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Change of Pace

By Susan Ellis



People who are into food and dining culture have surely noticed the words “Slow Food Movement” popping up in news stories and features recently. But it’s not a new trend. The Slow Food Movement was founded by Carlo Petrini after he and other concerned Italian citizens gathered to protest the opening of a McDonald’s near the Piazza di Spagna in Rome in 1986. Soon after, Petrini started the Slow Food Movement, which now has more than 80,000 members in 50 countries. The idea behind the Slow Food Movement is simply the opposite of fast food — swapping convenience and anonymous uniformity for something more fresh and personal.

In Memphis, a Slow Food convivium has recently come together, spearheaded by Melissa and Kjeld Petersen, the folks behind the new quarterly *Edible Memphis*. According to Melissa, the group has more than 30 members, and they’ve planned a number of events to introduce Memphians to the movement. One of those events, on Saturday, June 2nd, is an “Open Garden” at the Magevney House, where volunteers at the historic downtown home have maintained the garden according to mid-1800s standards, cultivating enough produce to feed a family of four and the home’s slaves. Visitors to the Magevney garden can take a tour and purchase seeds and cuttings as well as get information on the Slow Food Movement.

“Knowing where your food comes from — that’s the big thing,” says Melissa of the movement. “It’s making a conscious choice as to where you get your food. Wait for tomatoes to be in season, make the extra effort to go to a farmer’s market because [you] actually know the grower. I know that it’s better for me, and I’ll get a better-tasting tomato.” ■

OPEN GARDEN AT THE MAGEVNEY HOUSE, 198 ADAMS, 9 A.M. TO NOON, SATURDAY, JUNE 2ND. FOR MORE INFORMATION ON SLOW FOOD MOVEMENT EVENTS IN MEMPHIS, GO TO EDIBLEMEMPHIS.COM.