

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, ICE CREAM CONE!

The next time you see someone licking a cool, delicious mound of ice cream cuddled in a crunchy cone, you might give a sigh for those departed souls who lived before they yummy, tummy-tempting treat was invented.

The ice cream cone celebrates its 70th birthday this year. For it was in 1904 that America, which had already given the world the telephone, the airplane, the cotton gin and the loganberry, came up with the ice cream cone.

It happened, most accounts agree, at the St. Louis World's Fair. Thereafter, de-

tails vary. One version has a nameless concessionaire hawking a flat, sweet cake which he baked on a griddle before his customers' eyes. During a lull, he rolled one of his still-warm cakes into a cornucopia shape. But what could be put in the cornucopia? The vendor in the next stall was selling ice cream. He leaned over and begged a dollop for the open end of his creation — and the ice cream cone was born.

Unfortunately, according to this story, neither man saw that it was a great day in gastronomic history. But two other Fair employees were



BIRTHPLACE OF THE ICE CREAM CONE...A view of the St. Louis fair in 1904.

taken with the idea. After the fair closed they went to Cincinnati where they began to experiment with baking cones. They used a small hand oven and turned out hand-rolled sweet sugar cones and the pressed or molded type. Their products found a ready market and before long cones appeared in other cities.

Automation got into the act in 1910. That was when Frederick A. Bruckmann of Portland, Oregon, invented a machine that turned out 3,000 cones an hour. He sold machine rights and territories to businessmen in various parts of the country and a new industry was launched.

Nabisco, Inc. entered the cone business in 1928 by buying the McLaren Consolidated Cone Corporation. Founded by Alexander McLaren, who early had obtained the rights to the Bruckmann machine for certain eastern territories, the company had a number of plants around the country.

One of the main features of the McLaren cones was the nesting ring of extra thickness around the outside of the cone near the top. This permitted the cones to be packed



KING CONE...Woman employee packs 'em in.



FOR PALACE OR PALATE...Ice cream cones can tempt a lad to dream.


one inside the other for shipment, without the disastrous percentage of breakage which plagued the industry in its early years.

Nabisco manufactures three basic types of cones: waffle cups, which come in assorted colors and flavors, waffle cones and sugar cones. One Nabisco plant, for example, bakes over 300 million cones a year. The biggest switch in

sales has been from regular size cones to be dispensed in stores to cups for home use. Mom's kitchen is becoming a do-it-yourself ice cream parlor.

Probably nobody knows the exact date on which to say "Happy Birthday" to the ice cream cone, but wittingly or not, millions of cones will be raised to the lips in celebration this year.

Since the most recent figure shows the United States consuming 786 million gallons of ice cream annually, what if it all were dispensed in single dip cones? It would come to about 194 cones eaten each year by every man, woman and child. Of course, not all ice cream is consumed this way, but isn't it a delicious thought in this cone-prone world?



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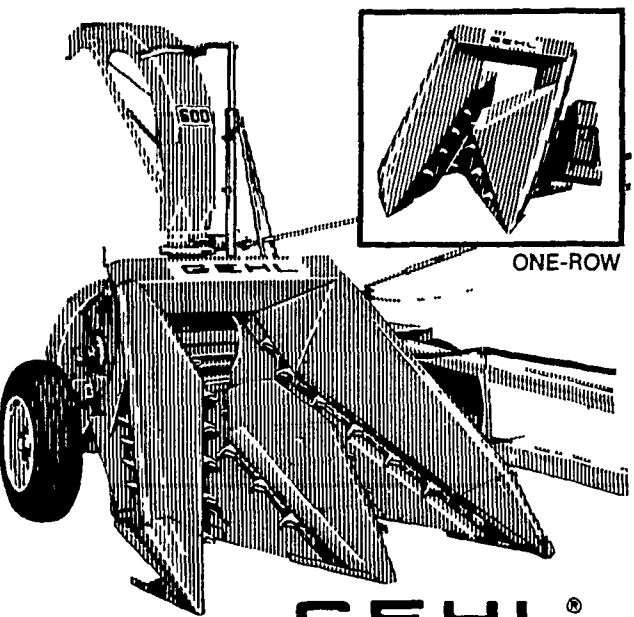
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