

Red and Trudy's – Portville Landmark

This past summer at the PHPS office, we had a visitor from New Jersey. He had not been to Portville for many years. Cassius Fitzgerald left Portville with his family when he was a young child. Return visits were to visit his grandparents, Heston and Hazel Carr, who lived on Temple Street. On this latest visit, he drove around Portville looking for familiar landmarks. He was surprised and delighted to see that Red and Trudy's was still here.

The history of the Portville restaurant located near the intersection of Routes 305 and 417 begins eighty-two years ago, in 1924, when Frank and



MRS. FRANK MIDDAGH

Elizabeth "Libby" Johnson Middaugh decided, after Mr. Middaugh's retirement, to start serving food in a small building next door to their house. They called it "Middaugh's".

In the early years, the building was very small, occupying a space of only 10 feet by 14 feet. In 1926, a dining room that could seat 36 was added. The next year, a room for a kitchen was added and later, a store room.



MR. FRANK MIDDAGH

In 1932, Red Rutledge took over the business and called the restaurant "Rutledges." He was a pharmacist, who came from Georgia and worked at Caneen's Drugstore in downtown Portville. When he managed the restaurant, he had a beer license.

In 1950, the property was sold to two women from Shinglehouse, PA, Gertrude "Red" Foote and Trudell "Trudy" Powell. They renamed the restaurant "Red and Trudy's."

Memories of 1950's were: tall green wooden benches around tables; a juke box and a pin ball machine; a dropped window in the right front of the building for take-out orders; those wonderful milk-

shakes and beef barbeque sandwiches of crumbly beef with mustard and onion served on a crisp buttered and salted bun; and outdoor men's and women's restrooms. Bob Fairbanks recalls that it was a good place to take a date. The price was right. For Jan Caya, it was a popular place to stop on the way home from roller skating at the Coliseum. Gus Kayes remembers the individual little machines mounted near the tables where you could deposit money, choose a song and the juke box would play your choice.

In 1958, Francis ("Hoppy") and Janice Caya purchased the restaurant. During the 1972 flood, high water damaged the restaurant and necessitated the complete redecoration of the interior. Jan Caya recalls that the flood water was up to the peak of the building. "We had to begin all over again." Even though it was a difficult time, Jan says that the benefit was the installation of inside johns.

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The Caya's son, Fred, and his wife, Melanie, bought the restaurant in 2000 to continue the local tradition. The same popular items remain on the menu, with a few new additions. Melanie was quoted in a December 18, 2003, article in The Olean Times Herald as saying that they have continued to paint the building the same color that it has been for many years. "I don't think anybody would like it to change," she said. "I think when you start changing, then there goes your memories." She said that many customers come to relive memories of when they were young. "Many married couples talk about how they ate at the restaurant while dating."

On December 19, 2003 an article about Red and Trudy's appeared in The New York Times. *Halfway There, A Family Stops to Eat* was written by Steve Kurutz for the "Escapes" section of the newspaper. In Steve's opinion it is the

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Remembering When I Welcome Back

SOUVENIR MENU

"THE RUTLEDGE"

Luncheon and Refreshments

FEATURING
TOASTED SANDWICHES

BOVINE EVERMORE

We came into the world without any care.
We didn't have Hamburg anywhere
Then we grew up quite aware -
That there was plenty of Hamburg everywhere

We grow old in this world thru toil and wear.
Finally die and go up where -
We don't quite know - but this our prayer
That there will be no Hamburg over there.

CHICKEN BARBEQUE WITH LETTUCE & MAYONNAISE 25c

TOASTED SANDWICHES

Cheese	10c
Hamburg	10c
Hot Dog	10c
Egg	10c
Peanut Butter	10c
Pork (Barbecue)	15c
Beef (Barbecue)	15c
Ham (Barbecue)	15c
Canadian Bacon	15c
Ham & Cheese	15c
Bacon & Cheese	15c
Ham & Egg	20c
Bacon & Egg	25c
Chicken (Barbecue)	25c

HOME MADE PIES SERVED EXCLUSIVELY

SODAS, All Flavors 10c

LIST OF POPULAR BEERS

CHOICE OF POPULAR ALES

Guaranteed Country Butter Milk
FRESH EVERY DAY

SUNDAES

Chocolate	15c
Caramel	15c
Mexican	15c
Maple Walnut	15c
Tubber	15c

Ta

Cream of Mush
Clam Chowder
Noodle with Ch
Old Fashioned
Cream of Toma
L

Creamed Maca
Boston Baked

Ham and Heinz
Slices of Heinz

Cheese
Hamburg
Hot Dog
Egg
Peanut Butter
Pork-Barbecue
Beef-Barbecue
Ham-Barbecue
Canadian Bacon
Ham and Cheese
Bacon and Cheese
Ham and Egg
Bacon and Egg
Chicken Barbecue with Lettuce and Mayonnaise

10c
15c
15c
15c
15c
15c
15c
20c
20c
25c

THE RUTLEDGE

Phone 6 Portville, N.Y.

W. B. Rutledge

RED & TRUDYS

PORTVILLE, N.Y.

