

J. F. DARMODY COMPANY BUILDING
(Commercial Building)
25-27 West Maryland Street
Indianapolis
Marion County
Indiana

HABS No. IN-220

HABS
IND
49-IND,
47-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDING SURVEY
MID-ATLANTIC REGION, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA 19106

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J.F. DARMODY COMPANY BUILDING
(Commercial Building)

Location:

25-27 West Maryland Street
Indianapolis, Marion County, Indiana

USGS Indianapolis West, Indiana Quadrangle
Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates
16.572 020.4401 920

Present Owner:

Si-Roose, Inc.
P.O. Box 7033
Indianapolis, Indiana

Present Occupant
and Use:

Architectural and construction field office, on first
and second floors only, all others are vacant.

Significance:

Built in two phases 1904-05 and 1911, following the designs of architect P.C. Rubush and later Rubush & Hunter, the J.F. Darmody Company Building functioned as a confectionery and wholesale outlet for the Darmody firm. It is an early design of Rubush & Hunter, one of the most important and prolific architectural firms in Indianapolis history. Candy making was one of several industries located within the Indianapolis Wholesale District. Established during the Civil War, the Wholesale District served the city and central Indiana until after the Second World War as a source of wholesale products ranging from clothing to groceries and cigars. The J.F. Darmody Company Building is a contributing structure in the Indianapolis Union Station-Wholesale District, listed in The National Register of Historic Places on July 14, 1982.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: The J.F. Darmody Company Building (to be referred to as the Darmody Building) was constructed in two phases. The basement and first three stories were erected in 1904-05 and three additional stories were added in 1911 (Rubush & Hunter Collection, Architectural Archives, Indiana Historical Society Library, Indianapolis).
2. Architect: The Indianapolis architectural firm of P.C. Rubush & Co. designed the original three-story structure. In 1905 Preston C. Rubush (1867-1947) joined architect Edgar O. Hunter (1873-1949) to form Rubush & Hunter which became one of Indianapolis' most famous and prolific architectural firms. Darmody turned to Rubush & Hunter in 1911 to enlarge his building by three stories. The firm of Rubush & Hunter was extremely active in this period designing many of the skyscrapers immediately before the First World War and up to the Great Depression. The firm designed many commercial buildings in a variety of styles and materials, including theaters (Circle Theater, 1916; Indiana Theater, 1927; and Walker Theater, 1927), office buildings (Occidental Building, 1914, HABS No. IN-211; Circle Tower, 1930), hotels (Hotel Lincoln, 1918-1972), and industrial buildings (Coca-Cola Company building, 1931). The firm also designed many houses, apartment buildings, clubhouses, and retail commercial buildings. The firm often used sculpted Indiana limestone in styles ranging from Neo-Classical to Art Deco (Patricia J. Casler, "The Architecture of Rubush and Hunter." Master's thesis, Columbia University, 1985).
3. Original and subsequent owners: John F. Darmody purchased the property in 1903 (Marion County Recorder's Office, MCRO, Deed Book 357, March 21, 1903) and had the building constructed and completed in 1904 as indicated by a mechanics lien (MCRO, Book 45, p.135, October 21, 1904). The Darmody interests sold the structure in 1945 to a person named Davis who sold it the following year to L.S. Ayres & Co. Department Store. Ayres used the building as a warehouse and sold it in 1973 to Campbell Circular Advertising Co. In 1982 Mermac Development Co. purchased the building, but had been leasing and remodeling it since 1974 into the Gift Mart showroom for giftware manufacturers' representatives. Group Americal Inc. purchased the building in 1984 and that year announced its intentions to rehabilitate the building as a hotel ("Gift Mart Hotel Planned, Indianapolis News, June 28, 1984, p.35). Group Americal's president Louis Pack was also a partner in Southeast Development

Partnership which took possession of the building in 1986, selling it in 1987 to Si-Roose, Inc., an affiliate of Melvin Simon & Associates, Inc. ("Simons Buy Gift Mart to Make Way for Mall," Indianapolis Business Journal, February 8-14, 1988, p.14).

