

Who Remembers...Star Store?

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Fourth Street; Thomas Knowles & Company

Once upon a time, before [Purchase Street](#) was named so, it was called 4th Street. It was primarily residential, had a rather large park with gardens and was lined with elm trees. As more and more revenue from Whaling entered the city, business "sprawl" spread north. The first three streets were primarily service streets – businesses that served whaling, i.e. coopers, carpenters, wrights, smithies, customs, the Seamen's Bethel, Mariner's home, brothels, etc. The first available street for residents to go shopping or be entertained at was Fourth Street and Purchase Street – East of Union Street- was born circa 1834.

One of the very first dry goods stores on Purchase Street to open was artist William Bradford's at 16 Purchase Street in 1845. Another merchant, who saw the great potential of Purchase Street was one Thomas Knowles (1803-1877). He and his brother, John Pepper formed a partnership in 1835, T.& J.P. Knowles producing clothing.



*New Bedford Dry Goods'
Star Store circa 1916
(Spinner Publications)*

Their cousin Joseph Knowles entered the picture and they opened a store on the Northwest Corner of Union and Purchase Street called Thomas Knowles & Company in 1844 – likely the very first establishment to sell dry goods on the street. In addition to dry goods, they sold groceries, provisions and were also agents for over a dozen whaling vessels.

The buildings of note by the 1860s were Liberty Hall, the granite North Congregational Church, the Cummings Building and the Wing's Building – which was the precursor to Wing's Department Store and Wing's Court. More and more businesses popped up on Purchase Street and it became the premier shopping destination.

New Bedford Dry Goods Company

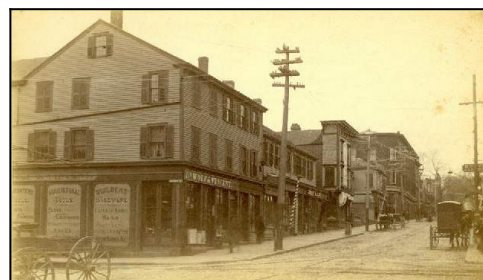
Back to Thomas Knowles & Company – they operated their store with their sons until 1894. Here there is a lacuna in the timeline of the building's history. When it appears next, it's New Bedford Dry Goods headed by president Asa A. Mills, which opened to wholesalers on October 8, 1898 with a sales force of 20 people. This store claims to be the site of the very first escalator in the country – in spite of the fact that the Guinness Book of World Records lists Coney Island as having the first.

The one-story building and its basement consisted of a modest 15,000 sq. ft., but its popularity by 1915 meant a ten-fold expansion: they increased their workforce to 300 and took over

adjacent buildings to the tune of 150,000 sq. ft. By 1918 it opened to the public, needed an elevator because it expanded upward, and even added a roof garden. New Bedford Dry Goods aka the Star Store became *the* shopping destination.

Slew of Factoids – Credit plates, carillons, pneumatic tubes

Coincidentally, a lady named Mary Dorothy Cox was selling candies out of the New Bedford Dry Goods Store in 1925.



*Union Street from
Acushnet Avenue. Left
to right: Dewolf – 2nd
Geo. Lobdell Hall
second floor, Sheedy's
Vaudville – F.W.
Francis, Pool Room –
Caleb Maxfield
furniture, store –
Knowles Dry Goods
(upstairs), Pierian
Hall (Whaling Museum)*

It had a deli, clothing department, jewelry, cosmetics, pet center, and more. In 1952, Star Store jumped on the bandwagon of “merchant cards”, the precursor to credit cards with a metal card called a “credit plate.” Sometime in the 1960s they built a carillon, which was an automatic music “machine” that consisted of bells that were struck electronically. Star Store’s carillon was a favorite around Christmas time when it belted out Carols and popular Christmas tunes.

A “first” claim for Star Store was that it was the first store

in the country to utilize pneumatic tubes which used small containers to send bills and receipts. While it was surely used for practical reasons, it had a real promotional value in drawing in local children.

