

Carroll's Pharmacy and Ice Cream Store

by Mel Montemerlo

Most of the early "Ice Cream Stores" in Windsor Locks were actually Confectionery stores which sold a wide variety of goods, such as fruits, cigars, tobacco, groceries, confectionery, postal cards and toys, and imported olive oil. Almost all of these stores which appeared in Windsor Locks between 1880 and 1920 were owned by Italian immigrants such as Vito Colapietro, Pasquale Colapietro, Dominick Alfano, and Leo Viola. Then in 1945, James P. Carroll Jr. opened Carroll's Pharmacy. Unlike the Italians we have just been discussing, who came over between 1880 and 1910, his ancestor, Richard Carroll, arrived in the U.S. in 1861.

By the time James P. Carroll Jr. opened his Pharmacy on Suffield St. in 1945, his family had deep roots here. Charles Carroll, son of James P. Carroll Jr. provided the photo of the Co Op pharmacy, which was on Main Street. See the photo of the Co-Op Pharmacy, in which James P. Carrol, Jr. worked. If you look closely at that photograph, you will see that a pharmacy sold a variety of goods, as did the confectionery stores mentioned above. Following that is a photo of Jim in his own "Carroll's Pharmacy", which was on Suffield Street, between North St. and Main St. Jim must have gotten the idea of marrying a pharmacy with an ice cream store while working at the Co-op.



Co-Op Pharmacy, Main St., Windsor Locks, Conn., 1930
Art Logan (left) and Jim Carroll Jr. (right) worked there part-time.



James P. Carroll in his store. About 1955

Back in the day, an ice cream cone at Carroll's was a dime. It was a favorite place of children in the neighborhood, especially on hot summer days before the invention of air conditioning.

Jim Carroll was not only a pharmacist, he was the Windsor Locks Fire Chief. Notice the photo of Jim in front of his store, which had a window which was devoted to Fire Prevention Week.

Dr. Ettore Carneglia, who seemed to be everyone's physician in Windsor Locks, used to give his young patients vouchers that could be redeemed for an ice cream cone at Carroll's. In the days of Carroll's Pharmacy, many prescriptions were compounded by hand, and the capsules were filled by hand.

Back in the 1940s and early 1950s, most Windsor Locksians lived between Main Street and West Street. Back then, it really was a small town. Much of business life and social life centered in the Downtown area around Main Street. Back then, Carroll's Pharmacy (and Ice Cream Store) was a well known and well loved fixture in town life.

The Pharmacy was on the ground level, and his family lived above the Pharmacy. They built a Cape Cod style house next to the Pharmacy and moved into it in 1963 when the Pharmacy closed. These photos of Carroll's Pharmacy

bring back pleasant memories of an earlier time and a different way of life. Those of us who remember Carroll's Pharmacy can really appreciate what personal service used to be.

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