4. Builder: Jones Brothers of Indianapolis was the general contractor for the construction of the Darmody Building.
5. Original plans and construction: The plans of the Darmody Building are in the Rubush & Hunter Collection in the Indiana Historical Society Library, Indianapolis. The plans for the first three floors and basement are labeled "Business Building for J.F. Darmody, P.C. Rubush & Co., Architects" and are undated. The drawings for the addition of the upper three floors are dated March 1911 and labeled "Addition to Business Building for J.F. Darmody, Rubush & Hunter Architects."
6. Alterations and Addition: The building was originally designed and built as a three-story structure in 1904 after Rubush's design. The top three stories were designed to integrate seamlessly into the established design by removing and reusing the copper cornice, the facade pilaster capitals and third-floor front windows and by continuing fenestration patterns and the use of details and bricks in the front facade. An historic photograph of the building dated April 19, 1912 documents the configuration of the storefront with the center bay accommodating a glazed double-leaf door flanked by a pair of sidelights, surmounted by a three-part transom. The two flanking storefront bays with grilled aprons, display window and three-part transom (Bass Photo #27860, Indiana Historical Society Library, Indianapolis). This photograph documents that the building was constructed as per the Rubush and Rubush & Hunter designs.

Later alterations to the building include the replacement of the original wooden storefront windows and doors with the present ones framed with aluminum. The date of this alteration is unknown, but probably occurred in the 1960's or 1970's. The interior of the Darmody Building was renovated to its present configuration between 1974 and 1980. A newspaper article reported the remodeling of the building, with work progressing "a floor at a time until the project was completed" ("Gift Mart Is Wholesale Treasure Trove," Indianapolis Star, August 2, 1981, sec. 4, p. 15).

B. Historical Context:

The Darmody Building functioned as the home of a manufacturing and wholesale commercial business from 1905 until 1941, contributing to the historical significance of the Wholesale District. The Darmody Building was planned and functioned as a manufacturing and wholesale commercial building located in the city's Wholesale District. The Darmody Building was constructed to house the J.F. Darmody Company, a candy manufacturer and wholesaler. The company was founded by John F. Darmody (1865-1946) in 1895 and operated until 1941 ("John Darmody, Funeral to be Held Saturday," Indianapolis News, June 3, 1948, p. 14; and George S. Cottman, Centennial History and Handbook of Indiana, Indianapolis: Max R. Hyman, 1915). The company was a family business with Darmody's brothers serving as co-founders and officers ("Local Candy Manufacturer Dead in Auto Wreck," Indianapolis Star, July 2, 1923, p.1; and "J.M. Darmody, 66, Succumbs," Indianapolis Star, July 29, 1936).

After liquidation of the Darmody firm in 1941 (News, June 3, 1948), the building had a number of uses. From 1941 to 1944 the building stood idle, followed by a late wartime use as the Indianapolis Marine Mart in 1945. The local department store L. S. Ayres & Company purchased the building in 1946 for \$800,000 and used it as a warehouse for its nearby store (Ibid.). Ayres sold the building to the Campbell Circular Advertising Company in 1973. From 1974 until circa 1985, the Darmody Building functioned as a wholesale commercial building, accommodating 53 wholesale showrooms. Named the "Gift Mart" its stalls were filled with samples of "luxury gift and houseware items" ("Gift Mart is Wholesale Treasure Trove," Indianapolis Star, August 2, 1981, sec. 4, p. 15). The six large open floors and the basement were partitioned into stalls for the different sales representatives. After the closing of the Gift Mart the building had a brief period of vacancy before being used as the field office of a construction company and as an architectural design studio, from 1988 to the present.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement

1. Architectural character: The Darmody Building is a six-story, brick, commercial building constructed in two stages, 1904-5 and 1911. The facade material of the main facade is a brown-gray brick with limestone accents and ornamental cast iron storefront enframingent, dividing the facade into three bays. A classical copper cornice caps the main facade. The east facade is divided into nine bays, the south facade into two. The west wall has no openings.