Musical businesses

Star Store was purchased in 1969 by Boston department store Gorin's, who intended to keep it as it was. In 1976, a 300-year-old, archaic Blue Law stated that business had to be closed on Sunday. Star Store bucked the law as did Kresge's further downtown Purchase Street and Golub's Furniture.

In 1983, Almy bought the Star Store from Gorin's and opened another Star Store in Fairhaven in the old King's Department Store where Shaw's Supermarket is/was now in Berdon Plaza. King's Department store had a run as a Zaire's and Ames as well.

Almy's was purchased by Stop & Shop in 1985 who held a liquidation sale (at the New Bedford site) before closing the doors permanently on January 12, 1985. In November, it reopened as Stuart's employing 175 people. Continuing the theme of musical businesses Stuart's closed its doors in 1987, and moved to the North End. The building was officially vacant and began to deteriorate to the point that the facade was falling onto the sidewalks and street and the city had to erect a covered walkway. Thieves began to strip the building of its copper flashing.



Deli Department 1975

(Spinner Publications)

The building was supposed to be the Bristol Hotel, but never materialized. 1989 Hotel Properties paid a little more than \$2 million for the building and planned on spending \$8 million to turn it into a 117 room hotel. Didn't happen. In 1990 it was to be turned into a Sheraton hotel that included 14,000 sq ft of retail space...didn't happen. In 1992 Building was foreclosed on by New England Federal Savings Bank as the owners filed for bankruptcy.

In 1995 the city took over as \$700,000 was owed in back taxes and handed control over to the New Bedford Redevelopment Authority. With the influence of Senator Mark Montigny, Governor Paul Cellucci granted the city \$32 million in 1998 to renovate a three block area with \$16.6 million dollars set aside for the Star Store building. A deal was struck between the city and Sakonnet Properties Inc. who would give the city the Coffin Building which was actually two buildings adjacent to the Star Store. The city in turn forgave \$376,000 in back taxes and footed the \$500,000 bill to repair the facade.

The rest as they say – is history.

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Who Remembers...Barbero's

Pizza?

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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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Who Remembers...Underoos?

Underoos are fun to wear! Yeah!

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In terms of fondest memories of childhood, *Underoos* has to be somewhere at the top of the list. If you are a child of the 70s and 80s, you owned a pair. No ifs, ands or butts about it!

Developed in 1977 by entrepreneur, Larry Weiss who purchased license from Marvel, DC, and Archie comics as well as Hanna-Barbara, they didn't explode onto the market until Fruit of the Loom picked up the product and marketed it a year later. What made Underoos so special? Kids all over the world had an extra tool to turn their make-believe Superhero sessions a bit more "realistic." It was pretty darn easy to pretend to be Superman (my favorite) when you had Underoos with a giant "S" on the chest!

There were superheros like Aquaman, Captain America, Batman & Robin, Wonder Woman, the Thing, and Spider-Man – my brother Mike's favorite. Star Wars was well represented with the Ewoks, Luke Skywalker, Darth Vader Yoda, C-3PO, and crew. Your favorite 70s and 80s shows like Knight Rider, A-Team, Dukes of Hazzard (Daisy, Bo & Luke), Buck Rogers, GI Joe, Thundercats were covered – pun intended? Had a favorite movie? Underoos had Gremlins, E.T. and Ghostbusters! Even Pacman and Ms. Pacman!

Remember the jingle?

*"Wearing Underoos is fun.
And you can choose from more than on
There's Spider-Man and The Flash
(something something rhymes with Flash)
(something something something)
Something super-NEW in underwear
YEAH!"*

Not only do I think re-releasing Underoos would turn out to be lucrative, I kid you not, if Fruit of the Loom had an adult line, I would snatch up a pair of Superman today!

Underoos are perhaps the greatest mnemonic device ever for me. I can easily recall moments in my childhood, *because* I had Underoos on, that I wouldn't normally. Just thinking about it brings a smile to my face, and I'm sure if you mention

Underoos to someone today, it will do the same!

Which Underoo were YOU?!

