

Partridgeberries and Jam Making

Collector: Gertie Fowler

Contributor: Stella Barney

Gertie Fowler:

I'm here in L'Anse au Loup today with Stella Barney, and Stella is going to tell me a little story about Partridgeberry picking and how they use to make their jams and preserve their jams. Okay Stella how are you today?

Stella Barney:

Fine.

Gertie Fowler:

That's good.

Stella Barney:

Well, growing up in L'Anse au Loup, maybe at the age maybe at the age of twelve

Gertie Fowler:

Yeah.

Stella Barney:

Maybe older.... as I got older, we would go berry picking every fall and look forward to the fall of the year, when we would go..... when we would go partridgeberry picking. And we would we'd have to walk about a mile and a half to get to L'Anse au Loup Brook and then we would have to get across by boat. Someone would take us across in a small boat and we would start our way up a steep hill.

Gertie Fowler:

Yeah

Stella Barney:

And we would have to climb a long a long way up a hill and when we get up there, will we would have to take a spell and then we'd continue on and we would find some berries and we would pick ... start picking berries and we would be picking until about twelve.

Gertie Fowler:

How many berries, now, would you pick in a day?

Stella Barney:

Ah.... I guess I picked about picked... well at my age then, I dare say I would pick about four or five gallons....

Gertie Fowler:

Yeah.

Stella Barney:

But if mom and dad was with us, well they would pick maybe ten or eleven.

Gertie Fowler:

Yes maid.

Stella Barney:

So, we by the time we'd have three or four gallons picked we would.... be time for the boil up. So we would light a fire, and we would have some partridgeberry jam with us, and some cream, cows cream to go on it, and we would have some fish to roast on the fire.

Gertie Fowler:

Yeah.

Stella Barney:

And well the main thing was the kettle, boil the tea in a kettle on an open fire.

Gertie Fowler:

That was good was it.

Stella Barney:

That was delicious.

Gertie Fowler:

Yeah.

Stella Barney:

Well, after the lunch would be over, we would clean up and then we would have to go and pick some more berries. We would pick until maybe about five or six o'clock in the evening and then it'll be time to come home.

Gertie Fowler:

Yeah.

Stella Barney:

Leave to come home.

Gertie Fowler:

So what did you put your berries in, now?

Stella Barney:

Ah flour what we would call a flour bag. We use to buy flour then, in bags.

Gertie Fowler:

Yeah.

Stella Barney:

In 100 pound bags and 50 pound, so maybe I would had a fifty pound bag, being I was younger but mom and dad, well they would have a ... a hundred pound bag.

Gertie Fowler:

Hmmm.

Stella Barney:

And we would have them full.

Gertie Fowler:

How would you carry them now?

Stella Barney:

Across our shoulders, across our back.

Gertie Fowler:

Okay.

Stella Barney:

Use to have to take take ... stop and take a spell every now and then.

Gertie Fowler:

Hmmm.

Stella Barney:

Still there was no problem gettin' down over the hill, it was better coming down over the hill then it was going up because we would better gettin' down.

Gertie Fowler:

Yeah, that's true.

Stella Barney:

You ... you was coming down the hill all the time. So when we got down to the brook, we had to get someone to take us across the brook again.

Gertie Fowler:

So who would take you across sometimes?

Stella Barney:

Ohhhh, Aunt Clarise ...

Gertie Fowler:

Aunt Clarise ...

Stella Barney:

Aunt Clarise Normore, or Uncle Mike, or just that's about that's about the one that would take us across, because they would always be home.

Gertie Fowler:

So when you get home now, you was pretty tired was ya?

Stella Barney:

Oh, yes. And we had to walk home then 'fer ah.....another hour.... ah.... half....half hour maybe back home.

Gertie Fowler:

And then it was time to make the jam.

Stella Barney:

And then make the jam, yup.

Gertie Fowler:

So then, how did you make the jam?

Stella Barney:

Well we would ah.... bring it to a Any amount of berries..... any amount that you want in a saucepan or pan and you would boil them and ah.... bring them to a boil and after they would boil for a half an hour, you would put sugar in them. Sweeten 'em, to your own taste.

Gertie Fowler:

Oh, okay. Back then a lot of the ladies use to use pans and that to boil their ...

Stella Barney:

Enamel pan, they use to ... use to have.

Gertie Fowler:

So how did you preserve that then for the winter?

Stella Barney:

We just ah well jam well, I guess, the jam wouldn't hurt in bottles, but then ah... we would put them in barrels.

Gertie Fowler:

Okay

Stella Barney:

And put water on them.

Gertie Fowler:

And freeze them.

Stella Barney:

On the partridge berries, and they would freeze.

Gertie Fowler:

Okay.

Stella Barney:

And any time, when you would want your berries, you'd have them out to a in a shed.... when you want..... would want you would want your partridge berry jam 'fer to make partridge berry jam, you'd go out and just scoop some out, with a scoop.

Gertie Fowler:

Yes, maid.

Stella Barney:

Hmmm.

Gertie Fowler:

So where did you get the bottles to, there was no mason jars back then?

Stella Barney:

No, but you use to use bottles from ah... if you had pickle bottles.... if you bought a bottle of pickles up the store or we could save the bottle, or jam bottle.

Gertie Fowler:

Yeah.

Stella Barney:

Save the bottle.

Gertie Fowler:

Once they use to seal.

Stella Barney:

Yeah.

Gertie Fowler:

Oh okay.

Stella Barney:

They would seal over a second time.

Gertie Fowler:

Yeah.

Stella Barney:

With the hot jam in them.

Gertie Fowler:

Okay. So is that all you have to add to your story today.

Stella Barney:

Yes, that's about it, I guess.

Gertie Fowler:

Okay that's great. That's wonderful, thank you very much for your memories.

Stella Barney:

You're welcome.