

# PLEASE WAIT TO BE SEATED

Stories from inside Diamond's



Under my Uncle John's careful business-minded supervision Diamond's Restaurant opened in Girard in 1961. Originally my grandma didn't work at Diamond's, she was a housewife, but money was very scarce and despite some fierce arguments with her husband she went to work as a waitress in the restaurant's opening year. To most people Mary could be defined as a waitress. It's how she made her living, how she supported her daughter, and, according to her, how she had fun. My grandma loved her job. She loved her customers, she loved working with her family, and she loved her tips. She can remember a lot about her times at Diamonds, she said it was the best time of her life.



The Booths inside the Dining Room



The Tables inside the Dining Room

The most memorable things about Diamond's, according to Mary, were her customers. Diamond's Restaurant was the first establishment to be open twenty-four hours a day in Girard, and they got customers from every different walk of life. She can remember the bad racial relations around her house in the 1960s when she carried a shotgun in the backseat of her car for protection. When she got to Girard however the racial problems stopped. She said how there were only a handful of African-American families in Girard, but they were always welcome at Diamond's and there were no real racial problems.



My grandma and friend in Diamond's



The Staff at Diamonds

Another aspect of the community was the Mob. My grandma always swears that the best tippers were mobsters. They came in during all times of the day and night and loved my grandma. Along with the mobsters also came the politicians. Traficant, Hanni, and Hagan all made their appearances at Diamond's. There was also another element constantly at Diamond's, the steel workers. Union men and women from Lordstown and the Sheet and Tube had meetings in the back rooms of the restaurant, and according to my grandma every working man in Youngstown came in at one time or another.

My grandma also remembers the things that the customers and many visitors to Diamond's would probably remember the most, the free Christmas parties, where everyone in the neighborhood came in and ate free, the huge super bowl parties where the crowds got fierce, and the illegal poker parties where racketeering wasn't really an issue because the cops were always throwing down a couple of dollars too.



Another look at the tables inside Diamond's



Another look at the Booths inside Diamond's

Everyone had a blast in Girard, but due to the problems with the mills closing and the additions of Perkins and Denny's with competitive twenty-four hour service Diamond's Restaurant relocated to Market Street in 1980. This is the Diamond's restaurant that I remember because of photographs, lucky for me there were plenty taken so the memories can last a life time.

<a href="#">Family Ties</a>	<a href="#">Please Wait to be Seated</a>	<a href="#">Blue Plate Special</a>	<a href="#">Save it for the Judge</a>	<a href="#">It's all Relative</a>
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