

SUNDAY

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FOOD

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Cubs and berries on a Saturday morning

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It was a beautiful Saturday, and everyone in the neighborhood happened to be home at the same time. Our folks were all busy mowing or doing yard work or cleaning house, and with nothing else to do a whole troop of us neighbor kids decided to ride our bikes out across the creek to check on the blackberries. Struggling to peddle through the soft dirt, we stood on our bikes huffing and puffing, oblivious to the tall weeds whipping at our legs as we raced to be the first to cross the little hand built bridge that our bachelor neighbor, Harry, had placed there years earlier.

Once at the bridge, we found that a couple of the old boards had broken, and we couldn't get our bikes across without them. While the big kids set about making repairs, we smaller ones valiantly made our way down the creek bank to squelch our bare feet in the thick, cool, green mud. We discovered that several crawdads had sunk into the mud to keep out of the sun and were busy examining them with a twig, when we heard a faint buzzing, sputtering noise overhead.

The Cub

Looking up, we were startled to see a small red and white airplane making its way across the sky over our field. Suddenly the plane's engine gave a final cough, and then there was nothing. We scrambled up out of the creek, all eyes glued to the now silent aircraft as it swayed in the sky, lower and lower.

The plane glided past our heads and landed gently in the grassy field. Quick as a wink, a man hopped out of the cockpit and greeted us. After friendly hellos all around, several of us went racing toward the house to fetch a grown-up.

We headed straight to my father, all yelling at once. He finally made out that we were telling him that a plane had landed in what we called the back acre. Stunned, he asked if anyone was injured, and then loped off toward the field as we shouted that no one had been hurt.

