



Betty Beber, Bidwell; and Bab Stoffel, Monongehela; examine the results of the test firing of the beehive oven from the summer kitchen at West Overton. Photo by David Hiebert.

## Bread Recipe Rises From Living History Re-enactment

**DAVID HIEBERT**  
Northumberland Co.  
Correspondent

WEST OVERTON (Northumberland Co.) — Living history encampments bring life to bygone eras.

Encampments are popular at West Overton Museum, a Westmoreland County tourist attraction and the birthplace of coal baron Henry Clay Frick.

People who participate in encampments research the era they are portraying and often take on the identity of a deceased individual. The goal is to recreate an authentic character and represent what the person might do in all situations, such as in clothing, meal preparation, and informal conversation.

Chris Sediak, Slovan, is a Civil War living historian reenacting with the 9th Pennsylvania Reserves Company 1861-1865. Sediak said that the elite company from Pittsburgh was called into federal service in 1881 from what was then known as Allegheny City.

Sediak said that encampments are a form of education that gives one a lot more appreciation for the

times and helps one feel as if one is really living in the 19th century.

In addition to reenactments for the public, historians offer living history to school groups, especially to those studying about the Civil War.

Food is needed at the encampments. Historians try to devise authentic food typical of the Civil War Era. At one of the encampments, bread was made in the West Overton Museum's beehive oven.

Barbara Bachman, Mt. Lebanon, said that hickory wood provides a hotter fire to heat the oven.

The bread recipe is an adaptation of a sourdough recipe used by pioneer families. In the original version, sourdough would have been used instead of yeast. Potatoes were used often because they were a readily available starch.

Bachman said that the recipe was handed down from her mother-in-law May Denver Backman.

Here is the recipe used.

**Beehive Oven White Bread**  
2 or 3 potatoes the size of hen's eggs  
1 cake compressed yeast (1/2 of a large cake or 2 packages)

4 tablespoons sugar  
1/4 cup lukewarm liquid mixture

12 cups flour (more or less)  
1 tablespoon salt  
3 tablespoons lard or shortening  
Egg white (brush on top to brown)

Hickory wood for fire  
Cook potatoes and mash using the water in which they were cooked.

Reserve 1/2 cup of the water, add 1 tablespoon sugar and the yeast.) Strain. Heat to luke warm. Add yeast to a little potato water. Mix in some flour then add salt and melted lard. Mix in more flour to make a dough stiff enough to knead

Knead until smooth — 10 minutes is about right Place in a greased container and keep warm Allow to double in bulk (about 1 hour) Knead back to original size Form loaves in pans. Let rise until double in size.

Start baking 350 degrees for 15 minutes. Increase to 425 degrees until golden, or use constant temperature of 375 degrees



Outside the summer kitchen at West Overton, Beber, Bidwell; Barbara Bachman, Mt. Lebanon; and Bab Stoffel, Monongehela; ponder how much food it will take to feed the whole encampment anticipated. Photo by David Hiebert.

SEE YOUR NEAREST



**NEW HOLLAND**

DEALER FOR DEPENDABLE  
EQUIPMENT & SERVICE

**PENNSYLVANIA**

**Abbottstown, PA**  
Messick  
Equipment  
RD 1, Box 255A  
717-259-6617

**Honey Grove, PA**  
Norman D. Clark  
& Son, Inc.  
Honey Grove, PA  
717-734-3682  
Loysville, PA  
717-789-3117

**Annaville, PA**  
BHM Farm  
Equipment,  
Inc.  
RD 1, Rte. 934  
717-867-2211

**New Holland, PA**  
A.B.C. Groff, Inc.  
110 South Railroad  
717-354-4191

**Carlisle, PA**  
R&W  
Equipment Co.  
35 East Willow Street  
717-243-2686

**Oley, PA**  
C.J. Wonsidler  
Bros.  
R.D. 2  
610-987-6257

**Elizabethtown, PA**  
Messick Farm  
Equipment, Inc.  
Rt. 283 - Rheem's  
Exit  
717-367-1319

**Pitman, PA**  
Schreffler  
Equipment  
Pitman, PA  
717-648-1120

**Greencastle, PA**  
Meyers  
Implements, Inc.  
400 North Antrim Way  
717-597-2176

**Tamaqua, PA**  
Charles S.  
Snyder, Inc.  
R.D. 3  
717-386-5945

**Halifax, PA**  
Sweigard Bros.  
R.D. 3, Box 13  
717-896-3414

**West Grove, PA**  
S.G. Lewis &  
Son, Inc.  
352 N. Jennersville Rd  
610-869-2214  
1-800-869-9029

**MARYLAND**

**Frederick, MD**

Ceresville Ford New Holland, Inc.  
Rt. 26 East 301-662-4197  
Outside MD, 800-331-9122

**Hagerstown, MD**

Antietam Ford Tractor, Inc.  
2027 Leitersburg Pike  
800-553-6731  
301-791-1200

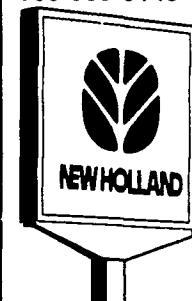
**Rising Sun, MD**

Ag Industrial Equipment  
Route 1, 50 N. Greenmont Rd.  
1-800-442-5043

**NEW JERSEY**

**Bridgeton, NJ**  
Leslie G. Fogg,  
Inc.  
Canton & Stow Creek  
Landing Rd  
609-451-2727  
609-935-5145

**Washington, NJ**  
Smith Tractor &  
Equip., Inc.  
15 Hillcrest Ave  
908-689-7900



**Woodstown, NJ**  
Owen Supply Co.  
Broad Street &  
East Avenue  
609-769-0308

**NEW HOLLAND**  
Credit Company