Introduction

In 2017, the MSU Campus Archaeology Program (CAP) used archaeological and archival data to reconstruct historic campus cuisine, and, in collaboration with MSU Culinary Services, orchestrated an 1860s-era luncheon event. To expose a broader audience to historic cuisine, CAP once again worked with Culinary Services in the spring of 2018 to bring some of the favorite “historic” dishes from the luncheon to the students, faculty, and staff across the campus through the MSU ON-THE-GO Food Truck. Consumers were able to learn about MSU’s history by tasting the food that past students and staff would have consumed.

Experiential Outreach

Historic Luncheon Reconstruction

In April of 2017, the Campus Archaeology Program hosted a historic luncheon featuring dishes inspired by foods that had been consumed on campus in the 1860s. Ingredients were derived from archaeological food remains and archival records, while historic cookbooks provided popular recipes of the time. Together with MSU Culinary Services expert chefs, a menu was created and the luncheon planned. Guests from across the campus were invited to the event.

Food Truck Collaboration

Although the historic luncheon garnered a lot of publicity and social media attention, only fewer than 40 people were able to actually taste the historic dishes. Taste can evoke memory and make connections. To this end, we expanded our collaboration with MSU Culinary Services and came up with historically based food dishes that could be easily served on the MSU ON-THE-GO Food Truck.

The Eat at State ON-THE-GO Food Truck is MSU’s very own food truck. The truck operates seasonally and parks at various locations across campus for lunch and late-night dining. Offering rotating, seasonal menus using locally sourced ingredients from the MSU Dairy Store, MSU Student Organic Farm and more, the food truck offers guests a unique dining experience.

Outreach Events

The historically-inspired dishes (seen to the left) were featured during special “Throwback Thursday” and “Flashback Fridays” lunches at different locales around the MSU campus during March and April of 2018. The events were widely advertised on our social media sites (Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, Snapchat, and the CAP blog).

Recipes featured included a few that were adapted directly from the historic luncheon, including potato croquettes, chow-chow relish, and codfish balls. Additionally, the Culinary Services chefs created some new twists on historic eats, such as the roast turkey “shooter” sandwich (a modern play on pressed meat popular in the 19th century), a pressed beef epigram (a breaded and fried morsel of deliciousness), and pork sausage sandwich with chow-chow relish. The MSU Bakers also made ginger cake, one of the most popular dishes at the original luncheon, which proved quite popular at the food truck, too.

Results

This collaboration was a huge success. The favorite food item was the potato croquettes, which sold out within a half hour each time! At each event, we provided flyers about the Campus Archaeology Program for patrons to learn more about the program. It was difficult to determine how many people purchased food at these events as a direct result of our marketing, but the historically-based offerings were popular nonetheless.

Conclusion & Future Directions

We will be continuing our partnership with MSU Culinary Services this fall, expanding the variety of historically-based menu items and switching the location from the food truck to one of the major dining spaces on MSU’s campus. These changes will be more high-profile and allow for more exposure to the collaboration and the project, as well as allow for opportunities for growth and improvement of creative outreach endeavors. By continuing this project, we hope to reach a broader audience of MSU students, faculty, staff, and visitors.

Once historic featured meals are established at 1855 Place, we plan to conduct formal surveys for students to evaluate the effectiveness of our outreach efforts and record student reactions to the dishes and the Campus Archaeology Program.

Acknowledgements

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Flashback Friday

Presssed Beef Epigram
Breaded and fried pressed beef and vegetables

Flashback Friday

Codfish Croquettes
Deep fried codfish and potato balls

的结果

这个合作是一个巨大的成功。最受欢迎的食品项目是土豆肉饼，每次都在半小时内售罄！每次活动，我们都会提供关于校园考古项目的传单，让顾客了解更多的信息。很难确定有多少人在这些活动中购买了食物，但是历史悠久的菜肴非常受欢迎。

结论与未来方向

我们今年秋天将继续与MSU烹饪服务合作，扩大历史悠久的菜单项目，并将位置从食物卡车改到MSU的主要用餐空间之一。这些变化将更具代表性，并允许更多的曝光度，以及合作和项目的项目，以及为增长和改善创意外展项目提供机会。通过继续这个项目，我们希望能够接触到MSU更广泛的学生、教职员工、员工和访客。

一旦特色菜在1855广场确立下来，我们计划进行正式的调查，以评估我们外展活动的有效性，并记录学生对这些菜及校园考古项目反应的情况。

致谢

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