

Guide to the Dovecrest Restaurant History Collection 1964-1994

Collection Overview:

Date Range: 1964-1994

Creator: Tomaquag Museum

Extent: .5 linear feet

Abstract: The collection consists of one clamshell box of menus, periodical clippings, promotional materials, handwritten notes, advertisements, correspondence, recipes, images, and various miscellaneous artifacts.

Language of Materials: English

Repository: Tomaquag Museum

Collection Number: Ms. Dovecrest Restaurant History (DRH)

Scope and Content: Dovecrest Restaurant was a renowned eatery located in Exeter, Rhode Island. It first opened in 1963 under the ownership of Eleanor and Ferris Dove, and remained open until Eleanor sold it in 1984 following Ferris' death. It developed a national reputation for the quality of its offerings during its twenty-plus years of existence, and it remains one of the only restaurants to have served indigenous cuisine in the region. This collection houses an assortment of materials from Dovecrest's history, including menus, advertising copy, handwritten notes on hosted events, periodical clippings, correspondence, recipes, images, and promotional brochures. Additionally, the collection contains several artifacts from various periods of the restaurant's existence, such as business cards and a guest book.

Arrangement: Chronologically (where possible) and by type of material. Arranged into eighteen series.

Series 1: Menus

Series 2: Biographical advertising copy

Series 3: Thanksgiving festivals

Series 4: Periodicals

Series 5: Food service award

Series 6: Congressional Record

Series 7: Cultural center flyer

Series 8: Brochures

Series 9: (deaccessioned from collection)

Series 10: 1984 Amerindian Feast

Series 11: Recipes

Series 12: Correspondence

Series 13: Images

Series 14: Yellow Pages advertisement

Series 15: The Rhode Islander magazine

Series 16: Guide book

Series 17: Small items

Series 18: Miscellaneous

Biographical/Historical Note: Dovecrest Restaurant was opened in 1963 by Eleanor and Ferris Dove, who were of Narragansett descent and also went by the names Pretty Flower and Roaring Bull. It immediately became one of the few indigenous-owned and operated establishments in New England, and was the only indigenous eatery located in Rhode Island throughout its existence. Its menu was well-known for incorporating wild game meats such as buffalo and raccoon, and its signature johnnycakes were named best in New England by multiple publications. In addition to the restaurant, the Doves simultaneously ran Dovecrest Trading Post out of the same building. The Trading Post served as an important outlet for indigenous peoples, both from New England and throughout the country, to sell their wares to visitors.

Dovecrest quickly developed a positive reputation throughout the region, and regularly partnered with the Tomaquag Museum to host programming such as traditional Thanksgiving festivals, the proceeds of which would go towards supporting the museum. By the early 1980s, the restaurant had developed a national reputation as well, and was profiled in such news outlets as USA Today, Christian Science Monitor, and the Dallas Morning News. Additionally, a 1981 New York Times article about the restaurant was entered into the Congressional Record by Senator Claiborne Pell to honor the Doves' accomplishments. Ferris passed away in 1983, and though Eleanor continued to operate Dovecrest for about a year after his death, she eventually closed it and sold the property in 1984. In 1997, the former Dovecrest property was purchased by Eleanor and Ferris' daughter, Dawn Dove, and donated to the Tomaquag Museum. It now serves as the Tomaquag's permanent home.

Access & Use:

Access to Collection: Access to the collection is based upon staff availability and is by appointment only.

Use: Reproduction and use of materials may be subject to fees. The museum requests that a final copy of the publication or academic paper produced with our collection material is donated to the museum upon completion of project.

Preferred Citation: Collection, Tomaquag Museum Archives, Exeter, Rhode Island.

Contact Information:

Tomaquag Museum

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Administrative Information:

About the Collection:

Acquisition: Institutional archives of the Tomaquag Museum.

Processing Information: Rehoused October-November 2019, Inventory completed November 2019, Finalized November 2019.

About the Finding Aid

Author: David E. Bernardo, November 2019

Encoding: EAD

Descriptive Rules: DACS

Additional Information:

Inventory:

Series I: Menus.

A collection of Dovecrest Restaurant menus.

Party menus	1 item
Thanksgiving menu	2 items
Regular menu	1 item
Regular menu (typewritten)	1 item

Series II: Biographical advertising copy.

Text typewritten by the Doves about Dovecrest Restaurant. Intended to serve as copy for advertisements to be placed in unknown media.

