

Luhrs Building



The Luhrs Building is a historic ten-story building located at 11 West Jefferson in downtown Phoenix, Arizona. It was built at a cost of \$553,000 USD by local businessman George Luhrs and opened on April 1, 1924. The building's four upper floors housed the facilities of the Arizona Club, including dining rooms, lounges, a library, and bedrooms for club members. The ground floors were leased as office space. When the Arizona Club moved out of the Luhrs Building in 1971, the upper floors were also converted to offices.

The L-shaped Luhrs Building was designed by the El Paso architectural firm of Trost & Trost. The building is faced with brown brick, with elaborate marble ornamentation on the uppermost two floors and a heavy cornice at the top.

The Luhrs Building should not be confused with the adjacent Luhrs Tower, which was built five years later.

SOURCE: Wikipedia.com

Luhrs Tower



Luhrs Tower is an Art Deco skyscraper in downtown Phoenix, Arizona. It is located at the southeast corner of First Avenue and Jefferson Street, on the south side of Patriots Square Park. Built in 1929 by George Luhrs, a prominent local businessman, the tower reaches a height of 185 ft (56 m). Luhrs Tower has 14 stories, with symmetrical setbacks at the 8th and 11th floors. It was designed by the El Paso architectural firm of Trost & Trost and bears a considerable resemblance to another design by the same firm, the O. T. Bassett Tower in El Paso.

The Luhrs Tower appeared in the background of a scene from the 1960 film *Psycho* in which the character Marion Crane (played by Janet Leigh) crossed the street with the deposit she was supposed to make for her boss.

SOURCE: Wikipedia.com

Biographical Note

GEORGE H.N.LUHRS, Phoenix businessman and real estate developer, was born at Neuhaus, Germany on March 31, 1847. He arrived at the Arizona Territory in 1869 and established a wagon-making business at Wickenburg. He became a permanent Phoenix resident in 1878, and married Catharina Dodenhoff (also a native of Neuhaus) in 1884.

In 1881 Luhrs established a partnership with Nowell Herrick known as Luhrs and Herrick that financed the purchase of prime real estate parcels that would become the center of downtown Phoenix. This would be the site of a number of buildings that became landmarks in downtown Phoenix, including the Luhrs Hotel, the Luhrs Tower and the Luhrs Building. The Luhrs Hotel was built in 1887 and was originally known as the Commercial Hotel.

The hotel operation was originally managed by George and Catharina Luhrs, who moved into the hotel after the dissolution of Herrick and Luhrs in 1890. Later the hotel operation was managed by their son Arthur. A significant portion of the hotel burned in the fire of June, 1916. George H. N. Luhrs continued to invest in real estate in downtown Phoenix, sometimes borrowing capital at high interest rates to effect timely and advantageous purchases.

George H.N.Luhrs was very active in fraternal organizations in the Phoenix area. He was Noble Grand of the Phoenix Lodge of Odd Fellows and became Grand High Priest of the Arizona Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons. Luhrs was a charter member of the Phoenix Commandery, Knights Templar, Patron of Phoenix Chapter no.5, Order of the Eastern Star, and was also a thirty second degree Scottish Rite Mason. He served as Treasurer for all Masonic organizations in Phoenix (other than the Eastern Star) from 1896 to 1924.

Luhrs also devoted considerable effort to civic affairs in Phoenix. He served on the Phoenix City Council from 1883 1884 and also served as a member of the Board of Education for the Phoenix Union High School from 1899 1900. He was appointed to the citizens' committee assigned to draft the new Phoenix city charter in 1900.

George H.N. Luhrs and his wife Catharina had four children: Arthur Cleveland Luhrs, Ella Louise Henriette Luhrs, Emma Sophia Johanna Luhrs and George Henry Nicholas Luhrs, Jr. George H. N. Luhrs passed away in his suite at the Luhrs Hotel May 3, 1929.

