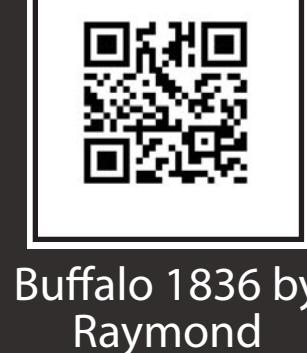


From Genesee Square to Roosevelt Plaza

1800	
1804	- Joseph Ellicott lays out streets of Buffalo.
1810	
1813	- British attack and burn Buffalo.
1820	
1822	- Buffalo dredges harbor, secures Erie Canal Western terminus.
1820's	- Major Andre Andrews builds a farmhouse at the site of the Electric Tower.
1825	- Erie Canal opens, bringing growth and development. - 5-7 E Genesee were built.
1830	
1830-1831	- Thomas Spicer has a wagon shop on the south side of Genesee Square.
1836	
1837	- Financial panic/economic recession.
1840	
1850	
1855-1881	- John Chretien has a leather & shoe store at 5 E Genesee.
1860	
1870	
1880	
1881	- Courtesy of the Buffalo History Museum
1898	- Spanish-American war
1890	
1900	
1910	
1912	- Buffalo General Electric Building is built, the tallest building in Buffalo.
1920	- Hikers Monument is installed.
1921	- Century Theatre opens as Loews Theater.
1924	- 1st expansion at the Electric Tower.
1926	- 2nd extension at the Electric Tower.
1927	- Courtesy of the Buffalo History Museum
1928	- Loew's Theater becomes Kenmore Theater; then Century Theatre.
1929	- Standard Shoe Repair opens at 9 E. Genesee; Howard's Credit Jewelers opens at 5 E. Genesee.
1930	
1930's	- Electric Building is named the Niagara Mohawk Building.
1935	- Courtesy of the Buffalo History Museum
1938	- Howard's Jewelers moves around the corner from 5 E. Genesee to 535 Main.
1939	- Century Theatre purchased by Dipson and Basil; becomes D&B Century.
1940	- Dipson anti-monopoly movie distribution lawsuit against Michael Shea.
1950	- Century Theatre modernized.
1960	
1965	- Buffalo News names Century Theatre best kept downtown theater.
1970	- Harvey and Corky purchase Century Theatre for rock concerts.
1972	- Courtesy of the Buffalo History Museum
1978	- Urban Mass Transportation Administration agrees to fund Metro Rail construction.
1979	- Century Theatre demolished.
1980	
1982	- Metro Rail construction closes Main Street to automobile traffic.
1982	- City of Buffalo Office of Strategic Planning
1985	- Buffalo Place Inc.
1988	- First New Year's Eve ball drop at the Electric Tower.
1990	
1992	- Standard Shoe Repair closes at 9 E. Genesee.
1993	- \$5.5 million restoration project at the Electric Tower. Bagel Brothers opens at 5-7 E. Genesee.
1998	- Arby's closes at 537 Main. Grever's Flower Shop opens.
1999	- Howard's Credit Jewelers at 535 Main closes after 70 years.
2000	
2003	- Electric Tower sold to Iskalo Development.
2005	- Texas Red Hots opens at 5 & 7 E. Genesee.
2006	- Grever's Flower Shop closes.
2007	- Electric Tower reopens after \$1.8 million restoration.
2008	- Electric Tower on National Register.
2010	
2011	- Buffalo Place Inc.
2014	- 9 E. Genesee renovated as a private home with first floor restaurant space.
2015	- 537 Main Street renovated as a private home with first floor restaurant space. Restoration of 5-7 E. Genesee is underway.
	Opening of Main Street to Traffic - Fountain Plaza/500 Block.