More videos: [Mashpedia – Underoos](#)

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Who Remembers...Wing's, Kresge's, Grant's & Thomas' Department Stores?

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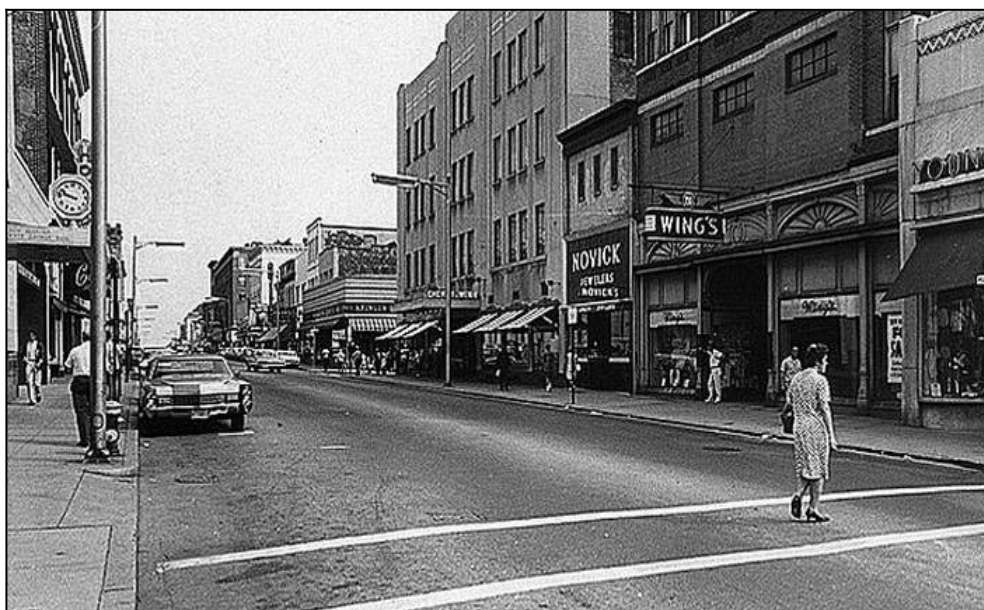
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Before Big-Box stores and hypermarkets Wal-Mart, K-Mart and Target there were smaller department stores. Believe it or

not, the concept of a department store – being able to go to one location and find a wide variety of goods – started in the early 1700s. There were no shopping carts and one was not free to roam the store. When you arrived you let a representative know what you needed and he would go into the facility and pick your order.

The concept of being able to browse the aisles yourself and do it with a shopping cart was started in Dartmouth with Martin Chase's [Ann & Hope](#) in 1953. Sam Walton who founded Wal-Mart and Harry Cunningham who founded KMart got their ideas from visiting the flagship Ann & Hope facility.

Since we already covered local favorite [Arlan's Department Store](#), we'll discuss the four other iconic department stores. Special thanks to [Spinner Publications](#) for their generosity in allowing us to share all the photos within the article.



C.F. Wing's Department Store

Wing's department store is named after whaler and "merchant prince" of New Bedford, Charles F. Wing, born here in 1851. In 1874 he opened a little shop in a wooden building at 774 Purchase Street next door to *The Pour Farm*. He did well enough to have that building razed and replaced in 1887 with the

current building today. It was a popular destination until it closed in 1985. Yes, Wing's Court is named after the same fellow.



Kresge Co. 5 and 10

Kresge's "five and dime" was started by department store mogul Sebastian S. Kresge. The Pennsylvania native opened his first store in Memphis, Tennessee in 1897. The New Bedford store sat on the corner of William and Purchase Streets, where Rite-Aid is today. By 1924 his business was worth \$100 million dollars and he had opened over a hundred stores. In 1962 he opened his first new department store that you may have heard of – KMart. Hence, the "K" in KMart!



W.T. Grant

The Grant family opened their first store in Lynn, MA in 1906. W.T. Grant opened the fifth in the chain at the Hastings Building in 1910. He also opened up a location on Acushnet Avenue in 1932 that was open until 1966. The W.T. Grant that was at 860 Purchase Street closed in January 1975.



