The Original

BURGER KING







Gene Hoots purchased the Frigid Queen building and business from his uncle, Bill Paullin in 1952.

Closing Sale

Free with each 2 qts. of Frigid Queen 1 can of chocolate syrup and 1 doz. empty cones. Lemon, strawberry, chocolate and vanilla in qts. or pts. Closing Sunday, Oct. 23.

FRIGID QUEEN
1508 Charleston Avenue



FRIGID QUEEN
OPEN FOR SEASON

Saturday and Sunday Special
TWO CONES FOR PRICE OF ONE
All Milk Shakes 10c

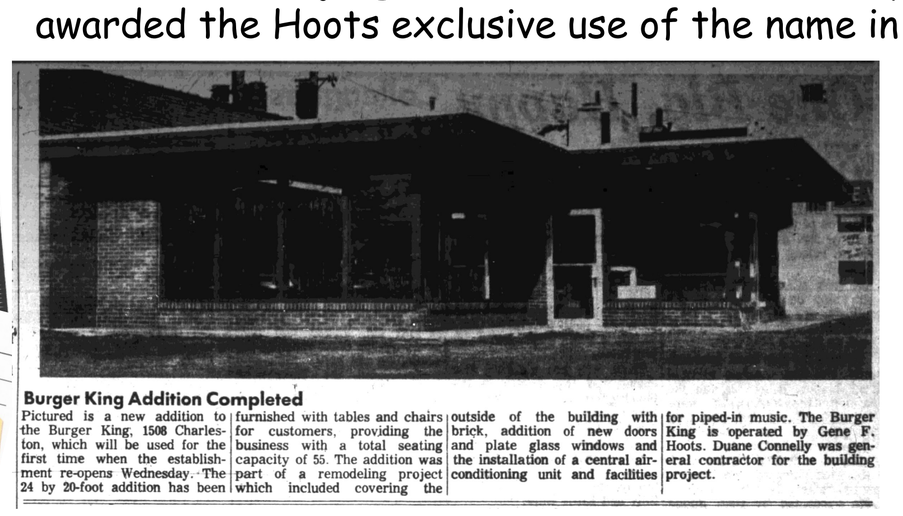
Vanilla Cones Everyday
Strawberry Cones Tuesday
Lemon Cones Thursday
Chocolate Cones All Other Days
All four flavors in quarts and pints at all times
1508 Charleston Ave.



In 1954 in order to even out the seasonal soft serve business, Gene began offering hamburgers and French fries. By this time, married to Betty they acquired the empty Schudel Laundry building on the back of the lot and moved the Frigid Queen building alongside it. They enclosed them together and named the hamburger business Burger King.

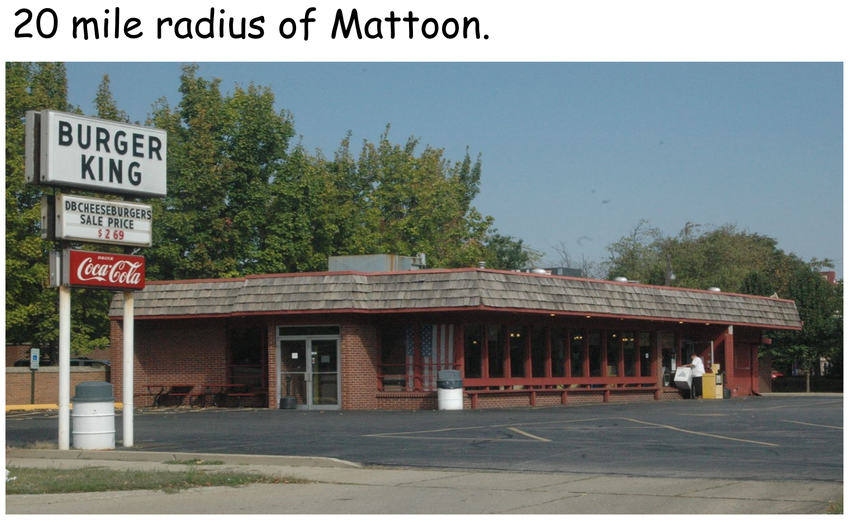


Business was good and growing and then along came a challenge from a chain based in Tampa Florida called Burger King. The chain, also founded in 1954, was expanding nationally and set to open its first Illinois location in Skokie, in 1961.. They discovered that Gene and Betty had registered the name in Illinois and a protracted legal battle ensued. In 1968 a Federal judge made a "Good Faith" exception to the chains' National trademark and awarded the Hoots exclusive use of the name in a 20 mile radius of Mattoon.



Burger King Addition Completed

Pictured is a new addition to the Burger King, 1508 Charleston, which will be used for the first time when the establishment re-opens Wednesday. The 24 by 20-foot addition has been furnished with tables and chairs for customers, providing the business with a total seating capacity of 55. The addition was part of a remodeling project which included covering the outside of the building with brick, addition of new doors and plate glass windows and the installation of a central air-conditioning unit and facilities for piped-in music. The Burger King is operated by Gene F. Hoots. Duane Connelly was general contractor for the building project.



The original building was expanded and updated several times over the years.
Through all of the years, Gene and Betty worked side by side in the business. Betty could be found every noon shift "dressing" hamburgers and helping Gene to keep things flowing smoothly.

Customers are still appreciative of the iconic manila number tag, the lined order card and the sacker calling out the numbers. "Number thirty niiiine!"

In the years before fast food franchises were scattered up and down Charleston Avenue and Lakeland Boulevard, it was not uncommon for the Burger King to serve 2,000 hamburgers on a Friday or Saturday. Generations of little leaguers have lined up outside the Burger King, after a game, for the special 25 cent milk shakes that have become a



Submitte
A Mattoon soldier serving in Vietnam sent this photo of himself to Burger King letting them know missed their hamburgers.



No Whoppers here
Burger King one-of-a-kind restaurant
MATTOON (AP) —

The Burger King gained national attention in August of 1998 when 140 newspapers nationwide picked up an Associated Press story about the Mattoon Burger King. As a result of the AP story, the NBC Today Show did a feature on September 4, 1998.



In 2015, Gene and Betty Hoots, both well into their 80's, decided to retire and sold the Burger King to a group of local businessmen lead by Cory Sanders.
On March 3, 2017, longtime Burger King employee and manager, Ernie Drummond and his wife Jodi purchased the business and have maintained the original operating style begun by Gene and Betty in 1952.
Gene Hoots passed away on December 2, 2017.
Betty Hoots passed away on June 3, 2019.