MAP OF BUFFALO VILLAGE INNER LOTS
Drawing by J. E. Smith

Site of Future Buffalo Savings Bank Building

SUNY Buffalo State Archives & Special Collections, Courier Express Collection



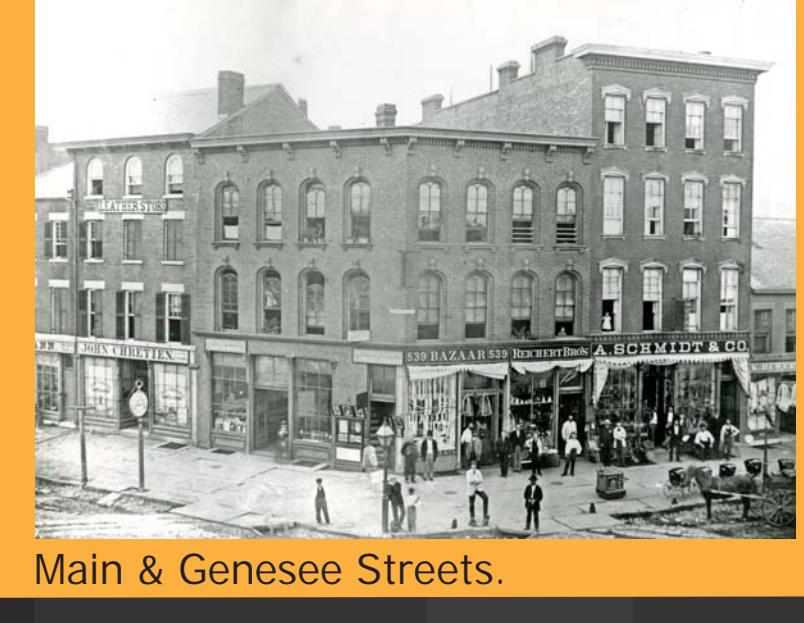
Living Above the Store

The buildings standing on Genesee Street east of Main are likely the oldest buildings in downtown Buffalo, built after the Erie Canal and railroad brought westward migration and delivered Midwest farm bounty to the East. The brick buildings would have been similar to the style of Benjamin Rathbun, Buffalo's first building entrepreneur whose empire collapsed in a financial scandal in 1836.

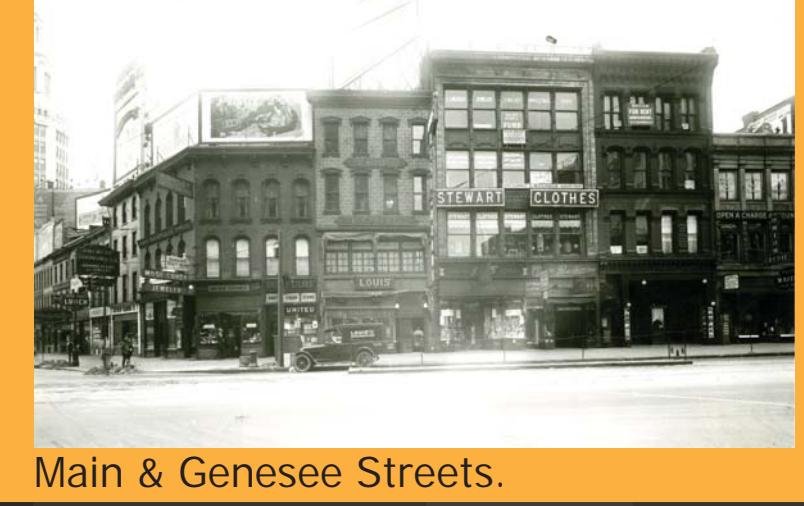
The Genesee Block at 5 - 9 E. Genesee was built in 1825, and has returned to its original utilization after 90 years, with commercial uses once again limited to the ground floor and residential above.

Similarly, 535 Main around the corner, was built in 1851 with A. Schmidt & Co. in the storefront and residential upstairs. As downtown prospered, the space was taken over by commercial businesses until they eventually went vacant in the mid-20th century. Now after full restoration, residential upper floors are back with a restaurant on the first floor.

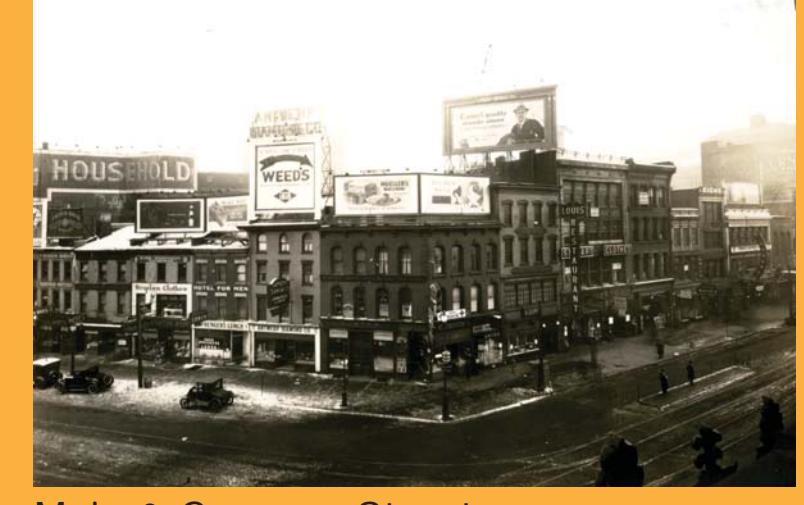
In the 1830s, author Samuel Welch recalled the wagon shop of Thomas Spicer at the corner of Main and Genesee. The current building at 537 Main, built in 1860, is again residential on the upper floors with restaurant space below.



Main & Genesee Streets.



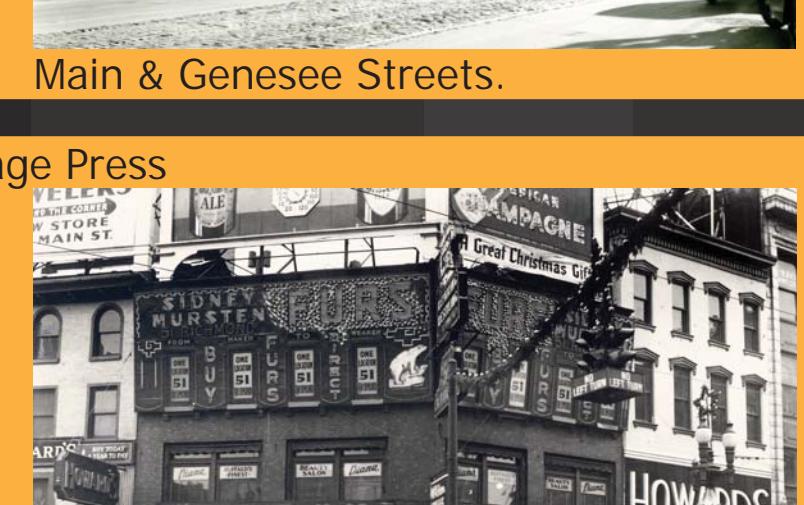
Main & Genesee Streets.



