

Beautiful Table Settings

THE BEST OF BTS



Back to School

MEMORIES OF YESTERYEAR

Featured Articles

HISTORY & TRADITIONS

Tips and Treasures

TIPS ON TREASURE HUNTING

Table Setting

FOOTBALL, LABOR DAY,
BIRTHDAY PARTIES

contents

2	Table of Contents Editor's Thoughts	19	A Masculine Birthday Gay Hightower
3	<i>Labor Day</i> Gigi Dinkins	20	<i>Farewell to Summer</i> Donna Reeves Allen
4	<i>Labor of Love</i> Teresa Moss Francescon	21	<i>Birthday Traditions</i> Christy McCaskill Wendell
5	<i>We Gather Together</i> Keeton Lloyd	22	<i>Our Contributors</i>
6	<i>Georgia Bulldog Spirit</i> Melissa Buchanan	23	Happy Birthday to You!
7	Our Contributors	25	Feature Writer Blos
8	Tailgating, Anyone?	26	<i>Pretty in Pink</i> Janice Hattox Cox Perkins
10	<i>A Few of My Favorite Things -</i> Cover Photo Brenda Bickley Campbell	27	<i>Tennessee "Go Vols"</i> Sherry Earp
11	<i>Celebrating the American Worker</i> Anita Matthews	28	<i>Birthday for a Queen</i> Kathryne J. Lyons
12	<i>Farewell to Summer</i> Cheryl Holland	29	<i>Labor Day Alfresco Dining</i> Rowena Herrero Floro
13	<i>Romantic Birthday Party</i> May Ridolphi Eason	30	Our Contributors
14	Our Contributors	31	<i>Miss Debbie's Tips & Treasures</i>
15	Labor Day — Honoring Artisans, Skilled Craftsmen & Factory Workers	33	Back to School - Special Short Christy McCaskill Wendell
18	<i>Alabama Roll Tide</i> Sharon Whitehurst Cone	34	BTS Information and Staff
		35	Recommended Reading

Editor's Thoughts

This month's issue focuses on Labor Day, Football, and Birthday Parties. We believe you will enjoy the tablescapes, featured articles, Tips and Treasures and special segments. I know I sure have!

Fall is just around the corner, and members appear ready to set fall tables. Next month we feature just that, Fall Tables and Halloween Tables, too. A reminder that most members post previous years' tables on May's weekly *Magazine Worthy Wednesday* announcements (click on the *Magazine Worthy Wednesday* announcement each week, located in the "Featured" section, to post your photo and/or to vote for your favorite table).

Everything in our magazine is created and written by BTS members. That's what I most love. We don't have to outsource to create an incredible magazine of beautiful table settings and well-researched articles. It bears repeating...talent abounds within our BTS membership. Happy Fall, y'all!

Kathy

HAPPY
★ ★
Labor Day

Labor Day

Courtesy of Gigi Dinkins

Dinner Plates: Ming Royale,
Tuesday Tell

Crystal: Interglass, Italy

Demitasse: Oriental Marketing

Sterling: Strasbourg, Gorham

Salt Cellars & Spoons: family collection

Chargers: gifted by May Eason

Napkins: Damask

Placemats: Primrose Bordier, Le
Jacquard Francais

Centerpiece: Bowl & Shells, family pieces



Labor of Love

Courtesy of Teresa Moss Francescon

Dinner & Salad Plates: Grapefields, Laura Ashley Lifestyles

Flatware: Cream Stainless, Renaissance Bone

Stemware: unknown

Salt & Pepper Shakers: vintage turnip

Napkin Rings: Godinger

Chargers: Hobby Lobby & IKEA

Chianti Bottle & All Other Table Items: Goodwill & thrift stores





We Gather Together

Courtesy of Keeton Lloyd

Dinner Plates: Dollar Tree

Salad Plates: Dollar Tree

Glasses: Dollar Tree

Linens: thrift purchase

Wicker Chargers: thrift purchase

Mosaic Orange Glass Vase: thrift purchase

Napkin Rings: thrift purchase

Sunflowers: Hobby Lobby

Georgia Bulldog Spirit

Courtesy of Melissa Buchanan

Dinner Plates: Bed, Bath & Beyond

Red Glasses: Perspective, Noritake

Placemats: Hobby Lobby

Runner: Hobby Lobby

Chargers: Walmart

Georgia Napkin: Dollar General



OUR CONTRIBUTORS



Gigi Dinkins has lived in Mississippi her entire life, the last 46 in Madison. She explained that Labor Day has turned into one of her favorite holidays. “It tends to be a low key day with family when we reflect on careers we have had, sharing our gifts and jobs that taught us lessons!” Gigi said. Her table setting is a mix of family treasures, thrifted items, and favorites acquired with the help of BTS friends. Her centerpiece bowl was passed down to her mother-in-law and she feels fortunate to have a turn with it.

Teresa Moss Franescon was born and raised in Nashville, Tennessee. She currently resides in Nolensville. Teresa’s inspiration started with the plates but the true inspiration was her husband’s grandparents. Teresa explained that they came to America from Italy, started a new life, learned a new language, became American citizens, started his own company and worked hard to make a living. Teresa described her table as, “A Labor Day table for Labor of Love, hard working people.” Teresa expressed her great admiration for her grandparent’s-in-law, who accomplished so much through hard work, living successful lives in America.



Keeton Lloyd says that “Sweet Home Alabama” has been his home for years. While Keeton explained how fall means many things to many people...bonfires, fall decorating, family reunions, football games, autumn gardening, and travel, he particularly enjoys a get-a-way to a hidden mountain cabin in Mentone, Alabama, to witness the beautiful color changes. “August and September are the prepping months for the bigger festivities in October and November,” explained Keeton. He continued by saying that his table setting is a fun invitation to his family and friends who enjoy a country meal al fresco style with the harvesting of the last of their country gardens.