GEORGE H.N. LUHRS, JR. was born June 28, 1895 at the Luhrs Hotel. He attended Phoenix Union High School, graduating in 1914. He graduated from Stanford University with his Bachelor's degree in 1918 and immediately enlisted in the Army. World War I ended before he finished basic training, and so Luhrs returned to Stanford and received his J.D. degree from the Law School in 1920. He was admitted to the Arizona Bar in 1921.

Luhrs practiced law in Phoenix for just over a year, and then resigned so that he could assist his father in fulfilling a lifetime dream, the construction of the Luhrs Building. The Luhrs Building was completed in 1924, and it was fully occupied upon completion through the promotional efforts of George Luhrs, Jr.

Luhrs' efforts also resulted in the construction of the Luhrs Tower, the Luhrs Arcade and the Luhrs Parking Center on real estate that had originally been purchased by his father. All of these buildings were remodeled with regularity in keeping with a Luhrs family tradition.

Luhrs has been a director of the Phoenix Chamber of Commerce, and a member of the executive board of the Phoenix Downtown Association. He was a charter member of the Phoenix Lions Club, a life member of the Arizona Club and a member of the Masonic Lodge, the Scottish Rite and the Shrine.

George H.N. Luhrs Jr. never married. He died in Phoenix in 1984.

SOURCES:

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Pollock, Paul W., American Biographical Encyclopedia, Arizona Edition, Vol. IV, Phoenix, Arizona, Paul W. Pollock Publishers, 1977, p.88.



Luhrs Hotel



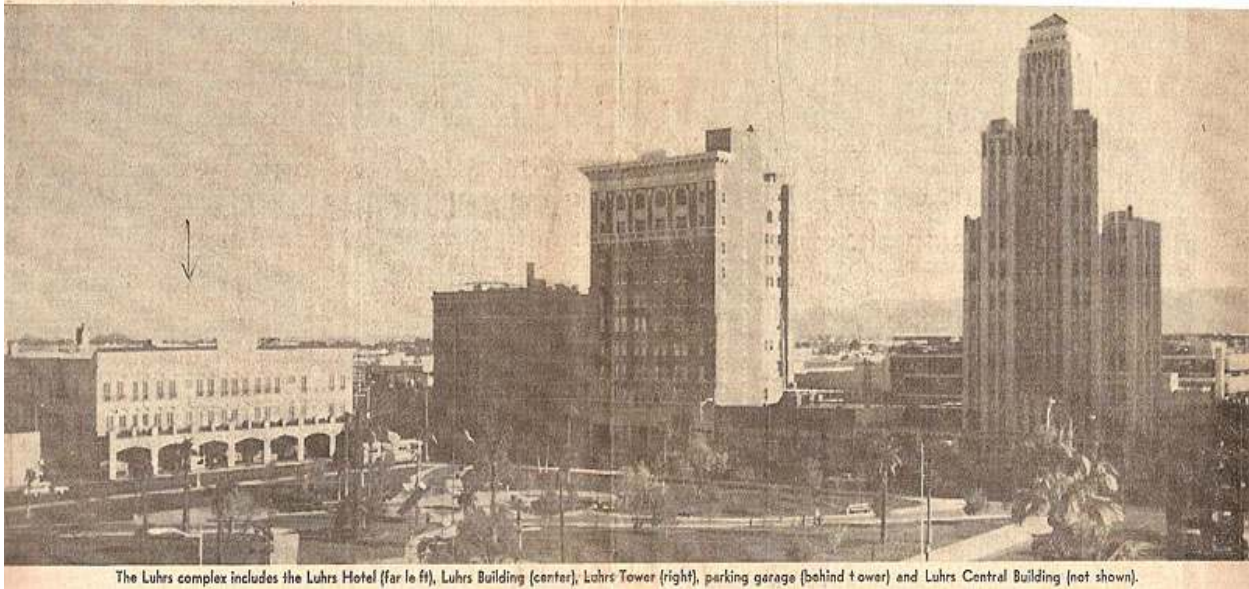
Luhrs Building



Luhrs Arcade



Luhrs Tower



The Luhrs Hotel, formerly the Commercial Hotel, is seen here circa 1890's.

