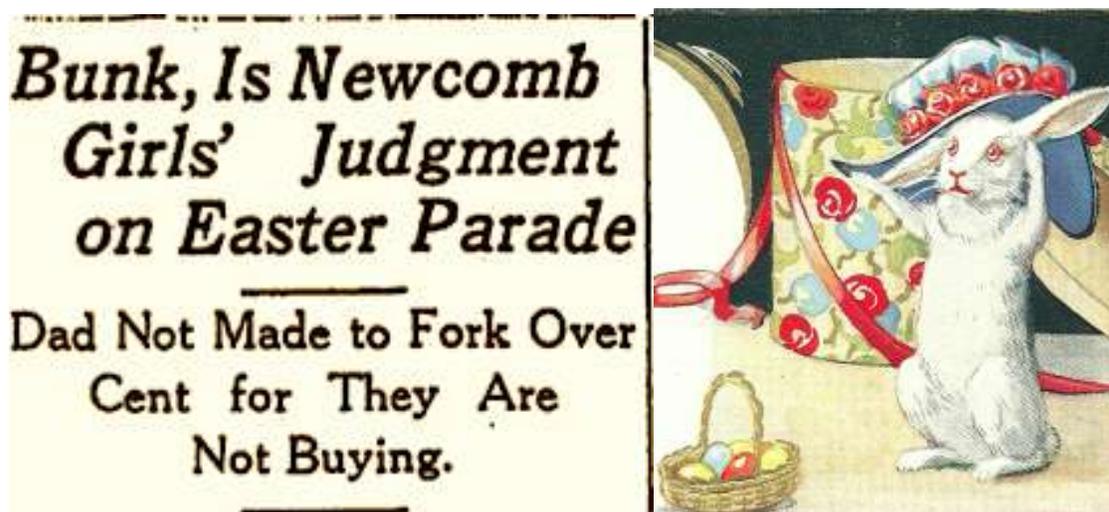


Easters of the Past

Newcomb Girls Protest Easter Parade, Call it "Bunk"

Back in 1921, the Newcomb College girls said "No" to the idea of the "Easter Parade". It is not clear whether or not these young ladies were quite yet flappers, i.e., bobbed hair, short skirts, smoking, drinking, jazz music and, perhaps, a little naughty behavior. An article in the *Times-Picayune* dated March 26th of that year reported the details.



Easter Headline, Times-Picayune, March 26, 1921

"The familiar sight of bundle boys with capacious boxes containing Easter millinery and delivery cars with packages of feminine spring silks and filmy things will not be seen around Newcomb College this year," said the *Picayune*.

"It has not cost dad 1 cent for College daughter's Easter outfit. They're just not buying them this year that's all."

And what was the reason for this attitude on the part of the Newcomb students? "The girls' answer: 'Well what's the use. This Easter parade stuff is the bunk anyway, and besides, things will be much cheaper in three weeks.'"

Cost conscious colleens, weren't they?

An additional observation by the *Picayune* was that the college girls that Easter were to be in "places where spring outfits" were "not being worn." They were "scattered from Biloxi to Mandeville on carefree houseparties." These affairs may have been "called houseparties" but were often in fact houseless, consisting of tents and summer camps in some cases – all being made useful "for the Easter holiday period."



Flappers on Canal Street approached by man with a kansoong, or jelly-bean moustache, New Orleans Item, October 16, 1921

"Each sorority at the college," in those days, was "giving a party," a custom that had been going on for years. But that year, 1921, the paper reported, Easter events were to be "strictly 'men' affairs" with no *boys* invited.

What did the *boys* think about this? Strangely the *boys* weren't "losing sleep" over the "small matter of 'cold shoulder' ... turned to them." As far as they were concerned it was saving them money. The

“unanimous judgment rendered at Tulane” was: “There are a thousand and one things to buy on one of these parties – boats to rent, eats, hired cars and what not. That doesn’t include the torment of rowing a boat in a broiling sun or baiting a hundred and one hooks for the girls either.”

With all of this posturing on both sides, the social gatherings went on as scheduled. The paper reported that many of the girls had “left for the parties Thursday afternoon, and Friday the campus was practically deserted. The parties continued until Sunday night, after which the girls had to return for classes on Monday morning.