Melissa Buchanan is originally from Carrollton, Georgia, but has lived in Franklin for 19 years. “Back in January, someone on BTS challenged the Georgia and Alabama folks to do a table to support their team for the National Championship. Now, I had never in a million years expected to do a football table, but I’m always up for a challenge. I had a few football items from a party years ago. So, I was off on a journey to find some Georgia items. Luckily, good old Dollar General had just what I needed. I was happy with how it turned out, but really happy I pushed myself to do something different,” Melissa said.





Tailgating, Anyone?

By Melissa Bradley

As with many things in history, theories abound about who should be credited with tailgating. Regardless of its beginnings, tailgating has evolved into one of America's most beloved and festive traditions. No matter if you are yelling, "Go Dawgs!" or "Roll Tide!" or "Hotty Toddy!" or "Go Big Blue!" the evolution of this time-honored practice has created fan loyalty, scrumptious foods, tasty beverages, and some fabulous table settings.

In ancient Greek and Roman times, the tradition of gathering around an event with food before the fall harvest celebration was an annual occurrence. Greeks and Romans would gather to enjoy music, food, and drink with their fellow citizens before winter set in. These gatherings were also held before gladiators fought throughout the Roman Empire and frequently at the Colosseum. Many discussions regarding the prowess of Spartacus probably were held while sipping wine and eating grapes, just like today's discussions comparing Brady versus Rodgers or SEC versus Big Ten.

Even during the Civil War, gathering around an event with food was common. During the First Battle of Manassas, many citizens of Virginia made their way to Bull Run Creek on Sunday, July 21, 1861, to watch what would be one of the bloodiest days during the Civil War. While much was made about spectators bringing picnics, it was a 7-hour journey for many and obviously, a necessity. Historian John J. Hennessy published in his book *The First Battle of Manassas*:

Throughout the morning and early afternoon, steady streams of would-be spectators found their way to the heights of Centreville, fully five miles from the battlefield. "They came in all manner of ways," wrote a Union officer, "some in stylish carriages, others in city hacks, and still others in buggies, on horseback, or even on foot. Apparently everything in the shape of vehicles in and around Washington had been pressed into service for the occasion."

The first college tailgating event is credited to the Rutgers fans who showed up at the first college football game decked in their school colors of scarlet and white, starting the time-honored tradition of proudly wearing your school colors. On this day in 1869 when Rutgers and Princeton played that first game, a college tradition of grilling is said to have started when sausages were grilled at "the tail end of the horse." Thus starting one potential beginning of the term tailgating.

Others believe the term "tailgate" to be a phrase coined in 1919 by Green Bay Packers fans. Packers fans would park their trucks at the field in anticipation of the game. As they would wait with anticipation to view their beloved Packers demonstrate their talents on the field, fans would bring out bins of food and drink to share with those around them. While enjoying all the delicious food, cheeses, and beverages fans would discuss all the latest news regarding the players and coaches, often sharing their own beliefs on calls and decisions made by the coaches and the referees. However, some historians dispute this as the pickup truck wasn't commonplace until later in the 1920s. Today's Packers' fans don't limit tailgating to

cont from p 8

pickup trucks parked at the stadium, neighborhoods surrounding the stadium also get into the pre-game festivities with tents, grills, and the green and gold decorations symbolizing their loyalty to the home team.

Today's tailgating traditions are as eccentric and as varied as the fans who gather before the sporting event decked out in their school colors ready to cheer on their beloved team. Each gather around stadiums throughout the nation to show off their team spirit and show up their rivals in the next tent over, no matter the success of the home team. RVs, pop-up tents, and in a few towns, boats, claim their location, usually the day before, and start setting up for the festivities to follow. What seems like miles and miles of electric cords are strewn about and the constant hum of generators powers the televisions that will show the game and a host of other games, as one must keep up with the play of all of one's rivals. Soon after, charcoal smells waft through the trees as "chefs" prepare for the spread that will be shared prior to the game. College Game Day, SEC Game Day, and a whole host of other broadcasts often search for the best tailgaters to feature on their shows.

Homer Simpson even shared his thoughts on tailgating in the episode, Any Given Sunday of "The Simpsons:"

We're not here for the game. The game is nothing. The game is crap. The game makes me sick. The real reason we Americans put up with sports is for this: Behold, the tailgate party, the pinnacle of human achievement.

While true fans don't believe the game is nothing or crap, they may completely agree that the tailgate party is the pinnacle of human achievement!

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John J Hennessy, The First Battle of Manassas: An End to Innocence, July 18-21, 1861



Cover Photo



A Few of My Favorite Things

Courtesy of Brenda Bickley Campbell

Dinner Plates: Spring Bouquet, Royal Stafford

Luncheon Plates: unknown pattern, Haviland Limoges, made for JE Caldwell

Salad Plates: J Maddock

Bread and Butter Plates: unknown

Chargers: Vietri

Cobalt Blue Goblets: unknown

Wine Goblets: J Presiosi

Sterling: Buttercup, Gorham

Celebrating the American Worker

Courtesy of Anita Matthews

White Plates: various
Flow Blue patterns

Blue Stem: Artland Iris
Seeded Cobalt

Red Stem: vintage Ruby
Red blown glass

Flatware: Encore, Rogers

Spreaders: Cambridge

Chargers: mix of Chop
Plates, Currier & Ives and
Flow Blue

Cake Plate: vintage Sap-
phire Blue, Anchor Hocking
Wexford

Tea Pot: Addison

Water Pitcher: vintage
Cracker Barrel

Linens: thrifted





Farewell to Summer

Courtesy of Cheryl Holland

Dinner Plate: Blue Room Garden
Collection, Spode

Torte Plate: vintage, Cracker Barrel

Flatware: Bamboo Cambridge, Amazon

Glassware: Wicker Sleeve

Stemware: thrifted

Reticulated Charger: Torte Plate

Placemat: Blue & White Floral, Tuesday
Morning

Napkins: Gingham, Amazon

Tablecloth: Battenburg, thrifted

Basket: HomeGoods

Centerpiece: blue & white miniature
chinoiserie pots with hydrangea, set in
silverplate tray