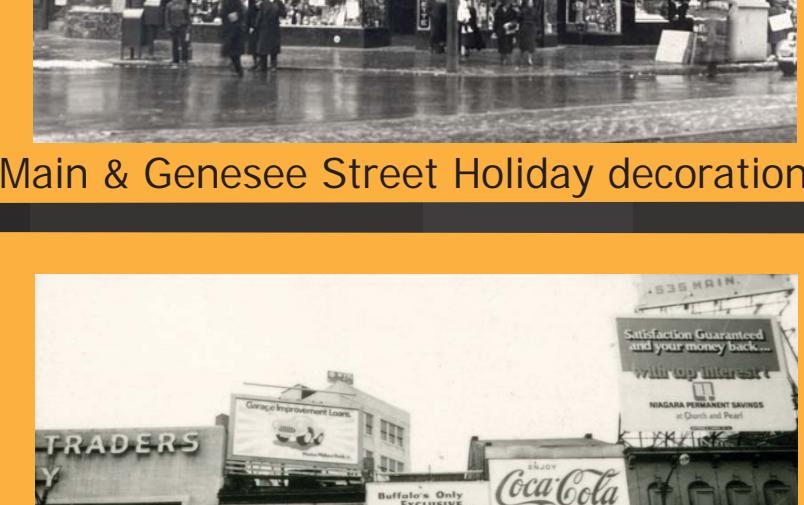
Main & Genesee Streets.



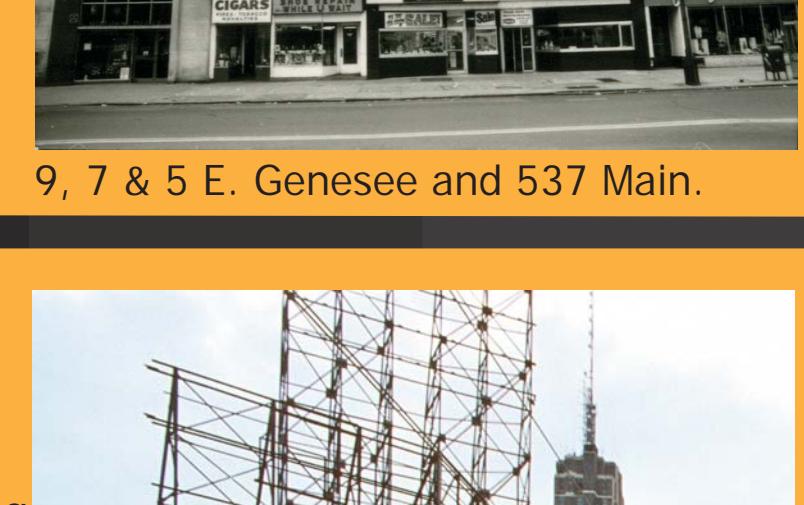
Main & Genesee Streets.



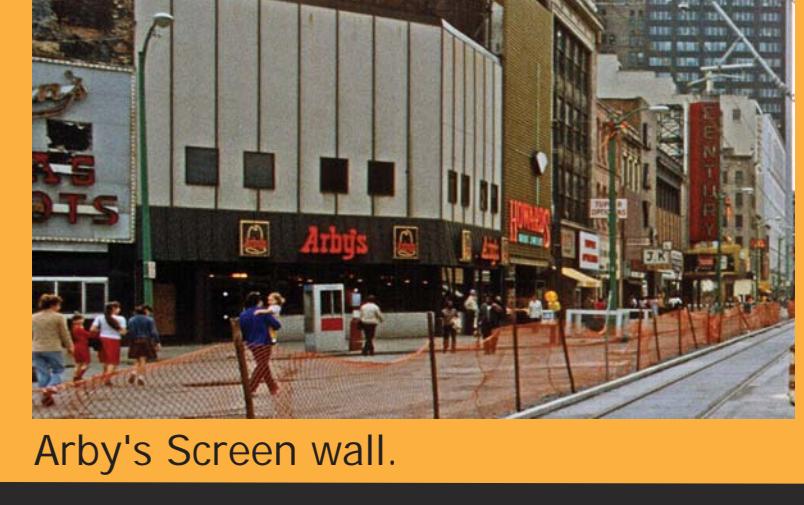
Main & Genesee Streets.



