

**DOWNTOWN LAZARUS**

# The last grand dame bows out

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THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

When Lazarus-Macy's switches off the lights late today for the last time at its huge Downtown store, it will mark the end of an era in which big, central-city department stores ruled the retail roost across Ohio.

Most of the large buildings — some more than a century old — still stand, but they're now offices or condominiums. Some sit vacant, stark reminders of a time when central business districts were the hub of a community's commerce.

Cleveland had several "legacy" downtown stores, including May, Higbee's and Halle's. Cincinnati's retail landscape included Shillito's, McAlpin's and Pogue's. Dayton had Rike's and Youngstown was dominated by Strouss.

All, and more, are gone, victims of changing shopping patterns.

"As consumers and residential populations moved out of the city centers to the suburbs and then beyond the outerbelts, the big downtown department stores became irrelevant," retail-industry expert Lois Huff said.

Department-store owners just "followed the people and the money," she said, building smaller stores closer to where people lived.

Meanwhile, consumer lifestyles and needs also changed. As more women worked rather than staying home, starting particularly in the 1960s, their time became more important.

"People wanted the benefit of going to a mall location, where you can do a lot of

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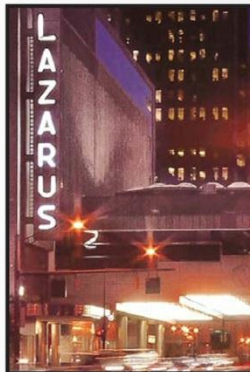
**AKRON | O'Neill's**  
Open: 1928 to 1988  
Current use: city, business offices



**CINCINNATI | Shillito's, Lazarus**  
Open: 1878 to 1997  
Current use: lofts



**CLEVELAND | May Co., Kaufmann's**  
Open: 1914 to 1993  
Current use: offices



**DOWNTOWN | Lazarus**  
Open: 1909 to 2004  
Future use: offices

► Coming Sunday: A look at what's in store for Lazarus-Macy's



**TOLEDO | Lasalle's**  
Open: 1917 to 1984  
Current use: apartments, offices

## Trading spaces

Major Ohio downtown department-store buildings, which opened during or before 1932 and closed in or after 1968, and their current use.

### AKRON

#### ► Polsky's

Opened: 1930  
Store closed: 1978  
Current use: University of Akron offices and classes.

#### ► O'Neil's

Opened: 1928  
Store closed: 1988  
Current use: city, business offices and restaurant

### CLEVELAND

#### ► Halle's

Opened: 1910  
Store closed: 1982  
Current use: offices

#### ► May Co. (later Kaufmann's)

Opened: 1914  
Store closed: 1993  
Current use: offices

#### ► Higbee's (later Dillard's)

Opened: 1931  
Store closed: 2002  
Current use: vacant

#### ► Sterling-Lindner Davis

Opened: 1910  
Store closed: 1968  
Current use: offices, retail

### CINCINNATI

#### ► McAlpin's

Opened: 1877  
Store closed: 1996



FILE PHOTO

The old Lazarus store on 7th and Race streets in Cincinnati closed in 1997. The building, which opened in 1878 as Shillito's, was converted into lofts.

Current use: vacant

#### ► Mabley & Carew (later Elder-Beerman)

Opened: 1907  
Store closed: 1986  
Building demolished.

#### ► Shillito's (later Lazarus)

Building opened: 1878 (numerous later additions)  
Store closed: 1997

Current use: lofts

#### ► Poguc's (later L.S. Ayres)

Building opened: 1932  
Store closed: 1988  
Current use: Tower Place Mall

### COLUMBUS

#### ► Lazarus

Building opened: 1909  
Store closed: 2004  
Future use: offices

#### ► The Union

Building opened: 1904  
Store closed: 1968 (the business moved to S. High St. and, as Halle's, closed in 1982)  
Current use: offices

### DAYTON

#### ► Rike's (later Lazarus)

Building opened: 1912  
Store closed: 1992

Building demolished in 1999. Now the site of a performing arts center.

### TOLEDO

#### ► Lasalle's (later Macy's)

Building opened: 1917  
Store closed: 1984  
Current use: apartments, offices

#### ► Lion Store

Building opened: 1890  
Store closed: 1980  
Building demolished in 1987. Now the site of offices.

#### ► Lamson's

Building opened: 1928  
Store closed: 1974  
Current use: offices

#### ► Tiedtke's

Building opened: 1910  
Store closed: 1973 (At least one Annex Building at this time)  
Building destroyed by fire in 1975

### YOUNGSTOWN

#### ► Strouss

Building opened: 1926  
Store closed: 1986  
Current use: mostly vacant.

Source: Dispatch library staff

## GRAND

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different shopping in one place," said Huff, senior vice president of Retail Forward, a Columbus-based retail consulting and market-research firm.

