



Amery Area Historical Society

Historical Sites



Photo Courtesy of the
Clear Lake Museum

M&M Barbershop
1895

Barbershop Dedication

The building housing the M&M Barbershop, at 126 Keller Avenue North in Amery, has been in continuous operation as a barbershop since the structure was built in 1895 by Christian Petersen. The first barber was Petersen's son-in-law, Louis P. Christiansen, who was 19 years of age when he opened the barbershop that year. He had previously served an apprenticeship in Clear Lake.

Christiansen was joined in 1901 by J.P. Parslow. At that time haircuts were 35 cents, and shaves were three for two bits. Baths were available on Saturday nights for 15 cents. Hot water was provided by a wood-fired boiler. In those days, the barbershop was open seven days

a week. Hours were 7 am to 10 pm Monday through Friday, 7 am to Midnight on Saturday, and 7 am to Noon on Sunday. In 1907, a cleaning and laundry service was added.

On August 19, 1933, W.B. "Tib" Randall began barbering at the shop for Christiansen and Parslow. After Parslow died in 1934 and Christiansen died in 1936, Randall took over operation of the barbershop. Two years later, Randall added air conditioning to the barbershop. The cooling system consisted of an automobile radiator, a deep well, and a gasoline engine to drive a water pump, as reported in the July 7, 1938 edition of the Amery Free Press.

During the 1930s, the cost of a haircut had gone up to 40 cents, a single shave was 20 cents, and a bath was a quarter. Business hours were 7 am to 6 pm on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday; 7 am to 10 pm on Wednesday; and 7 am to 11:30 pm on Saturday, when baths were offered.

In the late 1950s, in addition to the Randall Barbershop, there were two other barbershops in Amery. One of the competitors was



Present for the plaque presentation were, from left: Stan Proden, Jerry Haug, Marv Maxon, Mlick Larsen, Jo Ann Hulquist and Ruth Mugerauer. (Photo by Tom Stangl)

"There was a death in the barber chair. A man from Range fell sick, turned white, and didn't have his heart pills. A nurse in the shop took his pulse and said he was dead. Tib laid him on the floor and gave him a crack on his back. He came alive and lived for many more years." - Tib



"I learned barbering from a German barber in Luck. I had to shave my mentor for 20 times before he let me shave a customer." One of his early customers, a salesman, asked about his prior work which included farming and a little plumbing. He advised Tib, "Young man, you should have stuck to that, you can unscrew the hairs better than you can cut them off." - Tib

the Nelson Barbershop at 104 Keller Avenue North, the other end of the block. Nelson had worked for Tib Randall for five years before purchasing his own shop, and he continued barbering there until 1983.

The second competitor was the Maxon Barbershop, located across the street on the west side of Keller Avenue. That barbershop was operated by Paul Maxon, who had previously worked at a barbershop in the Amery Hotel and had also built and operated a barbershop in Clear Lake before returning to Amery.

On February 16, 1960, fire destroyed the Maxon Barbershop as well as five other businesses – a total loss of \$200,000. In the wake of the fire, Tib Randall invited Paul Maxon to move to his shop, and he accepted the invitation.

Three years later, when Paul Maxon was ready to retire after 40 years of barbering, he asked his son Marv to return to Amery and take over his chair. Marv had finished barber school in Eau Claire two years earlier, and was working at a barbershop in that city. Marv Maxon moved back to Amery and is still barbering at the same shop, over 50 years later.

In 1965, the barbershop was remodeled and updated with all new equipment and furnishings.

Mick Larson began working at the Randall Barbershop in 1971. When Tib Randall decided to retire on October 8, 1974, Larsen and Maxon took over rental of the building, operating under the name M&M Barbershop. Randall had been barbering and renting the building from the Christiansen family for the previous 41 years.

In 1999, Mick and Marv purchased the building from the heirs of Louis P. Christiansen, who was the first barber to operate the shop, splitting the ownership equally.

Mick Larsen and Marv Maxon were joined in 2010 by William Vierkandt, and Larsen retired that same year.

William Vierkandt bought the M&M Barbershop business fully in 2014, becoming the second sole proprietor since 1895. Maxon continues to barber with Vierkandt part-time.



Bub & Marv Maxon on left and William & Mick on right.

"A rack held the shaving mugs of 35 Amery businessmen. When a customer came in to be shaved, the mug would be dusted or washed for shaving. One belonged to old John Burman with his name, another to storekeeper Hugh Phillips; both got theirs back. The rest went to the back room until a man came in and offered \$5 each for the 25 mugs. I didn't think they were worth anything. We later realized that they had been worth \$50 a piece." - Tib

Research for brochure by Karen Schanon, JoAnn Hallquist & Linda Tempel



The Amery Area Historical Society (AAHS)
collects and preserves the heritage of the local area.



This historic site brochure is an activity of the
Cathy Haug Memorial Project of the AAHS.



The AAHS welcomes your participation
as donors and members.



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(lower level of the Amery Area Public Library)