

MEMORY LANE

When my husband and I were still dating, we came to Fentons often. We liked to see the babies and happy families enjoying their ice cream. In fact, we came in so often and enjoyed the families so much that we finally decided to take the leap and start a family of our own. When friends and family ask what made us decide it was time to have children, we tell them that spending so much time at Fentons Creamery made us want to become a family. We are now married and have a little baby girl named Camille who is six months old. Our first outing when she was five days old? To Fentons of course!!

-Audra

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I have wonderful memories of having lunch there every Friday with my young daughter in the 1980's. As I worked full time 4 days a week, Friday was the one day Deanna and I treated ourselves to some quality time...the morning spent at the Temescal library and then lunch at Fentons...grilled cheese sandwich for her and crab for me with a coffee milkshake to share. My mouth is watering as I type this!

Deanna is now a sophomore at UC Davis and I am working 2 jobs...but the memories of those days of finding good books to read and sharing lunch together will always be part of who we are.

Sincerely,

Nancy

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It was 1998. Ronn was the first person I dated after my marriage dissolved. The breakup of the marriage happened for numerous and complex reasons, but suffice it to say my ex-husband is now happily married to his secretary.

Things were getting serious with Ronn. But how could I know if he would be faithful? How could I know that our love would endure? The answer came to me immediately. Three simple words: Swiss Milk Chocolate.

It has been Ronn's favorite flavor since he was five. If Swiss Milk Chocolate could be his favorite for over thirty years, then so could I. We are one wedding and two children later and eagerly looking forward to sharing our next pint of Swiss Milk Chocolate at Fentons.

With best wishes,

Joan

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For years, my Mom and I would walk down Linda Ave. to take in a double feature at the Piedmont Movie Theater, and a special part of those excursions was a trip to Fentons Creamery...This was back in the late 40's or early 50's...Imagine your favorite Humphrey Bogart movie topped off with a fantastic hot fudge Sundae!

Little did I realize at the time that I would meet Doug Fenton and his family, and that we would run off to Carson City, Nevada with his brother and Mother Ardis following behind us--and get married!

I reside in Florida now, but my condo is on the market and I'm moving back to that area--What memories the stories I've read bring back: The Key Train (#C) which would take my Dad off to work in S.F. daily, Piedmont Grocery, the movie theater--But most of all, Fentons...It's like an old friend and I can hardly wait until I'm back there to revisit one of the most endearing virtual landmarks of my youth!

Wynne

My late husband, Dan, and I often visited Fentons, sometimes completely unplanned when we were just driving by....."Look! A parking space and no line!"

The evening before my husband's funeral was my brother's 60th birthday and of course....we went to Fentons. As everyone in the place sang Happy Birthday to him I knew, somehow, that everything was going to be okay.

Many thanks to Fentons for over 30 years of happy...and poignant memories.

Kathie

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There are so many memories of Fentons that I just don't know where to start.

I grew up on the Avenue, and Fentons is a big part of my life. It was always a treat to bring visiting family or friends, we would walk down and buy huge ice cream cones and laugh all the way home as we tried to eat our cones before they started to melt.

Also regardless of day or time, I always ran into someone that I knew there. It was just funny how ice cream brings out the masses, it didn't matter if it was raining or sunny, actually some of the longest lines were on cold raining nights.

Best Wishes and hope to see Swiss Milk Chocolate in my future.

Cora

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My first memories of Fentons date to its previous location where the post office is now. It was always a treat to be taken for a root beer float or a milkshake. Kneeling on the stool at the counter to get the last drop to come up through the straw was part of the ritual. If my appetite needed coaxing during a childhood illness, a milkshake would appear at my bedside with, I learned years later, an egg mixed in for added nourishment.

By the time I was in my teens, Fentons had moved to Piedmont Avenue. I remember more milkshakes and sundaes with high school friends. Those were the days when I could polish off a tuna and olive or an egg and olive or a ham and cheese sandwich and a chocolate milkshake for lunch and be hungry again by dinner.

As an adult, I moved away from Oakland but have returned frequently to visit my family. Well into their old age they enjoyed their visits to Fentons, but we usually took home a good bit of a milkshake to have later on.