Thomas' Department Store

Thomas' Department Store was located at the Thomas Building on the corner of Rivet and Bolton streets where Fernando's Restaurant was until recently. The Thomas family immigrated to the city from Lebanon in the 1890s and the department store was owned Joseph Thomas. For those who think the named sounds familiar, that's because Joseph Thomas' grandson is Joseph Thomas, founder of Spinner Publications.

Who Remembers...York Steakhouse?

Decisions, Decisions!

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Just mentioning the words **York Steakhouse** evokes not only memories, but I swear I can smell a mouth-watering sirloin being grilled. Like Sunbeam Bread, driving by the building and through the aroma stopped all conversation in its tracks. The chain's North Dartmouth location was a special treat growing up. I always felt like I must have done something good to deserve a dinner there. There also wasn't a lot of arm twisting when it came to convincing my mom to take the family there!

If you lived under a rock, you have never heard of the national chain owned by cereal makers General Mills and served steak and potatoes like nobody's business. Started some time in the 1970s, York Steakhouse was incredibly popular until the majority were shut down by 1989 when General Mills sold, leaving only a handful of independently run and owned restaurants. They were positioned strategically within a strip mall or within eye-sight of a shopping mall – as was the case with the North Dartmouth location.

When you arrived the symbols, plaques on the walls with images of what was available, iron chandeliers, and the battlements made you feel like a king, queen, prince or princess. You would queue, stare at all the plaques – making it even more difficult to make a choice; “I'll have the Sirloin Strip with...no, I'll have the Sirloin Tips...um...I mean, I'll have the Ribe-Eye...oh crud.”

After making the difficult choice, you got a tray and headed into the “cafeteria serving section” where you could pick things a-la-carte, like salad, utensils, dessert (flaming cherries Jubilee anyone?), butter, sour cream, soup and drinks. Then one would tell your order to the cashier, he/she would ring you up and give you a little plastic sign and you would head into the dining room – with salivary glands exploding. Do you remember the coding system of the signs?

Look at the end of the article to see if you are right!

I'm unsure whether the case is either that I never ate a bad meal there or it was the entire experience that made everything taste better than it was. As of 2011, only one city in America has a York Steakhouse, so if you want to relive the experience, you'll have to head to Columbus, Ohio near the Westland Mall.

Meal Options:

1. – 8 oz. Sirloin Strip Steak, Baked Potato, Roll, Salad
 2. – Sirloin Tips on Skewer, Baked Potato, Roll, Salad
 3. – 8 oz. Chopped Sirloin, Baked Potato, Roll, Salad
 4. – 4 oz. Chopped Sirloin Sandwich, Steak Fries
 5. (Lunch Item Only) – 6 oz. Chopped Sirloin, Steak Fries, Roll, Salad
 6. (Lunch Item Only) – 4 oz. Rib-Eye Steak, Baked Potato, Roll, Salad
 7. – Chef's Salad
-

Serving Sign Codes:

Red=Rare

White=Medium

Brown=Well

2 Red tags stacked=Very Rare

White and Red stacked=Med Rare

White and Brown Stacked=Med Well

2 Brown tags stacked=Very Well

Did you work at York Steakhouse? Do you recall the "kitchen french" that was used to call out the orders? Here are a few I uncovered during my research.

- *Tre Tre Cinya=Very Rare (Cinya is pronounced Sin-yaw)*
- *Tre Cinya=Rare*
- *Lay Tre Cinya=Medium Rare*
- *Cinya=Medium*
- *Lay Beonque=Medium Well (Beonque is pronounced Bee-on-kwee)*
- *Beouque=Well*
- *Tre Beonque=Very Well*

I also found these interesting anecdotal codes:

“Check the ice” meant there was an attractive female, “CTI deux fois” meant two attractive girls back-to-back, and “Check the iced tea” was for attractive men.

