

Her gourmet cooking and writing begin in the garden

By Tom Penzenhagen
staff writer

others, all of which are used in Hudson's gourmet cooking creations.

"It's a pretty standard vegetable garden for someone who lives in the country, but I don't think you'll find one like it in the city," said Molly Hudson, who maintains a thriving vegetable garden at her Wimbleson Road home in the heart of Birmingham.

Her garden grows cucumbers, squash, eggplant, broccoli, lettuce, peas, carrots, beets, raspberries, peppers "that could kill you, they're so hot," and more herbs than you can shake a garden hose at.

"You can grow a lot of food in the city," Hudson said. "This garden feeds my family, my mother's family, several of my friends and my mother's friends."

Herbs are a specialty. Hudson has dill, oregano, large sweet basil, fine leaf, lettuce leaf, lemon and bush basil, pineapple and honeydew sage, parsley, sorrel, chervil, bronze fennel, bayleaf, rosemary and a host of

THE COOKING came first, then the garden, Hudson said. Then this year Hudson formed a partnership with Yvonne Gill, former owner of Tweeny's Cafe in Birmingham. Together they publish "The Food Enthusiast," a newsletter circulated among gourmet cooks nationwide.

Hudson experiments with many of her garden products — "sometimes you have to experiment with the herbs to find out what they are," she said — before writing about how to prepare them in the newsletter.

She said the newsletter "offers a cooking class by mail. It gives ingredients, recipes but also explains methodologies of how to prepare foods."

"It progresses beyond the level of written recipes and gives (readers) access to a teacher when they don't have a teacher."

Hudson said Gill's 25 years of experience in the restaurant business



Molly Hudson's in-town garden provides produce for friends and relatives as well as for her own family. In addition, it offers the

freest resources imaginable for her national newsletter, "The Food Enthusiast."

is an invaluable addition to the success of the newsletter.

"I realize it's not an inexpensive subscription," Hudson said of the newsletter's cost of \$12 per year for 12 issues. "But it's a quality product with an upscale format, and it's typeset and illustrated, too."

HUDSON'S GARDEN "started with six tomato plants; then, in 1977, we dug the predecessor of the big vegetable garden and planted an herb garden and wildflowers," Hudson said.

A raspberry patch, various perennials and a kitchen herb garden followed.

"Owning a garden is like owning a sailboat," Hudson said. "As soon as you get one, you want one that's bigger."

The garden won't grow bigger anymore, however. Hudson, who works for Campbell Ewald advertising, is being transferred to New York City in the fall.

"I'm happy about the move," said Hudson, whose husband, Arnold Hudson, already lives in New York — near 6th Street and Third Avenue.

"The city's impossible," Hudson said, explaining that she would not

try to grow vegetables in town. Instead the couple are looking for a country home in rural sections of New Jersey or Connecticut, where she can start another garden.

The transfer date will allow her ample time to harvest this year's crop.

"IT'S MY IDEA of the best time to move because I can get the most out of this gardening season and be

in a new place to get the most out of the new planting season."

Although Hudson will be leaving her Birmingham garden behind, she won't be uprooting quite all of it.

"I have heirloom flowers, irises and peonies that belonged to my mother and my grandmother, who came from Illinois," Hudson said. "I'll take divisions of these flowers to the East Coast with me."

Staff photos by Mindy Saunders



Each issue of the newsletter for gourmet cooks as well as those who aspire to be, contains lots of recipes, illustrations and assorted choice tidbits.



To illustrate the variety in even one herb such as basil which Molly Hudson has in her garden, she lined up a sampling. The types of basil are (from left) lettuce leaf, large sweet, opal, lemon, fine leaf, piccolo verde fino and miniature fine leaf.

Restoration

Builder/author loves old, abandoned houses

By Corinne Abatt
staff writer

Arthur Wood Landry loves old houses the way other people love prize races, diamonds or rare jade.

"I feel an old house has a lot to say. Somehow an old, abandoned, empty house is a sad thing to see... My heart reaches out for those old houses. When I pass one (along the road), I have to go back. God, when they tear them down, it hurts. I hate that."

A former Bloomfield Hills resident, now living in Cheboygan, Landry, long an expert renovator of old houses, has taken his love a step further.

His first book, "Restoration of Old Houses," will be out about Aug. 1. It is published by Sterling Publishing of New York, and the soft cover book sells for \$8.95.

It is based on his own experiences, first working on the restoration of some 200 houses in this metropolitan

"Eventually I want to get to where I can buy a whole block and fix it up the way it should be. My reputation is such now that I can get investors."

— Arthur Wood Landry

area and continuing with the many he has done in and about the Cheboygan area where he has lived since 1974. Landry took all of the photographs and did all of the diagrams for the book.

LANDRY grew up in Bloomfield Hills, attended St. Hugo grade school, Shrine High School and the University of Detroit. He said it took a while for him to do what he had always wanted to do, learn carpentry.

"I had always loved old houses and if they were run down and abandoned, I

loved them even more.

As soon as he had his carpentry skills in good shape, he said, "I learned how to become a plumber, an electrician, a heating man and do dry wall and plaster. There isn't a job in an old house I haven't done myself."

He went up north to find a quieter lifestyle and his career flourished.

One of his closest friends was Pete Fisher, who died recently of a heart attack at age 40.

Landry said, "I dedicated my book to him. I was sailing with him just before

he died, I was going to tell him I had dedicated the book to him, but I didn't because I wanted it to be a surprise. He was a wonderful person. He helped me more than any one in my life."

It was Fisher who helped Landry find his first house to restore in Cheboygan — a run-down, four-bedroom structure which he bought for \$8,000 at no money down and \$75 a month.

HE PAID \$1,000 for his own house in Cheboygan and took him 10 months working full time to restore it.

While Landry occasionally builds custom houses, he prefers restoration. "It's extremely creative and one of the most rewarding things I've ever done."

He continued, "Eventually I want to get to where I can buy a whole block and fix it up the way it should be. My reputation is such now that I can now



When Arthur Landry of Bloomfield Hills finally took the hammer by the handle and became a carpenter, it opened up a world of excitement and satisfaction for him — not to mention several successful careers.

Please turn to Page 4

GARY CASKEY/staff photographer