Romantic Birthday Party

Courtesy of May Ridolphi Eason

Dinner Plates: Floradora Green, Royal Doulton

Salad Plates: Rose, Minton, maternal grandmother's pattern

Goblets: antique EAPG

Flatware: Fairfield, Oneida

Placemats & Napkins: teal with embroidered roses

Center Table: walnut, Empire Style



OUR CONTRIBUTORS



Brenda Bickley Campbell was born Marshallville, Georgia, lived in Macon while attending college and then moved back to Marshallville where she resides today. Brenda said, “Blue and white is one of my favorite combinations, and I especially love my flow blue salad plates...finding eight in perfect condition was a coup!” She searched for them for months. The cobalt Vietri charger was a bucket list item that she finally acquired. “Planning this birthday party for my favorite people with some of my favorite pieces was pure fun!” she said. Brenda said that BTS has motivated and challenged her to take what she has always loved to new heights. “The gorgeous tablesettings here are truly an inspiration,” she said.

Anita Matthews was born and raised in Florence, Alabama. She has lived in Tuscumbia for the last 30 years. Anita said that she has always had a love for pretty dishes, but that it wasn't until joining BTS that she realized decorating her table could be a part of her décor! She expressed that Patriotic tables are her favorite because the colors are close to her heart and red and blue just happen to be her colors of choice to collect. “As I was considering how I would go about setting my table for Labor Day, I was mindful of what Labor Day is about and how thankful I am when I think about days gone by and what hard-working people went through to provide for their families,” said Anita. She continued by explaining that her table is a salute to all the hard working people in the USA, from the farmers to the ones that prepare the meals that feed their families.



Cheryl Holland was born in Columbia, Kentucky, and lived there until she went to college in Bowling Green. She met her husband there and has since made it their home. Cheryl's table inspiration for her Labor Day table setting was saying farewell to summer. “I used a lot of my summer favorites on this table—blue and white hydrangeas, floral and garden patterns, gingham, Battenburg lace and wicker,” she said. Cheryl remembers being excited selecting her wedding china 41 years ago and loved making family occasions throughout the years even more special by setting a pretty table. “But, since joining BTS, my interest (and inventory) has grown so much! I am inspired every day by the lovely settings our members post!” said Cheryl.

May Ridolphi Eason grew up in Montgomery, Alabama, and lived in Tuscaloosa and Birmingham. She also lived in Pensacola and Gulf Breeze, Florida. She has resided in Alabama for 12 years. She retired from a career of Interior Decorating assisting clients in flooring, kitchen remodels, window treatments, and custom area rugs. May explained that her table inspiration was the little birthday cake and miniature cake stand, “and, of course, the roses Jerry got me!” May enjoys playing with her dishes because she uses them to decorate. She said that it's an easy way to be creative and then change it all up for another look. May also pointed out that using dishes to decorate is much faster than changing paint colors or wallpaper, and is so much less expensive.



Labor Day - Honoring Artisans, Skilled Craftsmen & Factory Workers

By Erin M. Murphy

Here in the Northeast, Summer is quickly drawing to a close. Though Fall doesn't officially hit our calendars until September 22, Labor Day weekend is Summer's unofficial send off.

But Labor Day is so much more. Like most holidays, sadly, people don't necessarily take a moment to think and reflect upon the significance of the day. It just becomes another passing day, highlighted only because it boasts a three-day weekend.

The first Labor Day fell on September 5, 1882, in New York City to recognize the contributions of American workers to the strength and prosperity of our country, but it took nearly 12 years before Congress passed an act making it a legal holiday. On June 28, 1894, President Grover Cleveland signed Labor Day into law, making it a national holiday to fall on the first Monday of September.

Americans are not the only ones to honor workers with a national holiday. Many European countries celebrate on the first day in May, known as May Day, symbolizing internationalism, and solidarity among the working class; also synonymous with their kick-off to summer.

This Labor Day, join me in honoring the work of our artisans, skilled craftsmen and factory workers through the history of two world-renowned pottery, dinnerware and fine china companies: Belleek and Lenox.

Belleek, based in County Fermanagh in Ireland, continues to thrive 165 years after its start in 1849 when John Caldwell Bloomfield inherited his father's estate in the small town of Belleek at the same time the Irish famine was coming to an end. Given the devastation, Bloomfield wanted to provide the town's inhabitants with a means of making a living and subsistence.

As an amateur mineralogist, Bloomfield had the land assessed and found it rich in minerals, and the nearby River Erne had the power to drive a mill wheel that could grind the minerals into the liquid needed to form clay. He obtained two business partners, Irish-born architect Robert Williams Armstrong and Dublin merchant David Birney, one of whom recognized the need to bring in experienced potters from Stoke-on-Trent to ensure the company's success. Though Belleek was started to bring livelihood to the townsfolk, that would not have been possible without securing a foundation of artisans and skilled workers at inception.

Belleek pottery began with the production of quality stoneware for domestic use, then was expanded to include finer pieces to highlight the level of artistry that had developed using Parian. This was not successful until approximately 1865 when the company built a strong market in Ireland and was exporting pieces to England, the United States, Canada and Australia.

World Wars I and II provided numerous challenges for Belleek, from restrictions on exports to the rationing of coal and drying of the exports. Yet they survived due to their resourcefulness, producing utility earthenware pieces fired at lower temperatures.

The post-war technology included more efficient kilns – a furnace or oven for burning, baking, or drying for firing pottery – allowing them to place greater emphasis on the production of Parianware. Belleek continued to upgrade their technology to meet the demands over the years, but they weren't without their challenges. Decorative tastes changed over the decades and there was less interest in Parianware. The company changed hands many times, then opened a visitor's center. It was purchased in 1990 by Erne-Heritage Investments, owned by Dundalk-born American based businessman George Moore.

