

A Lot of History in a Little Space

By Bill Poray, Perinton Town Historian

An amazing variety of business activity has taken place at 36 North Main Street in Fairport, in a space less than twelve feet wide. The tiny storefront utilizes the left-front corner of a building constructed in the fall of 1886 and known as the Deal Block. Andrew Deal published his newspaper, the Fairport Herald, in most of the first floor of building, the same space that has been the home of Barranco's store for the better part of a century.



Above: Unidentified barbers in 1911 in the north shop of the Deal Block .



Below: Roger Masciangelo (left), and Ted Johansen (right) in the same location in December of 2018.

A barbershop has occupied the space since 1946, first operated by Francis Pomponio, until his death in 1975. At the time, barber Roger Masciangelo needed to find a new place for his shop, as his previous location was to be demolished, a victim of urban renewal. Roger has been cutting hair in the little shop ever since. Ted Johansen runs the shop these days, as Roger is said to be retired, which in this case means he works a little bit less than he used to before he retired.

Francis Pomponio was not the first barber to set up his shop in the little storefront. From 1910 to 1921, a succession of five barbers rented the space. All told, the place has been a barbershop for 83 years. That leaves about fifty years of business to account for, starting with Dentist B.F. Schuyler, who pulled his first tooth in the building in February of 1887. Two months later, he was replaced by G.H. Churchill. He installed a brick bake oven, but didn't stick around long to use it. After two more tried and failed to make a go of the bakery, Walter Clark opened a "gent's furnishings" store. By Christmas of 1890, J.V. Sly was selling candy in the little storefront, but he left in a hurry, replaced by a tailor named Fred Lehman.



James Barranco stands in front of his store in this photograph, circa 1930. At the time, his sister Angelina operated a dress shop from the north storefront, where a barbershop has been located since 1946. Photo courtesy of Charles Barranco.

The DeLand factory fire of 1893 prompted Fairport to invest in a waterworks system, which in turn, created a need for plumbing supplies, which could be purchased in the little storefront. It then served as the factory for Dudley and Company in the manufacture of baking powder. By the fall of 1900, the Fairport Democratic Party rented the space for their campaign headquarters. After that, undertakers displayed their coffins, and bicycle salesmen their two-wheelers, all in the little storefront. Over the next few years, a variety of stores sold tobacco, fruits, candy, and household furnishings, followed by more undertakers and their caskets. And of course, 83 years of haircuts.

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