

OUR COMMUNITY

Sooke chef makes it in the Big Apple

Former EMCS culinary arts student making his dream come true

Pirjo Raits
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Sooke's Carl Heinrich is taking the Big Apple by storm.

At 18 years of age Heinrich packed up his knives and headed to the best cooking school he could find and he is now honing his culinary craft at one New York's finest restaurants.

The road to New York seemed almost preordained for Heinrich. His early years were spent in the most unglamorous aspect of the culinary arts — dish washing. He worked during spring break and summer and at some point the idea of becoming a chef filtered into his mind and he enrolled in the Culinary Arts program at Edward Milne community school. He also worked at the Sooke Harbour House where they helped him train for a chef's competition. Most competitors were graduates of the Camosun College culinary program and they generally had no competitors from high school. He entered and won.

"I was the only one from EMCS and I killed that competition, I took it away," said Heinrich in an telephone interview from New York.

He said he owes much of his success to Pia Carroll and Sheila Hunter, his instructors and mentors at EMCS.

"I began this thing and thought, 'hey I can do this

for the rest of my life'."

The young cook could have gone to Malaspina or Camosun but he decided he would aim for the best. He researched his options, took interviews and was accepted by all the schools he contacted — he chose Stratford Chefs School in Ontario. He was 17-years-old. He was the youngest one there and he was chosen as one of 35 from 300 applicants.

"I was lucky. It all started at Mom's Cafe and with Pia and Sheila at EMCS... they started me off there. The Sooke Harbour House is an unbelievable restaurant; the food is amazing. When I walked in they showed me how to hold a knife."

Stratford, says Heinrich, is an incredibly tough school. It's private and not run like any other and has a 12-1 student/teacher ratio. He said it is the best in the country. The chefs in training run a restaurant in the summer for the theatre crowd and in winter they are considered the best restaurant in town. In the summer he cooked at Rundles, although he could have gone anywhere. He said most cooks-in-training work for free at restaurants with good names.

His high school friend Michael Boston, of tap dancing fame, was in New York and asked Heinrich to come to New York.

Bright lights and the incredible opportunities lay before Heinrich as he made the decision to work for free



Submitted photo

Sooke's Carl Heinrich, pictured in Times Square, is cooking at one of the top restaurants in New York City. He credits Pia Carroll and Sheila Hunter for the jump-start to his career.

in one of the best restaurants in New York — Daniel Boulud. They offered him a job and told him to come back when he turned 18. So for the past two years Heinrich has been a sous chef at DB Bistro Moderne, one of Boulud's three restaurants in New York. Boulud's has other restaurants in Las Vegas and Palm Beach.

"As you may have guessed,

Carl Heinrich is considered a great young talent to watch in the kitchen of Daniel Boulud's DB Bistro Moderne. DB Bistro's Chef Olivier Muller and Sous-Chef Kim Leiken are big fans of Carl's talent, skill and motivation and feel very fortunate to have him in their brigade," says Georgette Farkas Trapp, public relations director for the Dinex Group.

"It's been amazing. I work as a sous chef at every station. It's very possible; I'm just a kid from Sooke. It's possible for anyone if you work at it and choose to go to a good school. You have to challenge yourself to choose the best path and for me it worked out."

When asked if cooking in New York was anything like the popular television show "Hell's Kitchen", Heinrich said. "The kitchen is very stressful. We are a very busy restaurant with very high standards on our food. Between breakfast, lunch and dinner we

serve between 350 and 500 people a day. But if you do something wrong or you present a dish that isn't up to par the chef will make sure you know about it. Sometimes he's more gentle than others. Maybe you'll get screamed at or not, but he will make you feel like an a**hole. I've never had a bowl of soup dumped down the front of me, but I've seen bowls and pans fly; I've seen a chef grab guys and shake them up a little, and I've seen people break down and cry right in the middle of service. The heat is intense by the stove and sometimes you get so in the weeds (kitchen term

for having too much to do without the time to do it) that you want to just get out and hide, because you know you're going to get it. But it is the best food I've ever served, and there is a very talented, very international kitchen staff, and Olivier Muller (the chef at DB) and Daniel Boulud are the best chefs I've ever worked for. I love the rush, I couldn't do

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*--Carl Heinrich
Chef*

anything else."

His favourite food is French and he said New York has every possible quality ingredient one might ever need or want.

He is aware of what is going on in Sooke and said the increased exposure of the Saturday Farmers' Market, the organic growers and the fresh food movement is making Sooke a place that is coming alive.

He said his pleasure comes from going to market to select great ingredients, putting it on a plate and making people happy.

"That's what it's all about. When I cook I can make people happy."

Women in Tune dole out grants

The Women in Tune Society began as a fundraising arm for the Sooke Performing Arts group and has now evolved into an incorporated non-profit society.

They fundraise to support the arts in Sooke and have organized everything from luncheons and teas to a masked ball at Royal Roads University.

Their popular and well-attended Sooke Secret Garden Tour takes people into the private gardens around Sooke.

The storm in December necessitated a

change of plans for the 2007 garden tour, so they booked well-known garden expert and author Des Kennedy.

Their history goes back to 1999, and over this time they have: donated funds to the Sooke Philharmonic Orchestra; helped in the construction of the outdoor amphitheatre at Ed Macgregor Park; aided students in writing workshops with the Sooke Scribblers; helped 325 Admiral Waller sea cadets purchase band instruments; hired musicians for concerts with the Ekoos Vocal

Ensemble; sponsored artist award for the Sooke Fine Arts Society and helped beautify Sooke through the Kaltasin Project.

Their board of directors consists of eight dedicated and enthusiastic women and they always have room for more volunteers. Their intent is to present a quality, high-caliber and successful event to the public.

Current members are: Merle Fulton, Liz Kreeft, Wynn LeComte, Edith Newman, Sandy Parson, Fern Simpson, Bonnie Sprinkling and Elizabeth Tanner.

Currently, the society is accepting grant funding applications. The funds come from their recent "In the Garden" event held at the Sooke Harbour House in early June.

Those interested in applying for funding can contact Merle Fulton at fulton5@shaw.ca. An application form will be forwarded.

The applications are open to both groups and individuals with a closing date of October 1, 2007.