

TIME TRAVELLER'S DIARY: [MilkShake, Rattle and Bowl

By Michelle JohnsonAurora Museum & Archives

In 1927, Archie and Lorne Cousins approached Council with a plan to establish a dairy and pasteurizing plant on the southeast corner of Yonge and Mosley Streets.

Their request was granted and the old Royal Hotel, more recently known as The Club, was demolished. Construction of the Dairy was completed by the Aurora Building Company, which at the time was owned by the neighbouring Browning family.

Cousins Dairy opened in November 1927 and was described as "one of the most up-to-date and best equipped sanitary dairies in the country" (Aurora Banner, November 18, 1927).

The Dairy was the first in the district to produce pasteurized and homogenized milk. They also sold chocolate milk in 1927 - two years before it was available in Toronto!

The business was very successful and quickly expanded with a Newmarket location opening in 1930 followed by one in Bradford in 1932.

In 1947, a new two-storey building was constructed as an addition to the existing building. The following year, Cousins Dairy began manufacturing ice cream and the first floor of the newly renovated building featured a modern ice cream parlour. The ice cream must have been delicious because in 1951 they produced 189,270.59 litres.

The upper level of the building was home to Aurora Recreational Parlours and featured a four-lane bowling alley. It soon became known as Benny's Alley, after the manager Ben Harrison.

Local businesses were quick to establish teams, which included the Sisman Shoes Brown Bottoms, Cousins Dairy Milk Shakers and the Scanlon Bakery Dough Punchers.

This was the only bowling alley in Aurora until 1963, when a new more modern facility opened on Edward Street.

This new facility featured sixteen-lanes and multiple billiard tables.

Faced with competition, Archie Cousins decided to repurpose the upper floor of the Dairy; it would become the first commercial shuffleboard court in the Metro-Toronto

area. The space took on multiple purposes and became known as the Fiesta Room, which could be rented out for banquets, dances and club meetings.

Cousins Dairy was in business for over forty years when the decision was made to merge with Glenville Farms in June of 1968. Two years later the building on the corner of Yonge and Mosley Streets was sold to the Spasopoulos family who opened up the Trio Restaurant.

The good luck on the southeast corner of Yonge and Mosley Street proved to be enduring and the Trio Restaurant was in business for over thirty years.