



THE WIRT DEXTER BUILDING

1887 - 2006

A COMPLETE 1:500 SCALE MODEL

Architects Louis Sullivan and Dankmar Adler designed this building as a furniture store and warehouse for the prominent lawyer Wirt Dexter in 1887. The structure housed many businesses over the years, most famously the George Diamond steakhouse, which had its heyday in the 1950s and 60s, a meeting place for politicians and celebrities.

The front facade of the building featured plain brickwork and a solid base of rusticated limestone, though it lacked much of the ornamentation that would later mark Sullivan's distinctive style. The back wall was most known for its unique exterior iron girders, as well as its charming sign for the Sawyer Secretarial College, easily visible from the elevated train running directly behind the building.

The steakhouse reopened briefly but closed for good in 2000, and the building sat empty for years, awaiting renovations. On October 25, 2006, workmen cutting up an old boiler in the basement for scrap accidentally started a fire which spread quickly through the building, destroying it completely.

