



TRUE 'CUE NEWS

From the Campaign for Real Barbecue

April 2018

No. 11

Note: We have embedded hyperlinks to related material. For sites that do not allow direct linking, we have provided addresses to copy and paste.

Two New Patrons

Another newsletter and two more additions to the [list](#) of distinguished food writers, scholars, and critics who support the Campaign and its mission:

Ardie A. Davis will be known to anyone familiar with competition barbecue. A native Oklahoman, he founded the Diddy-Wa-Diddy National Barbecue Sauce Contest in his suburban Kansas City backyard in 1984, a contest which has evolved into today's American Royal World Series of Barbecue International Barbecue Sauce & Rub Contest. He was a charter member of the Kansas City Barbeque Society and wrote the society's official judge's oath. The most recent of his eleven barbecue books is [Barbecue Lover's Kansas City Style](#), and he was inducted into the Barbecue Hall of Fame in 2016.

Craig Pascoe is a professor of Southern history at Georgia College and is the conceptual design creator and contributing curator for the upcoming Atlanta History Center exhibit [Barbecue Nation](#). He is also Head Smoke Detector for the newly established Georgia branch of the Campaign (see below).

True 'Cue Georgia

At long last the Campaign for Real Barbecue has a presence in the Peach State. Heading up our Georgia effort is Craig Pascoe (see above), aided by his fellow Georgia College history professor Trae Welborn, former Georgia State University geography professor Harvey Newman, and Patron Jim Auchmutey. Look for a list of certified 100% wood-cookers in Georgia at [True 'Cue USA](#) soon.

True 'Cue Georgia will be tied in to a website devoted to Georgia barbecue that Comrades Pascoe and Welborn are putting together. (*georgiabbqtrails.com* should be up and running in May.) Pascoe reports, "The concept is to provide the general public with historical and cultural information about Georgia BBQ, [with] sections for BBQ places in two categories--historic and contemporary; fixins'; special interest stories featuring pitmasters, butchers, hog farmers, etc.; recipes; etc."

For the time being, check out what the Southern Foodways Alliance has documented:

southernfoodways.org/get-on-the-southern-bbq-trail-georgia/



Small-town, Family-owned Places Endangered

That headline refers to Tex-Mex places in Texas, but it could also refer to barbecue in the Southeast, for many of the same reasons. Check out [this article](#) in *Eater*, starting about a quarter of the way down, and compare what it says there to what Kathleen Purvis has to say about North Carolina barbecue in this [video](#).

And while we're recommending Patron Purvis's smart commentary, take a look at what she says [here](#) about the great divide between cheffy barbecue and what might be called the "vernacular" variety.

Irish Barbecue

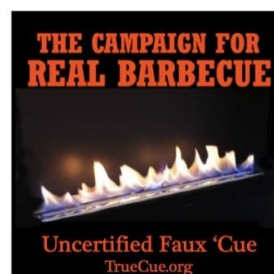
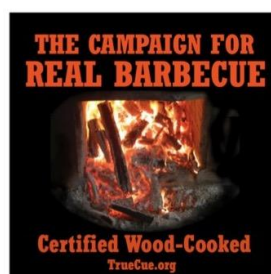
To update an old joke, you might think the shortest blog post ever written would be one on Irish barbecue, but Patron Robb Walsh has found a lot to say about it. Read "[Portrait of Irish BBQ as a Young Art](#)" (great title) for some pointed observations about wood cooking, whether a pellet cooker can produce Real Barbecue, and confused Irishmen who think Texas barbecue cooked in North Carolina is North Carolina barbecue.

Brooklyn Barbecue

Speaking of barbecue abroad, you should read a Vice.com article headlined "Why Is Brooklyn Barbecue Taking Over the World?" (munchies.vice.com/en_us/article/d75jza/why-is-brooklyn-barbecue-taking-over-the-world).

Naturally, it provoked a lot of outrage and trash talk. In fact, if you read the whole article, you'll find that the author, Nicholas Gill is *almost* appropriately humble, but his provocative headline (which he didn't write) couldn't pass without comment. One of the less outraged and more intelligent responses came, not surprisingly, from Patron Daniel Vaughn, in *Texas Monthly* (texasmonthly.com/bbq/brooklyn-barbecue-munchies-photo/) Perhaps the funniest was a [Washington Post article](#), especially the correction: "An earlier version of this story incorrectly located Brooklyn in the Canadian province of Quebec." (It now says it's a suburb of Poughkeepsie. The comments reveal that many readers have no sense of humor.)

We'll just observe that there has been barbecue in Brooklyn at least since the late George H. Lee started trucking it in from his native Duplin county, North Carolina, to sell in a gas station parking lot (ediblebrooklyn.com/2014/carolina-country/). But Bedford Stuyvesant is being gentrified, and its barbecue is, too. What the article means by "Brooklyn barbecue" is the product of cultural appropriation by hipsters with tattoos. What they cook can be excellent – don't get us wrong – but any claim of world domination is, to put it no more strongly, premature.



Any questions?

Real Barbecue on a *Boucan*

The etymologists among us will know that the word *barbecue* comes from a Caribbean Indian word for a wooden frame used for cooking meat, a word the Spanish heard as *barbacoa*. Another word for such a frame was *boucan* (the word and some of the techniques are preserved at Johnson's Boucaniere in Lafayette, Louisiana), and some anti-social elements in the West Indies who cooked this way came to be known as *buccaneers*.