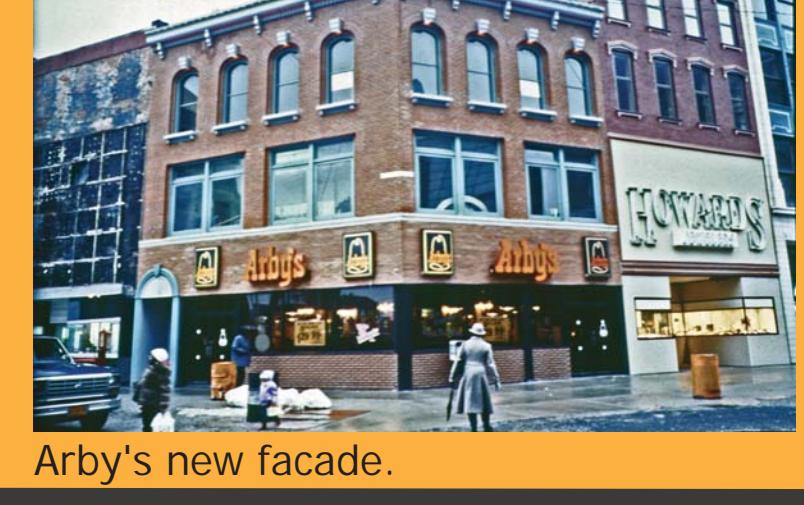
Main & Genesee Street Holiday decorations.



9, 7 & 5 E. Genesee and 537 Main.



Arby's Screen wall.



Arby's new facade.



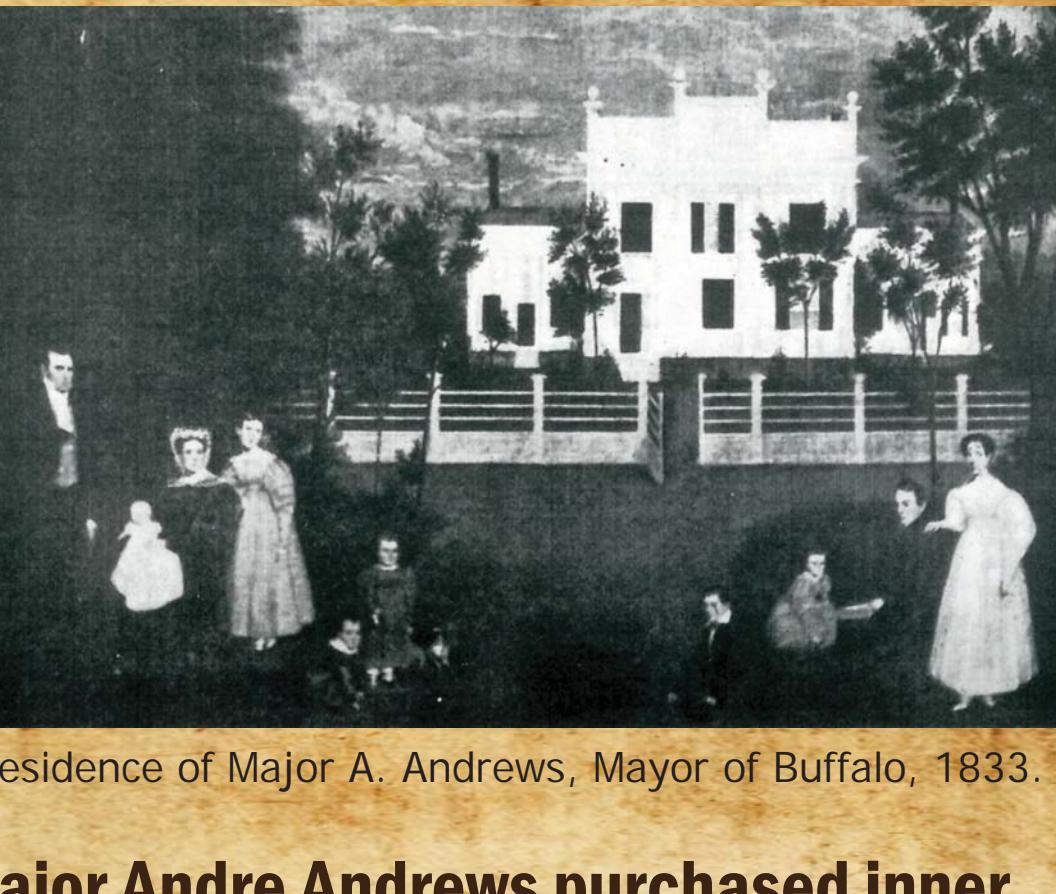
Before renovation.

First Residents

The lots surrounding Genesee Square, as the intersection of Main and Genesee Streets became known, were sold to private owners after the opening of the Erie Canal.