2. Condition of fabric: The Darmody Building is in good condition.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: The Darmody Building occupies a rectangular parcel of land, filling the entire parcel from West Maryland Street to the alley Chesapeake Street along the alley Bird Street. The building is 45 feet, nine inches wide and 194 feet long (Centre Venture, "Building Descriptions of Circle Centre Mall," Indianapolis, Indiana, February 8, 1988, rev. July 15, 1988, typewritten, unpublished).
2. Walls:
 - a. North Elevation: The principal facade of this six-story, brick building faces West Maryland Street. It is divided into three bays separated by two, five-story limestone pilasters serving as mullions. Each bay has a pair of double-bay, wood sash, one-over one-lighted windows resting on a brick spandrel at each level, except the first and second stories. The second-story windows rest on the limestone cornice above the cast-iron storefront enframement. The storefront retains its decorative frame and mullions but now has replacement aluminum framed windows, transoms and centered double doors. The brown-gray brick is sparingly used on the spandrels, end piers and the frieze. A decorative limestone molding frames and recesses the window and spandrel area from the pier and frieze framework. The deep copper cornice includes modillions and dentils. The facade brick and cornice wraps around the east corner 11 feet. Limestone plinths are at the bases of the two end piers.
 - b. South Elevation: The rear elevation is divided into two bays, the western with two, twelve-over-twelve lighted windows and the eastern with three windows with nine-over-nine lights. In the west corner is the integrated chimney stack with a corbeled top rising above the parapet. An overhead wooded garage door is at the street level in the western bay. The eastern bay's first floor opening has a sheet-metal covered glazed door below the easternmost window. The second story opening of the western bay has been altered with under-sized windows. The window sills are made of limestone and the exposed lintels are steel I-beams.

- c. East elevation: The east elevation faces the alley Bird Street and is exposed from pavement level to the roof. The elevation is divided into eleven bays with the northernmost and southernmost being blank. All other are treated identically at every level from the second to the sixth floor. Every bay has three windows with limestone sills, nine-over-nine, double-hung, wooden sash, and cast-iron, I-beam lintels.
 - d. West elevation: Only the fifth and sixth floors of this elevation are exposed, rising above a five-story parking garage. The west elevation is blank with no openings.
3. Foundations: The limestone foundation is not exposed on the exterior.
4. Structural system, framing: The building structure is a combination of steel frame and heavy timber construction supporting brick curtain walls and wood flooring. Steel columns support steel beams spanning in the east-west direction. Heavy timber beams span between the steel beams in the north-south direction. Both stone and concrete foundation walls are visible in the basement (Centre Venture).
5. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: The replacement front door in the center bay of the storefront is a double-leaf, plate-glass type framed with aluminum. The rear elevation has an overhead, wooden garage door and a hinged, glazed, paneled door. The hinged door is part of the three-window bay, below the easternmost window which is three-fourths the size of the other windows. The garage door is in a segmented-arched opening. Bricked-up basement openings are located in on the south elevation and centered below each bay on the east elevation.
 - b. Windows: All the windows appear to be original except for the front storefront windows which are aluminum-framed all other windows have limestone sills, and double-hung, wood sash. The windows on the north elevation have one-over-one lights, those on the east elevation have nine-over-nine lights and half of those on the south elevation have twelve-over-twelve lights. Window openings in the south and east elevations have cast-iron, I-beam lintels.

6. Roof: The flat roof slopes from west to east with parapets in the northwest and south rising above the roof line as does the penthouse on the west wall and the chimney in the southwest corner. The roof is clad with synthetic rubber sheeting. Industrial steel-sash windows light the penthouse.

