

The Daily Courier

Saturday, January 28, 2012

Native Prescottonians: Did you shop here? Awning removal uncovers 1950s Goldwater's sign

[Cindy Barks](#)

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PRESCOTT - This past week's removal of the "ski jump" awnings on the 1890s-era Otis building revealed a layer of the building's history.

As workers removed the half-century-old awnings, they uncovered traces of a Goldwater's store sign from a past era.

Architect D.J. Buttke, who is working with architect Doug Stroh on the project, estimated Friday that the sign dates back to the mid-to-late 1950s.

He pointed out that a parade photo from 1955 shows the building at the corner of Cortez and Union streets without the sign. The ski jump awnings were installed in about 1960 or 1961, Buttke said, concluding that the Goldwater's sign went up in the interim.

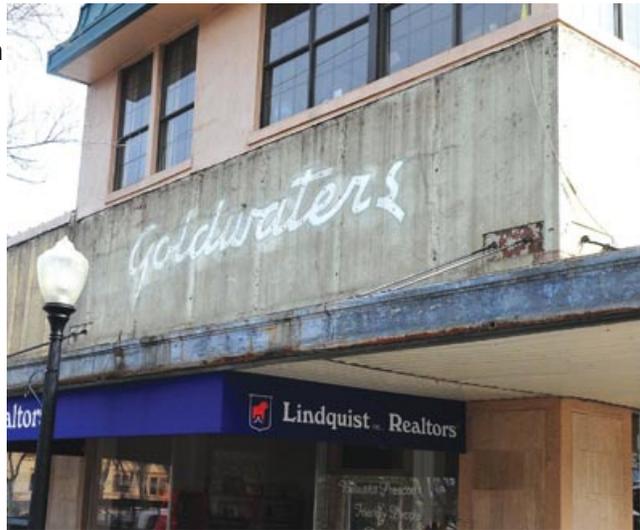
The sign, which Buttke said appears to be the remainder of a neon design, marked the temporary location of the Goldwater's department store.

Local historian and long-time Prescott resident Elisabeth Ruffner said the store sold a variety of clothing, gloves and jewelry.

The Otis building was not the first location for the Goldwater's store, Ruffner said, noting that the store once occupied Howey's Hall, the 1876 building that previously stood where Prescott City Hall stands today. Later, Goldwater's moved to the Studio Theater building on the southeast corner of Union and Cortez, which is now a parking lot, Ruffner said.

Goldwater's later rented space in the Otis building, she added.

Fred Lindquist, who oversees the Otis building and whose Lindquist Realtors business currently



Les Stukenberg/The Daily Courier

Workers removing the ski-slope awnings in the 100 block of South Cortez Street in Prescott uncovered the outline of a mid- to late-1950s Goldwater's department store sign.

To share your memories of Goldwater's or other downtown Prescott stores of the past, email kdespain@prescottaz.com.

occupies the space, said he is looking into the possibility of preserving the Goldwater's sign.

"I'm very much interested in doing what's best for the community," Lindquist said.

But Ruffner noted that the Goldwater's store made up just a fraction of the history in the 122-year-old Otis building, and questioned the appropriateness of identifying the historic building with the Goldwater's sign.

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