

Remember When?

Remember your childhood's fondest memories? Remember chasing the shiny white jingling truck down the street on your bicycle? Remember the tall smiling man in his stark white uniform get out of his truck and ask "What'll it be?" Remember your answer? Good Humor Bar? Remember where the Good Humor Bar came from or anything about it other than it was the most delicious thing on the Earth at the time!! Probably not, since it's origins come from an unlikely area of our country known for another industry.

Youngstown, Ohio is commonly known as a center for steel making and other heavy steel related industries. During the boom era of the steel industry in America, Harry Burt ran a confectionary at the building, which still stands at 325 West Federal Street in Youngstown, Ohio. Harry Burt was the inventor and manufacturer of the Jolly Boy Sucker, which was a lollipop on a wooden stick. The company also manufactured ice cream, which it sold from the store on West Federal Street and one on South Phelps Street also in Youngstown.

In 1921, Harry was developing a chocolate coating that, although a culinary success, was a practical disaster as the ice cream bar was too messy to eat. Burt's son, Harry Jr., suggested that his father freeze some of the Jolly Boy Sucker wooden sticks into the ice cream forming a handle. The ice cream bar, as we know it, was born. The name Good Humor refers to the idea of changing a person's demeanor by pleasing their palate.

To promote the new ice cream sensation, Burt dispatched 12 white shiny trucks with bells to deliver the Good Humor to the closely-knit ethnic neighborhoods in the greater Youngstown community, hence the jingling Good Humor Truck was born. Drivers who were dressed in white chauffeur attire operated the trucks; hence the Good Humor Man was borne. The rest is history.

Gone are the Good Humor Man, the Good Humor Truck and Burt's Confectionary Co. from Youngstown and other towns in America. Only three things remain. The Good Humor Bar, the childhood memories and, oddly, Burt's Confectionary Co. Building on West Federal Street in Youngstown, Ohio.

The three-story ornate white terra cotta facade fit's well amongst its surrounding historic neighbors on Youngstown's west end. The building is one of Youngstown's numerous terra cotta "queens" and is a fine example of the Beaux Arts Classicism of the era in which it was built.

Operated for over a half a century by an electronic component wholesale and mail order company, the building is literally stuck in time as many of the interior architectural features of Burt's Ice Cream Parlor at this location remain. Remnants of the cork lined coolers and ammonia chillers remain in the building today.

Oddly enough, with this great history and this great building, the Burt Confectionary Co. Building is not listed on the National Register of Historic Places. No one took the time to stop and think about it. That is, until now.



RONALD CORNELL FANIRO, ARCHITECTS, A.I.A., INC.

25 EAST BOARDMAN STREET SUITE 537 YOUNGSTOWN, OHIO 44503
TELEPHONE: 330.747.2800 FACSIMILE: 330.747.2802 WWW.FANIROARCHITECTS.COM