HERSHEY ESTATES DAIRY

Hershey Creamery

Hershey Creamery was a popular place to enjoy a sundae or other treat. Built in 1929, the Creamery began operations in 1931. Located next to Hershey Park, it was a popular destination for Park visitors, Ballroom dancers and swimmers at Hershey Park Pool. It closed in 1971. The tile work mural (below) was saved when the building was demolished and is now on display in the Museum Shop in The Hershey Story.

HERSHEY TILE MURAL

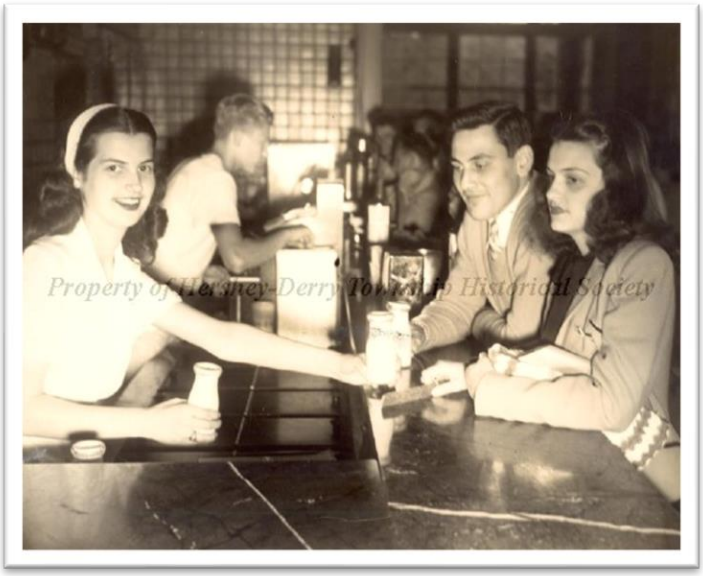
This mural, which illustrates the key raw materials in milk chocolate and the chocolate plant in the community of Hershey, plus designed for the Hershey Creamery which opened in November 1929. Once a supplier of dairy products to the local community, the Creamery is no longer in operation, and the mural was moved to Chocolate World in 1979 to afford its visitors an opportunity to view an art form no longer commonly practiced.

The mural was designed by Larry, L Williams, a staff artist employed by Franklin Pottery Company of Lansdale, Pa., an early forerunner of the American Olean Tile Company. The panel was fabricated using a little practiced technique called Faience, named for the Italian City of Firenze (Florence), where the art forms once flourished.

The procedures, for the perfection of this particular work were as follows:

1. The artist first produced a full size sketch of the approved design, laid out on grid paper, each block of which represented a single tile.
2. The design was then transferred to a hand molded square of clay and sculpted. Note that each figure is outlined with a raised line, which created a recessed into which the colored blazers would eventually be poured puddled.
3. The tiles were then fired for the first time bisque firing with a kiln temperature of 2,100°F. This operation was to form the tile so that it could now be hand decorated without fear of chipping or distortion.
4. The appropriate glazes were then applied in the depressed areas, and the tiles were fired for the second time (Glost firing) at approximately 2,000°F.
5. All units were than assembled to create the complete mural, and each piece was identified by number.

When this mural was produced, Franklin Pottery Company was actively involved in the perfection of Faience murals for many great buildings in the U.S.A. Eventually, however, the fabrication of handcrafted art forms of this sort became quite expensive and began to disappear.



Dick Hiler Remembers the Hershey Estates Dairy

My father, Bruce Hiler, had a milk route. He would leave the house about 2:30 a.m., go to the barn on main street (where the Days Inn now stands) to get his horse and milk wagon, go to the dairy to load up, and then begin one of the two alternate routes that he was assigned. As a young boy, I started to help run the milk route in the summers and during school snow days when Pop needed extra help.

Here are some of the interesting and sometimes humorous stories of my days helping my dad on the milk routes. (The goal was always to get done early so we could go fishing or hunting.)

During the horse and wagon time, it seems Joe (the horse) had most apple trees on the route staked out and would often refuse to move farther until Dad got him an apple.

Dad told the story of getting the very first milk truck that the company provided. One day, the horse relieved himself in the street in front of a Hershey executive's house and the guy and dad got into an argument about cleaning it up. Two weeks later, dad was awarded the first of what became a fleet of Metro step-in milk trucks. The truck was not always an improvement because the horse would follow in the street as dad went from house to house with carriers of milk. Now he had to walk back up the street to retrieve the truck.

We delivered milk to the Juvenile Golf Course for "Joe" the hermit who lived in a shack on the course.

I took two carriers of milk into the Community Center at 4 a.m. to deliver to the men who lived there. I would take the west elevator to the 4th floor, walk the length of the hall delivering milk and then take the east elevator down to the street where Pop would be waiting with the truck…a little spooky at 4:30 in the morning.

When I helped, I would deliver one side of the street and Pop the other. He kept a metal bound ledger in which he recorded each day's delivery so that he could do bills and collect at the end of each month. We would exchange the bottles for full ones according to the delivery instructions often left in a note in the neck of a milk bottle with the money for that day. He knew the customers by name, and they often became good friends. One summer…a local teenagers were going ahead of the milkman and taking the money out of the bottles before the driver got there. Dad caught them one day — he never told me exactly what happened, but I know it wasn't pretty.

One morning about 4 a.m., Pop did not come back to the truck right away and when he did, he showed me a note which said, "Bruce whenever you get here would you knock on the door?" So, he knocked, and the upstairs window came open and the lady of the house asked him to come up and help her turn the rug. He also knew where the dogs were left out and he carried an empty milk bottle in one hand to "educate" the animal if it pulled a sneak attack.

Dad's route also included some of the restaurants in town such as DeAngelis's which is now Fenicci's. They needed half and half for their coffee creamers, so we would take a "clean" return bottle from the truck so that we could mix the milk and single cream together and put it in the walk-in refrigerator. I remember stepping over the rising pizza dough which had over-flowed the container and was traveling along the floor of the fridge. I don't know if there were any "food police" in those days.

Upon return to the Dairy, we unloaded all the milk that we didn't sell that day. Everything except the chocolate milk was "dumped" into milk cans and became Hershey's Ice Cream Mix. Often the "mix" was whatever was left over and included double, single cream, whole milk, Guernsey (cream top), etc., which explains why Hershey Estates Ice Cream was especially rich with high butter fat content. While Pop counted his money from the day and checked in, I had the run

of the Dairy which often began where Fred Mazzolli was filling fresh ice cream containers. I always seemed to get a big cone to eat.

The Dairy was also noted for their “Eskimo Pies” which were large blocks of vanilla ice cream dipped several times into chocolate coating. Sometimes the chocolate would get low in the dipping trough of the machine, and I was given a ball-peen hammer to go to another room where there were large blocks of Chocolate in 10- or 20-pound cakes laying in the corner. I would use the hammer to break off some pieces and bring them back to the machine which melted them as they were added to the mix.

I remember the soda counter where several high school girls worked. The large pasture scene mosaic was on the wall behind the counter. The mural is now on the wall in the gift shop at the Hershey Story on Chocolate Avenue.

Property of Hershey-Derry Township Historical Society

For further discovery, explore the Hershey History Center’s Photo Archive.

HERSHEY HISTORY CENTER