

History

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Old ads are great source of history

Sixty-two years ago, a new newspaper appeared on the Willimantic scene, published by M.E. Costello. The Willimantic News was dedicated to promote local trade and local civic organizations. It contained some local news, and a number of syndicated columns, ranging in content from Hollywood news to recipes.

Costello appealed to local people to submit their articles to their newspaper. "If you have anything of news interest, send it in! If you are the author of literary gems, send them in! If you have nursed the desire to become a columnist, as a music, movie or literary critic, send in your efforts for consideration."

Old advertisements are a great source of social history. The following advertisers appeared in the opening edition of the Willimantic News, on December 17, 1937. Jack Roan, the Armstrong Man, the Home-Made Candy Shop, the Delmar radio dealers, Mrs. William A. Haddad's store on Jackson Street, Albert's Package store, Albert Milevitz's men and boy's shop, Larry and his Mad Hatters band, John Roy and Sons automobiles, Mazzola's Market, Shaheen Haddad's clothing store, Joseph Hersant's Sunnyside Dairy and McCarthy United Cigar Store. A closer look at some of these ads provides an intriguing view of 1930s culture.

Mrs. William A. Haddad, whose business was founded in 1907, paid for a half-page spread to advertise her cloth-



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ing store at 36 Jackson St. All purchases would be "all done up in holiday wrappings saving you time and expense." Men could buy fur-lined chambray gloves for \$1.95 and silk robes for \$3.50. Women's flannel nightgowns cost anything from 69 cents to \$1.19, and frocks were only \$1.50. Girl's woolen mittens were 50 cents, and plaid dresses cost \$1.95. For the home, Bates Rayon Spreads were \$1.79 and oriental tapestries cost 79 cents and up.

John D. Roy & Son offered a modernized auto service at the big Esso station at the corner of Main and Tingley Street. Cars could be lubricated on the new twin post lift. "Our lift is safer, too, never knocks off a battery or muffler, as sometimes happens with rails. Gives us complete access to every under-car part." Roy's inspections, "frequently finds loose bolts and other sources of trouble."

The Home-Made Candy Shoppe was located at 901 Main Street opposite the Capitol Theatre. Nothing but the purest ingredients went into the company's large line of original candies and chocolate. On offer were maraschino cherries, almonds, Brazil nuts,

pineapple cubes and the store's original, new and alluring candies. Also on sale were a large assortment of flavored, home-made ice cream.

The Natchaug Radio Co. at 35½ Jackson St. was offering a special Christmas Service. "Does your radio have distorted tone, strange noises, loose knobs, dial light out, interference, intermittent reception, periods of silence — then call the Natchaug Radio Co.'s prevention service for only \$2. All tubes tested, chassis wiring tested, speaker adjusted, tuner adjusted, and aerial grounded and tested."

Christmas entertainment was offered in music, film and drink. Larry and the Mad Hatters were advertised as New England's most popular swing band, and were featured every night at Cooks Butterfly Ballroom at Springfield, Mass. They could be booked locally by phoning Larry Haggerty at Willimantic 510.

Christmas cheer could be enjoyed at Paul Locastro's "Wonderful Tavern" at 40 Jackson St., and Tut and Jim's "Horse Shoe Tavern" at 53 Union St. Beer and liquor was available next door at 55 Union St. in Albert's Package Store, where Calvert's Kentucky Pride cost \$1.65 a quart, and Budweiser beer cost \$2.75 a case. Appearing in local movie theaters were film stars Sonja Henie, W.C. Fields, Anna Neagle, Nelson Eddy, Norma Shearer, and Deanna Durbin.

Christmas meat was on sale

Jack Roan

SAYS,
"YOU DON'T NEED CHAINS
WITH

Armstrong Mud & Snow TIRES

	SIZE	PLY	Price
	4.75 5.00-19	6	13.09
	5.25 5.50-17	6	15.35
MUD	5.25 5.50-18	6	15.85
AND	6.00 6.50-17	6	18.60
	6.00-16	4	15.55
SNOW	6.25-16	4	17.40
TRUCK SIZES			
SPECIALS	30x5	8	27.65
	32x6	8	35.90
	6.00-20	6	22.05
	6.50-20	6	25.95

These Prices Less

LIBERAL TRADE IN ALLOWANCE

YOUR SAFETY IS OUR CONCERN

—NOTICE—
WATCH FOR
Our FREE GIFT Offer
In Xmas Issue!

FRIENDLY SERVICE
COURTESY
LOW PRICES

JACK ROAN—The ARMSTRONG TIRE Man
415 MAIN STREET
PHONE 1148

THE AMOCO STATION AT THREAD MILL SQUARE

The Willimantic News ran many local ads, including this ad for Jack Roan's tire dealership, located at the Amoco station at Thread Mill Square, 415 Main St.

at Mazzola's Market, where customers could pick up cube steak at 35 cents a pound, bacon at 29 cents a pound and butter at 39 cents a pound. For those without the time to prepare food, the Five and Ten Cent luncheonette at 873 Main St. was offering toasted cheese

sandwiches, hamburg sandwiches and frankfurts at five cents, and breakfasts and businessmen's lunches at 10 cents.

If you know the whereabouts of any other issues of the Willimantic News, or when it ceased publication, please get in touch with me.