Today, Belleek employs over 600 employees and operates as a group of decorative art and gift branding companies, including Galway Irish Crystal, Aynsley China, and Donegal China. The quality of their pieces is the direct result of a rigorous and stellar inspection process. They implemented what they call the '16 Hands,' as 16 different artisans are responsible for every piece sold to the public. There are four different inspections, and if a piece is deemed less than perfect, it is discarded. Their sole objective is to ensure a customer receives a flawless piece of work.

Crossing the pond, Lenox produced their first set of China in Trenton, New Jersey, in 1889, and the name became synonymous with bone china. Walter Scott Lenox co-founded the Ceramic Art Company with Jonathan Coxon, then bought him out of the business, became the sole owner and changed the name to Lenox Incorporated.

The early years focused on producing limited patterns of American-inspired pottery, with many pieces before the 20th century being one-of-a-kind. Some of these were displayed at the Smithsonian, and shops carrying high-quality ceramic products always stocked Lenox China. In the mid-1900s, the small New Jersey company became a nationally acclaimed producer of porcelain dinnerware. The Lowell and Autumn patterns were popular and played a role in introducing Lenox, Inc. to the world along with the wife of the late President Woodrow Wilson who took the first liking to the Lenox designs. Lenox was the first American-produced china to be used in the White House. Successive Presidents from Truman to Clinton continue to frequent the business. Lenox china was purchased by every administration and became a tradition, sealing Lenox's renowned reputation in the bone china industry and servicing the wealthy, middle and lower class in different world regions since the 19th century.

Due to rising popularity, mass production started in the early 1900s with the company increasing the portfolio to create multiple dinnerware sets, hiring renowned artists like Frank Holmes to design the wares. It was around this time that the manufacturing moved from Trenton, New Jersey to Kinston, North Carolina. Lenox evolved with the eras, keeping up with the ever-changing, modern tastes and adding figurines as well as small decorative objects to their offerings. They won several awards, to include the Silver Medal of the American Designers Institute and the 1926 Craftsmanship Medal of the American Institute of Architects. In 1928, Lenox porcelain became the first American-produced porcelain displayed at the National Museum of

cont from p 16

Ceramics in Sevres, France.

Sadly, in April 2020 Lenox Corporation was forced to close its manufacturing facility in Kinston due to COVID-19. The pandemic resulted in extreme financial distress and an employment loss of approximately 175 employees. The plant operated for three decades, and its closing was viewed as a loss of identity to the local area. The 218,000 square-foot Kinston facility built in 1989 produced fine bone china dinnerware patterns and was the only fine bone china factory in the U.S. It was renowned in the industry for its innovative and unique manufacturing capabilities and could produce 15,000 to 20,000 pieces of fine china daily.

With 130 years of business behind them, Lenox continues to remain strong, and its heritage patterns will continue to be designed and developed in the U.S. and manufactured in Europe and Asia.

Two china companies, two different stories, yet one common thread that ties them together: the commitment of artisans, skilled craftsmen and factory workers that make it all happen each and every day.

Former Lenox CEO, Mads Ryder, said it best:

“... These achievements were only made possible by the competent, dedicated and proud team of the Kinston factory.”
This Labor Day, let us honor and appreciate the array of workers who are the foundation of countries around the world.

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HAPPY LABOR DAY

Alabama Roll Tide

Courtesy of Sharon Whitehurst Cone

Dinner Plates: Canopy White, Home Trends,
borrowed from sister

Royal Beaded Stainless Flatware: Norfolk,
International, borrowed from sister

Mugs: Dollar Tree

Pewter Tray & Matching Candle: JN
Daalderop & Sons, FB Marketplace

Napkins & Table Runner: fabric from Etsy,
custom made by Sharon

Pewter Napkin Rings: vintage, WEB, Etsy

Black Placemats: Amazon

Burgundy Tablecloth: Amazon





A Masculine Birthday

Courtesy of Gay Hightower

Dinner Plates: McKinley Presidential Series,
Lenox

Salad Plate: Hayworth, Lenox

Crystal: Franciscan, Tiffin

Silver: Melrose, Gorham

Gold Chargers: Hobby Lobby

Cream Damask Cloth: thrifted

Greek Key Runner: The Royal Standard

Napkins: monogrammed "H", gifted

Brass Lamps: gift shop, Kiawah Island, S.C.

Wrought Iron Cross: handmade by husband

Farewell to Summer

Courtesy of Donna Reeves Allen

Dinner Plates: Millennium Edition, Lenox

Salad Plates: Millennium Edition, Certified International

Wine Stems: Lenox, BTS Tuesday Tell

Silver Plate and Crystal Coasters: auction

Sterling Silver Salt & Pepper: auction

Glass Chargers: Goodwill

Napkins: Goodwill

Napkin Rings: Donna glued on sunflower, thrifted

Nesting Cube: Happy Everything

Flowers & Greenery: from Donna's garden





Birthday Traditions

Courtesy of Christy McCaskill Wendell

Crystal Plates: Delores, Tiffin-Franciscan, inherited from mother

Crystal Stemware: Colleen Flute Champagnes & Ponies, Waterford

Sterling Flatware: Candlelight, Towle, inherited from mother

Birthday Charger: DII Stoneware

Birthday Tablecloth: inherited from mother who used it for all birthdays

Sterling Napkin Rings: Towle

Salt & Pepper Cellars: inherited from great-grandmother

Spooner: EAPG ALFA, 1908
John B. Higbee Rexford
Euclid

Crystal Fruit Bowl: Victorian Nappy, inherited from great-grandmother

Birthday Candelabra Candles: Genuine Fred

Centerpiece: Ceramic Cake, Heritage Mint Collectibles

Sunflowers: Christy's garden

OUR CONTRIBUTORS

Sharon Whitehurst Cone was born in Virginia Beach, Virginia, and raised in the low country of South Carolina. Since graduation from college in 1987, Sharon has lived in the Midlands of South Carolina. “As the family looked ahead to Daddy’s 80th birthday, we knew there was no better way to honor him than with a BAMA table!” One of twelve children, we largely suspect the hours he spent working in the cotton fields paid no small role in the development of his strength of character, so it just seemed natural to include cotton in this centerpiece. Gathering other football accessories was effortless,” Sharon said. She knew she’d done well when her 99 year old grandfather declared, “You sure set a pretty table.”



