



DELGADO RECEIVES DONATION OF JANE AUSTIN SMITH COOK BOOK COLLECTION

Delgado and its Culinary Arts program are the grateful recipients of a generous donation of more than 400 cooking books – many focusing on our regional cuisine – from the collection of Jane Austin Smith, sister of Delgado Institutional Advancement Coordinator Lee Gaffney. The donation was made in her honor by her husband, Manship Smith Jr., and family.

Born in Battle Creek, Michigan, Mrs. Smith moved to New Orleans as a teen and began developing her lifelong passion for cooking in high school. At Fortier, she was president of Pi Alpha Kappa and was named Betty Crocker Homemaker of the Year. Though her major at LSU, from which she graduated in 1959, was English Education, cooking always remained her first love.

Her daughter, Betsy Manship, says of her mother's passion for cooking: "It was her identity. She started her day planning meals and ended her day planning meals. While she loved cooking for her family, she came to life cooking for others. She loved to entertain, and every meal she prepared was a new adventure. She was constantly trying a new recipe, new flavor, new genre, new technique or new gadget for this or that."

Mrs. Smith collected many of the ideas for those culinary experiments on the road. "Jane has traveled extensively throughout the United States, Canada, Hong Kong, China, Thailand and Mexico, attending cooking classes whenever the time would allow," says Mr. Smith.

"Every road trip was designed around the next place Mom and Dad had to try, as well as old favorites they could never miss," adds Betsy. "If they read about something wonderful, they would map out a trip and eat their way through it. Along the road, they met the cooks, chefs and owners of the various establishments they enjoyed. They collected cookbooks everywhere they went."

Mrs. Smith's extensive cook book collection spans 40 years and several continents. "It is her pride and joy," explains Mr. Smith. "She would read them as novels and constructed many classes from them."

When she and her family moved to Texas in the mid-70s, Mrs. Smith combined her education, talents, passion and experience to teach cooking classes in the Dallas area that explored Cajun, Creole, Chinese, Thai, Mexican, Canadian and other exotic cuisines. She was always creative. "She could cook anything in a wok, even a cake," says Mr. Smith.

Along the way, Mrs. Smith noted the details of her creative approaches as well as the knowledge she gained in the kitchen in the margins of her cook books, or on notes and menus slipped between their covers. Today, beyond their printed pages, Mrs. Smith's books contain a wealth of her personal knowledge and experience, making them an even more invaluable resource for the food lovers and culinary talents of tomorrow.

"Years ago, before Katrina, we traveled to New Orleans looking for a place of need to donate the collection, and Delgado was one of the places we visited," says Mr. Smith. "When we learned that

Katrina had destroyed Delgado's library, the family felt that now – not later – was the perfect time to share the collection with the school."

By generous donation over several phases of delivery to Delgado Community College, Jane Austin Smith's lifelong collection of cookbooks will be housed at the City Park Library, sharing her love of the culinary arts with generations to come.



A proud member of the International Association of Culinary Professionals, Jane Austin Smith has dined with Julia Childs and Jacques Pepin and taught cooking with Justin Wilson, Paul Prudhomme, Frank Davis, Tom Fitzmorris and Jeff Smith.



Mr. and Mrs. Manship Smith Jr.