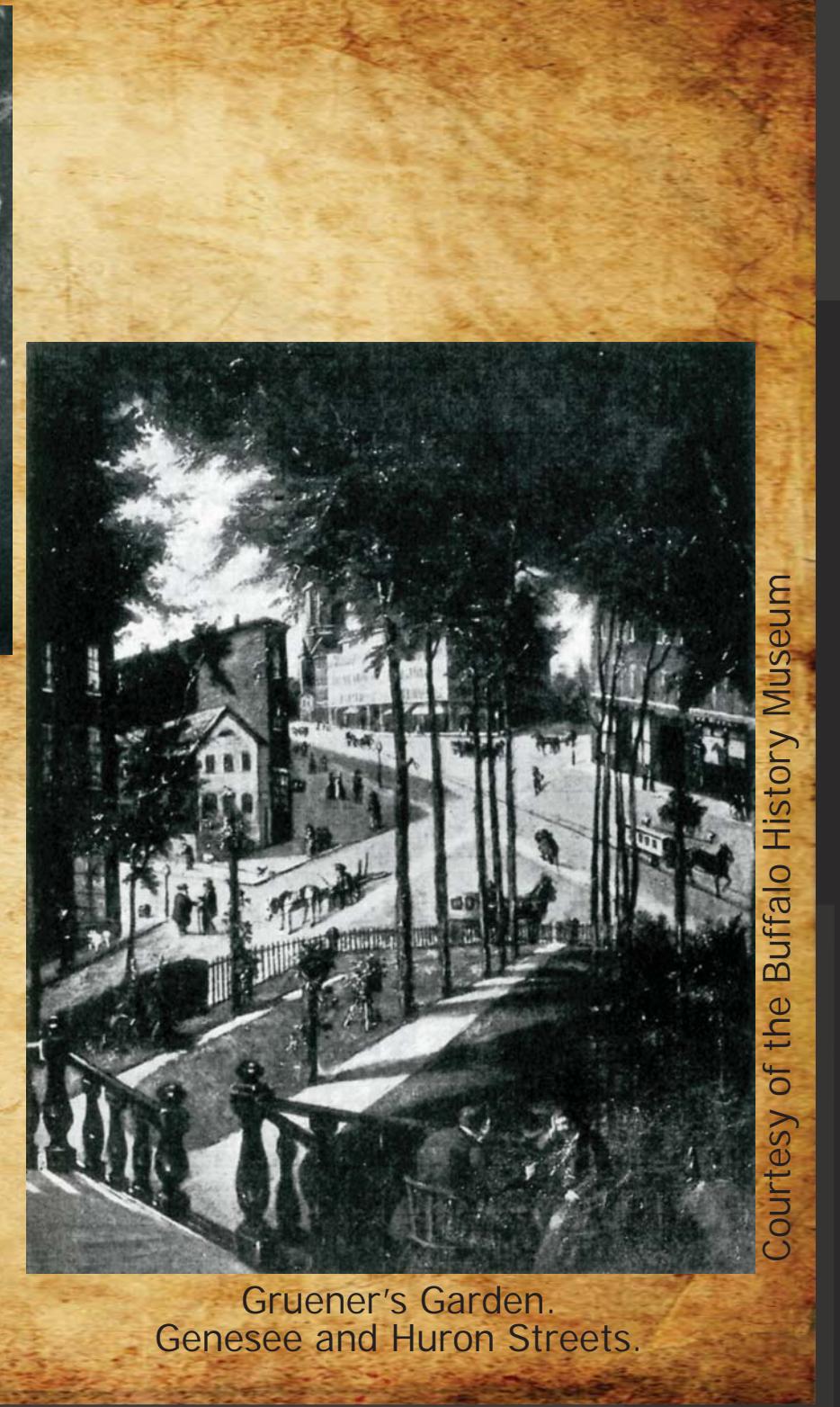
Moses Baker purchased lots 24 and 26 on the north and south sides of the square in 1826 and 1833. He was an active early citizen, serving as a village trustee for eight years, and as an alderman after Buffalo was incorporated as a city. Baker's rented space on east Main between Mohawk and Genesee was the temporary site for Court proceedings following the burning of Buffalo in 1813. He built the building that stood at the site of Buffalo Savings Bank from the 1830s to 1889.

Courtesy of the Buffalo History Museum



Residence of Major A. Andrews, Mayor of Buffalo, 1833.

Major Andre Andrews purchased inner lots 202 and 203 in 1828 where he built a "rural attractive home" on the sizable lot that became the site of the Electric Building. He was a lawyer and served as an alderman before becoming the second mayor of Buffalo in 1833. Andrews died of cholera the next year.



Courtesy of the Buffalo History Museum

Electric Tower

Buffalo's Electric Tower opened on September 21, 1912 to showcase the revolutionary power of electricity for the Buffalo General Electric Company, which used it as their headquarters and to showcase modern electrical appliances. The building was modeled after the 1901 Pan-American Exposition Tower of Light, and the Pharos Lighthouse of Alexandria, one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. It was designed in the Beaux-Arts style by local architect Eisenwein & Johnson, and was one of the world's first fully electrified buildings.



1912 Buffalo General Electric Company Building. Courtesy Iskalo Development Corporation

The Tower has always been known for colored light displays during holidays and events. In 1926 it was studded with 44,000 lights and had a massive searchlight on its finial so powerful that it could be seen by residents of Niagara Falls. Since 1988, the building has been the site of Buffalo's own annual New Year's Eve Ball Drop.

Iskalo Development acquired the building in 2004 after the merger of former owner Niagara Mohawk Power Corporation with National Grid. After 18 months of planning and design, and 15 months of construction, the historic property was rededicated in 2007, winning awards for the quality of the restoration. The revitalization of the historic Electric Tower is a symbol of Buffalo's renaissance and recognition as a truly great American city.

