

The middle years

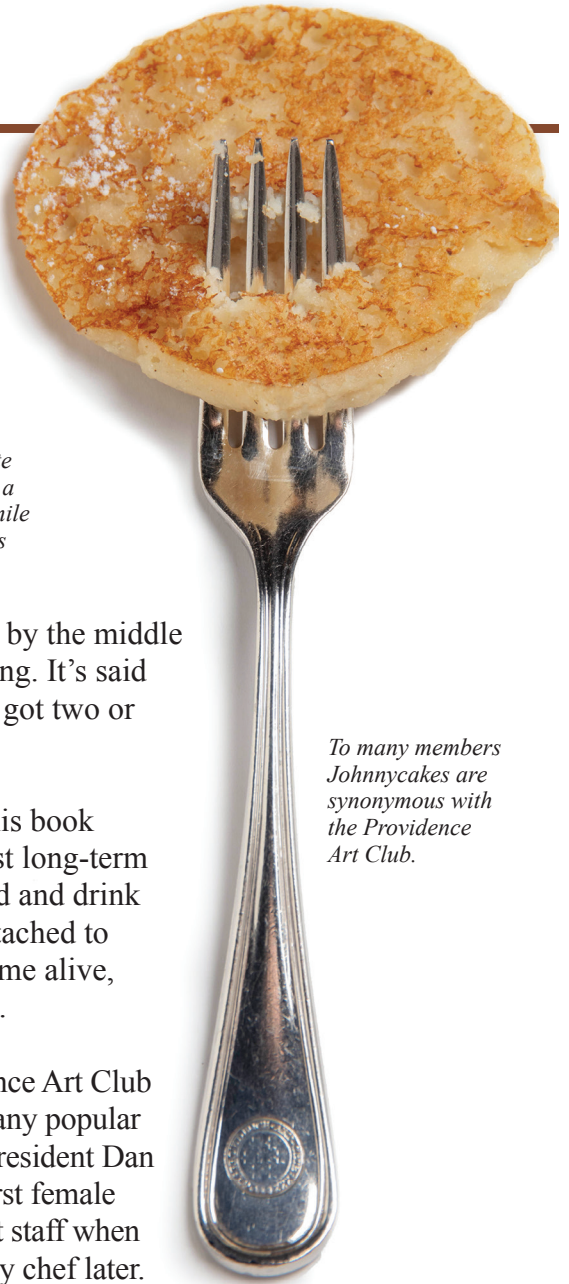


Starched white uniforms and a welcoming smile greeted diners in 1965.

Lunch became a regular thing as our Club matured, and by the middle of the 20th century the mid-day meal became a routine happening. It's said that no matter what you ordered during some early periods you got two or three hardy johnnycakes with your meal.

One of the most enjoyable aspects of the research for this book was the dialogue with members, including a number of our most long-term members. We took in their first-hand accounts of the actual food and drink served here, but also their fond memories and emotions they attached to these offerings. All this made the nearly lost middle decades come alive, providing fodder for this book and added spice for our archives.

In the middle years no one would ever confuse the Providence Art Club with La Mediterranée in Paris or even Barbetta in Manhattan. Many popular dishes included “franks and beans, with brown bread” as twice president Dan Mechnig mentioned, or “salmon and peas,” as Alice Miles our first female president recalls. It should also be noted that Alice worked as wait staff when she attended RISD in the late 1950s and acted as the Club's pastry chef later.



To many members Johnnycakes are synonymous with the Providence Art Club.



Al Albrekson, our longest tenured current member, since 1954, said about our culinary offerings back in the mid 20th century, “Food choices were very few. They had American names that were common place, no French stuff, all dolled up.” He went on to say...

“We had a small kitchen, but I never had a bad meal, ever.”

A happy gathering in the cabaret in 1950 had everyone smiling.