

Whatever happened to ... R. H. Bareham & Son

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Recently, when Wendy Lindsey, owner of Schotzie's Gifts and Antiques went into the basement of her shop to admit the meter reader, she made a discovery that would shed a whole new light on her business, at least in her eyes. Among the odd wooden table leaves leftover from a former business, old hardware and other miscellaneous items only an antique lover would appreciate, was a large McGuire's Furniture sign that hung on the front of the building in the mid-1900's.

If that wasn't enough, underneath that sign was another even older sign. The background of this large (approx. 18 in. x 10 ft.) sign was painted black with gold letters that spelled out R. H. Bareham & Son. Being an avid antiques person and curious about their background, Wendy began to investigate the origin of the sign. That investigation led to questioning the local historian about it, and that led to this dissertation.

Robert H. Bareham was born in Palmyra in 1865, married Harriet Clark in Palmyra in 1888, died in 1935 in his home on Cuyler St., and was buried in Palmyra Cemetery. He spent his entire life in Palmyra where he operated a bakery business for nearly fifty years.

According to records, he bought the goods and business formerly owned by George Merwin in December 1881, and in 1898 installed a new store front at the corner of Main and Cuyler.

An early 2-inch box ad in Wayne County Journal 1899 reads:

“BAREHAM'S BAKERY has the Largest and Best Assortment of TOYS, BOOKS, GAMES, &, c. in Palmyra. Come and See the Display of CANDIES. The Best Goods for the Best Price is what everybody is looking for. BAREHAM'S Is the Place to Buy.”

After his son, Russell M., joined the business, it became evident they needed a new facility. In 1930, Bareham bought the building at 49 Main St., as cited in the following article published in this newspaper.

“BAREHAM HAS NEW LOCATION. R. H. Bareham & Son, the well-known grocers and bakers, have just moved into their new store at 49 Main Street. The building was purchased by Mr. Bareham and completely refitted to meet the demands of the rapidly growing business of the firm. A bakery department comprising the most modern machinery for producing the bread, cakes and

planning to restore it before the grant came into the picture, because they feel it would add to the ambience of the post-construction “new” Main St. if it was more original looking.

As for the sign, which is in good condition, Wendy said, “We’ve owned the building for over a year, and I had never been in the basement before. What a surprise when we found this! ... You know, I can just imagine the old ovens and counters now that I know what was here before. ... We’ve already had people interested in buying the sign, but others have said we should either donate it to the museum or hang it here in our shop. We’re undecided about what to do with it, but I’d kind of like to keep it here. After all, this is where it was first used - it’s a part of this place.”

If the Lindsey's do hang the sign in their store, it can be seen during the hours of 10 am to 5pm Tuesday through Friday, or Saturday 10 am to 4 pm.

(Caption) Wendy Lindsey is shown with the sign near the spot where she discovered it in the basement of the former R. H. Bareham & Son bakery.