



Photo by Bob Pearson

John 'Doc' Davidson stands in front of the grill at the Greenwich Cafe, where he cooks his famous fish and chips.

'Doc' cooks up fish and chips storm

By Sue Brown

Fish and chips without malt vinegar is like a kiss without a moustache or an egg without salt, according to the originator of "Doc's English Style" fish and chips.

John "Doc" Davidson, emeritus professor of botany, was a UNL faculty member from 1948 to 1976. He also introduced fish and chips to the Greenwich Cafe, 1917 O St.

After commenting to a group of teachers that he missed not having fish and chips in Lincoln, many were curious as to what they were. One teacher knew of a restaurant near Seward that served fish and chips, so a teachers' club decided to take a trip to find out what Davidson was raving about. Unfortunately they were confronted with a fish fry instead of fish and chips, Davidson said.

But Davidson was not ready to give up. Being a regular at the Greenwich Cafe, where he said he often discussed teaching methods "over a couple of beers," he asked the owner's wife if he could use their deep fryers to cook fish and chips.

Popular dish

After convincing her that he could cook, he was able to rent the deep fryers for one evening in March of 1973. The teachers chipped in to cover the cost and admitted that the fish and chips were great and they had never tasted anything like it, Davidson said.

Starting in November of 1973, Davidson began cooking fish and chips on Friday nights at the cafe. The word spread and soon people were standing in line outside to taste Doc's English Style Fish and Chips. Fish and chips are now served at the Greenwich Cafe Monday through Friday because of their popularity, he said.

Currently Davidson, who said his fish and chips are known from coast to coast and from Canada to Mexico, is learning how to tend bar at the cafe.

Davidson received the nickname Doc when he first came to UNL in 1948. He had attended the University of British Columbia where everything was very formal, he said, adding that professors who had doctorates were always referred to as doctors.

First name basis

The University of California at Berkeley was a different story. Attending the university to get his doctorate, Davidson said professors encouraged students to call them by their first names.

When he came to teach at UNL, Davidson tried getting students to call him by his first name. One student found it particularly hard to do, but asked Davidson if he could call him "Doc." From that time on the name has stuck, Davidson said.

According to Davidson, he suffered from "stage fright" at first, not using eye contact with the students and hiding behind the lecture stand.

He then decided to get away from the formality. He wore comfortable clothes to class, came out from behind the lecture stand and talked to the students rather than lecturing to them.

Davidson quotes the words of a monk long ago, "a lecture is the process whereby the notes of the lecturer become the notes of the student without passing through

the minds of either."

Three schooling processes

He described three different processes in schooling today. First, he said, is belief. A young child believes everything he is taught. If one's whole life is based merely on belief, he said, "you can be completely blissful, and wrong."

Second is training, which Davidson says there is far too much of in schools. According to Davidson, the trainer is always the authority. He decides what is to be learned and what the rewards and punishments will be.

During the third stage a student experiences situations, discovering that many of the things he was told are not true, Davidson said. The conflict then develops between what he was told and what he believes.

"Education is a good word but we forgot what it means," he said. What it means is "to draw out" students rather than to cram in, he added.

"As far as I know, I was the first person in this continent to conduct a large class completely inductively," he said. If what a student says to the professor is more important than what the professor has to say to the student, then why is there so little time devoted to it in a semester, he asked.

Similar evaluations

Davidson, who has had 40 years of experience in evaluating students, said he asked his students to honestly evaluate themselves in their overall class performance. The grades are usually very close to his evaluation, he said.

Davidson said he never had to ask a student if he understood something because he could tell by their reaction. He calls this the "Merry Christmas Syndrome," comparing it to the looks on his eight children's faces years ago on Christmas morning. Davidson said he could have told his kids what they were going to get but that would have ruined it for them. That's just what 90 percent of teachers do to students, Davidson said, calling it criminal.

"I like kids to open their own present," he said.

According to Davidson, teachers need to step down off the pedestal and students shouldn't be afraid to contradict them.

"'You're full of bull' is a good response and a teacher should be able to take it," he said.

'Acquire' knowledge

Davidson said professors lecture because they were lectured to, adding that, "you can't give knowledge, it must be acquired." There is a no more inefficient way of getting information across than the lecture, he said.

Davidson has written a manuscript entitled "Inquiry Into Learning" which came out of seminars he conducted with his graduate students.

For two years after his retirement he continued the sessions, inviting students to his home. They discussed methods of teaching, grading, and how to design a botany course for the colleges where they would be teaching, among other things, he said. The manuscript is a pooling of the seminar findings as he has interpreted them.

Davidson said if he could put an inscription in every classroom, the back of the room would say, "Telling is not Teaching" and the front of the room would say, "Listening is not Learning."

Wholesale prices force up food costs in the Crib-Bennett

By Cindy Coglianes

Students have to dig in their pockets for a few more pennies to cover the cost of food at the Crib in the Nebraska Union.

If you want a reason why, Nebraska Union Director Al Bennett says, take a look in the grocery stores.

"The prices are going up regularly," Bennett said. "We raise our prices according to our wholesalers' prices."

Bennett said the increases are from two to eight cents.

"It's very frustrating for us as providers of food service to keep raising the prices," Bennett said, adding that he has tried to adjust prices about every month with the wholesalers.

Bennett said that a large portion of the staple foods for the Nebraska Union are bought from the University Central Stores that have contracts with major food wholesalers. He said bread products and canned goods are bought through their own contracts with wholesalers and only fresh produce is bought in the open market.

"I suppose it's possible that the price increase could affect our business and I would invite our community for ideas on how we can better the situation," Bennett said.

"You've got to pay for what you get or you don't get it. It's the same decision you are forced with when you go into the grocery store," he added.

Some cold sandwiches, hot sandwiches, soups and salads experienced about a three cent increase. Breads, desserts, beverages, vegetables and the breakfast menu also had some price increases and the cost of soft serve ice cream increased five cents.

Ellsberg to discuss Vietnam perspective, his Pentagon study

Daniel Ellsberg is scheduled to speak on "Vietnam in Perspective: Part II," Thursday, December 7 at 3 p.m. in the Nebraska Union Centennial Room. There will be no charge to attend the lecture, but donations will be accepted.

In 1971, Ellsberg gave the *New York Times* a study, later referred to as the Pentagon Papers, that he had completed for the Rand Corporation investigating the decision-making process in the Vietnam war.

The government tried to stop the publication of the study after several newspapers had published parts of it. The U.S. Supreme Court ruled that the Pentagon Papers could be published because the government did not prove that restricting publication of the study was necessary to protect national security.

In his lectures, Daniel Ellsberg says Richard Nixon really did have a "secret plan" to end the Vietnam war. Ellsberg also claims that there was a connection between Watergate and the Vietnam War.

Ellsberg is being sponsored by a voluntarily funded speakers account. The following organizations have contributed to the fund: the All University Fund-\$600, Faculty Convocations Committee-\$400, Residents Hall Association-\$200, Nebraskans For Peace-\$100, and the United Ministries in Higher Education-\$100. Smaller donations have been made by the Innocents Society, Rho Delta, and the Student Y. J.B. Milliken, Talks and Topics chairman, said that the Committee for Facts about Vietnam also helped to bring Ellsberg to UNL.

Ellsberg graduated from Harvard University in 1952 with highest honors, majoring in economics. He then volunteered for the Marine Corps. In 1962, Ellsberg received a Ph.D. in economics from Harvard. From 1959-64 he was a strategic analyst at the Rand Corporation.

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