

A 'SWEET' NEW LOOK ON MAIN STREET

1102 4th Street On It's 120th Anniversary

By Barbara Mask

The two buildings on the south west corner of 4th Street and 12th Avenue were not built in the same year, however, they were, architecturally, an identical pair. The corner building was built in 1876 by Richard N. Green, a successful and popular merchant, who started his business at other sites in Fulton. Fifteen years later (1891) the company, named R. Green & Sons, built an addition (as it was referred to in the Fulton Journal) on the south side of the corner building. It is 1102 that is featured in this article. Richard N. Green and his sons, half brothers William C and Nathaniel, were the owners. Their wives and other family members also worked in the store. The grocery and mercantile store needed more space to accommodate their business. Arched walkways were built in the shared wall so that customers could move about the store without leaving the double store-building. The Green family played a significant role in Fulton's history and will be the subject in a future article. A book, written by Dwight P. Green, Sr. in 1966, detailing the family history in Fulton is in the Fulton Authors Collection at the Fulton (Martin House) Museum.

The building at 1102 4th Street, built in 1891, remained in use as the Green family business until 1924. One of the unique, structural features is that there was never a completed second level; only one store room with no access once the arches were closed in with brick. John Downs had a building erected at 1104, also in 1891, which architecturally matched the upper fronts on the buildings at 1100 and 1102. (See photo at lower right). 1104 and 1106 buildings are currently owned by the Musk family.

THE STRATINGS 'ENSURE' THEIR MARK

(Strating Family in Business at 1102
(1933-2005)

George John Strating started selling



1891: Richard N. Green welcomes customers to his new building of the department store / grocery business. All three wives of the owners worked in the store. 'Doc' Fiet and Diamond are shown in the delivery wagon.



2011: Wendy Bogle Ottens will welcome customers one hundred and twenty years later and work in the same building as the wives of the Greens, but in 2011, Wendy is the owner! True Construction, co-owned by Brent Fisher and Tony, Kurtz, is the contractor. Workers pictured L-R: Brad Moeller, Mike Ricca, and Brent Fisher.

insurance in Fulton in 1911 in a rented space in the block north on Main Street. He had worked in the R. Green & Sons store and he, along with other clerks in the store, served as pallbearers at the funeral of Mr. Nathaniel Green (the youngest son of the firm) in 1922.

George Strating moved his insurance business into this location in 1933. As an independent agent, he offered insurance coverage for: life; health; accident; home owners; automobile; travelers and farm equipment. The Strating Service Company also provided the following services: telegrams; state driver's license renewal; notary public; auto plate purchase and hunting and fishing licenses.

A visit to the store was similar to going into Smith Brother's General Store in Clinton. The Stratings sold rifles, coal, camping gear, tires (became the Firestone agent in 1954), household accessories, B-B guns, bottle gas, tools, flatware, ammunition, Schwinn bicycles, barbeque grills, potatoes, batteries, paint, and clocks. The Company also sold brand name appliances, such as, Gibson, Hotpoint, Firestone, Admiral, and General Electric. Customers appreciated the premium stamps (King Korn and S&H Green Stamps) that complimented their purchases.

George's sons, Theron and Irvin, worked with their father and became business partners. Irv was an active member of the American Legion Post # 402 and a loyal supporter of children activities in the Fulton community. The entire Strating family was dedicated to their hometown and demonstrated that through donations and participation. George died in 1943. The sons purchased the building in May, 1957 and continued their business in this location until 1993 when Irv died.

Karen Strating Lynn, daughter of Virginia and Irv Strating, owned the building from 1994 until 2005. She continued selling off items that remained from the Strating Service Company which included a line of blue delft items and some antiques. The interior of the store retained its vintage appearance: the wood floors, brick walls, old bank counter and the visible markings of the former arches on the north wall; reminders of the original construction when it was an addition to the R. Green & Sons store.



Many people recall the variety of items and services provided by the Strating Service Company. It became a Firestone Agency in August of 1954.



1903: Parking problems: ongoing. R. Green & Sons built the corner building in 1877 and the addition in 1891. (See buildings on left side of photo.) The William C. Green family, the eldest son in the partnership, resided in the upper level 1877-1925.

OTHER BUSINESSES AT 1102

Myra Norman, owner of Interiors, Etc., purchased the building in 2006 and remodeled the interior to accommodate her decorating and designing business. The floors and the walls were retained, but the transformation was dramatic and the new enterprise

enlivened the historic setting with colorful fabrics and attractive home accessories.

In 2008, Interiors, Etc. closed when Myra Norman moved to Colorado.

Charles Dykstra purchased the building in November, 2008 and opened the 'Interiors Antique' shop. 1102 was an ideal setting for the antique business and its vintage charm delighted those who entered the building. The building integrity was preserved while entrusted to Dykstra's ownership.

Wendy Ottens, owner of Sweet Woodruff, purchased the building on August 1, 2011. It will allow her to expand her personal and home accessory business. Without walls, the ability to showcase her merchandise will greatly be enhanced. An office is being created in that single room in the upper level that has never been used. The stairs, built by True Construction, a local contractor, will be present and utilized at 1102 for the first time.

Sources: Karen Strating Lynn; THE HISTORY OF THE GREEN FAMILY IN FULTON by Dwight P. Green, Sr.; and Fulton Journals. Photos courtesy of the Fulton (Martin House) Museum.



1910: The facades of the first three stores on the west side are architecturally alike. 1102 (middle building) shares a wall on the north side with 1100 and on the south side with 1104. At the base of the cornice area is a series of Roman arches ending in corbelled brackets. Above this brickwork is a bracket metal cornice. These features have been painted to accentuate their Italianate design.