

Bunny's Store in Byrnesville I

Byrnesville, Barnesboro, Northern Cambria, Cambria County, Pennsylvania

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friday, may 8, 2009

Bunny's Store in Byrnesville I



Photoshop 'renovated' Bunny's Store in Byrnesville.

Small Grocery in Byrnesville

Thomas J. Byrnes built a number of buildings in the early 1900's in an area which would be called Byrnesville located adjacent to Barnesboro and Spangler.

About a hundred years later Barnesboro and Spangler become Northern Cambria, Pennsylvania. Although the area is still known to a lot of local people as Byrnesville I've yet to find records of the village ever being incorporated.

Thomas J. Byrnes built houses, barns, shanties, sheds, one hotel, and a wide single story structure. This structure was used for a number of things; initially it was intended to be used as a hall. The hall would have been a nice area large enough for wedding receptions, parties, and dances. The hall was probably built within a few years of the hotel which was built in 1902.

Perhaps the hall was rented out for various occasions. Somewhere in the 1920's or 1930's the hall was divided up with one part becoming a garage, and the other part a store with a pool hall in the back. Orlando Byrnes (1904-1955) ran the garage probably in the 1930's and 1940's.

There were other Byrnes family members involved in the garage. [If a reader can provide more information, please do.] Orlando worked on cars and coal carts and machines for local mines. One story has Orlando and Marcellus Byrnes (1884-1952) working on a coal cart and mounting a motor on it. Perhaps this was going to take the place of the mules pulling the coal carts out of the mine Marcellus had on the hill above the hotel. (Click here to see 'Byrnesville Recorded Recollections'.)

My dad, Edward J. Byrnes, told me that at one time there were a couple of barns and a mine entrance right behind the structure we called Bunny's Store. Bunny's Store was owned by Lavanis G. 'Bunny' Byrnes (1906 - 1993), son of Gilbert 'Bert' Byrnes (1876 - 1935). Bunny had a shower somewhere in the back of the store available for miners wishing to clean up before heading home.

Early on there were not that many showers in the homes and the miner would take a bath in a large tub in the kitchen heated with water on the coal stove. Cleaning coal dust and coal oil off skin and out of clothes was a necessary drudgery. The miners could use the shower at Bunny's to be fairly clean when they went home. I don't know if the water was hot but either way I bet the shower helped.

By the time I rolled into Byrnesville in the late months of 1949 part of the 'hall' had long been transformed into a neighborhood grocery store. I believe the store was running at least as early as the mid 1940's.

Posted by Edward Byrnes at 09:13 | No comments

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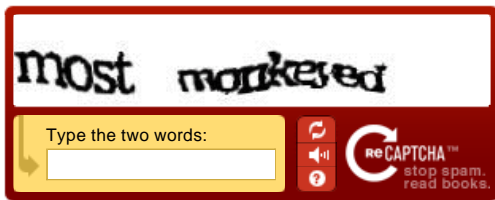
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