1942, was rebuilt, and named “Whitey’s Cafe & Lounge.” The 1940’s marked the end of an era in East Grand Forks. The gambling industry was closed down in 1947, and, with the loss of traffic on the Avenue and tightening of license requirements, many nightclubs were forced to close. Whitey’s was one of the few to survive and survival meant change.

With the same enthusiasm that Whitey employed to build his “Wonderbar” he now used to build the food reputation that his Cafe and Lounge is now famous for. Whitey would settle for nothing but the best; anything else would be out of character.

Because of his enthusiasm, his constant attention to detail, and his insistence on quality, “Whitey’s” remains among the finest and most successful restaurants in the country. The wonderful food and comfortable atmosphere of “Whitey’s” still attracts people from a wide area to East Grand Forks. Started in 1925 with one employee, today “Whitey’s” employs 65 people. After five decades in a rapidly-changing world, the quality and the image, and the name of “Whitey’s” still remain in a class of their own.

Whitey’s Cafe.

MRS. JAMES (OTTA) AMBLE
Otta Skeie was born at St. Hilaire, Minnesota in 1894, the eighth of ten children born to Christian A. and Inger Berkeland Skeie. They had come from Norway to New London, Minnesota, in 1881, moving to St. Hilaire to make their home a short time later. Christian Skeie was a shoemaker and operated a second-hand store. He later homesteaded near Spooner, Minnesota. Their ten children were Arne, Nicholas, Helbertina, Caroline, Anna (now Mrs. Peter Lefald of Towner, North Dakota), Christine, Ida (Mrs. Erbie Stoyke of Park Rapids), Otta, Ella (Mrs. Julius Torgeson of Minneapolis), and Od, who is called “Died” and lives with his wife, Alice, in San Diego, California.

Samuel J. and Carrie Johnson Amble were also born in Norway, and both came to Grand Forks, where they were married in 1883. In 1906 they moved to St. Hilaire and started the Park Ridge Nursery Farm. Their five children were: Blanche, Nettie, May, James and Cleo. May, the widow of Floyd Purvis, now makes her home with her son-in-law and daughter, Robert and Fyrene Ruth in East Grand Forks.

Otta Skeie and James Arthur Amble were married at St. Hilaire in 1916. She had been postmistress there and was organist at the Lutheran church. James, a graduate of Union Commercial College in Grand Forks, was associated with his father in the nursery business and later employed in the Merchants State Bank in St. Hilaire. In 1919 they moved to Grand Forks where he became affiliated with “The American,” a daily newspaper then being published there. He then became associated with the Credit Bureau of Greater Grand Forks, which he purchased from Francis McKernan in 1925 and operated until 1937, when he sold the business to Maude M. Adams. James and Otta Amble had five children: Alva, Stanton, Raymond (who died in infancy), Anita and James Jr., who died in 1970 in California.

During World War II, James and Otta moved to the West Coast, where their children then resided. Both were employed by the R. L. Polk Company and worked in cities from California up to Seattle, Washington, where they had resided for fifteen years when he died in 1961.

Since then, Mrs. Amble has spent most of her time in East Grand Forks. For two years she lived in Bemidji, Minnesota, where her son, Stanton (“Bud”), and his family reside, returning to East Grand Forks to live when Sunshine Terrace was opened in 1971. She fell and broke a hip early in 1973 and has made her home with her son-in-law and daughter, Arthur and Alva Amundson, in East Grand Forks. Her other daughter, Anita, is married to Elton Grina and lives in Grand Forks. Otta has eighteen grandchildren and twenty-four great-grandchildren. She is a member of First Lutheran Church and their Golden Circle.

KLUNDSETERS BECOME AMUNDSONS
As was the custom, when the sons of Amund Klundseter came to the United States from Norway shortly after the turn of the century, they changed their name to Amundson, designating that they were sons of Amund. Thus Olaf, Otto, Ole and Emil Klundseter became Amundsons, while Martin and Helga, who stayed in Norway, remained Klundseter’s. Emil later returned to Norway to live, but Olaf, Otto and Ole stayed in this area — Olaf and Otto in Grand Forks and Ole at Blackduck, Minnesota, where he later died.

Otto moved to Strandquist where he married Jennie Hegstrom, and farmed for many years. After her death, he returned to Grand Forks to make his home with a son, Vernon, and both men died about ten years ago. Otto had ten children, two of whom now live in East Grand Forks.

Elmer, the oldest son of Otto, is a retired truck driver and lives in East Grand Forks with his wife, Minnie, and daughter, Jennifer. They also have three married children, Bonnie (now Mrs. Thomas Todd), Elroy and Donna (Mrs. Kenneth Huff), Minnie’s father, Charles Nelson, is a resident of Good Samaritan Nursing Home and in good health for his ninety years.

The other son of Otto Amundson who lives in East Grand Forks is Dale, who drives for Dan Dugan. He and his wife, Florence, have seven children: Gerald, Roger, Daniel and Elaine, all married, and Ronald, Debbie and Dale Jr. at home.

Olaf Amundson married Rena Nygaard at Grand Forks in 1911. She was a native of Oslo, Norway, and all of her relatives had remained over there. Olaf was a cement contractor and later worked for the city of Grand Forks. He died in 1952 and Rena died in 1965.

Olaf and Rena had nine children, all of whom are still living. Roy lives in the family home built by his father in 1911. Margaret is married to Lawrence Stauing and they live in Grand Forks. Lillian (Mrs. Wilbur Hemenover) and Helen (Mrs. Kurt Schmuck) both live in California. Donald and Maybelle (Mrs. Earl Bushy) live in Denver. Arthur, Gladys (Mrs. Harold Rosenberg) and Dorothy (Mrs. J. Howard Olson) all live in East Grand Forks.