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LONG HISTORY TO BARRE DELI



Our photo illustrated with this article shows the present Barre Deli Plus Store as it appeared back in 1909. At the time this post card photo was taken, the store was owned and operated by Henry Jackson and Enos Rice. It's fair to assume they are the two standing on the front porch. We also note a man posed on a very early motorcycle near the front steps.

The store building was built by Jackson and Rice in the early 1900's and has played an important part in the history of Barre Center ever since. The main floor was used for the grocery business while the second floor remained vacant. However, it wasn't long before the Barre Grange was organized in 1904 and the second floor of the store then found use as the Grange Hall. In early 1915 due to increasing membership, the Grangers built their own hall across the road at the corner of Rt. 98 and Malpe Street.

In the early 1920's the business was sold to John Phillips and his son Wendell who operated the Arrowhead Store. Here they added the convenience of gas and kerosene pumps to the front of the building.

Later Wendell Phillips was elected Town Clerk and thus established his office in the store building. This was a position he held for many years. He and his wife Ann also lived in an apartment in the rear of the building. For a short period of time while the Phillips were operating the store the second floor, following Grange use, became the Town of Barre polling place until a town building was erected.

In 1961 Wendell Phillips sold the store and the house next to it to Larry and Janet Hamilton. They remodeled the second floor for an apartment and removed the house next door for a parking lot to accommodate their customers. In the early 1960's

Larry Hamilton was elected Barre Town Clerk which continued the use of the building for the Town Clerk's office.

In 1970 the Hamiltons sold the store to Jack Patterson and his family who ran the business and lived in the upper apartment.

The present owners are Mr. and Mrs. Jerry Edwards who purchased the business in 1989. With these new owners have come many changes. Jack Patterson dealt primarily in meats and groceries. Jerry Edwards however, has emphasized the Deli business with breakfast and luncheon or daily specials. This includes hot foods and pizza with a delivery service included. Booths have also been added to the premises for the convenience of the customers.

It's interesting, "that what goes around comes around". When Jackson and Rice were operating a store here over eighty-five years ago, they too had a delivery service. Theirs was a wagon loaded with groceries that they went out and sold to customers on the back roads. Indeed, history repeats itself. The Barre Deli Plus is a gathering place for people to meet. So it was years ago when high-school students of Barre Center met each morning to wait for the school bus, or local people came to chat and hear the news of the day. Yes, big changes have occurred over the years but the essence of things and people's needs are usually the same.

In the last forty years we have seen a complete transition from small country stores to huge supermarkets and now back to the idea of small stores through mini-markets and convenience stores that cater to the quick needs of their customers. Barre Deli Plus continues the old time custom of personalized service with a quality product. It is indeed, a gathering place not unlike days of old.