



OBJECT ID	F2015.58
OBJECT NAME	Box, Candy
OBJECT COLLECTION	Gayety's Chocolates (is part of)
MATERIAL	Cardboard
OBJECT ENTITIES	Gayety's, (created by)
ACCESS POINTS	box Gayety's Chocolates & Ice Cream

OBJECT DESCRIPTION

Rectangular cardboard Gayety's Chocolates box. White bottom. Lid has a coppery finish with "Gayety's Chocolates Net Weight One-Half Pound printed in red lettering on the top of the lid. On the right side in red letters is, "Ingredients: Chocolate, sugar, almonds, cashews, pecans, walnuts, cherries, prunes, dates, orange peel, raisins, pineapple, coconut, peanut butter, corn syrup, evaporated milk, butter, cream powder, water, vegetable oil, egg albumen, pure vanilla, natural flavoring. On the other side in red print, "Gayety Candy Company, INC. 2390 - 172nd and torrence avenue, lansing, Illinois 60438 708-418-0062 Family Owned Since 1920"

ORIGIN

The Gayety Story is very similar to many other American success stories of that era. In the early 1900's, James Papageorge (Uncle Jim) left his mother and father in Tripoli Greece and came to America at the ripe old age of 9 to find work and make a life for himself. Armed with a good work ethic and a fierce determination to succeed -- young James Papageorge had no idea that while he was earning his living scooping ice cream for someone else, he was laying the foundation for his destiny -- The Founder and "godfather" of Gayety's Chocolates and Ice Cream in South Chicago, IL.

In 1920, Uncle Jim, now a young man, purchased "Gayety's Chocolates & Ice Cream". Located on Commercial Avenue next to The Gayety Movie Theater in South Chicago, Illinois. It was a popular place for date nights and family outings. Folks remember Uncle Jim (aka. 'JP') always at his post behind the cash register - Stern-faced, always wearing a suit and a tie, and smoking a cigar. Truthfully, he kind of looked like 'Al Capone'. Did you know that a Sundae only cost 50 cents, and 3 pounds of candy could be bought with \$1.00.

In 1936, Lee (Father) started his career at the Gayety as an energetic 12 year old eager to follow in his uncle's footsteps. The Gayety has always been Lee's life-long passion. He worked 7 days a week except for the time he served his country in WWII and then again when he left to earn his business degree at DePaul University in Chicago. A good looking young man with arms like Charles Atlas and thick wavy hair like Liberace, the young girls would come just to watch him dig ice cream. Some most likely cried when he met the beautiful Angelene Chiou. Lee knew he found his "Special Angel", and in 1959 Angelene and Lee married and started a family of their own (kids: Jim, Lenore & Liane). The Gayety prospered in its South Chicago location until the Steel



Mills closed and Lee followed our customer base to the south suburbs.

Decades later, in 2003, it was Jim's turn. Years of hearing customers reminisce about the old neighborhood made Jim want to re-create that same experience for both our new and our old customers. So he moved the store to its present location in downtown Lansing, IL. Lined with trees decorated with little white lights, flanked by family-owned storefronts, and surrounded by residential neighborhoods and schools, Ridge Road was and is the perfect place for an Ice Cream Parlor / Chocolate Shoppe.

CITATION

Box, Candy, Gayety's Chocolates, *National Hellenic Museum*, <https://collections.nationalhellenicmuseum.org/Detail/objects/>. Accessed 05/02/24.
