

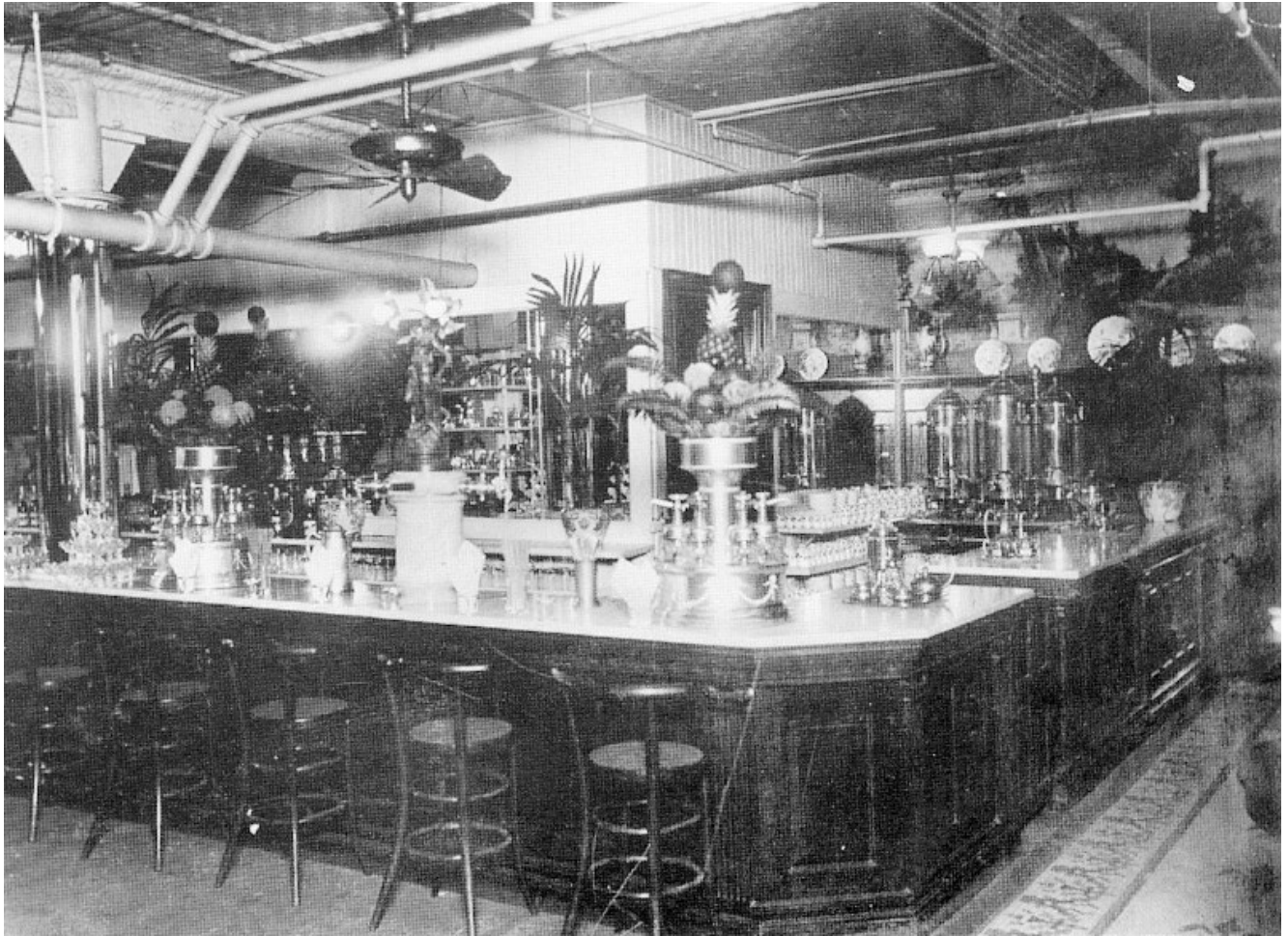
Who Remembers... The Soda Fountain and Ice Cream Parlor?

Here is another installment in our *Who Remembers?* series. You can browse previous articles by using the search bar on the right or by clicking [here](#). 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!

It's fun to reminisce of things that have passed. Remember having to walk to a payphone when your car broke down? Pressing a number multiple times to get the right letter for a text? Having to listen to white noise, static, bells and beeps while waiting for your computer to log onto the internet?

One of these fun things to recall is the soda fountain. Some young-uns or whippersnappers will think that you are pulling their leg when if you try to tell them that once upon a time – or as they would refer to as the olden days or the Jurassic Period – we would go to a Woolworth's Five & Dime or local diner to hang out at the soda fountain. You didn't need your arm twisted to be convinced to tag along with mom while she did some shopping.



Yes, you could be left alone at the soda fountain at a young age. There you could choose a flavor of soda and it would come out of a hose into your glass. And these kids think Cherry Cola is a modern invention! This was served by a soda jerk, which was his title, not something you'd call him if your customer service was horrible. See some of the popular lingo or slang from the jerks here.

Of course, you could also make it afloat by having a scoop of ice cream added to it. When mom was going to Woolworth's Five & Dime it was a no-brainer that you would tag along.

The soda fountain can't be found anywhere today, but it had been around for a long time. In fact, the first patent was granted in 1819 and the first operational soda fountain was built in 1858. The first ice cream "float" was served in 1874, carbonation was an option once it was invented in 1888 and the front service soda fountain we are familiar with wouldn't be designed until 1903 – by a doctor to boot!

While today soda conjured up a sweet concoction, the younger folks of today would be horrified to find out that soda was actually first used to make medicines easier to imbibe. Most medicines were a cocktail of some pretty disgusting things and many chemists or apothecarists – what pharmacists were called “back in the day” – would assemble a variety of roots, herbs, spices caffeine, even cocaine, and opiates, for many ailments such as “nerves,” “dyspepsia,” headaches, cramps, fatigue, and virtually anything else. Yes, you could get drugs “over the counter” and it wasn’t illegal until the “Harrison Act” in 1914.



Once prohibition came around in 1919 the soda fountain filled a void in American society since bars were shut-down – excepting Speakeasies, of course. It was at this point in history that the soda fountain became synonymous with the ice cream parlors or saloons that we know today and was no longer

a stand-alone business.

It was with the advent of prohibition that the term “soft drink” would come about and the drinks would get sweeter and start losing their association with pharmacists and medicine. Owners would advertise their compliance with the government as well as to let the general populace know that there was still something enjoyable to be had. Find some great soda recipes