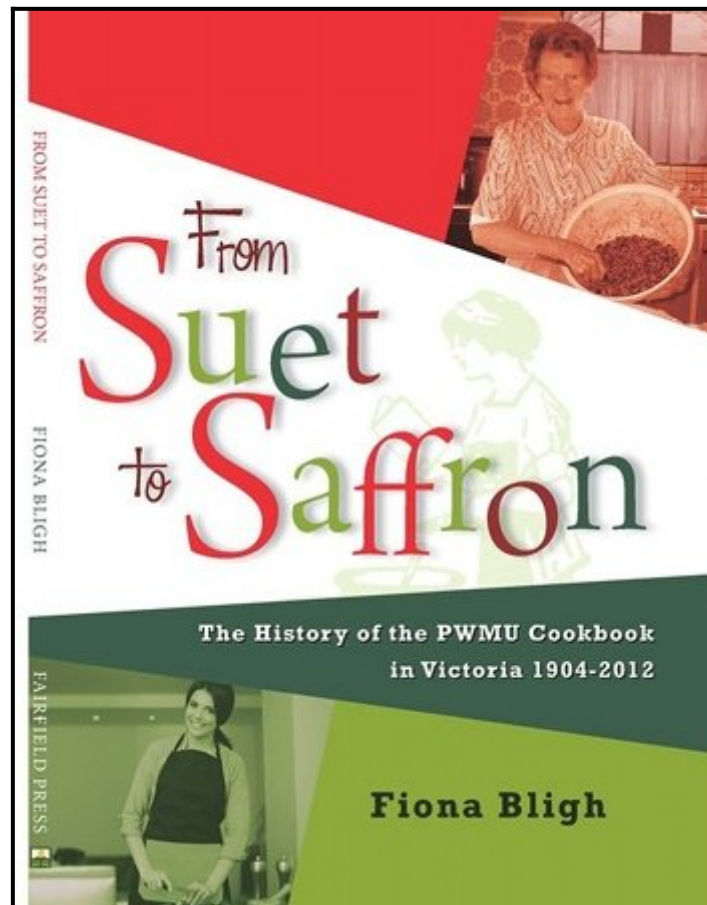


A long way from suet pudding



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[/dropcap]ld-fashioned cooking techniques and recipes are making a comeback, although perhaps without the levels of salt, fat and sugar that were all considered normal before a life sitting in front of computers made it harder to work off such nasties.

This week, **Michaelie Clark**, from **Warrnambool Books**, has chosen a gem that explores the history of one such book that was a must for all housewives, and yes, most married women were called housewives.

Ahh, those were the days...not! Over to Michaelie...

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[/dropcap]he name of the recently published history of the PWMU Cookbook could not be more appropriate. ***From Suet to Saffron*** by Melbourne author **Fiona Bligh** celebrates the evolution of the book since its first edition was produced by a group of Victorian women in 1904, when offal and raw animal fat were well-loved staples, to the current day, when the menu is infused with multi-cultural cuisine.

As well as giving a good overview of the origins of Australia's oldest, continuously in-print cookbook and the changes it has undergone to achieve that designation, *From Suet to Saffron* also provides a snapshot through the ages of our country's socio-cultural norms and prescribed gender roles.

Amidst advice for 'invalid cookery', priceless 'observations on soup', recipes for sheep's head broth and instructions for cleaning ivory are replications of the advertisements that appeared in the book over the last century.

These range from macaroni ads in 1904 which ask 'Do You Love Your Husband and Children? If so, feed them on Rinoldi' (with a side serve of house-wifely virtue) to flyers by the State Electricity Commission of Victoria declaring in 1943 that 'Electric Cooking is Now Every Woman's Right!'

Whether you're a long-time fan of the PWMU Cookbook or just want to take a look at Australia's past from an interesting perspective, *From Suet to Saffron* is definitely a book you can sink your teeth into."



Melbourne author and historian Fiona Bligh has explored our changing tastes...and gender roles.

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