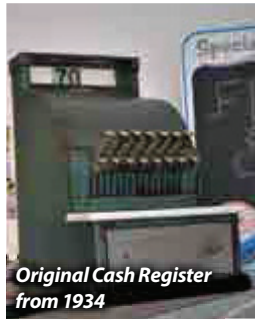




Original owners Peter & Jean Manoll circa 1970's



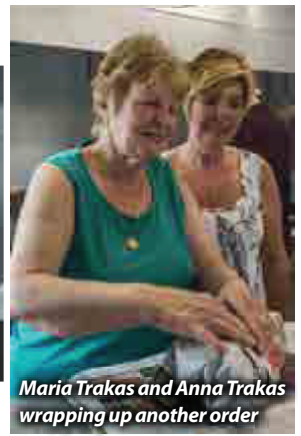
Original Cash Register from 1934



Evangelos Trakas circa 1972



Maria Trakas circa 1972



Maria Trakas and Anna Trakas wrapping up another order

MANOLL'S FISH & CHIPS

Humble Immigrant Beginnings to 85 Years of Success!

By Andi Christine Bednarzig

It's a sweltering late summer day in downtown Brockville. At Manoll's Fish & Chips, a customer watches as owner and sole proprietor, Anna Trakas, coats a piece of cod in batter and slides it into a vat of simmering shortening.

"It's the homemade batter with our secret recipe that keeps our customers coming back for more!" she laughs cheerfully.

Anna's mother, Maria Trakas, then places the cooked fish and a heap of fresh cut potato fries into a cardboard box and then enfold it in newspaper to give to a waiting customer eagerly waiting to taste this local seafood treat.

This year marks the Historic 85th Anniversary of Manoll's, the first fish & chips shop in Brockville.

Traditional British-style battered fish fried in oil may have come to Britain from immigrants as early as the 16th century.

Writer Charles Dickens mentions "fried fish warehouses" in *Oliver Twist* (1838) and "Husky chips of potatoes, fried with some reluctant drops of oil" in *A Tale of Two Cities* (1859).

By the 1850s, with the expansion of railway systems connecting major fishing ports to industrial areas, fish and chips became a standard meal among the English working class.

Back in 1934 at Manoll's, fish, fries, and roasted peanuts and cashews were sold from the store, which was only about half the size of the present one. The fresh fish arrived from Montreal on ice by train.

The original owners, Jean and Peter Mastromanolakis, gave the shop a shortened version of their name and

"Manoll's" it's been ever since.

When the Manolls were ready to sell their business in 1972, one of the conditions was that it would go to a young couple. Maria and her husband, Evangelos Trakas, bought the business that May.

Maria recalls arriving from Greece as a young bride to settle in Brockville, where a family member had already put down roots. It had been Evangelos's dream to have a business of his own. When this opportunity arose, he quit his job, and Maria's and Evangelos's venture began.

Mrs. Manoll agreed to stay on for a week to help train the couple after they purchased the business.

Despite her language barrier and inexperience, Maria took on her new role in the shop with great enthusiasm. She smiled as she recalled her first day when she gave twenty dollars worth of change to a customer who paid with a twenty-dollar bill for a large order.

Manoll's has been in the Trakas family ever since, except for a span when the premises were leased. When the leasee gave notice, Anna didn't want to see the doors closed because of its family history.

Maria was well into retirement for 13 years when she came back to the family shop to help Anna who had inherited the business in September 2016.

Anna did some renovations to give the shop a fresh look. She also changed the batter recipe, which is a carefully guarded secret.

Not only is Manoll's signature batter homemade, but also the tartar sauce, seafood sauce, coleslaw dressing, and gravy. Keeping

up with customer requirements, Manoll's now has a gluten-free batter as well.

Anna offered a tasting of freshly dipped cod. It was moist and flaky, and the batter crisp, crunchy, and not too thick. Whatever is in the secret recipe certainly works!

Customers vary from locals, seasonals, tourists, and those who arrive from across the river in their boats.

"I have third and fourth generation customers that used to come with their grandparents," Anna said.

One gentleman has been coming every Tuesday for his piece of haddock since 1946. Another claims that Manoll's was his first solid food.

Even in the face of highs and lows of the local economy, a takeout of fish and chips, wrapped in newspaper the old-fashioned way, is an affordable option. Anna works hard at customer retention and loves meeting people from all over making Manoll's a place where people return to again and again to see Anna's and Maria's welcoming smiles. **LH**

Editor's Note: Congratulations to Anna and her family on this significant Business Milestone. You can visit Manoll's Fish & Chips @ 11 Buell St., Brockville. Call 613-342-7448 and order ahead for some of the most delicious Fish & Chips you will ever have!



Manoll's Fish & Chips