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Photo Guide

- 1. Ad showing items and prices from decades ago. Visit by Snoopy too!*
 - 2. “Everything a store should be!”*
 - 3. “Capitol Theatre” today*
 - 4. The castle like appearance that drew kids.*
 - 5. Vintage photo of a child world.*
 - 6. Creative toy display from the 1960s.*
 - 7. Holly Hobby!*
 - 8. Peter Panda on skates!*
-
-

Who Remembers...Child World?

Child World advert from 1981

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Ginger or Mary Ann? Megadeth or Metallica? Bettie or Veronica? Toys "R" Us' or their biggest competitor Child World? Growing up these were very important questions! Wise people would answer "BOTH!"

Child World came on the scene after Toys "R" Us had a few decades under its belt. Founded in Avon in 1970, they skyrocketed to popularity and became their chief competitor in a staggeringly short period of time. At its height the chain had revenue of \$800 million dollars and consisted of 182 stores. Part of their success was that they directly competed with Toy "R" Us by placing their locations very close. The local store sat where the Christmas Tree Shop is today in the [Ann & Hope Plaza](#).

Also strengthening their ability to compete was the acquisition of Children's Palace in 1977 and using their gimmick of placing castle towers and battlements on opposing ends of their stores. No kid could resist and would pester mom and dad to choose Child World!

Another draw for children were the mascots that they utilized in their commercials. Originally there was *Happy Rabbit*, but

he was replaced in 1977 with overall wearing Peter Panda.

The combination of Toy “R” Us’ gaining popularity and declining sales began to hurt the chain in the late 1980s, and weakened them to the point that the recession that began in early 1990 found them financially vulnerable. Internal turmoil, restructuring and turnover further weakened them and led to their downfall. Stores began to close at a rapid rate, and by the end of 1991 – a year later – half their stores were closed. In 1992 they filed for bankruptcy.

They continued to flounder and head towards going out of business, when another toy store chain Lionel Kiddie City entered the picture. Child World suggested a merger, and Lionel Kiddie City agree if they could finalize all paperwork by the deadline in July of 1992.

They rushed to liquidate their inventory to improve cash flow and capital by having a chain wide clearance sale. However, it didn’t raise monies fast enough. Child World announced a change of plans: the clearance sale would now be a “Going-Out-Business” sale. By September all stores had been liquidated and closed their doors permanently.

Do you have any memories of Child World? Perhaps other stores in the area? Please share!

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Photo Guide

1. Ad showing items and prices from decades ago. Visit by Snoopy too!
2. “Everything a store should be!”
3. “Capitol Theatre” today
4. The castle like appearance that drew kids.
5. Vintage photo of a child world.
6. Creative toy display from the 1960s.
7. Holly Hobby!

Who Remembers...Cherry & Webb?

Founded in 1898 and originally located on William Street (Spinner Publications)

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Cherry & Webb

While the Cherry & Webb building today is a Bristol Community College campus and Cafe Arpeggio, it was once the largest fashion store in New Bedford. No kidding, right? Well, I remember telling my daughter when she was 8-9 years old about pay phones and she thought I was pulling her leg. Why would anyone use a pay phone when everyone has a cell phone. Silly daddy!

So what is an obvious thing to some of us, is new to many!

The Cherry & Webb store actually began “next door” on William Street in 1898. It was relatively small at 3,500 sq. feet and was limited to one story. Proprietors George R. Cherry and F. Webb offered a variety of apparel at inexpensive prices. They were so successful that they had to continually expand moving up and out.

When they could no longer physically expand they decided to have a building erected that was much larger and could handle their needs. They took over the Union Street Railway’s waiting station that sat on the corner of Purchase & William streets in October of 1931. 70,000 sq. feet and five floors of all sorts of clothing for people of all shapes and sizes.

Some time in the 1980s the store uprooted and relocated to the Dartmouth Mall. They filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy in March of 2000.

Coincidentally, Cherry & Webb started WPRI-TV Channel 12 Providence in March 1955.