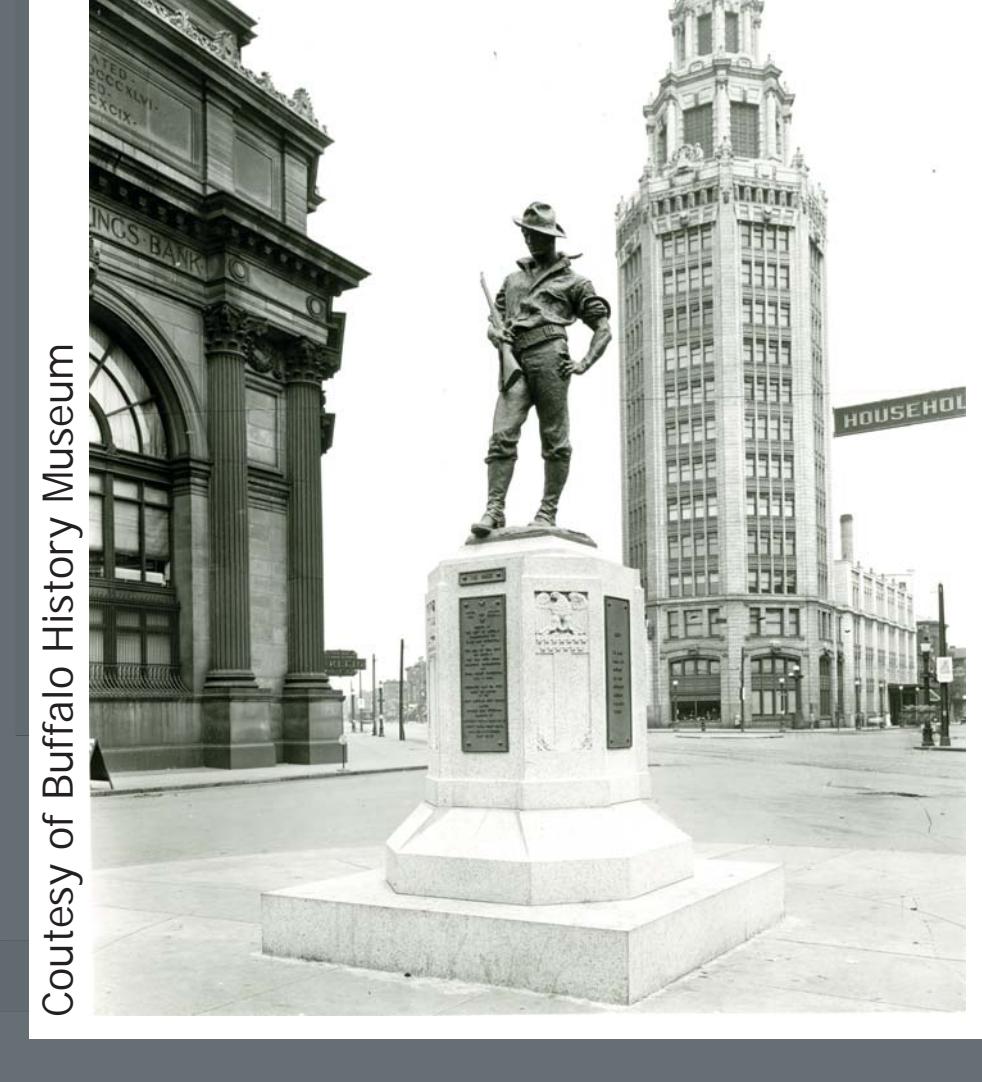


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Hiker Monument

The Hiker was erected on May 29, 1920 to memorialize the Americans who volunteered for service in the popularly supported Spanish-American and Philippine-American Wars between 1898-1902. Assistant Secretary of the Navy Theodore Roosevelt resigned his post to organize the first US Volunteer Cavalry, who became known as Roosevelt's "Rough Riders" for their efforts in Cuba. They were joined by "Buffalo's Own Regiment," a battalion of the 13th United States Infantry, and later by volunteers from the 65th and 74th Regiments of the New York National Guard. During these wars, volunteer infantry men referred to themselves casually as "hikers."

The Hiker, copyrighted by sculptor Allen G. Newman in 1904, was described by an art critic of the time as, "the best bronze soldier in America." Through the efforts of the United Spanish War Veterans organization, identical statues are installed in 20 locations including New York City, Niagara Falls, and Arlington National Cemetery. The adjacent plaza is named for Theodore Roosevelt in honor of his Spanish-American War service, and to commemorate his swearing in as President in 1901, following the assassination of William McKinley at the Pan-American Exposition.