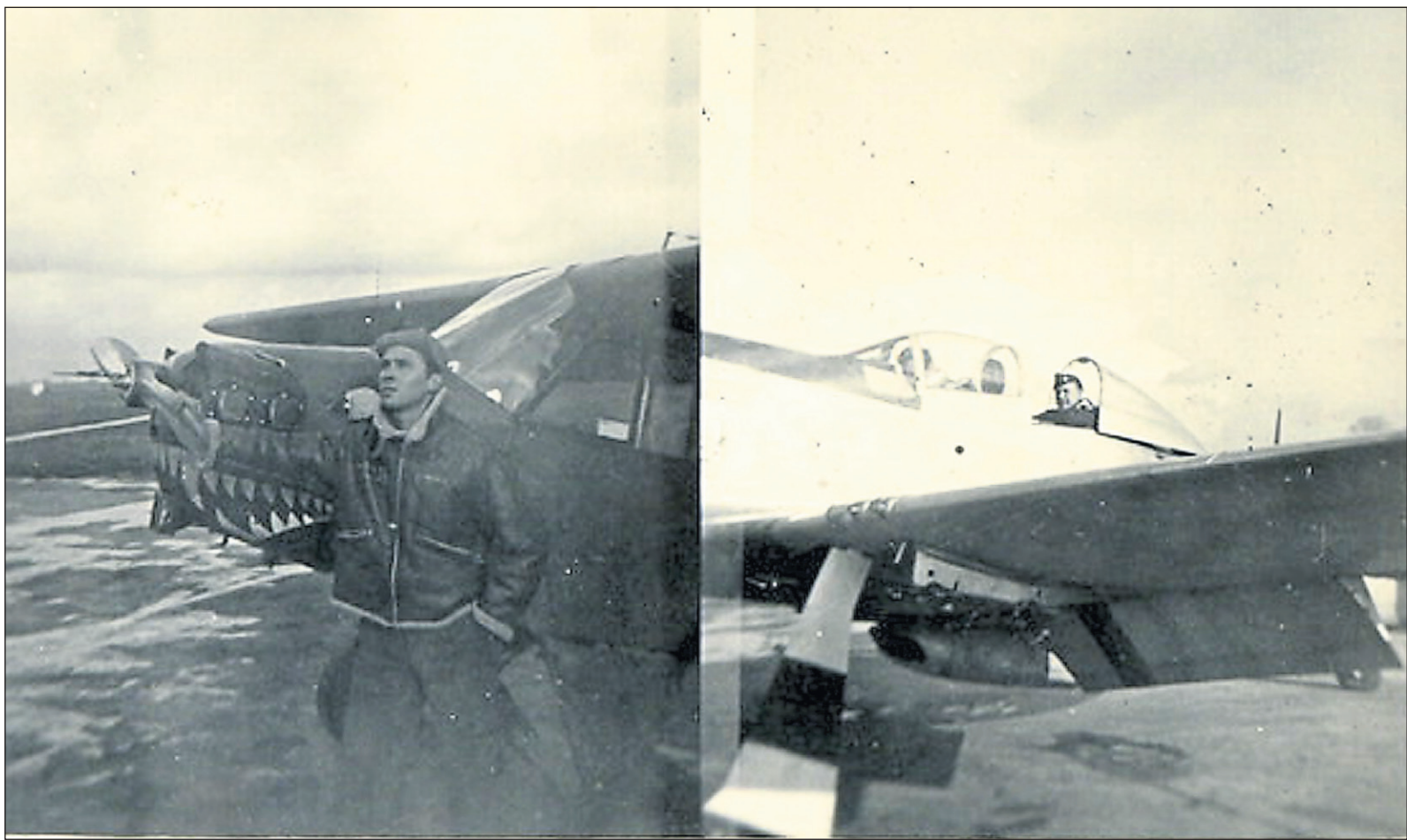
Airman to Airman

Racing behind our father's figure, we reached the field in time to see the two men shaking hands as the pilot told Dad that he'd run out of gas. We were only a few miles from the airport, and some of the kids began walking the pilot up to our house so to make a phone call while Dad and I stayed back by the plane.

Dad smiled as he looked over the aircraft, which he told me was a Piper Cub, and told me that if I was very careful I could touch the plane. I barely brushed my index finger along the wing, amazed at how thin the metal was. To me, it didn't feel much tougher than a sheet of aluminum foil that, if I wasn't careful, I could poke my finger through.

Several minutes later the pilot returned to wait by the plane for someone from the airport to come. Dad admired the little airplane while they waited, and told the pilot that he'd been in the Army Air Corps in World War II and piloted a plane a time or two. After the war he'd gotten his own pilot's license down in South Carolina, flying a P-51 Mustang, and used he to buzz the farmers for fun. Listening to our father talk with the pilot, we saw a side of him that we'd never known much about. The two men had a great time swapping stories and talking about planes.

After a while, the folks from the airport showed up and refueled the plane. Our field was fairly wide and flat, and the pilot had no trouble taking off again to head to the airport. The berries were completely forgotten about and



Library of Congress Veterans History Project

On the left is a WWII pilot identified as Jimenez standing in front of a Piper Cub. On the right is an unknown airman flying a P-51 Mustang.



Laura Hunt Angel

These big blackberry scones go equally well with your morning coffee or a scoop of ice cream later in the day.



Laura Hunt Angel

Delicate sour cream pancakes pair perfectly with fresh raspberries.

we all walked back to the house together, listening to Dad talk.

I had always loved studying my father's work-worn hands and had noticed the strange, blue tattoo-like scribbles on them. He had some of those same marks on the back of his neck, and I once asked him what they were. He told me of how he'd been a belly gunner in the war, and that a few times he'd been hit with shrapnel, which he explained was little bits of metal. Once embedded in the skin, these little bits of metal couldn't be removed and turned the skin blue.

Of course, there was a lot more to the story than just being hit with a little bit of metal, but we didn't hear much about the serious side of war until we were grown. Our Dad had been stationed in England during the war with a group that became known as the Bloody Hundredth.

At the time, about all we were told about the Bloody Hundredth was that a friend of our father's was a cowboy who once flew a donkey in his plane. Some time later we saw the old black and white movie, Twelve O'clock High, and figured our Dad to be a movie star in his own right.

The Berries

We may have forgotten all about our berries that day, but here are some great tips from the team over at the Food Lush blog for keeping your berries fresh berries and unforgettable.