Special thanks to Spinner Publications for their perpetual generosity with their photos. Without them, these articles would be vastly inferior and lacking.

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Photo Guide

1. Undated photo of the current building.
2. Nativity scene during Christmas in 1952.
3. Hustle and bustle on Purchase Street in 1967.
4. Current building with showcase window displays.
5. Union Street Railway waiting station that stood on the corner of Purchase & William Streets.
6. The William Street Cherry & Webb that preceded the current Cherry & Webb building.

Who Remembers...Dialing For Dollars?

Dialing For Dollars began as a radio show in 1939 and grew into a popular franchised television show in the late 1940s.

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*New Bedford's
franchise on WLNE-TV*
56

Just mentioning the words “*Dialing For Dollars*” conjures George Allen’s voice and the cheesy set that he worked. Why was I fascinated by *Dialing For Dollars* considering that I was a child, far too young to participate? Because after he dialed that number, there was a hush...a holding of one’s breath – would my phone ring? Could George Allen accidentally called our house? Mom entered her phone number without telling us, maybe?

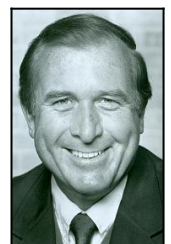
We’re going to win the \$100 – which would buy a car, some candy, a house, a lifetime supply of Cookie Crisp, and one each of every comic book down at Magazine World.

Even if someone else called at that one moment, it would have been – to quote Hulk Hogan – “*Hulkamania running wild, brother!*”

That darn phone never rang. One of the most traumatic experiences of my childhood.

For those of you who need a jogging of the memory, the program was on WLNE-TV. If I remember correctly, it was Channel 56 – at a time when there were about 12 channels. The show had its inception on WCBM in Baltimore, Maryland in 1939 as a radio program, but moved to television in the late 1940s where it was franchised.

At the beginning of the television show, Allen would mention a password. He would then randomly draw a phone number from a bowl.



*George
Allen*

*hosted
'Dialing
For
Dollars'
on WLNE-
TV 56*

These numbers were strips containing lots of eighteen phone numbers cut from a telephone book. Allen would then "count" from the bottom or the top, i.e. "eight from the top", "six from the bottom."

If you were called you were required to declare the "count and the amount (current prize amount)" as well as the password. If there was no answer, the prize amount was raised until someone finally won.

As more and more women were leaving the household and building careers in the workforce, it was becoming increasingly difficult to find people home to answer the phone. Daytime talk shows increased in popularity, '*Dialing For Dollars*' waned in popularity. These two factors led to the eventual death of the show.

George Allen passed away in November of 2010 at the age of 71.

Who Remembers...The Ann & Hope

Outlet?

Ann & Hope Outlets started in 1953 and never closed completely (Squirm114)

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 may still exist, but new businesses have replaced them. In other instances, the buildings or even the properties have been razed. 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!

As a kid, I was dragged to Ann & Hope at least twice a week and definitely every weekend. Moms across the South Coast made the Ann & Hope Outlet a prime destination. Outside of Arlan's it was the number one place to get anything and everything in one place. Heck, Sam Walton who founded Wal-Mart (visited in 1961) and Harry Cunningham who founded KMart, got their ideas from visiting Ann & Hope.

There were at least eight locations in Massachusetts – Westborough, Danvers, Weymouth, Millis, Randolph, Seekonk, Raynham, etc. – but there was only one that mattered: the Dartmouth location.

So where did Ann & Hope come from? What happened to it? Where did they go?

Ann & Hope was founded by Ukrainian Martin “Marty” Chase. In 1946, Mr. Chase bought a Mill complex in Cumberland, Rhode

Island that was built in 1886. This mill was called the Ann & Hope Mill in tribute to Ann Brown and Hope Ives, wives of successful, iconic 18th century Portsmouth merchants John Brown and Thomas Ives who made a fortune in Far East Trade. Apparently these fellows *really* loved their wives, because they had two of their vessels, including a flagship dubbed the *Ann & Hope*.



