

Bethinking of Old Orleans

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BARRE SEPTQUICENTENNIAL 1818-1993



The word Septquicentennial may be unfamiliar to many and even hard to pronounce for some. But it's official name for a 175th anniversary. This is the authorized word for such a milestone in history from the National archives. Because there have been many questions about this word, I thought it should be explained here.

The first part, SEPT, is the root of the Latin word for seventy which is Septuagesima. The second portion, QUI, is the root of the Latin word for five, Quinque. The third part of the word which is centennial means one hundred years in the sense of a celebration. By using the roots Sept and Qui we get seventy-five, and by placing centennial on to it, we derive the proper name for a 175th anniversary — SEPTQUICENTENNIAL.

In the ancient Roman calendar September was the seventh month. In the liturgical church year Septuagesima Sunday is seventy days before Easter.

On August 15 the Town of Barre will celebrate its Septquicentennial with a gala parade, water tower dedication, musical service and ox roast. The accompanying picture from a post card, now available, depicts the Barre Center and West Barre Churches.

Diner Update

From my article in the Column Vol. XV No. 20, I've received a couple of responses. One from Ralph Eibl who told me he worked in the Albion Diner for \$10 per week when he was seventeen years old, washing dishes. He said after they got a new diner his pay was cut \$2.00 because of an electric dishwasher.

The second response came in the form of a letter and visit from George N. Root Sr.

"...I worked in the Albion Diner for several years part time while still attending high school and later full time, which at that time, a full week consisted of six 12-hour days and one 6-hour day equaling 78 hours at \$11.00 per week plus meals and cigarettes.

"I owned and operated the Liberty Diner on Main Street for two years, 1933-34. Both diners were built by the Dickinson Manufacturing Co. of

Silver Creek, N.Y. The Albion Diner was owned and operated by Mr. and Mrs. Dickinson. Mr. Dickinson was a cousin of the people who built the diners. Mr. Dickinson is the man in the picture. He had a nickname, 'Little Dick from Silver Crick' (Creek), quite a character he. The Albion Diner was placed there in about 1923, was replaced by a larger one in about 1929-30. Somewhere in the files of the Orleans Republican news should be pictures and news of the day the old diner was moved and when it was pulled from that site, it seemed like ten thousand rats ran Pied Piper style down Platt Street to the canal. It caused quite a ruckus for a few minutes. There was a Texaco gas station behind the diner before Jimmy Hubbell's. It was owned by Dewey Tripp, one of the diners best customers. I also worked in the Medina Diner owned by Mr. and Mrs. William Denson from Sheridan, N.Y. and later owned by Skip Wilde of Medina. There were many Dickinson-built diners in New York State, as far east as Syracuse and west to Erie, Pa. Lockport, Medina, Niagara Falls, Brockport, Batavia, Leroy, Avon, Albion, Silver Creek, Dunkirk, Fredonia. There were a good many men and boys who started their careers in these diners and went on to own their own diners and restaurants in many towns and cities. These diners were quite a fad in the 20's, 30's and 40's and early 50's.

"A little bit about the Albion Dickinson. My last recollection was that they sold the diner and retired back to Silver Creek, N.Y. Mrs. Dickinson who was known to all as "Ma", was a wonderful and gracious lady but was a workaholic. She arose at 5 a.m. every morning and had 12-14 luscious pies and a cake or two made by 8 a.m. She baked them in her home across the street behind the Orleans Hotel, and she would be waiting on customers in the diner by 8:30 a.m. to 2 p.m., a short nap and was back by 4:30 to help with the supper trade. Most all diner workers in that era worked long hours, with small pay but good food."

Mr. Root noted, when I spoke with him, that for a short time he had Fritz Bergman as a partner in the Liberty Diner.