NOW OPEN

UNDER NEW OWNERSHIP

FRANCIS AND JANICE CAYA

- SPECIAL -
Wednesday - Thursday
And Friday
EVERY
25th order FREE

THE SAME
BAR-B-Q'S
Made Famous
BY
RED & TRUDY
WILL BE
SERVED HERE

(It's the Same
Recipe)

SPECIALIZING IN
PORK BAR-B-Q

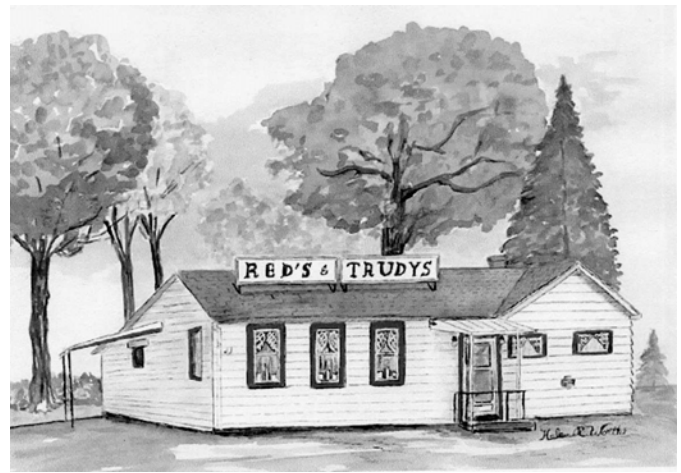
BEEF BAR-B-Q - HOT DOGS - CHEESE HOTS -

Thanks to Fred and Sharley Johnson for a copy of this collage of menu's from Red and Trudy's. Fred Johnson grew up in Portville and is related to the Middaugh family, the original owners.

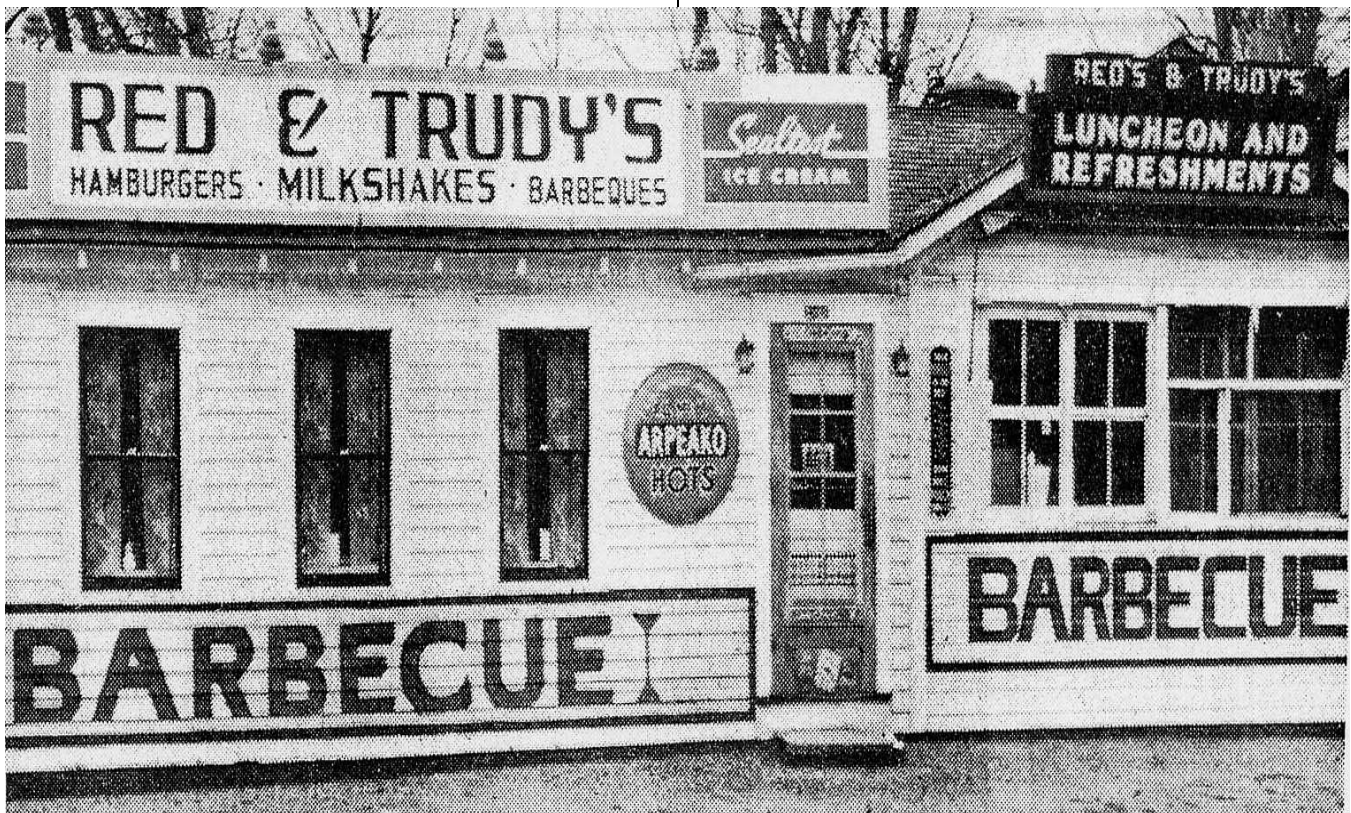
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“finest roadside restaurant in the history of roadside restaurants possessing all the desirable charms: Delicious Food, Local Character, Depression-Era Prices.” Of course he says this is a biased opinion.

He writes about three generations of his family stopping at Red and Trudy’s for over 60 years beginning in the 1940’s. It was a halfway point from Buffalo on their many trips to visit relatives in Renova, Pa. He said they continue to stop there because “in some ways, the restaurant embodies my family’s character – small, sturdy, occasionally ornery. The restaurant has changed owners, but its character has survived.”



*From a watercolor by
Helen Warner Worth*



Portville Landmark - Red and Trudy's - in 1954

Photo appeared in the 1954 Sesquicentennial Edition of The Olean Times Herald