Gay Hightower was born in Atlanta, Georgia, and lived in that area her entire life. Gay’s table inspiration was her husband’s birthday. She wanted it to have a rich, masculine feel and started with the Greek Key runner in tan and black and a cross Larry made in his blacksmith shop. Because blacksmithing is one of the oldest professions, the historical aspect goes along well with the Greek items on the table. Gay explained, “These hand-wrought iron pieces become more meaningful as he demonstrates to men’s groups the techniques used in forging metal.” Gay continued the warm tones throughout the setting in the china and napkins with gold and black accents.

Donna Reeves Allen was born and raised in Lufkin, Texas. She lived in Nacogdoches, Texas, for 32 years where she raised two children. For the last 16 years she and her husband have lived in the country, down a dirt road in the Glendale Community in Trinity County, Texas. Donna loves creating tablescapes that focus on things that are special and meaningful, or just plain fun! “Growing flowers and vegetables is a passion of mine. Planting and watching it sprout and grow into something beautiful or deliciously edible is amazing. Something akin to setting a beautiful table starting with a pretty dish,” said Donna. She grows sunflowers every year because they are such a happy flower. Donna thanks BTS for inspiring her.



Christy McCaskill Wendell has lived in Alabama, Austria, Brazil, Connecticut, Hong Kong, Georgia, Louisiana, New Jersey, New York, Tennessee, Vermont and currently resides in Texas. Birthdays have always been extra special in Christy’s family. Festivities began at breakfast with candles on pancakes. “Mom would bake our favorite cake while we were at school and we had to wait until Dad was home from work before we opened presents, made a wish and blew out the candles,” explained Christy. Unable to travel for her best friend’s birthday, they decided to have a zoom birthday breakfast party. Hence, the inspiration for her table. Christy said, “Cheers to my BTS friends far and wide. May your birthday wishes be filled with glorious dishes!”



Happy Birthday to You!

By Janet George Herald

Whether it's an extravaganza for a three-year-old or a special family celebration for your 80-year-old grandfather, everyone loves a birthday party. While not every honoree enjoys a surprise party, those in attendance certainly do. At my age, milestone birthdays are particularly poignant. For my 60th I wanted a party; at my upcoming 70th in October a quiet dinner with my best friends will suffice quite nicely – IF the restaurant has good lighting and isn't too loud. Many of you will understand that requirement.

It is possible that birthday celebrations began in ancient Egypt as scholars have pointed to the Bible's reference of a Pharaoh's birthday as the earliest known mention of a birthday celebration (around 3,000 B.C.E.). Egyptologist Dr. James Hoffmeier believes this is referencing the subject's coronation date, since that would have been the Pharaoh's "birth" as a god. Similarly, the Greeks offered moon-shaped cakes to Artemis as a form of tribute to the lunar goddess and lit candles and put them on cakes for a glowing effect. The Greeks most likely took the idea of birthday celebration from the Egyptians, since just like the celebration of the pharaohs as "gods," the Greeks were celebrating their gods and goddesses.

The prevailing opinion seems to be that the Romans were the first civilization to celebrate birthdays for non-religious figures. Romans would celebrate birthdays for friends and families, while the government created public holidays to observe the birthdays of more famous citizens. Those celebrating a 50th birthday party would receive a special cake made of wheat flour, olive oil, honey, and grated cheese. All of this said, female birthdays still weren't celebrated until around the 12th century.

Due to its belief that humans are born with "original sin" and the fact that early birthdays were tied to "pagan" gods, the Christian Church considered birthday celebrations evil for the first few hundred years of its existence. Around the 4th century, Christians changed their minds and began to celebrate the birthday of Jesus as the holiday of Christmas, and this new celebration was accepted into the church.

Although the general idea of celebrating birthdays had already started taking off around the world -- like in China, where a child's first birthday was specifically honored -- *Kinderfeste*, which came out of late 18th century Germany, is the closest prerequisite to the contemporary birthday party. This celebration was held for German children, or "kinder," and involved both birthday cake and candles. Kids got one candle for each year they'd been alive, plus another to symbolize the hope of living for at least one more year. Blowing out the candles and making a wish were also a part of these celebrations.

For quite some time, birthday celebrations involving sugary cakes were only available to the very wealthy, as the necessary ingredients were considered a luxury. But the industrial revolution allowed celebrations like *kinderfest* and the subsequent equivalents in other cultures to proliferate. Not only did the required ingredients become more abundant, but bakeries also started offering pre-made cakes at lower prices due to advances in mass production.

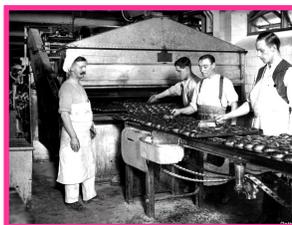
In 1893, Patty Hill and Mildred J. Hill wrote a song they called, "Good Morning To All," which was intended to be sung by students before classes began. The song eventually caught on across America, giving rise to several variations. Robert Coleman eventually published a songbook in 1924, adding extra lyrics that became the new rendition we know as "Happy Birthday to You." With the advent of the radio in 1931, the song appeared as a singing telegram on the Broadway show "The Band Wagon." Since then, the Guinness Book of World Records has nominated the song as one of the top three most sung songs in America.