Copy from one year into Dovecrest's existence (ca. 1964)	1 item
Copy from fifteen years into Dovecrest's existence (ca. 1977)	1 item

Series III: Thanksgiving festivals.

A collection of materials pertaining to Thanksgiving festivals held at Dovecrest.

"Rationale: Expanded Thanksgiving Program" memorandum (no date)	5 items
Handwritten "Festival Expansion Program Budget" (no date)	1 item

"Cranberry Thanksgiving Program" (no date)	1 item
Computer printout detailing clambake operation (one copy with handwritten notes on back)	2 items
Handwritten seafood order notes (on loose leaf paper)	1 item
Handwritten notes detailing preparations for clambake event (on small notepad paper)	6 items
Handwritten notes on preparations for unknown event (on yellow legal paper)	3 items
Handwritten list of artists to appear at unknown event (on yellow legal paper)	1 item
Strip of paper discussing strawberries	1 item

Series IV: Periodicals.

Articles removed from, and some full issues of, periodicals pertaining to Dovecrest, spanning 1973-1994.

"Enjoy Dinner At Dovecrest," Westerly Sun, unknown author (July 24, 1973)	1 item
"New Year's Eve Menu: Fun Is the Main Course," Pawtuxet Valley Daily Times, unknown author, p. 1 (December 31, 1973); refers to Dovecrest as 'Bovercrest'	2 items
"Cranberry Festival," Westerly Sun, photographer William Burrows, p. 10 (October 5, 1975)	1 item
"Dove Crest - Ferris and Eleanor Dove, Proprietors," unknown periodical, unknown author (February 18, 1976)	1 item
"Harris to Visit Dovecrest Friday," Westerly Sun, unknown author, p. 8 (April 22, 1976)	1 item
"Discovering R.I.: a journey toward sweetness & blight," Providence Journal-Bulletin, author Lorraine Hopkins, p. E-1 (July 18, 1976)	1 item
"Indian festival a sharing of joy at season's end," Providence Journal-Bulletin, unknown author (October 2, 1976)	1 item
"Cranberry Festival"/"Wild Rose," Westerly Sun, photographer William Burrows (October 3, 1976)	1 item
"Season for the Dove Crest," Chariho Times, author Arline Aissis (October 5, 1977)	1 item
Advertisements for Dovecrest Restaurant, Westerly Sun (July 3, August 17, and October 8, 1978)	3 items
"Strawberry Ceremony Sunday at Dovecrest," unknown periodical, unknown author (July 7, 1979)	1 item
"Hazard invites Carter to sample jonnycakes," Providence Journal-Bulletin, author James H. McDonald (October 22, 1979)	1 item
"Dove jonnycakes take the laurels," Providence Journal-Bulletin, author Maureen Croteau (June 8, 1980)	1 item
"Indians give thanks for bean crop," Pawtuxet Valley Daily Times, author Denis Bessette (July 22, 1980)	1 item
"Cuisine as American as Raccoon Pie," New York Times, author Bryan Miller (December 9, 1981)	6 items
"The Taste and Talk of Indian History," Yankee Magazine, author Fred Bouchard, p. 80 (November 1982)	1 item

- "Star-Spangled Cuisine," Dallas Morning News, author Dotty Griffith, p. 1E, 4E, 8E (November 4, 1982) 1 item
- "An Indian-style harvest celebration," Providence Sunday Journal Magazine, author Katherine Imbrie, p. 14-15 (November 21, 1982) 2 items
- "On the menu: Succotash and venison," USA Today, author Ellen Brown, p. 3D (November 24, 1982) 1 item
- "American cooks take pride in native food products," Christian Science Monitor, author Phyllis Hanes, p. 17 (December 1, 1982) 1 item
- "Buffalo, elk among fare offered at R.I. restaurant," The Evening Gazette and Worcester Telegram, author Dolores Courtemanche, p. 7 (June 1, 1984) 1 item
- "She's dedicated to preserving tradition," Charho Times, author Marybeth Reilly, p. 1, 18 (October 13, 1994) 1 item
- "An 'Indian' restaurant with N.E. food, French wines," unknown publisher, author Carol McCabe (no date) 1 item
- "Dove Crest - Ferris and Eleanor Dove, Proprietors," unknown periodical, unknown author (no date) 1 item
- "White House florals in R.I. Indian baskets," Providence Journal-Bulletin, author Karen Ellsworth (no date) 1 item

Series V: Food service award.

