

Who Remembers...Barbero's Pizza?

Here is another installment in our Who Remembers? series. You can browse previous articles by using the search bar on the right. These articles are strolls down memory lane. In some cases, the buildings, but new businesses have replaced them. In other instances, the buildings or even the properties have been razed. Instead of a building, it may be a TV show, personality, or commercial that no one longer exists. Either way, it can't stop us from taking the Memory Lane stroll!

As always we would rather this be a discussion. No one knows this area better than those who grew up here! Please, leave constructive criticism, feedback, and corrections. We'd love to hear your anecdotes. Please share!

Memories of 85 Huttleston Avenue

Having grown up a gypsy, I've lived in New Bedford (no less than 7 different locations), Fairhaven (4 different addresses), Rochester, and Acushnet. That only covers Massachusetts and not the other states and countries I've lived in. The benefit of living in multiple locations is I can wax nostalgic over a variety of places. When I first moved to Fairhaven, I was perhaps 14 years old if memory serves me correctly. What is top of the food pyramid for a 14-year-old? Yeah, you guessed it: pizza.



*Bob and Ray
Barbero at
Margaret's
Variety Store
(Nina Barbero)*

So it was only natural to seek out who had the best pizza around. Having moved to Fairhaven from New Bedford, that meant going over the bridge and down Route 6. Destiny dictated that as I was staring out the window I saw a sign – I swear there was a golden aura shimmering around the sign – stating *Barbero's Italian Restaurant* at 85 Huttleston Avenue.

I kid you not when I say that I am now salivating. I feel like I should race into the kitchen, dig through all the drawers and see if I have enough coupons for a FREE pizza. I bet you somewhere in my attic of packed away things, there's a Barbero's coupon. Remember those green cut-outs on each pizza box? 10 coupons gets you a golden ticket.

This was THE spot for Italian food in Fairhaven for the longest time, especially pizza. I vaguely remember the variety of toppings, but remembering there being a lot to choose from. Barbero's always loaded their pies with generous amounts of toppings. I didn't like thin pizza anywhere else and don't like it today. I have NOT ordered and eaten a plain cheese pizza since.

This was my brother Mike's favorite place to eat whenever he would get a break from military duty. He would fly in from wherever he was living in the world at that time, and within a

few hours, the words “Let’s go to Barbero’s!” would be on his lips.



*The original
restaurant after
its conversion in
1951 (Nina
Barbero)*

I have a vague recollection of the mini-golf course next door and reader Janet Gouveia Rusinsoki who worked there for 3 decades, stated that Barbero’s also owned the golf course, which was placed there in the 1960s. Batting cages were also added in the early 1990s, but were eventually razed to make way for a parking lot.

Barbero’s was such a landmark, that if you needed to give anyone directions, you could say “Go past Barbero’s and take that left.” or “Turn right at the lights after Barbero’s.” Barbero’s was brilliantly located near my house – which led to teenage entrapment while walking home.

Sadly, the Fairhaven Barbero’s closed their doors on March 15, 1998.

Margaret’s Variety; Corner of County and Linden Streets

Our more knowledgeable readers will know that the Fairhaven location wasn’t the only location. There were seven or eight “Barbero’s” depending on how one counts, from New Bedford, Fairhaven and Dartmouth, to Dennisport, Falmouth, Marion – even a sub shop on Union Street (the early 1970s), and a concession stand at Lincoln Park for 8 years at one point.

Barbero's had humble beginnings with three variety stores throughout New Bedford. The third variety store, "*Margaret's Variety*" was named after Joseph Barbero Sr.'s wife Margaret. This variety store opened in 1951 and was on the corner of County and 58 Linden Street, which is *Linden House of Pizza & More* now.



*The Barbero Family –
Ray, Joe, Margaret,
Joey, & Bob (Nina
Barbero)*

When I lived on 868 County Street next door to Kinyon Campbell, I went to this spot often, and as long as I can recall it was always a sub and pizza shop, changing names over the years. *Margaret's Variety* sold fresh baked bread from Tom Marcucci's Bakery of Fall River. It was Tom that suggested they sell pizza – which they did for 5 whopping cents a slice. The pizza was so popular and demand so great that Tom suggested they begin to make it themselves. The rest is history!

Margaret's Variety was converted into a small restaurant and began to sell that famous mouth-watering pizza, soft-serve ice cream, and soda from a fountain. Eventually, Joe and Margaret's sons Joe, Ray, and Bob ran the business until the early 1960s. This establishment in turn also became so popular that they expanded and opened a second Barbero's in 1958, which was the one in Fairhaven that I began the article with. The third Barbero's was opened, coincidentally at the old A&W's in Dartmouth at 868 State Road.

I need a Barbero's pizza in my life...STAT!

If you want to peruse a ton of great old photos of Barbero's there is a "Remembering Barbero's" [Facebook](#)! I want to extend a heartfelt thanks to Nina Barbero for most of the information and all the photos in this article. Without her generosity, this article would have been another boring write-up with a photo of a Barbero's coupon.

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