Displaying cakes in an attractive manner appears to be of interest to many BTS members who frequently show their beautiful finds of antique and vintage cake stands. Cake stands were originally known as salvers, named after the wide silver platters used for serving food or drinks, which prevented spillage from falling to the floor. Some of the earliest glass salvers were mentioned in British records around 1620. Typically, these pedestals were made with a molded glass stem, and often appear in paintings from the 17th century topped with a group of wine glasses. By the mid-18th century, such servers were more commonly used for displaying desserts, sometimes stacked in successively smaller sizes to create dramatic dessert pyramids and topped with a compote holding fruit.

In the United States, the first glass salvers were produced in Philadelphia around 1770. Dessert stands were increasingly made from pressed glass rather than hand-blown, reaching their height in the late 19th century. During the boom-time for EAPG production, glass salvers were made by manufacturers like Adams & Co.; United States Glass Co.; Dalzell, Gilmore & Leighton; and McKee Bros. Cake servers from this era were sold in sizes ranging from a few inches in diameter to nearly two feet, and made in vivid colors like emerald green, canary yellow, amethyst, and sapphire. Pedestals also appeared in trendy materials like milk glass, jasperware, and jadeite.

Eventually designed, like the New England Glass Company's "Diamond Point" salver, salvers were part of larger glassware sets that included a matching plate, bowl, tumblers, candlesticks, and more. Around the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, major American manufacturers like Fostoria made salvers to match their full line, cut into patterns with evocative names, like Diana, Louise, Virginia. In the mid 20th century, Pyrex and Fiesta stream lined and simplified their cake stands to match modernistic trends, even as the use of these items was falling out of style. Countries around the world have their own birthday traditions, such as pinatas in Mexico, that you may wish to research as space here is limited.

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Feature Writers



Melissa Bradley Bishop has always loved stories, both reading and writing them. During her 25-year teaching career she spent many of those years writing with her students at both the elementary and high school level. While she was teaching elementary students, she started modeling the writing process by creating stories about a character inspired by her daughter. Recently, she has started working on turning those stories she started with her students' into soon-to-be published books. For three years Melissa has joined her sister's company at Alt 1 Creative and that has enable Melissa to get these books published. Melissa left teaching to join her sister company 3 years ago. Melissa lives with her husband in Loganville, Georgia, where they enjoy cheering on the Georgia Dawgs!



Erin M. Murphy's passion for table settings began during a children's finishing program where she fell in love with exquisite china, sparkling silverware and the overall orchestration of the fine dining experience. That love later sent her to The Protocol School of Washington where she trained as a Business Etiquette and International Protocol Consultant, a decision that served her well in her marketing career and beyond. The dining skills portion has always been her favorite part of any workshop she's hosted. Erin hopes today's perception of "etiquette" has transformed. She believes dining is an art, an activity that extends far beyond the palate and elegance ... a way of life. Erin resides in New Hampshire.



Janet George Herald has been a musician since the age of five. She sees her adult life in distinct time periods. The first twenty-five years were spent in higher education in Admissions, followed by several years of consulting. The next twenty or so years were spent as a community volunteer and golfer. After serving as a volunteer founding board chair in 2004, she is now the employed Development Coordinator for First Tee. Janet's entire career has required extensive writing including researching and authoring the 50th Anniversary Book for Shady Oaks Country Club. Aside from taking care of her dogs, Janet states that her current hobby, inspired by BTS, is collecting dishes and setting tables. Janet lives and works in Fort Worth, Texas.

Pretty In Pink

Courtesy of Janice Hattox Cox Perkins

Plates: Desert Rose, Facebook Marketplace

Napkins: T.J. Maxx

Plates: Cabbage Ware, Bordallo Pinheiro

Table Runner: thrifted

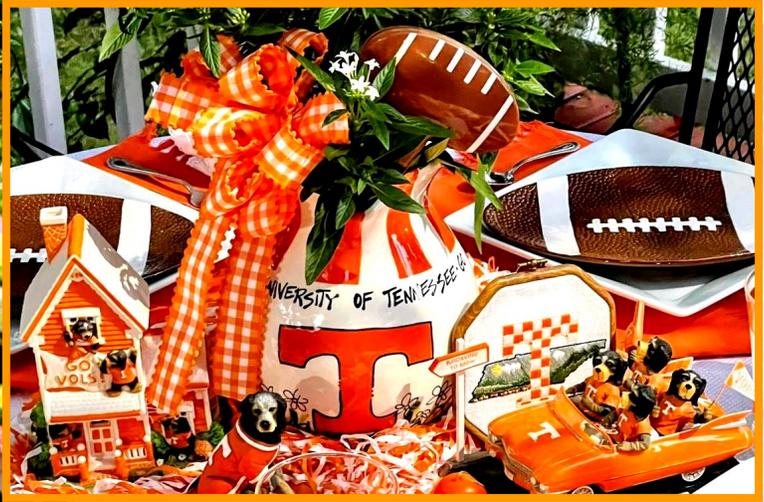
Sterling: Buttercup, Gorham

Flowers: Limelight Hydrangeas and ferns, from Janice's garden

Iced Teas: Godinger

Tin Chargers: Fitz and Floyd





Tennessee "Go Vols"

Courtesy of Sherry Earp

White Plates: Kohl's

Football Plates: hand painted, Home Goods

Flatware: Wallace, JC Penney

Tennessee Glasses: gifted from Mom & Dad

Tablecloth: Dillard's

Orange Placemats and Napkins: TJ Maxx

White Napkins: Hobby Lobby

Football Player Napkin Rings: made by Sherry

Football, Smoky Bobble Head & Shakers:

Tennessee football game

Centerpiece Pitcher: Tennessee Vols pitcher, made by Sherry, Magnolia Lane, filled with flowers, Lowe's, Ribbons, Hobby Lobby