Cooking on a *boucan*
Credit: Felix Padilla

A fine article on the subject can be found at atlasobscura.com/foods/boucan-buccaneers-caribbean.

For more, see simplytrinicooking.com/bucaneering-meat-trinistyle/

Why Our Campaign is Needed

Our Campaign was founded in North Carolina, and people from luckier states (read: Texas) have sometimes asked why we need action to preserve and promote wood-cooking. Here's why:

For a new edition of his book *Roadside Eateries*, D.G. Martin has put together a preliminary list of "North Carolina's iconic eateries, the ones we should be sure to visit before we die." There are 26 of them and, fittingly, 14 -- a majority -- are barbecue places.

But *six of the 14 use no wood at all*. That's 42% of North Carolina's "iconic" barbecue places.

Or maybe that should be iconic "barbecue" places.

The Secret Life of Hank Hill #3

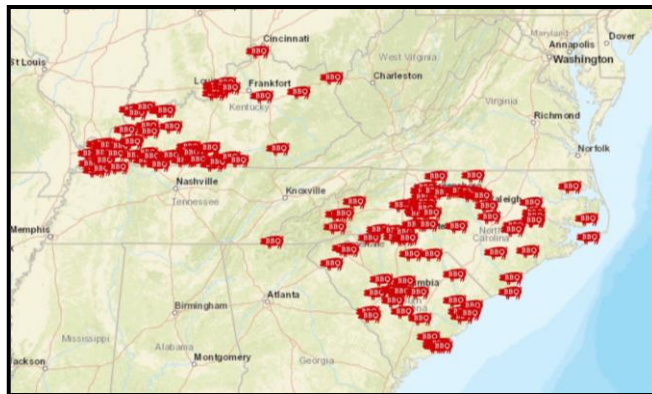


A Geography Project

Ryan Cooper, whose day job is cultural geographer with the National Park Service, has set out to devise “story maps” for the major American barbecue regions. When he’s done, you’ll be able to read about each region’s barbecue tradition, click on links to articles and videos with more information, view an interactive map of the restaurants that serve it, and open web pages for some of the more celebrated ones.

You can see what he’s done for Kansas City at kcbbqstory.com. Go to the map, click on a restaurant, and you get information like its name and address, the year it was founded, maybe a link to its website, and (why we’re going on about it) **the wood it cooks with** (if known). We’re eager to see similar pages for other regions. Stay tuned.

Just for fun, Brother Cooper has also mapped certified purveyors of Real Barbecue (arcg.is/1W1LGe). He starts off with a map like the one below, but, again, clicking on a particular location brings up more information about the place.



The map reflects the fact that the Campaign has so far been operating only in the Carolinas and Kentucky. Any volunteers to fill in the East Tennessee/Southwest Virginia gap?



FUEL FOR THE FIRES OF HELL

You Might Be Obsessed If –

– you looked at this photograph and noticed the sign first.



In the 1960s Helen's Bar-B-Que, at 8516 G Street in Oakland, was a favorite hangout of the [East Bay Dragons](#), who considered the owner, Helen B. Brown, to be the “mother” of their motorcycle club. No word on whether she cooked with wood.

What It Takes to Be the Best

When *Southern Living* polled its readers to establish “The South’s Best Barbecue Joint” (southernliving.com/souths-best/bbq-restaurants-verdict) the result was a dead heat between Southern Soul Barbeque of St. Simons Island, Georgia, and Lexington Barbecue of Lexington, North Carolina.

Southern Living’s Barbecue Editor (and True ‘Cue patron) Robert Moss observes “Both are beloved institutions in their respective communities [and] unwavering in their devotion to slow-cooking meat on wood-fired pits.”



Most Inane “Best BBQ Joints” Listing of 2015

A *Yahoo Travel* feature headlined “[The Best BBQ Across America](#)” (published in 2015 but only now brought to our attention) purported to tell readers “the best place to get your fix of ‘que in each of the fifty states.” We don’t know about the other states, but it sure got it wrong when it said “the reigning king” of North Carolina barbecue was Durham’s Backyard BBQ -- for its “sweet sauces and tender pork ribs.”

Look, Yahoo: Backyard BBQ is a great, family-owned place. They cook over coals from burned-down logs, and we go there a lot. And yes, they cook ribs and offer a Kansas City-style sauce to put on them. But they also cook *barbecue*, which in this part of North Carolina means *pork shoulder with vinegar-based sauce*.

Whoever wrote that feature just shouldn’t write about barbecue. It’s no wonder [Yahoo is tanking](#).

Merch of the Month

As we keep saying, the costs of the Campaign for Real Barbecue – promoting the website, web hosting, printing decals, framing certificates, driving around to certify restaurants, etc. – are borne by unpaid volunteers. Of course we welcome contributions (although we haven’t had any), but you can help in a more self-serving way by purchasing branded merchandise from Zazzle.com. This issue, we direct your attention to the handsome tee-shirt at right. We’d love to [sell you one](#). (You’re on your own when it comes to physique.)



Please forward this newsletter to anyone who might be interested.

Back issues can be found on-line [here](#).

You can also follow us on [Facebook](#).

If you have anything of interest to supporters of Real Barbecue, please send it along to TrueCue@gmail.com

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