First, to prevent mold from growing and thus keep your berries fresh longer, rinse them with a mixture of 1 part white or cider vinegar to 10 parts water as soon as you get them home. Second, if your berries have already been in the fridge a while and are not yet spoiled

but are beginning to get a bit long in the tooth, mix them with a couple of tablespoons of sugar. (If they are large, like strawberries, slice them first.) Either of these tips will help fresh berries to keep up to a week longer than they would have otherwise.

The Recipes

Blackberry Scones With Lemon Glaze

Back in the winter I discovered this recipe on Sylvia Fountaine's food blog, "Feasting At Home", and couldn't wait until for the right time to show off these delectable little biscuits. Her original recipes calls for either sourdough starter, sour cream or yogurt; I chose plain Greek yogurt which it is easily accessible in our area, and most do not keep sourdough starter on hand.

2 cups fresh or frozen blackberries
2 1/2 cups flour
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 1/2 teaspoons baking powder
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
Zest of one lemon
1/2 cup sugar
1/2 cup cold butter, sliced into 8 pieces
1 cup plain Greek yogurt (or sour cream or sourdough starter)
1/3 cup milk or cream
1 beaten egg for brushing, optional

Glaze:

1/4 cup fresh lemon juice
1 cup powdered sugar
1 tablespoon butter, optional
 Begin by lining an 8" round cake pan with plastic wrap; layer 2 cups of the blackberries in the bottom of the

pan. (If the berries are very tender, freeze them for a few minutes at before hand.) Combine the flour, salt, baking powder, baking soda, lemon zest and sugar. With a food processor or hand pastry blender, cut in the butter until the mixture resembles coarse crumbs (like pie crust). In a small bowl, combine the yogurt with the milk, then add it to the flour mixture and blend by hand or pulse 2 or 3 times, just until it forms a ball; add a bit more milk if necessary but only enough to create a heavy, biscuit-like dough. Gently press the dough evenly over the berries. Cover the dough with plastic wrap and freeze for at least 4 hours or overnight.

To bake: Preheat oven to 400F. Remove the pan from freezer and peel off top layer of plastic wrap; invert dough unto a cutting board. Thaw dough 15-20 minutes, then cut into 8 wedges. If you're deft at cutting, you may choose to cut these into smaller wedges as this recipe is for large, British-style scones. Brush with beaten egg (optional) and place on lightly greased or parchment-lined baking pan. Bake 18-20 minutes or until golden brown. Makes 8 large scones.

To make glaze: In a small saucepan, mix together lemon juice and sugar; heat until sugar dissolves. Stir in butter, if using; drizzle over warm scones.

Sour Cream Pancakes with Fresh Berries

I discovered these little these delicate little pancakes years ago and they are a real favorite of mine, so much so that I can't make them very often because I tend to eat them all. They will turn any weekend breakfast into a special occasion, and can also be dressed up for dessert pancakes. The rich sour cream batter is the perfect backdrop for piquant raspberries. I didn't, but you could probably use plain Greek yogurt for these in place of the sour cream.

1 cup sour cream
5 rounded tablespoons flour
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
2 tablespoons sugar
2 eggs
Oil for griddling
1 pint (or more) fresh raspberries
Butter, maple syrup and/or whipped cream

Measure sour cream into a medium-sized mixing bowl. Mix the flour, baking soda and sugar together in a small cup; add it to the sour cream eggs and blend well but don't overmix.

Lightly oil your griddle or a fry pan (or use a high temp cooking spray) and heat to medium-low. Drop 1/4 cupfuls of batter (or even go smaller for silver dollar size cakes) onto the griddle and cook until bubbles start to form on the pancakes. Carefully flip and cook for about a minute more. Use more oil as needed. These pancakes have a soft, bread pudding-like interior that may make you think they aren't cooked through, but don't overcook them. Top with butter, and drizzle of maple syrup or swirl of whipped cream - or all of the above, and plenty of fresh raspberries. Makes 8-10 pancakes.