Smoky Car, House & Rocky Top Wine: gifted from husband

Wooden Tennessee Football: Tennessee bookstore

Tennessee Needle Work Picture: made by future dil Megan

Birthday for a Queen

Courtesy of Kathryne J. Lyons

Dishes: Bennet Bone China, Crate & Barrel

Champagne Flutes: Millennium, Waterford

Blue Glasses: Ikea

Flatware: Legato, Towle

Candlesticks: International Silver

Favor Boxes: Amazon





Labor Day Alfresco Dining

Courtesy of Rowena Herrero Floro

Dinner Plates: Melamine, Garden Soiree, Two's Company

Salad Plates: Melamine, Shanghai Dragon Chinoiserie, The Muddy Dog

Dessert Plates: Chinoiserie Staffordshire Dogs and Rabbits, Jay's Studio

Flatware: Oneida

Goblets: Cobalt cut to clear, antique shop

Napkins, Brass Candlesticks: estate sale and rescued treasures

Centerpiece Florals & Candle: Hobby Lobby

OUR CONTRIBUTORS



Janice Hattox Cox Perkins was born and raised in Pontotoc, Mississippi, and has lived in four areas of the state. She has also lived in Bogalusa, Louisiana, and resides in Covington. Janice's tablescape inspiration was birthday celebrations. "Several of my girlfriends and I were born in September, so I prepared a birthday brunch for us using my beloved Desert Rose pattern. The cake pedestal in the background awaits our fresh strawberry birthday cake," said Janice. Birthday celebrations have always been special for Janice's family and friends to celebrate.

Sherry Earp was born in Oklahoma, City, Oklahoma, and lived in Smyrna and Murfreesboro, Tennessee, during her school years. She moved back to Smyrna when she married almost 50 years ago. "My inspiration for my table is my love for my Dad and football, especially Tennessee football," Sherry shared. She was one of four girls and routinely accompanied her Dad to games, as the other three weren't interested. Sherry said that she treasures these memories. Having her Dad all to herself, with no limit to the concession goodies, she learned all about the game from, in her eyes, the BEST!



Kathryne J. Lyons was born and raised in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. She lived in Newark, New Jersey, Delaware, and Tokyo, Japan. Currently, she resides in Manhattan, New York City, New York. This year, Kathryn's husband was out of town on her birthday, and it made him sad. His absence is what inspired her to set a beautiful birthday table. On Mother's Day, her husband gave her a gift that was in a pretty box. It was the box that prompted the color scheme of her table. "When he got home, I had a nice table set for us, but his arrival was the best gift," she said.

Rowena Herrero Flore grew up in Chesterfield, Missouri. She currently lives in Louisville, Kentucky. Her husband's job took them to Mather Air Force Base, California, Minot Air Force Base, North Dakota, and Laughlin Air Force Base, Texas. Rowena explained that her tablescape was inspired by a pink floral tablecloth. As a tribute to the last days of summer, she wanted to focus on the vibrant colors. "One of the chinoiserie dessert plates featured Staffordshire dogs, so I added a pair to the table décor," she said. Rowena enjoys mixing colors and patterns, and loves surrounding family and friends with heirlooms and treasures they have found together.



Tips for Making the Most of Your Estate Sale Treasure Hunts

Estate sales had never held any appeal for me. They struck me as garage sales (which I also avoid) wrapped the macabre: poring over the belongings of the dearly departed.



Then BTS

happened. And suddenly, I'm headed to South Tampa, where two estates were set on display in one of those stunning two-story homes in historic Hyde Park. Because it's a ritzy neighborhood, I was prepared not find to any bargains. Because it was the last day of a three-day sale, I also was prepared to find nothing for which I'd be willing to overspend.

I had a lot to learn about estate sales.

True to my suspicions, there wasn't much left. But browsing in the kitchen, I came across a set

of dishes stacked haphazardly, looking for all the world as though they were destined for donation, or a dumpster. Here, unbidden, came Lesson No. 1: Never judge a pile by its presentation.

On a hunch, I began sorting through the lode, like a prospector panning in

stream — hopeful, but expecting the worst. Then there it was, glinting like a prize nugget, a cover to a vegetable bowl with swirls of vibrant colors, English with an Asian flair that sent my heart soaring. Was there more?

Yes! Removing the vegetable bowl revealed a trove of like-patterned china. I flipped over a plate. Minton. Oh, my heart. I began gathering, sorting perfect from damaged, trying not to despair at the price tags.

With four dinner plates and the vegetable bowl lid, plus a blue milk-glass parfait set clutched in a loving embrace and ready to call it a day, I overheard an agent reciting the siren call of the bargain hunter to a nearby buyer: "Of course it's all 50 percent off. It's the last day of the sale."

Instantly, things got seriously interesting. By the end of my exploring more than an hour later, my estate sale aversion was morphing into a passion, especially because of what happened at the checkout station.

The agent asked whether I wanted the rest of the Minton. What's left is damaged, I said. Take it anyway, she said. No charge. It'll save me from having to repack it. She'd also noticed me admiring a set of cut-to-clear hock wines in a rainbow of colors. Take all the Minton, and she'd add the cut-to-clears. It was a deal.

I was out the door with treasures beyond imagining, and tablescapes options galore, all for — I am not making this up — \$63. I'd been shaking so badly when she declared the price I almost dropped my wallet.

That was February 2020. I've been to countless estate sales since, and I've learned a few things worth sharing. Here, then, are Miss Debbie's Tips From a Estate Sale Addict.

(Continued next page.)

(Continued from previous page.)

- Most estate sales are listed online. Two good sites are *estatesales.net* and *estatesales.org*. Both invite you to register for sales alerts. Once you home in on favorite agents, follow their sites.

- Do your homework: Study each sale for items of interest. Go through picture by picture.

- Capture photos of items on your mobile device. It'll be a reminder of the things that interest you; and, if you don't see it right away, you can show someone who's working the sale. They're certain to know where stuff is.



- Why not rely on the website for photos? You'll be less organized, and you may not have good internet or cell coverage at the sale location.

