

Click [here](#) if you are having trouble viewing this message.



# Oxford Word of the Month – August: honey joy

*noun*: a honey-flavoured biscuit containing cornflakes.

## THE STORY BEHIND THE WORD OF THE MONTH

In 1938 a simple recipe for a crisp honey-flavoured biscuit appeared in a Victorian newspaper:

**Honey Joys** ... *Five cups cornflakes, 3 dessert-spoons butter, 2 table-spoons castor sugar, 1 table-spoon honey. Melt butter, sugar, and honey; mix in the cornflakes, put into paper patty cases, and bake in a moderate oven for three minutes. Take out, and leave to set. (Melbourne Argus, 13 July)*

There are earlier references in the 1930s to store-bought lollies called honey joys, but the recipe above is the first evidence we have of the cornflake-based biscuit we know today, and uses the same ingredients and method. The variant form **honey crackle**, first recorded in 1941, is less common, but is still in current usage: 'My first memory of cooking is with my grandma making honey crackles...'. (*Perth Eastern Reporter*, 10 November 2015)

Breakfast cereals are a cheap and convenient ingredient for sweet biscuits, and there are some well-known examples in Australian cuisine. Rolled oats feature in the traditional Anzac biscuit, while more highly processed cereal is the main ingredient for the honey joy and another Australian classic, the chocolate crackle, based on rice bubbles. Chocolate crackles and **honey joys** emerged in the same period, and both became favourite party snacks for children. But **honey joys** are easier to make. According to this writer, they are foolproof:

*When my chocolate crackles would not set and my toffees fell into misshapen blobs in the patty cases, I always knew my honey joys would pull through. (Canberra Times, 19 March 1991)*

And pull through they have, for nearly 80 years. The simplicity of the recipe, the convenience of using ready-made cereal, and the cornflake crunch have no doubt contributed to their continuing popularity. They have a long association with children's parties, school fetes, fundraising events, and country shows:

*Last weekend, the family and I spent all day at the Yankalilla Show ... The stalls were groaning with honey-joys, chocolate slices, rock buns and sultana loaves. (Adelaide Sunday Mail, 7 October 2007)*

Our fondness for them means they have achieved the same nostalgic status as other typically Australian fare:

*Our daughter Karen, living in London ... had an Australia Day Supper on the 26th January with other Tasmanians. It consisted of—vegemite sandwiches, **honey crackles** ... sausage rolls ... and lamingtons (found it a hassle making those), together with Australian wine and milo. (Deloraine Western Tiers, 19 March 1992)*

**Honey joy** and **honey crackle** are being considered for inclusion in the next edition of the *Australian National Dictionary*.

Share our Word of the Month:



Click [here](#) to unsubscribe from our Word of the Month. Read our [privacy policy](#).