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Famous Reuben Sandwich Created In Schimmel Hotel Poker Game

Walter Schimmel sparkled as he told the story of how his father and his father's poker pals made sandwich history.

It was in the 1920s in Omaha, Neb., where the Schimmels owned a hotel. As in Wichita they owned the Lassen. Snack time arrived, and the poker table's self-appointed sandwich maker went to work.

His most popular combination was corned beef, Swiss cheese, lettuce and thousand island dressing, served on pumpernickel.

THAT FATEFUL day, he ran out of lettuce. He substituted sauerkraut, and history was in the making.

Schimmel liked it so well that he immediately decided to add the sandwich to the Blackstone Hotel's menu. He named it after his poker pal, Reuben Kulakofski, an Omaha grocer.

Walter Schimmel has fun telling that story and suppressing the rumor that the Reuben was invented in a New York restaurant with that name.

It was in a Schimmel hotel, where many other delicious concoctions were created over the years.

Many of those recipes, including the Reuben, are in a new cookbook of which Walter is most proud.

Walter's brother, Bernard of Omaha, compiled the book as a pet project whose profits would go to that city's Joslyn Art Museum.

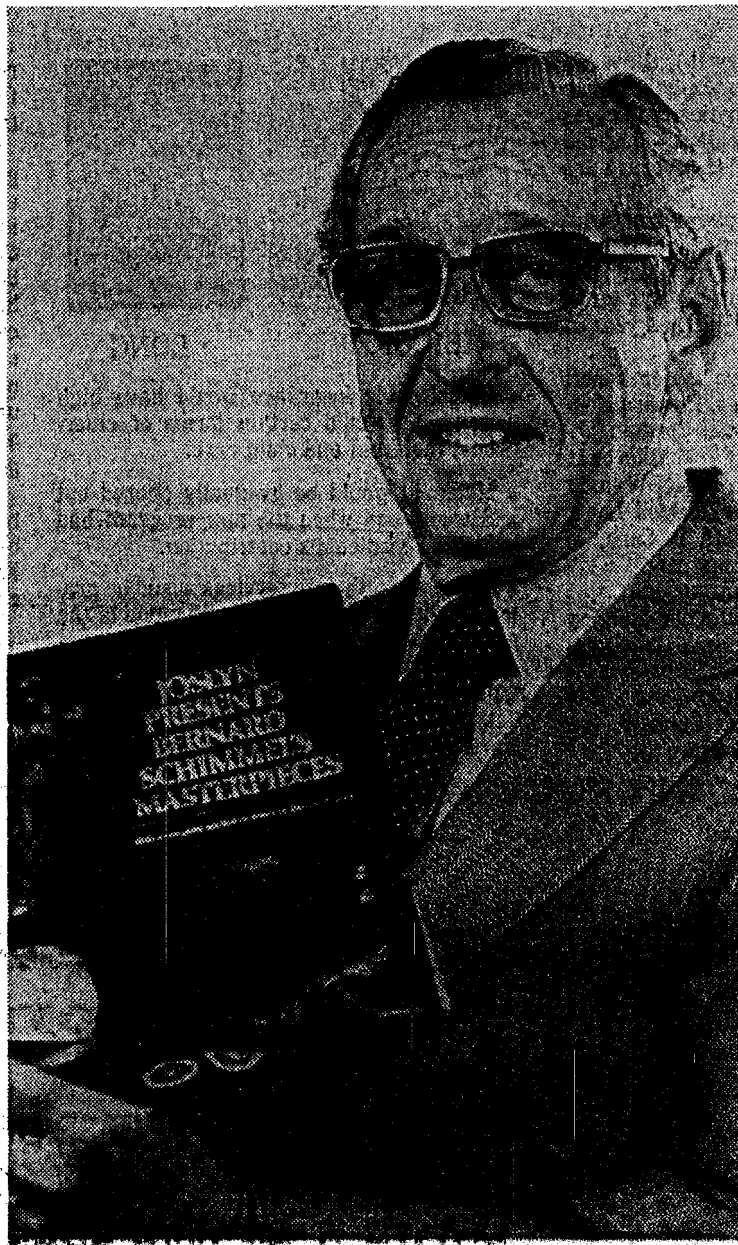
The book, "Joslyn Presents Bernard Schimmel's Masterpieces" (\$11.95, 216 pages, order from Joslyn Art Museum, Omaha, Neb., 68102), was published in September and already has sold more than 5,000 copies.

"The cookbook has been talked about for many years in the family," said Walter. "Bernard always has worked with the Joslyn; it's like him to help them with a fund-raising project."

WALTER MANAGED the Lassen Hotel, First and Broadway, from 1942 to 1968, when the family sold its hotel chain to a corporation.

Walter then joined the International Executive Service Corps, consulting with hotel managers in many parts of the world from 1969 to 1972.