C. Description of the Interior:

1. Floor plans: The floor plans were originally open, interrupted only by the center row of steel columns. Elevator shafts, water closets, utility closets and wooden stairs are all located in the center of the west wall. Since the 1970s each floor has been subdivided with dry wall or plywood paneling and stud partitions. With a corridor parallel to and along the west wall. The same treatment is found in the basement. A wooden stairwell is also located in the southeast corner of the building.
2. Stairways: The Darmody Building is served by two open, wood frame stairs that connect all building floors from the basement to the sixth floor. A concrete filled, metal pan stair connecting the basement to the first floor. A steel stair/ladder connect the sixth floor to the penthouse (Centre Venture).
3. Flooring: Most of the floors are covered with carpeting, but some of the wooden board flooring is exposed.
4. Wall and ceiling finishes: Beaded tongue and grove boards line the stairways. Behind the 1970s wall partitions are the original painted walls. Most of the ceilings are exposed revealing the wood joist framing and the underside of the upper floor's floorboards. Suspended ceilings cover up the ceilings on the first and second floors and the basement.
5. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: Except for the stairwells, utility closets and restrooms, no original or historic doors are found in the Darmody Building. These doors are typical of the period with two panels. They are made of wood and the stair doors are clad in sheet metal.
 - b. Windows: Window openings are found at all levels except on the west elevation and in the basement where all openings have been bricked up. The windows of the Darmody are all void of any decorative framing trim.

6. Decorative features and trim: No decorative detailing has been discovered in the Darmody Building.
 7. Hardware: Original doors have original nondescript period hinges, knobs and escutcheons.
 8. Mechanical equipment:
 - a. The Darmody Building used city steam for heat distributed by air handlers located at the north and south ends of the building and in an area below the elevator penthouse. Cooling is supplied through the same air handlers (Centre Venture).
 - b. Lighting: Suspended florescent lighting fixtures from the 1970s are found throughout the building.
 - c. Plumbing: Two restrooms are located on each floor with a mixture of historic and replacement porcelain fixtures.
 - d. Elevators: Two historic elevators (freight and passenger) provide vertical circulation of all floors.
- D. Site: The Darmody Building is located on the southside of West Maryland Street along the alley Bird Street with the north facade facing West Maryland. Immediately to the east, across Bird Street, is the excavated site of the five-story Levey Brothers Company Annex building; abutting the Darmody Building to the west is a five-story, poured concrete parking car garage. Immediately to the north, across West Maryland Street is a surface parking lot and the circa 1875, three-story Elliott's Block (HABS No. IN-60).

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- A. Architectural drawings: The undated, thirteen sheets of architectural drawings by P.C. Rubush & Company Architects are part of the Rubush & Hunter Collection of the Indiana Historical Society Library. These drawings are for the three-story brick "Business Building for J.F. Darmody." The nine sheets of architectural drawings for the three-story "Addition to Business Building for J.F. Darmody" specify the addition of the top three floors, designed by architects Rubush & Hunter, dated March 1911 with revisions of June 3, 1911. The plans call for the removal of the third floor windows of the main (north) facade and their

reinstallation on the sixth floor. It also specified the removal and reuse of the parapet, the copper cornice and the limestone pilaster capitals. The Sanborn-Perris Insurance Maps of Indianapolis, Indiana (1898-1913, III:302) documents the uses of the building with offices and shipping on the first floor, stockrooms on the sixth floor and basement, and candy factory on all other floors.

- B. Historic views: The Bass Photo Collection of the Indiana Historical Society Library contains two historic views of the Darmody Building. Bass Photo #19748, dated July 8, 1910 is a view of the first block of the south side of west Maryland Street from South Illinois Street. The photograph documents the Darmody Building as a three-story structure. Bass Photo #298218, dated April 19, 1912 documents the newly completed Darmody Building's north and east elevations. This photograph documents that the storefront was constructed following the designs of Rubush & Hunter.

1. Primary and unpublished sources:

Casler, Patricia J. "The Architecture of Rubush and Hunter."
M.S. thesis, Columbia University, 1985.

Deed Books, Marion County Recorder's Office, Indianapolis,
Indiana, 1906-1983.

2. Secondary and published sources:

a. Books

Cottman, George S., Centennial History and Handbook of
Indiana. Indianapolis: Max R. Hyman, 1915.