- Note the item's surroundings on the website. Are they on a shelf, in a cabinet, on a counter? Can you see what sort of room it's in? Is there carpet or other flooring visible? These details will help locate what you seek.

- Prepare a toolkit: a silver polish cloth, glasses cleaners, small flashlight (and black light, if you are hunting for uranium-infused glass), magnifying glass.

- If your heart is set on something, arrive early, an hour or more before the doors open. It's likely you'll be competing with aggressive resellers.

- Bring a small folding chair for the wait. Optional: an umbrella to ward off the sun.

- Note whether the sale is cash-only, or if the seller charges a fee for credit cards. You may need/want to stop by the ATM.

- Set a budget.

- Bring an ally willing to babysit your

items on the hold shelf. Estate sale shoppers are not always respectful of boundaries.

- If you are going solo, buy your treasure immediately. Ask about a safe "sold" area, or take it to your car. As a demonstrated buyer, you should be let back in by the agent immediately. (But it doesn't hurt to confirm this.)

- Some sellers prohibit bags or purses. Know ahead of time if this is the case. If allowed, you may want to take a sturdy tote bag. Include bubble wrap if you're shopping for breakables. (More on packing materials in a moment.)

- If there's a line, make friends with those ahead of you. If they're allowed in before you are, at the last moment, discreetly show them what it is you cannot live without. If it's not what they're there for, they may be willing to have an agent set it aside for you. That's exactly how I scored a set of long-

coveted pair of Staffordshire cows! (Be willing to pay it forward for those just behind you.)

- As you chat with those nearby, don't be specific about what's on your list. Some eavesdroppers — especially resellers — will go after items if they know they're items of interest.

- Early arrivals can count on paying the full listed price. Shoppers can (quietly and privately) ask for a break at any time, but prepare for disappointment ... unless you are a volume-buyer.

- If you're at the sale near closing on the afternoon before prices are cut, privately ask

whether sellers will honor the next day's discount.

- Do not rely on the estate sales team to provide packing materials. Bring your own bubble wrap, boxes, and tape or (my preference) stretch wrap on a roller.

- Another reason to enlist an ally (or two): Getting purchases to your vehicle is not among the sales agents' duties. Typically, that's on you. An estate sale is not Home Depot.

- Note whether the estate sales company offers discounts for return shoppers. If so, save your receipt in your estate sales tool kit. They'll want the original, not a photograph on your phone, so they can put a check or stamp on your receipt when it's presented.

OK, you're good to go. Happy treasure hunting!

~Debbie Jackson

Back to School

By Christy McCaskill Wendell

Last week when shopping for school supplies to fill backpacks for our church's August community mission project I was intrigued by the sophistication of today's school lunch boxes...Tik-Tok worthy Bento Boxes and designer bling insulated bags. I realized I might have a serious issue if my love of table settings extended to school lunch boxes...LOL! But this realization really explained a lot...my fascination with all things on the table is truly deep-rooted...all the way back to elementary school!

I couldn't help but smile thinking about the excitement which always surrounded the start of school. My brother and sister loved getting new school supplies, but most of all I LOVED getting to choose a brand-new lunch box! Just as a tablescape says a lot about the host, your lunch box was of great importance and spoke volumes about its owner...or so I thought. In the 1950s they were metal boxes with a latch for the hinged lids and a small thermos inside. There was just enough room for a sandwich, a piece of fruit and a sweet treat. My mother's lunches were a delicious work of art. My lunch box always had a brown paper grocery sack cut to fit and folded in quarters which I spread on the cafeteria table before setting out lunch (my earliest placemat!) and mom would write a special message in pencil in the corner of this placemat...always lovingly encouraging. She never missed a day. Sometimes I'd tear off the corner and keep mom's message in my pocket for the rest of the school day. Many ended up as a wad of wet kraft paper in the washing machine! How I wish I had saved just one of those precious messages today. A carefully folded paper napkin completed the lunch ensemble. Lunch boxes were the only time my mother used paper napkins. Homemade and hand-hemmed by my grandmother, cloth napkins were used on our table at home. I still treasure many of those napkins today and learned to iron at a young age, practicing on all of them!

Mom always took great care in packing our lunches. A different sandwich each day, but usually repeated from week to week. Ham & cheese, peanut butter & jelly, pimento cheese, bologna, and cream cheese & jelly on white bread. In cooler winter weather she'd substitute Campbells soup in the thermos and tuna fish or egg salad sandwiches since the mayonnaise wouldn't spoil. Each sandwich was skillfully wrapped in wax paper with folds that would rival any origami craftsman! Occasionally chips were included and always a piece of fruit along with a sweet treat...a cookie or brownie or rice krispie bars. Many classmates wanted to swap lunches. I was never inclined to trade, but I would share with friends. I can still smell the delicious aroma which sprung forth as soon as I opened the lid of my red plaid lunch box. My dad always wrote my name inside and out on the metal box since his printing was precise calligraphy. His handwriting at 93 years young is still better than mine!

Each day as we got off the school bus and returned home, before any snacks, we had to hand wash our lunch box so all was ready for the following day. Woe the person who forgot to rinse their thermos and mom was greeted with rancid milk the next morning.

Today, when I cleared the table of backpack school supplies and was getting ready to set the table for lunch, these precious recollections came flooding back. I chuckled as I realized that BTS could also be an acronym for *Back to School*. So changeroo, as May Ridolphi Eason would say, and "BTS" became my theme for today's tablescape with smiles and fondest memories of lunch boxes from many years ago. What's your favorite "Back To School" memory?



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We invite you to join our *Beautiful Table Settings* Facebook group, currently comprised of 130.3K+ members. May Ridolphi Eason founded the group in 2019 to share collections, ideas, and tablescape designs. We invite you to post a photo, pattern, manufacturer, origin and inspiration. Show your creativity and enjoy that of others!

Recommended Reading

