



## NORTH GREENBUSH NOTES

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### Tess Alber's Tavern

There is a fine restaurant just outside of Wynantskill called Paolo Lombardi's Ristorante. Old-timers will remember another great restaurant on that site called Tess Alber's Tavern.

Theresa DeMaria, always known as "Tess" was born in New York City in 1905. She and her family came to Rensselaer County by 1915 and she married John W. Alber in 1930. They bought a house on the south side of Route 150 and in 1931, which became Tess' Tavern. The family lived upstairs in the building.

Tess started with a hot dog stand but it wasn't profitable. She then switched to what was to become her specialties: Italian foods, especially pizza. If you google "Tess Alber's Restaurant" there is a website called "Who sells the best pizza on the planet." There is a quote mentioning Tess and saying "I never had a pizza better anywhere or any place." Most locals would agree. She also served veal and peppers that "would turn a vegetarian into a meat eater."

Many well known names frequented her restaurant such as Ray DuFour (former postmaster in Wynantskill), Red McLaughlin (owner of a bar on Main Avenue), and Billy Worthington (the florist). Billy Sharp and Charlie Franklin had their political gatherings at Tess' place.

At one time, Tess had a three piece band made up of local musicians: Henry Meusberger (former Highway Superintendent) played the banjo, Ike Berringer the violin and Bruce Fisher played the piano. Their "gig" would last from 9 p.m. to 2 a.m. some nights.

People from all backgrounds frequented Tess'. Teens visited after sports games, jockeys from the Saratoga Track, local businessmen, hunters and of course politicians made their way to her place. The atmosphere must have been like the bar in Cheers "where everybody knows your name."

Even after she retired in 1987, Tess and her daughter Beverly helped Frank and Steve Giuliano run a restaurant in East Greenbush called "Tessie II" from about 1992-96.

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