A certificate awarded to Dovecrest by the International Food Service Executive Association's Rhode Island Branch.

- Certificate awarded by I.F.S.E.A. "For Outstanding Contributions" (July 30, 1977) 1 item

Series VI: Congressional Record.

A copy of the Congressional Record that mentions Dovecrest Restaurant.

- Congressional Record, Vol. 127, no. 185 (December 11, 1981) 1 item

Series VII: Cultural center flyer.

A flyer promoting Dovecrest Indian Cultural Center.

- "Dovecrest Indian Cultural Center" flyer (no date) 1 item

Series VIII: Brochures.

Handout brochures intended to promote Dovecrest Trading Post.

- "Dovecrest Indian Trading Post" (no date) 5 items

Series IX: (deaccessioned from collection)

Series X: 1984 Amerindian Feast.

Letter to Eleanor Dove from Margaret Morgan, Public Relations Manager, Vista International Hotel (January 9, 1985)	1 item
Vista International Hotel letterhead envelope	1 item
Carbon copies of handwritten catering bills issued to Vista International Hotel Executive Chef Walter Plendner (November 13, 1984, and January 19, 1985)	2 items
Photograph of Eleanor Dove at Amerindian Feast (December 4, 1984)	1 item

Series XI: Recipes.

Recipes from or associated with Dovecrest Restaurant.

Quahog pie/Jonnycakes/Indian Pudding (computer printout)	1 item
Pumpkin soup/Raccoon pie/Pemmican (three hole punch page)	1 item
Succatash (handwritten on loose leaf paper)	1 item
"Good Tastes of Rhode Island's South County" booklet (featuring Succotash/Indian pudding)	1 item
Easy cobbler (handwritten)	1 item
Stuffed clams, Shirley Mayo ingredients list	1 item

Series XII: Correspondence.

Correspondence (and related items) pertaining to Dovecrest business.

Letter to Princess Red Wing from Jane Lovely (May 15, 1968)	1 item
Letter to "Director, Indian Green Bean Thanksgiving and Clam Bake" (November 6, 1972)	2 items
Letter to Eleanor and Ferris Dove from Becky Belt of Columbus Dispatch (November 9, 1982)	1 item
Card to Eleanor Dove from Lorraine L. Lacroix (August 29, 1983)	1 item
"What in the World," Family Weekly, author Marion Long, p. 14 (August 14, 1983) - periodical clipping enclosed with card from Lorraine L. Lacroix	1 item
Dovecrest Catering Service handwritten invoice	1 item

Series XIII: Images.

Images taken of Dovecrest Restaurant and its proprietors.

Eleanor Dove serving Dovecrest patrons (no date)	3 items
Eleanor and Ferris Dove posing in unknown location (no date)	1 item
Eleanor and Ferris Dove posing with unknown dignitaries at Indian Friendship Circle (no date)	1 item
Images related to unknown award received by Dovecrest (no date)	2 items
Eleanor Dove holding food tray in outdoor setting (no date)	1 item

Series XIV: Yellow Pages advertisement.

An advertisement purchased by Dovecrest in the Yellow Pages.

"As Advertised in the Yellow Pages" (no date, likely 1960s) 3 items

Series XV: The Rhode Islander magazine.

Issue of Providence Journal's Sunday magazine, The Rhode Islander, featuring Eleanor Dove on the cover. Issue titled "Searching for the best johnnycakes."

Providence Sunday Journal Magazine (January 20, 1974) 1 item

Series XVI: Guide book.

1979 "Collector's Edition" guide book to Rhode Island. Published by LK. Features Dovecrest on page 11.

"The LK Guide Book to Rhode Island, 1979 Collector's Edition" 1 item

Series XVII: Small items.

Items of too small a size to include in other folders, such as tickets or cards.

"Doves Indian Jewelry, Moccasins & Crafts" business card, Eleanor Dove 1 item

"Dovecrest Restaurant & Trading Post" business card, Eleanor & Ferris Dove 5 items

"Dovecrest Indian Trading Post" business card, Princess Red Wing 1 item

Mailing card invitation to "Dance - John Kenyon's Orchestra" at Dovecrest (no date) 1 item

Cranberry Thanksgiving ticket (October 1, 1977) 1 item

Clambake tickets (July 18, 1982) 8 items

Series XVIII: Miscellaneous.

Miscellaneous artifacts from Dovecrest Restaurant.

Guestbook (November 22, 1969 - August 22, 1970) 1 item

Placemats 2 items