

— HISTORY —

# These merchants kept Main Street alive and busy

Continuing from last week, we are looking at the highly diverse number of businesses that were located on Main Street as recently as 1975, about the time the East Brook Mall was being built, but long before the Buckland Hills complex was constructed at Manchester.

Quite simply, you could obtain almost anything from Main Street. Last week it was jewelry, shoes, sewing machines, stationary, drapes, cameras, jeans, sandals and furniture.

In 1975 you could walk into Edward Miner's Hobbyland store at 794 Main St. and buy planes, trains and rockets. The Savings Institute was still there of course, still in the location it had built in 1869, and Thomas Angell was the manager. You could buy almost anything in the furniture line at Despathy's Furniture Center at 872 Main St., managed by John Duaray. Tom Mangano was selling spring and summer fashions at Jantoms, and Ida Annati was offering Mexican sterling silver

rings, incense and tarot cards at the Bench Shop. Al Brand was offering a "full travel service", and Ray Bruce was selling Puma athletic shoes for \$29.

95. If you went into the rear of Todd's department store, Kristina Kost and Heidi Matwyfzyn would make custom tailored clothes for you.

Bob Carter was offering business and personal insurance at the Fowler Agency, located at 770 Main St., along with Milton Johnson, Douglas Nelson, and Robert Carter. If you found those gentlemen to be too expensive, Henry Hinckley could maybe offer you better rates at the J. P. Mustard Agency. If you couldn't afford insurance, or that weeks grocery bill, Al Briere would buy anything from you at a fair price at Al's Pawn Shop at 728 Main St.



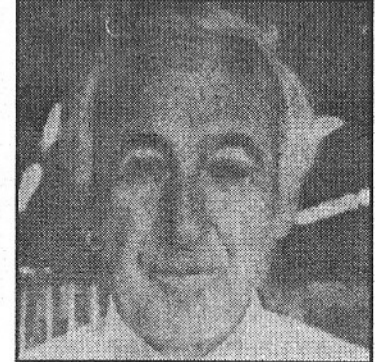
Tom  
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Bruce Gale was offering music lessons, and a wide range of instruments at his music center, and at Hurleys was celebrating its 51st anniversary, where George Fraser could supply any kind of mens apparel. If you needed your clothes cleaning, you went to see Max Rosen at the Columbia Cleaning Center.

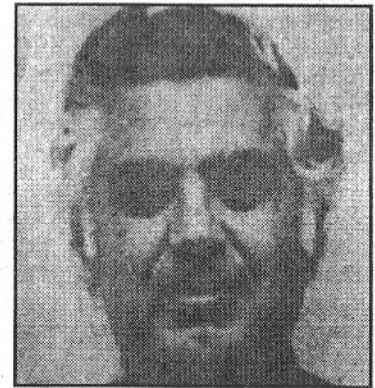
There was no need to leave the city and seek out a mall in 1975, because in 1967 Willimantic built its own on West Main Street. If you went there Pete Matsas was selling canning jars and grass seeds at Grant City, and Cecile Houle had a wide selection of women's clothes at My Fair Lady. Back in the city at Roan's, located at the corner of Church and Valley, Chris Pate could sell you a complete audio system, on which you could play vinyl long playing records, for just under \$200, and demonstrate a Sanyo state-of-the-art 8-track cartridge tape deck. And everyone of these stores was open until late on Thursday nights.



Above: Bruce Gale; below, George Fraser.



Above: Max Rose; below, Peter Matsas.



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