Getting to the suburban malls was usually easier, and the parking was free. Meanwhile, low-cost merchandisers such as Kohl's, Target and Wal-Mart took buyers from the older department stores.

"The department stores are still perceived as targeting higher-end consumers," said Shelby McIntyre, professor of marketing at Santa Clara University's Retail Management Institute.

What happened in central Ohio played out years ago across much of the country. The Lazarus-Macy's store lasted longer than most, in part because it was tied to Columbus City Center, the Downtown mall that opened in 1989.

While a couple of Ohio's major cities still have downtown department stores — Kauf-

mann's at City Center and Lazarus-Macy's and Saks Fifth Avenue in Cincinnati — those are newer, smaller units, not the giant stores that offered everything.

Many observers say the department-store concept began with Bon Marche in Paris, which was launched in 1838 but evolved into a department store in 1852.

The first U.S. department store was created by Mormons in Salt Lake City. The Zion's Co-operative Mercantile Institution built a three-story brick build-

ing in 1876 where merchants joined together for a community store.

About the same time, several American entrepreneurial retailers were launching retail businesses.

These included Rowland Macy and Lyman and Joseph Bloomingdale in New York, Marshall Field in Chicago, David May in Denver and John Wanamaker in Philadelphia. Another was Simon Lazarus in Columbus.

It took another few decades for the huge downtown Ameri-

can department stores to rise — Hudson's in Detroit in 1893, Macy's in New York in 1902, Wanamaker's in Philadelphia 1903 and Marshall Field's in Chicago in 1907.

The Downtown Lazarus-Macy's store opened in 1909.

Now, only a small number of the big, old downtown department stores remain, such as Marshall Field's and Carson Pirie Scott in Chicago, Bloomingdale's and Macy's in New York, Famous-Barr in St. Louis and Kaufmann's in Pittsburgh.

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## A history

- ▶ 1851: German immigrant Simon Lazarus opens a one-room men's clothing store at S. High and Town streets.
- ▶ 1870s: Fred Lazarus Sr. and Ralph Lazarus join their father, Simon, in the business. After Simon Lazarus dies in 1877, his sons expand the store.
- ▶ 1909: Lazarus moves across the street to a six-story, 115,000-square-foot store, its current site. The store adds women's and children's clothing. The store includes an escalator and chirping canaries.
- ▶ 1912: Lazarus passes \$1 million in annual sales.
- ▶ 1920: A building is added on High Street to make room for merchandise such as cameras and yard goods.
- ▶ 1928: Lazarus buys Shillito's in Cincinnati.
- ▶ 1929: Lazarus joins with Filene's of Boston and Abraham & Strauss of Brooklyn to form Federated Department Stores.
- ▶ 1934: Lazarus becomes the first store to establish a credit union.
- ▶ 1941: To lengthen the holiday shopping season, Fred Lazarus Jr., grandson of Simon Lazarus, launches a campaign to move Thanksgiving to the fourth Thursday in November. The idea is supported by President Roosevelt.
- ▶ 1946: Lazarus opens a housewares and appliance store at the former site of Columbus Auditorium.
- ▶ 1947: Its first Downtown parking garage opens.
- ▶ 1962: Lazarus opens its first branch store in what now is Westland Mall.



- ▶ 1964: Lazarus opens at Northland Mall.
- ▶ 1966: Lazarus opens at Eastland Mall.
- ▶ 1971: Lazarus opens at Kingsdale Shopping Center.
- ▶ 1986: Lazarus merges with Shillito-Rikes and moves its headquarters to Cincinnati. Columbus loses 900 jobs.
- ▶ 1988: Campeau Corp. mounts a hostile takeover of Federated. A month later, 1,200 Lazarus jobs are cut, including 150 Downtown.
- ▶ 1989: Columbus City Center opens next to Lazarus. Downtown store sales rise 40 percent.
- ▶ 1990: Campeau declares bankruptcy. Ownership reverts to Federated when bankruptcy ends in 1992.
- ▶ 1995: Federated merges Lazarus with Rich's and Goldsmith's and moves its headquarters to Atlanta.
- ▶ 1997: Lazarus signs a deal to renovate parts of the Downtown store for Ohio Environmental Protection Agency offices. The same year, Lazarus opens at the Mall at Tuttle Crossing.
- ▶ 2001: Lazarus opens at Polaris Fashion Place and Easton Town Center, the latter a prototype for future stores.
- ▶ August 2003: **Macy's** is added to the Lazarus name.
- ▶ October 2003: Lazarus-Macy's announces plans to close the Downtown store.
- ▶ Saturday: Scheduled closing date for the Downtown store.

Sources: *Dispatch* research; *Columbus: America's Crossroads*, by Betty Garrett with Edward R. Lentz