



## Landmark Granville Building Awaits Next Chapter

### Museum Hours

Saturday – 1:00-3:00 p.m.  
Sunday – 1:00-3:00 p.m.

### Archives Hours

Thursdays Only  
9 a.m. - 12 p.m.  
1 p.m. - 4 p.m.

Enter through the Robinson Research Center on the west side of the building.

Archivists are available to assist researchers Thursdays or by appointment.

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### May Guest Editor - Lyn Boone

### Annual Meeting Date Set

November 30th is scheduled to be the Historical Societies Annual Meeting

More details to follow, but for now, mark your calendars to enjoy an evening at Ottebein Granville in the Amelia Room. Your paid reservation provides heavy hors d'oeuvres, wine and a fabulous program featuring the Wright House



The distinctive three-story building at 116 E. Broadway is available for a new tenant again. The first two floors of the structure were constructed in the mid-1800s, and the third story was added in 1912.

many years. In 1912, during the time of the first grocer, Lewis W. Perry, a third story was constructed on the building. This was done to provide a permanent meeting-place and temple for the growing community of Granville Masons, whose lodge had been chartered in 1811. Thus we see the meaning of the two years, 1811 and 1912, that are commemorated on the face of the third level of the building.

The Masons signed a 99-year lease on the facility; they would make use of that lease for about seventy years, departing in 1982 when the rooms were deemed unsafe. Their lodge was soon incorporated into the Heath Masonic organization. The memorable grocery on the main floor (owned and run by Carl Welsh for decades) was in operation until 1977, and there were varied occupancies of the apartments then on the second floor. In 1980, First Federal Savings and Loan Association opened its new Granville office on the main level, staying for 25 years in that location. The building nonetheless remained under the ownership of the Welsh family until 2003, when it was sold to become the popular Brews Café. It was at this time that the building underwent major interior renovations, including an elevator and a large interior atrium. It also acquired an exterior second-floor balcony on the front.



Guy Rodes and James Clark worked on the addition to the building as it was nearing completion. The first-floor banner advertises the grocery store owned by L.W. Perry & Sons. Photo courtesy of Virginia Williams.

Some of Granville's oldest and most historic buildings are located on Broadway and continue to be landmarks in our community. About a decade ago, I researched the histories of several such old Granville buildings. In this column, I'd like to offer a summary and update about one of these distinctive structures, which is undergoing transition once again.

The building is the former Donatos Pizza shop, the bright ochre stucco-covered brick building at 116 E. Broadway. Over the longer term this structure has sometimes been dubbed the "Masonic Building," based on the lettering and symbols in relief at the top of the third-story façade. The symbol, the square and compass, is that of the Freemasons, and the words "Center Star No. 11" is the designation of the Masonic Lodge that Granville claimed through much of the 19th and 20th centuries. On the building's face, the icon is flanked by the years 1811 and 1912. These dates are the source of continuing confusion about the history of this building, because neither is the year of the original construction of the building.

Rather, the original brick structure was built as a two-story (with basement) commercial building in 1858 or 1859 by prominent Granville citizen William S. Wright. He and a number of subsequent 19th-century owners used the building primarily as a dry goods store.\* Shortly after the turn of the century, the building became a grocery that served Granville for



116 East Broadway is the storefront on the far left around 1900, before the addition of the third floor.

Nothing is forever, especially restaurants. In 2016 Brews closed and was quickly succeeded by Donatos Pizza. And five years later the pizza purveyor fell victim to the COVID-19 pandemic and its accompanying woes, the labor shortage and rising rents. Donatos closed its doors in late 2021, and the historic structure that housed it has sat empty since then, awaiting its next incarnation.

Although the Masons were not the original builders, their seventy-year occupancy has been by far the longest the building has seen. Center Star Lodge No. 11 accordingly holds pride of place in the building's 164-year history as well as, to this day, on the façade of the building. There its dates, logo, and lodge name are still prominent in beige letters against the ochre wall. No matter the future occupants, those words, dates, and symbol should remain an unobscured (if slightly confusing) witness to the history of this venerable building.

~ Lyn Boone

\* For more detail about the occupancies and ownership of the building, and for notes on historical sources of this information, see the article "116 E. Broadway" in the Fall 2011 issue of The Historical Times, available on the website of the Granville Historical Society.