

A Thanksgiving History

While the tradition of Thanksgiving originated in the earliest days of the Massachusetts colony, it was not until President Lincoln declared it a national holiday in 1864 that the fourth Thursday in November came to be the holiday that we recognize today. Ministers, governors and presidents had made Thanksgiving Day declarations before, but the date and the purpose varied year-to-year. It did not necessarily align with annual harvest festivals that were popular in colonial New England. Often it was a day marked by solemnity, humility and reflection, in keeping with its Puritan origins. George Washington notably deemed November 26, 1789, "as a day of public thanksgiving and prayer to be observed by acknowledging with grateful hearts the many and signal favours of Almighty God."

By the early 19th century the tradition was gaining a foothold, especially in

New England. Thanksgiving day was, for the most part, not celebrated in the South, until the close of that century. In 1817 New York was the first state to make Thanksgiving an official annual holiday. We know from the "History of the County of Berkshire, Massachusetts, in Two Parts," written in 1829, that Thanksgiving here in Sheffield was a day of prayer, with the day following it one of relaxation and leisure.



turkeys, Maple Ave. c. 1910

In 1827 Sarah Josepha Hale, an influential women's magazine editor and author of the nursery rhyme "Mary Had a Little Lamb" began petitioning presidents to make Thanksgiving a national holiday. Numerous years and presidents later she finally convinced Lincoln to do so, arguing that it would help unite the war-torn nation. The holiday did not become a fixed annual event, though. Presidents still had to proclaim Thanksgiving each year, and the last Thursday in November became the customary date. After FDR controversially bumped the date back one week to bolster Christmas shopping, in 1941 Congress permanently established the holiday as the fourth Thursday in the month.

sources: history.com; Plimoth.org

Pineapple Pie

Sheffield bakers of the 1970's were not afraid to be a little daring in their recipes.

*From: "Cooking Favorites of Sheffield"
Sheffield Grange No. 224*

PINEAPPLE PIE

Mrs. Edwin S. LeGeyt

1 beaten egg
1/2 c. sugar
1 large Tbsp. flour

1 c. undrained crushed pine-
apple
1/2 c. hot water
1/4 tsp. salt

Mix in order given. Pour into crust - lined pie plate. Cover with top crust. It thickens in baking. (I usually double the recipe.) Bake 15 minutes at 425 degrees, then lower to 350 degrees and bake 30 minutes or until done.



Antique pie making tools from the Milt Barnum Tool Collection



*This ingenious pie lifter let a baker lift and remove
a hot pie from the oven without burning herself*

Society Events

SHEFFIELD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Festival of Holidays

Nov. 6—Dec. 24
Weekends
10:00am~3:00pm
Black Friday & Christmas Eve
10:00am~3:00pm

Holiday Market at the Old Stone Store Gift Shop
137 Main St.
Sheffield
sheffieldhistory.org
413-229-2694

gifts for all ages and all occasions
Featuring locally-handcrafted products



MEMBER'S Holiday Party

Please join us on
Sunday, December 13 at the
Dan Raymond House
159 Main St.
4 pm -6 pm