Looking forward to new memories,

Sincerely,

Kathleen

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We haven't lived in Oakland in almost 20 years, but we've been back to visit often and have always stopped at Fentons! When I first visited my soon-to-be husband, Russ, an Oakland native, he and his grandparents introduced me to Fentons. Then when Russ and I were first married we lived right up the street on Pleasant Valley Ave. and made weekly (or more often) trips to eat ice cream - Fentons became synonymous with our big night out.

I remember one time in particular when a friend joined us for dinner and ice cream. We all had sandwiches (I think my favorite was a tuna and egg with black olives) and then Russ and I decided to share a black and tan because I knew I was too full to eat a whole one.

Our friend, a woman seminarian from Berkeley, had managed to eat a whole sandwich (Russ ate part of mine for me), and then topped it off with a Banana Royal!! I couldn't believe she ate the whole thing!

Good luck, and thanks for the wonderful memories!

Sincerely, Ellen (and Russ) - now of Vermont!

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Our daughter Katie's first birthday was celebrated at Fentons, and every birthday since.

We have a very vivid memory of her very first birthday there when the staff and the entire restaurant sang her Happy Birthday. All she could do was stare at the long birthday candle that came with her ice cream and then look around in amazement at all the people singing her Happy Birthday, luckily we caught it on video. It will always be a cherished family memory.

Of course, when our second daughter, Megan, came along we would also celebrate her birthday at Fentons, she was born on February 25, so during that time of year we would eat a lot of ice cream. Of course, we also come at other times of the year when we feel like a Fentons fix.

We look forward to continuing our family traditions at Fentons.

The Corbett Family

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Of all the stories you have heard about Fentons Creamery I'll bet you haven't heard this one. As a small girl living here in the area, my mother would send me down to Fentons Creamery along with a little container to be filled with their rich cream. It was the only cream that would do as far as my mother was concerned At that time, Fentons was only a creamery, no ice cream, and the front door was katty corner facing Howe and Forty-First Street.

Upon entering a bell would ring and old Mr. Fenton would shuffle out to fill the order. The windows of the creamery faced forty-first street and my cousin, who was about my age, and I would cross the street to avoid the clouds of steam that would shoot out while the bottles were being sterilized. As time passed ice cream was added to the menu and while on Forty-first Street it was a favorite haunt of the young people in the area.

Lucille

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My Aunt was married to Doug Fenton. His Great Grandfather, Elbridge Fenton, was the founder of Fentons.

I'll bet you never heard this old tale.....

One hot day, a lady came in as she did quite often. She placed her usual order, sipped her water, and was soon presented her cool creamy dessert. It wasn't but a few minutes later, she clutched her chest and fell to the floor. The staff immediately came to her aid. Someone called out to hurry and get her a doctor....And she shook her head, "No" It was against her religion. She wanted to be left there, on Fentons parlor floor, to meet her maker...And they complied... It was her wish.... Whattaya gonna do? I wish you all of the best!

Respectfully,

Cindy

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In the late eighties, I was in charge of a group of Russian students who came to the Head-Royce School from Oakland's sister city, Nakhodka.

I brought them to Fentons on the night the Cal Band was initiating its new members. The initiation consisted of seeing who could eat a Fentons banana split the fastest without using hands! Now, in Nakhodka, a small scoop of ice cream was considered a huge treat. Imagine the look on the Russian students' faces when they saw the size of the sundaes and the way the new band members were eating them! I ordered a selection of Fentons sundaes and smiled as the Russians picked up their spoons and started devouring them. (They didn't go for the idea of forgoing silverware!)

-- Wendy

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I was out with my husband, then boyfriend, on what seemed like a normal evening out. We stopped in for a sandwich and sundae, and afterward started to go for a walk. He sat down on the bench outside and took out of his pocket a small black velvet box... you know the rest.

We married the next month. It might sound to simple to be romantic, but I love that moment; it was perfect for him and for us.

We look forward to sitting on "our" bench again on our anniversary and reminiscing about the many family events we remember celebrating at Fentons.

Gina