



How Far Would You Go For Tapioca Pudding?

by Peggy Marker

An interesting question and an amusing answer to this question were found in a December 30, 1854 issue of *The Home Journal*, newspaper. The Museum recently received a donation of antique newspapers dating back to the Civil War and even earlier. The newspapers were in excellent condition and the stories well written. To access the newspapers into our collection was a simple task, but to put them away without reading them was a little more difficult.

Curiosity didn't kill the cat in this instance but helped to broaden my understanding of what the world was like in 1854. The article entitled, "Voyage Around a Pudding", caught my eye. It was about tapioca pudding. First, I need to state that I don't like tapioca pudding and second I couldn't believe tapioca pudding had been around for so long. This article, however, was written in such a clever way that I might be convinced to taste the pudding the next time I see it on a menu. The article starts out by describing a dinner guest folding his napkin, placing it back in the silver ring and laying it on the table. He leaned back in his chair, folded his arms and said to the hostess, "there are a great many things to be said about that pudding."

Eggs were about 25 cents a dozen in 1854 and were not always fresh; so, the hostess showed some discomfort at the statement thinking perhaps her pudding was not the best it could be. However, the guest immediately qualified his statement by saying, "In a geographical point of view, there are many things to be said about that pudding." And then the fun began as the guest tested the family with the question, "Where does tapioca come from?"

The first answer came from the family's teenage son, who spouted off, "the store from which it was purchased." While the visitor had to agree that it did indeed come from a particular store, he wasn't satisfied with that pat answer. He wanted deeper thinking on where the pudding came from so he asked the question in another way. "Does not tapioca come from Rio de Janeiro?" Immediately the family could see where this conversation was going and played along with the visitor and responded, "Yes, it comes from Rio de Janeiro from a plant called the *Mandioca*." The roots of the *Mandioca* plants are long and round and generally a foot or more in length. The tubers are dug up, peeled, scraped, grated, ground, and put in rattan sacks and broken down with water. The resulting juice is poisonous and very volatile. The mixture is set aside and when all the liquid evaporates, small crumbs like bread remain which is called tapioca. The guest then stated that Rio was about five thousand five hundred miles from New York and encouraged the family to continue to add miles to the pudding's journey.

The discussion continued and sugar was mentioned as an ingredient of

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the pudding. The sugar was made in part from sweet yellow sugar of Louisiana; but, the hard cane sugar came from the West Indies so they added another fifteen hundred miles to the journey. Someone in the family mentioned the vanilla flavor so vanilla was added to the discussion. In 1854, vanilla was gathered from the wild vines that grew in Venezuela and was shipped through the Caribbean. Everyone agreed to allow twenty-five hundred more miles. The dialogue became even more intriguing when the visitor boasted of the wine sauce that the hostess poured over the pudding. The hostess checked the bottle of wine and noted that it came from India and another

four thousand miles was added to this fantastic voyage.

By this time, the geographical exercise had the entire family engaged and when spices were added such as nutmeg and clove, the mileage to the Spice Islands in the Indian Ocean were included in the journey. The visitor and family continued to add miles as each ingredient was discussed and when all had been exhausted, the miles added up to twenty-five thousand miles. To end the discussion the visitor stated that they must not forget Mexico, where the silver was obtained to make the spoon which they used to eat the pudding.

What a delightful way to discuss something as simple as tapioca pudding and engage the entire family in a wonderful excursion around the world. It is a great geography lesson for all of us and one that could be used at the dinner table today. I must confess, however, that even though the lesson was thought-provoking and exciting, I still can't eat tapioca pudding. But, I might just see how far I would travel for a Bonnie Doon banana split!



Welcome New Board Members

We recently elected two new board members to the Museum Advisory Board to fill positions of outgoing board members Emmy Cokewood and William Graves.

Ashley Bennett, a Mishawaka resident, was born, raised, educated, and employed in Mishawaka. She has taught Theatre Arts and English at Mishawaka High School. Ashley is currently the drama director at Marian High School. Her husband, Dave is a Mishawaka firefighter and teaches Survive Alive classes at the Museum. They are parents of two young children. Ashley hopes to seek new and creative ways to expose her children to not only physical activities for their growth and development but also for cultural opportunities. The Hannah Lindahl Children's Museum is just one more way to expose her own children to their city's heritage. Her goal is to be a fresh voice, a team player, a creative participant, and a friendly

face among the hardworking members of the current board.

Peter DeKever currently resides in Mishawaka and teaches English and US History at Penn High School. He coaches their Academic Super Bowl Social Studies team as well as the Academic Spell Bowl team. His teams have won many state championships. He also is an adjunct faculty member at Indiana University. Peter is an avid volunteer in the community and a presenter of programs on local history topics. Peter will bring an enthusiasm for local history and personal expertise to the board.

We welcome both new members and look forward to working with them in the coming months.

The Children's Museum

By Lucy Minnix

The Children's Museum
Is the place to be.
There is something here
For all to see.

Children imagine
And want to know
How they might have lived
Many years ago.

Adults find memories
And enjoy it here.
It makes long ago
Seem so near.

Come to this place
That all will enjoy.
There is something to find for
Each girl and boy.

This year's 343 accessions were donated by 24 individuals and/or organizations. The following list shows a portion of the accessions. For a complete list of accessions and donors you can contact the Museum office at 254-4540. Thank you for remembering the Museum with your artifact donations.

Artifacts from Japan	Mr. & Mrs. Walter Johnson
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Abstract from Byrkit's addition	Mrs. Clara Vance
Rocking Horse and early wooden toys	Mr. & Mrs. Louis Motz
Aprons	Miss Nancy Harter
Record Albums	Miss Nancy Harter
Early South Bend History book	Mr. Jerry Bolin
Coalbush United Methodist Church History	Coalbush UM Church
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Canvas Laundry Basket	Anonymous
Mary Phillips Photograph Albums	School City of Mishawaka
Dodge Reliance Union Agreements	Mr. & Mrs. William Stout
Photographs of LaSalle Elementary	School City of Mishawaka
Photographs of Mary Phillips Elementary	School City of Mishawaka
Photographs of Mishawaka High School	School City of Mishawaka
Edison cylinder	Ms. Aimee Nicks
Photographs of Beiger Mansion	Anonymous
Ball Band Salesman suitcases	Mr. Robert Pierce
1857 -1875 newspapers	Mr. & Mrs. Donald C. Olson
Early Victorian dishes	Miss Nancy Harter
Photographs of Twin Branch addition	School City of Mishawaka
Photographs of 1963 MHS construction project	School City of Mishawaka
Foil Plate Stamp for HLCM Anniversary book	SC/M Print Shop
WWI newspapers	Ms. Courtney Zigler
Printing Plates from early area businesses	Mr. Jack Shank
Slides of Beiger Mansion fire	Mr. Carl DeMaegd
Salesman sample Ball Band Military raincoat	Mr. Carl DeMaegd
German Bisque doll	Ms. Jane David
MHS 1953 class reunion newsletter, memorabilia	School City of Mishawaka
Shiojiri History information	School City of Mishawaka
Main School Report Card c1912	Mrs. Enid H. Fisher
Photograph of Penn Township staff	Mrs. Connie Saltzgaber

Museum Advisory Board 2010

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Museum hours:

Tues. - Fri. 9 AM to noon & 1:00 to 4 PM,
(closed whenever school is not in session in the SCM)

Admission charges: \$2.00 - visitors 5 years and up;
\$1.00 - Visitors 2-4 years old;
No charge for Museum members



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