

1963: Ground Broken for New Store – and More Info By Dorothy French

Editor's Note: The following information was obtained from a scrapbook of newspaper clippings compiled by Mrs. Elton (Anna) May and donated to the Walworth Historical Society's museum by Gordon Youngman.

WALWORTH – Ground was broken October 4, 1963, for a new grocery store, the first to be built in this town in over a quarter of a century – the first supermarket to be constructed in the township. Don Brockman, owner of Don's IGA, hopes to be able to move into this new location by the early part of December if the weather is favorable. The new store will have five times the area of the present location. Builder and owner is Norman Soucy.

According to Brockman, who will be subleasing from Super Food Services of New York (IGA), there will be a new dairy case, new produce counter and enlarged frozen food cases as well as more of everything. There will be two checkout counters with an auxiliary checkout for rush hours instead of the one presently in use.

There will be more parking spaces. The building, 40' wide by 110' long, will face Marion Road across from the Walworth-Seely Public Library with room for 40 cars stretching back from the road along the length of the building. There will be a 12' show window and entrance in the front with an automatic out door.

Post Script to above story:

A January 16, 1964, story reported ribbon-cutting ceremonies will be held on January 17. "Champagne will flow in this dry town, when Mrs. Norman Soucy, wife of the builder, and Mrs. Donald Brockman will break a bottle christening the new store."

Additional Information:

Don closed the store in January 1970; it remained empty until June 1970 when owner/operator Leighton Bel and silent partner Floyd Amsler opened the store as Walworth Foodliner. Leighton operated the store until a disastrous fire February 12, 1972.

During the summer of 1972, Joe and Marcia Englert purchased the property and rebuilt the fire-damaged store. On July 25, 1973, it reopened as Billings Foodliner, Inc., under the IGA brand. Owners were Rick and Lynda Billings of Marion; Rick's parents were Howard and Pearl Billings of Walworth. The store closed October 1974.

On March 29, 1977, Mel and Irene Draves, partnering with Connie Cosgrove of Newark, re-opened the store as Draves Food Mart, inc., Walworth Super Market. Later it was empty for a period of time until 1987, when the United States Post Office became a tenant.



Don's IGA 1964 – 1970



Walworth Foodliner fire: Feb. 12, 1972