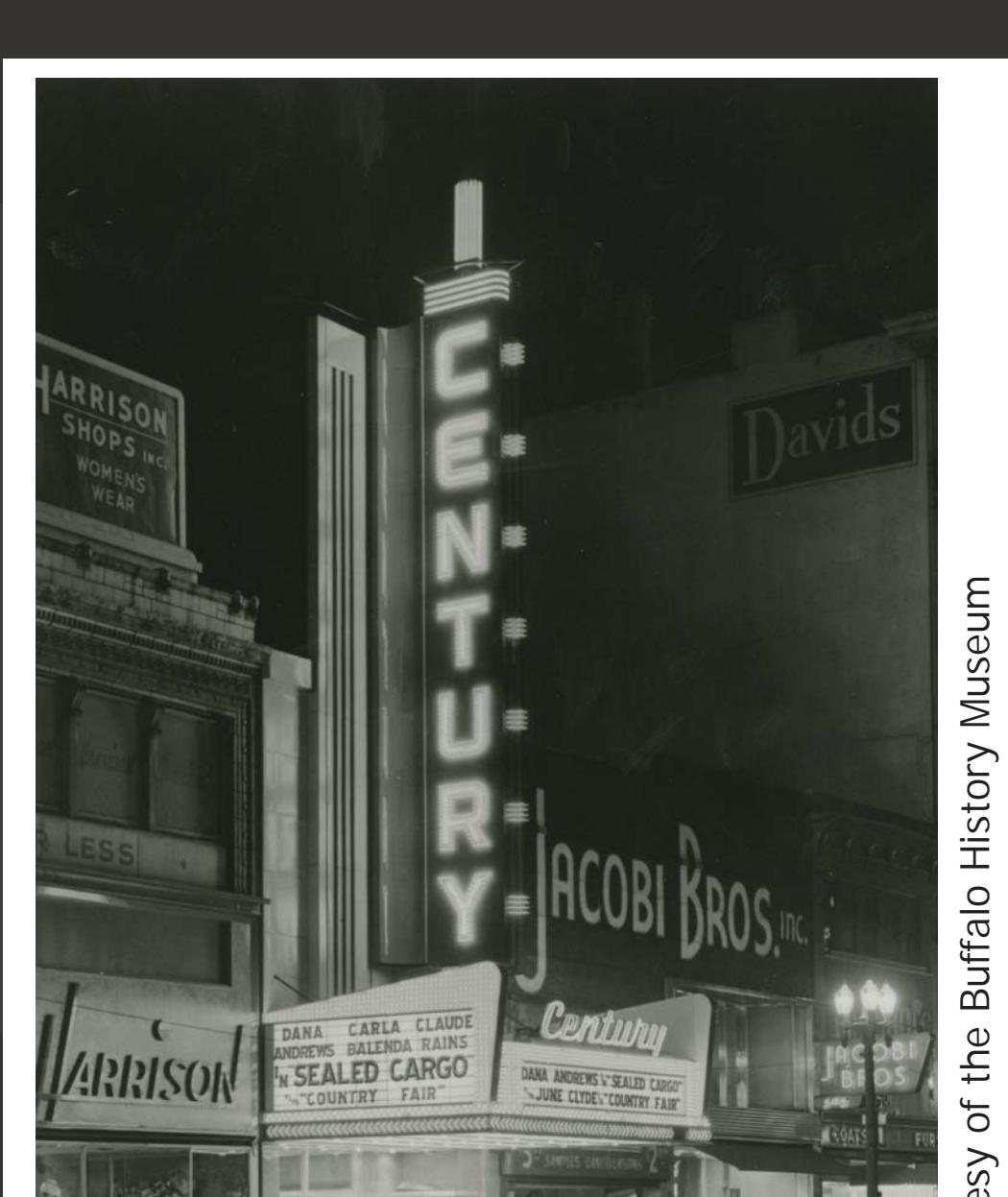


More Detail about Hiker Monument

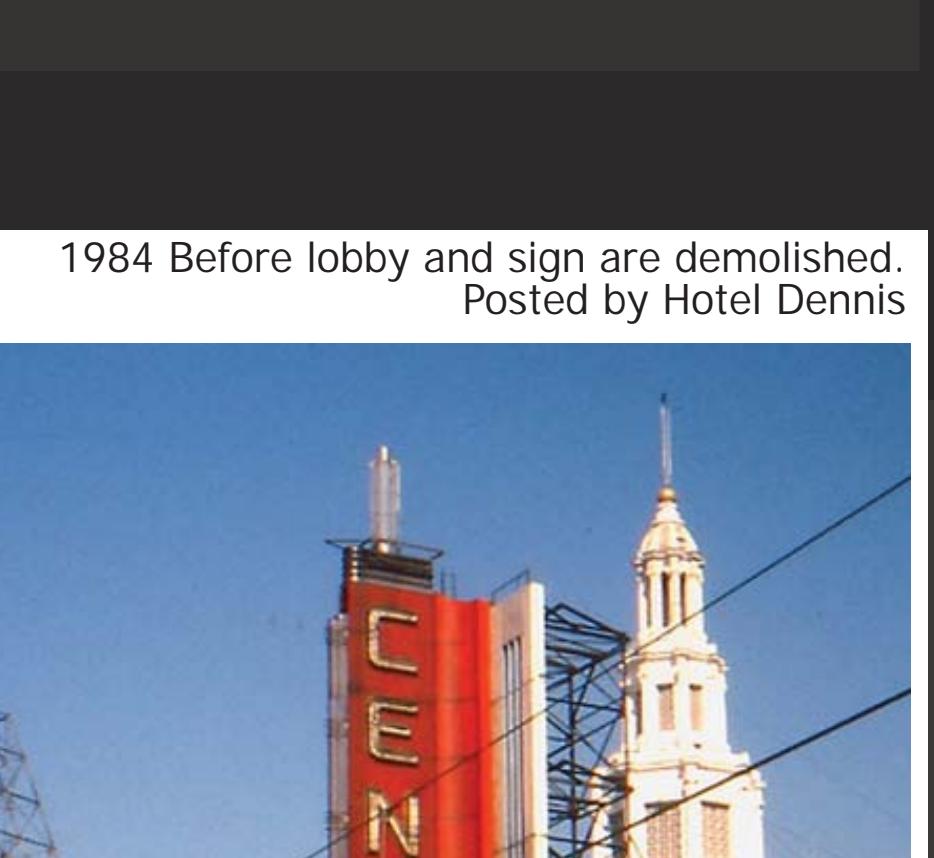
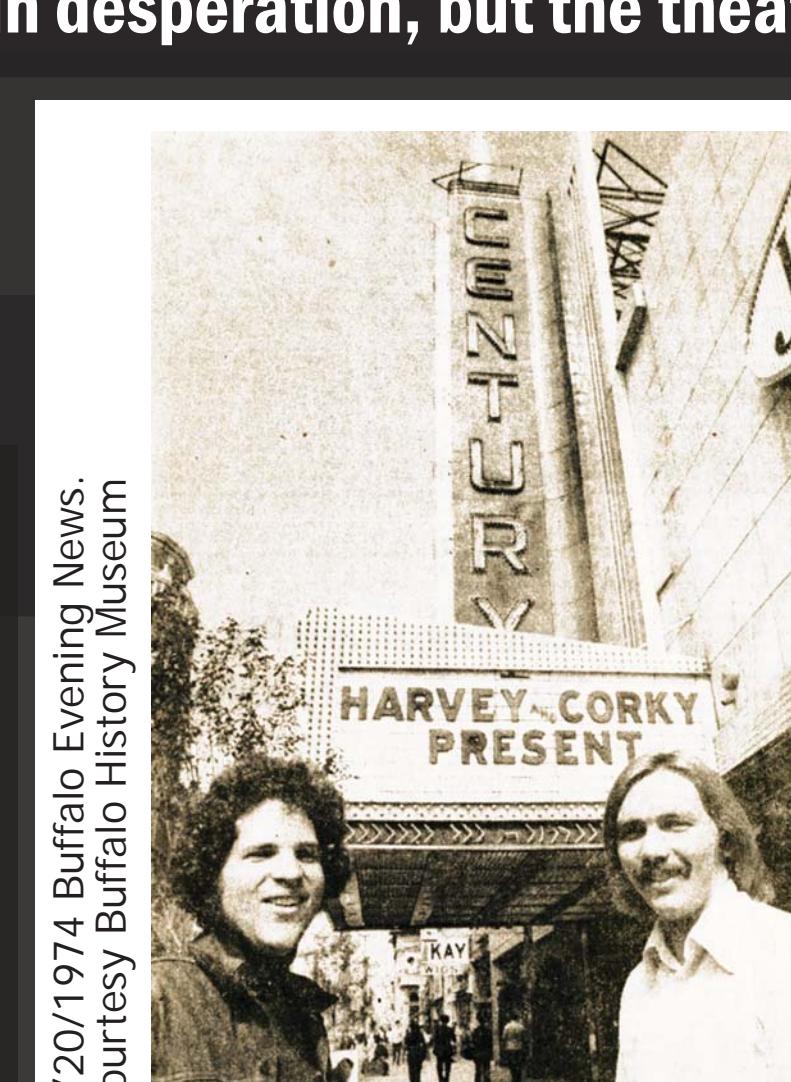
Century Theatre

Just around the corner, the Century Theatre opened in style in 1921 with a Main Street parade. Concern about how this Lowe's movie house would compete against Michael Shea's chain were forgotten when a sellout crowd of 3,000 attended the opening night vaudeville show and silent movie. Tickets cost 30 and 40 cents. Michael Shea leased Century Theatre in 1929. His secret for surviving the Depression was offering the lowest ticket price on Main Street, 10 cents less than the Hippodrome.

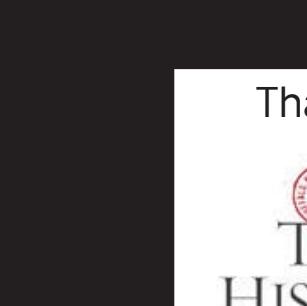
Nikitas Dipson took over in 1939, invested \$50,000, and sold tickets for 10 to 25 cents. The 1940 lawsuit against Michael Shea for monopolistic practices demonstrated the rancor between the competing theater businesses. Dipson modernized in 1950 to counter suburban competition. The Buffalo News named Century as the best kept theater in downtown in 1965, but patronage fell. X-rated films were offered in desperation, but the theater closed in 1971.



Courtesy of the Buffalo History Museum



Thank you to our partners for providing the included images.



More Detail about Century Theatre

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