

He thought this might have been in the '50s.

Bailas never met Ed Thomas in person since he died many years ago but he remembered meeting his son, Donald Thomas, the last of the Thomases to operate the store. Peter Fortis, who had since died, bought the store from Thomas and later sold it to Georgiou.

"When we bought it we didn't change it very much. We added a food counter and served sandwiches, coffee, homemade muffins etc. I remember we sold at least two to three dozen muffins a day," recalled Bailas. "My clientele were mostly from the city hall across the street and employees at the downtown banks."

In the old days, Ed Thomas had a variety of cigarette brands for his patrons.

Amongst them were the Black Cat noted in bold letters on the front area of the store. Other popular brands of the time available at the store were Sweet Caporal, Turret, Dixie, Old Gold, Gold Flake, Oxford, Muriads and Derby. They were sold in metal containers of 50 cigarettes each.



DON THOMAS

Bailas said that the store sold snuff but was no longer as popular as it once was. Snuff was at one time considered to be a remedy for cold, stomach problems and was even believed to cure asthma. Meanwhile, chewing tobacco, once in high demand from farmers, because they could safely chew it while working in the barns, was even less so with the growing awareness of it as a source of cancer in the lungs.

In the 1970s, most chewing tobacco sold for about 60 cents a plug while snuff sold for about 50 to 60 cents for an ounce and a half tin.

"A plug was half the size of today's pack of cigarettes and came wrapped in cellophane," explained Bailas.

The store opened in the early hours of the morning and generally closed at 8 p.m. and prior to him, he recalled that the store used to be open until midnight.

"At that time there was no Quinte Mall. All the action was downtown. Many businesses were open late into the night," said Bailas.

In 1988, the Bailases sold the Ed Thomas Store to Stuart Spoelstra, who turned the store into a delicatessen. Today, the couple runs the Harbour Restaurant in Wellington.

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town. When the railroad workers got off work, the banks were closed and they would head down to the Ed Thomas store to get their cheques cashed. Lots of times on Fridays, there was a lineup from the location right to the four corners," Bailas said. "If the cheque was for, for example, \$15.10 cents, the store kept the 10 cents for the service."