

Dear Wayne,

I read with interest your walk along the Great Road in the latest newsletter. As one who lived the first 14 years of my life at 19th and Market, I probably walked that road (from 18th to 24th) hundreds of times, and vividly remember all the places of businesses located there.

First of all...the gas station you mentioned at 18th and Market was Becker's Gas Station. During the war years, when sugar (and thus candy) were almost impossible to buy, a newsflash would sweep through the playground at recess at Lincoln School that "Becker's Gas Station has Double Bubble Bubble Gum." At the sound of the dismissal bell, throngs of kids would dash down 19th St. and across Market, then wait patiently in line for their chance to purchase 5 pieces (the allotted limit per person) of this precious commodity. To this very day, when I enter any kind of a store selling candy and see hundreds of pieces Double Bubble Bubble Gum in a bin, I remember hoarding my treasured 5 pieces in the cupboard at home and allowing myself one piece per week.

Beside Myers Funeral Home was the Gross house and small grocery store. Mrs. Gross also had a greenhouse behind her house, which she later sold to Pealers, and became their flower shop until they moved to Trindle Road. (Mrs. Gross's grandson, Glenn, started Aschcombe's, and her great-grandson, Jerry Nailor, was a State Rep. from the 88th District for 20 years before retiring.)

You mentioned Polk's Drug Store, but long before Mr. Polk bought it, it was owned by Mr. Stepp and known (appropriately) as Stepp's Drug Store. He not only had a long soda fountain, but also 8 booths, a magazine stand, greeting card racks, a pay telephone booth and shelves of perfume, scented soap, bath powder, etc. He sold Dolley Madison ice cream at 5 cents a cone and vanilla cokes for the same price.

Peggy (Rushong) Earley called the other evening to go over the list, and mentioned Hiler's on the corner of N. 21st and Traub's Meat Market at 2103 Market. I couldn't remember what Hiler's sold, so I went back to some old Highlights from the '50's and found advertisements from C.E. Hiler and Son featuring H-O railroad cars and model airplanes, ships and cars. Our Girl Scout troop leader, Mrs. Foster Powers, lived in an apt. above Hiler's, and we would go there to work on our merit badges.)

Next door to Traubs was Coombe's Barber Shop, and several doors farther down the street at 2136 Market was a building with the post office on one side (before they moved across the street) and Snyder's Gift Shop in the other. Roy Snyder and his wife operated the shop, filled with beautiful glassware, pottery, etc. Upstairs was the dentist office of Dr. Enterline.

You mentioned Fickles, but didn't include an important memory of many CH ballerinas...Mrs. Weigle's dance studio upstairs! She also held ballroom dancing classes for (reluctant, I'm sure) boys and enthusiastic girls.

Across S. 22nd St. from the old borough hall at 2163 Market was Cover's Grocery store until 1952, when it was bought by George Hartman. Hartman's ad in our 1954 yearbook lists "Premier foods, fruits, vegetables and meats" for sale.

The only other establishment I'd like to mention is Ream's Ice Cream Store on the south side of Market between 24th and 26th Streets. This was known to us teenagers as Ream's Marble Shop, due to the size of the ice cream scoops dished out by Mrs. Ream!

It is so nice to receive the newsletter, and, four times a year, Go Home Again! Many thanks to all of you who work so hard to keep the Historical Society strong.

Barbara Boggs Novak, Class of 1954

*Please phone, e-mail or write to the Editor with your stories/comments/suggestions:
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