Later he returned to Wichita to contribute his expertise and goodwill to a variety of organizations such as the American Red Cross, United Way



Staff Photo by LuVerne Paine

WALTER SCHIMMEL WITH COOKBOOK ... Family put famous recipes into print

In featuring the Schimmel hotels in a 1950 article, Hotel Management Magazine characterized Walter as the executive in the family; the late A.Q., the diplomat; the late Edward, the host; and Bernard, the showman.

The chain was established by their father, Charles, who immigrated to

Omaha often were trained by Bernard at the Blackstone in Omaha, said Walter.

Walter doesn't believe that the days of fine downtown hotels are gone forever. He says this though the Blackstone closed in 1976, and the Lassen now is the Defender's Townhouse re-

run in cycles. The downtown hotel industry (offering service and fine food) will be important again," he predicted.

TWO OF WALTER'S three sons are continuing the family innkeeping tradition. Charles is with the Ran Inn at Culver City, Calif.; Walter is a restaurant consultant working in Mountain View, Calif.

The youngest son, Bill, is with the station KEYN in Wichita. Walter Schimmel also is in the innkeeping field — Edward's son is a district manager for Ramada Inns, headquartered in Phoenix, Ariz.

Though all of the Schimmel brothers participated in the family hotel business, Bernard was the one who elected to specialize in the food service area.

He distinguished himself with the best honor awards at the world's standing hotel school at Lausanne, Switzerland. Following this training, he worked in every type of job in some of Europe's finest restaurants and hotels.

When Bernard returned to the United States, he said he "simply wanted to produce the world's best cuisine to provide guests throughout the west with unforgettable dining experiences, Walter said.

For 16 years the Orleans Room at the Blackstone, under Bernard's direction, was the only restaurant in Nebraska to receive Holiday Magazine's Award of Excellence.

Opening the cookbook is like stepping into the kitchen of an Old World hotel, with the advantage that recipes are scaled down to home-chen size.

In many cases the ingredient list a recipe calls for very specific items — Switzerland Emmentaler cheese, not merely Swiss cheese, for instance.

"Bernard always does things right," said Walter of his younger brother. "You'll notice he calls for lots of parsley and describes garnishes. He wouldn't think of serving anything that wasn't properly garnished."

The first section of the book is devoted to "garnishes and highlights."

Naturally, there's a section on sauces, the crown of any chef's repertoire.

The Schimmel Reuben Sandwich

serves 1

- 4 slices Swiss Emmenthaler cheese
- 4 (or more) slices Kasher-style corned beef
- 2 ounces chilled, well-drained sauerkraut
- 1 ounce (or less) Thousand Island dressing
- soft butter
- dark rye bread
- garnishes (see below)

Mix Thousand Island dressing with sauerkraut that has been drained.

Assembling procedure: Spread outside of each slice of dark rye bread with soft butter. Lay bread, unbuttered side up, side by side. Place Swiss cheese on each piece, corned beef on one piece, sauerkraut on corned beef and then put together for grilling on sandwich grill or skillet. Press together with spatula and cook until brown and hot through so cheese oozes. Eat immediately.

Garnish with Kasher dill pickle, rose radish and potato chips.

Leg of Lamb, Park Avenue

serves 10 to 12

An entree that also is a conversation piece. I like to serve this accompanied with Mintblade.

- 1 6-pound leg of lamb, boned
- 1 12- to 14-ounce pork tenderloin, close trimmed
- 1 lemon, juice and zest
- 1 teaspoon rosemary
- 1 teaspoon curry powder
- 1 clove garlic, crushed in 1 tablespoon Schimmelseasoning
- 1 stick butter, softened
- 1 cup white wine

- 2 ounces Kummel
- 1 clove garlic
- 1 tablespoon grated onion

Combine lemon and seasoning. Rub cavity exterior of lamb. Place tenderloin in center of wrap lamb around the pork and tie with oiled butcher's twine. Refrigerate overnight.

Brush meat with butter and cook on a rotis allowing 15 to 20 minutes per pound, or bar on a covered grill for about the same amount time. Baste with the following mixture:

- 1 cup white wine
- 2 ounces Kummel
- 1 clove minced garlic
- 1 tablespoon grated onion

Charcoal-Broiled Butterflied Leg of I
Provencale

serves

- leg of lamb, boned and butterflied
- 1 clove garlic, crushed in Schimmelseasoning
- ¼ teaspoon thyme
- ½ teaspoon rosemary
- ½ teaspoon oregano
- 1 lemon, juice and zest
- 1 cup oil
- ½ cup red wine vinegar
- garnishes (see below)

Prepare marinade of all ingredients except and garnishes. Marinate 4 to 6 hours before g Remove from marinade and reserve for basting Cook in covered barbecue for about 45 minutes turning and basting frequently.

To serve, slice thinly and garnish with fries and chutney.