

Memories of Kirkland

Memories of Kirkland's Main Street by Helen Lamont, 2018

I remember when I was very young, we lived on Main Street in Kirkland (Lori and David Finkle live in the house now). The telephone was mounted on the wall near the front door. It was a phone that you would crank and an operator would come on the line. I would climb up on a chair and call the operator who answered. I would say, "Hazel, do you know where my mommy is?" She would probably look out the window and say "Helen, she is at the grocery store. Do you want me to call her?" Our number was 93K and Lamont's Grocery Store was 23. I am pretty sure that the grocery store was in the building at 5th and Main Streets at that time. I know that the telephone operator, Hazel Thurlby (Al Thurlby's mother) was in the recently demolished building at the opposite end of the block on the south side of the street. The telephone operators worked in a room on the second floor—Cora Lewis, Darlene Glawe, Hazel Thurlby, and others worked there.

Sometime later, the grocery store relocated from down the street to the first floor of that building. I then spent much time there. In addition to the room of telephone operators, up those TALL stairs to the second floor, there was a beauty parlor with beautiful red roses on white wallpaper. Not only the roses were beautiful, but Helen Chambers, the beautician, seemed to me to be the epitome of beauty. She was the daughter of Ray and Vi (?) Chambers and sister of Maureen Kersten and Bernie Chambers. Helen worked there for some years. I don't know anything about her after that.



526 Main St.

After some years, Alan K. Davy and his family moved into the rooms above the grocery store. Christine was a close friend of my mother, Martha. The Davy girls, Marilyn and Chris, were my high school friends. I spent many wonderful times in their home. It was filled with books, newspaper clippings, and friendships.

Downstairs, the grocery store was a wonderful place for us. The place seemed huge and by Kirkland standards I guess it was. The meat case was in the back of the store. Behind the case was the walk-in where meat hung waiting to be butchered. My grandmother, Lou Lamont, would often make homemade doughnuts for special occasions. In front of the case at Christmastime, there were barrels of lutefisk for those Swedish and Norwegian customers. I know we kids were not fond of that wiggly fish. My Tindall cousins loved it as they were Norwegian on their mother's side of the family.

We were friends with many vendors who would deliver to the store. I especially remember, Steve, who delivered milk and ice cream. Special folks worked in the store—my parents, Wilbur and Martha, Grandpa Art Lamont, Uncle Red and Aunt Mary Lamont, Don Mason, and Ina Turner. The friendships of the Main Street store owners were special to our childhoods—Leroy and Mavis Gliddon, Jack Drager, Mame Summerfield, Clyde and Ruth Bell, and others.

The Fourth of July parades were a big deal of the town. Our Uncle Corwin "Shorty" Lamont had started the celebration just before his early death of cancer so of course the store was represented in the parade along with other businesses of the street.

Many years later, I spent lots of happy times with Peg Medine and Jen in Jennifer's beauty salon which had taken over the first floor of the grocery store building. By then, it would literally rain in the shop!

I hated to hear that the building was being torn down. That end of the block will seem so empty without it, but many happy memories live on in our hearts.

