makes ice and cold water and all the other wonderful bits of equipment. It leaves me wondering what will our homes especially the kitchen, that is if there will be one, will look like say in 2050. Let's make sure we leave enough information so that, that generation does know.

Maybe the next Bulletin will be one for the blokes. A request has been "how about one on transport and motor-bikes in particular." Isn't that one for the blokes to do? So how about it, fellers, step up to the mark, write something the society can print and we will!

This bulletin was inspired from an article in 'Home Management' Vol # 1 c1959