*Let's bring back
these prices!*

This story is really a large one and deserves its own article, so we won't go into too much detail. Suffice it to say, that the names Ann & Hope go back to the mid 18th century Rhode Island. Martin Chase started his business in a mill named after these merchant's wives and kept the name when he opened his flagship store in 1953 and maintained the name as it expanded.

What separated Ann & Hope from other department stores is that you didn't need to tell a clerk or serviceman what you needed and they would pick your order. You could freely roam the store with a shopping cart – supposedly the first department store to use them. In addition, there was what was called a sub-tenant, which utilized the concept of a Garden Center, for example. Chase was the first to use a check-out area with

multiple counters, that seem so “normal” today.

By 1969, business boomed and Ann & Hope revenue was calculated at \$40 million dollars annually. In the 80s, Ann & Hope came to Dartmouth as simply a department store on the site where Lowe’s is now. However, it quickly became so popular that it expanded and took over the adjacent land and became the Ann & Hope Plaza – which some of you dinosaurs may recall held Child World (Christmas Tree Shop), Heartland Supermarket (Kohl’s), and a Newport Creamery (USPS).

By 1990, competition from other department stores and local businesses hurt Ann & Hope and the company began to decline. Stores began to close rapidly, and by Spring, 2001 only two – the Warwick and Cumberland locations – remained, but were downsized.

Ann & Hope may have closed, but really didn’t go anywhere. The company still owns Ann & Hope Plaza and operates the Curtain & Bath, as well as the Garden Outlet stores there. And guess what? Ann & Hope stayed alive with its stores in Rhode Island and many Outlet Stores and began to make a profit again. Expansion began once again and as of 2011 there were 7 Ann & Hope Outlets in Massachusetts, and a few in Rhode Island and Connecticut and revenue approaches \$24 million dollars.

Would you like Ann & Hope to return to the area? The closed Shaw’s in Fairhaven? What were your memories of Ann & Hope?

Who Remembers...Frates Dairy & Ice Cream?

Frates Dairy & Ice Cream at 2840 Acushnet Avenue (1930-2001)

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Ah...the iconic Frates Milk Bottle! Funny how something so simple in terms of marketing can be so effective. If our mom and dad asked us where we wanted to go to have ice cream, it was EASY: Frates! If a parent would have asked why, we would have used their own quip against them: "Because." People would say "What is the big deal? It's not like you go anywhere from going to a place that was a giant dairy bottle."

Wrong.

You got excitement. You got juiced. You got jazzed. Your imagination would kick in and you could imagine it full of milk – or even ice cream – and you are swimming about in it. The giant milk bottle was fun. Pure and simple.



*Frates Dairy & Ice
Cream bottle caps
(EBay)*

The Frate's Dairy & Ice Cream bottle was built as one of three circa 1930 by designer Les Labrose at 2840 Acushnet Avenue by the Frates family*. The other two being in Boston and Raynham. This location made generations of kids happy, but it wasn't the Frates family's only spot. They also had a shop in the South End of New Bedford on the corner of South Water Street and Cove Road. Of course, when Route 18 came along, the location got the boot.

The milk bottle, which stands 52 feet high and was painted to look like the real deal: full of milk with a bit of cream at the top. Well, the real deal if you are old enough to remember that cream separated from milk and came in bottles – and even was delivered to your doorstep by a milkman. Explain that one to your kids and they'll think you're pulling their leg.

Some time in 2003 Crystal and Scott Vurpillatte purchased both the building and the business and called it "Tali" after their daughter. Business did not do so well and by 2005 the bottle was up for sale. A year later G&S Pizza bought it and moved from a few buildings away. Yes, they serve ice cream from Spring through Summer!

Some stellar photos on the outstanding WhalingCity.net.

** A story shared on WhalingCity.net states that the bottle "...was not designed and built by the owners, but by Jethro O. Ashley (1897-1975), carpenter and aviator." A fan has stated "Frates bottle was built by Dosithe Guilotte who owned New Bedford Lumber. He was*

my grandfather."