Polk, R. L. & Company. Indianapolis City Directory.
Indianapolis: R. L. Polk & Company, 1904-1986.

Sanborn-Perris Map Company. Insurance Maps of Indianapolis,
Indiana. New York: Sanborn-Perris Map Company,
1898, and 1898 corrected to 1913.

Sanborn Map Company. Insurance Maps of Indianapolis,
Indiana. New York: Sanborn Map Company, 1914 &
1915, and 1914-15 corrected to 1954.

b. Newspapers

"Gift Mart Hotel Planned." Indianapolis News, June 28,
1984, p. 35.

"Gift Mart Is Wholesale Treasure Trove." Indianapolis Star,
August 2, 1981, sec. 4, p. 15.

"J.M. Darmody, 66, Succumbs." Indianapolis Star, July 29,
1936.

"John Darmody Funeral to Be Held Saturday." Indianapolis
News, June 3, 1948, p. 14.

"Local Candy Manufacturer Dead in Auto Wreck." Indianapolis
Star, July 2, 1923, p. 1.

"Simons Buy Gift Mart to Make Way for Mall." Indianapolis
Business Journal, February 8-14, 1988, p. 14.

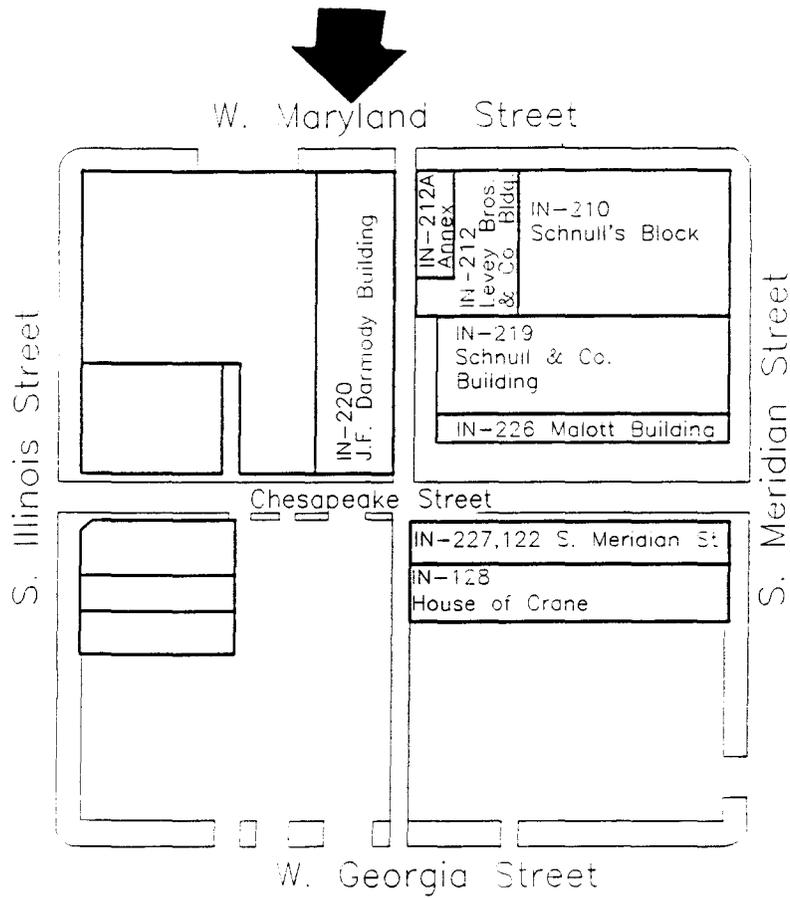
PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

This project was undertaken by the Indianapolis Historic preservation Commission (IHPC) in compliance with Executive Order 11593 and a Memorandum of Agreement with the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation as a mitigative effort.

Prepared by William L. Selm, Historian
Indianapolis Historic Preservation Commission
May, 1990

J.F. Darmody Company Building (Commercial Building)
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SITE PLAN



INDIANAPOLIS, IN.
CITY SQUARE 75