You can bet the Tulane boys were in attendance, no matter how plain the young ladies’ Easter outfits happened to be.

Two years before all of this Easter protest activity, Max Sheinuk opened Sheinuk’s Florist at 2600 St. Charles Avenue, on the corner of Third Street. For all of the Sheinuk family’s aptitude with flower arrangements, it was the abundance of bunnies at Easter that many people remember most.

Sheinuk’s Florist Bunny Town



While it’s difficult to determine the exact date, having bunnies on display at the florist for Easter was the brainstorm of Max’s son, Arthur Scheinuk, around 1940. Local newspaper ads for the “live rabbits” on display first appeared in 1948. Each year, and for over half a century

thereafter, an outdoor "bunny town" was featured each Easter season in front of the shop, consisting of numerous hutches painted to resemble a village, complete with all the buildings one would normally find in a village, such as a schoolhouse, church, barn and, naturally, a florist shop.

Complaints from animal rights groups, changes in the law, the exhibit's associated costs and other concerns brought about the demise of "Bunny Town" in 2000. The popular florist shop closed three years later.

Today a different kind of hutch living exists within the renovated florist shop: luxury condominiums.



Picayune, April 2, 1893

Easter Sunday of By-Gone Days

Such was the title of an article in the *Daily Picayune* on April 2, 1893. In it we learn that it wasn't only at Jewish weddings that couples were lifted up on chairs. The article mentioned the ancient Easter custom of

"heaving". "An odd feature" of this "old-time celebration," reported the paper, "was that of heaving, or lifting, the 'heaved' sitting in a chair decorated with white ribbons." Easter Monday and Easter Tuesday were known as heaving days, the women sitting in a chair (and being kissed) on Monday and the men (receiving the same attention) on Tuesday.

"Heaving" is an Easter custom that has largely gone by the wayside, and "heaving" days are something no one wants to experience nowadays, especially after a big night on the town.

I Want Candy

Elmer's, with its popular "Gold Bricks" and "Heavenly Hash", was not always the only game in town when it came to Easter treats. Back in the first two decades of the 20th century, 1902 to 1919 to be precise, Fuerst & Kraemer was a successful confectionery store chain that began in New Orleans, the brainchild of young entrepreneurs Irvin Fuerst and Albert Kraemer.



Employees at Fuerst and Kraemer, Ltd., Candy Company, creating Easter goodies, New Orleans, 1920s

The candy purveyor's success brought about its end. In 1919, Fuerst & Kraemer ceased operations as a locally owned and operated confectioner and instead became part of the candy-making arm of the New York-based United Retail Stores chain. Quite a number of Fuerst & Kraemer stores were opened not just in New Orleans but also throughout the northeast. Irvin Fuerst was relocated to New York City and the new company experienced rapid expansion, but it did not last. The last New Orleans Fuerst & Kraemer store closed in the late 1920s, and the brand disappeared quietly, without a lot of fanfare or outcry from the local press.

What Fuerst & Kraemer did leave behind, you might be interested to learn, was treasured for years by countless New Orleanians. In 1919, Katz & Besthoff is rumored to have purchased Fuerst & Kraemer's special recipe for nectar syrup, a soda additive and ice cream topping enjoyed for decades later, only to have it vanish again when Rite-Aid acquired K&B in another big national corporate buyout.



Making a Scene

If you can't make *the* scene on a trip to Florida or the Gulf Coast for Easter, there's always the chance you can take a look at the scene inside a beautifully decorated sugar egg. The fine art of confectioners handcrafting sugar eggs is an art that dates back to Victorian times. Also known as panorama eggs, they feature intricate Easter scenes within. Young and old love the magic of viewing inside.

**Easter Eggs, plain, fancy and pano-
rama eggs of all sizes and colors, at low
prices, by Ph. W. Dielmann & Co., 20
and 31 Tchoupitoulas street.**

Panorama eggs advertised March 22, 1891, New Orleans Item

Hope your Easter is full of color, beauty, new life and joy.

NED HÉMARD

New Orleans Nostalgia
"Easters of the Past"
Ned Hémard
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