

## The Flower Shop, Incorporated

Founded: 1869

Location: Locust Street, between Ninth and Tenth Streets, Evansville (1869–88); Water and Chestnut Streets (1888–1906); 927 Lincoln Avenue (1906–45); 750 South Kentucky Avenue (1945– )

J. D. Carmody and John Nelson began a floral business in 1869 on Oakley Street.

Carmody was a native of New York and an entrepreneur who had tried his hand at several businesses including opening a saloon and a meat store in the 1860s. After selling the floral company he started a manufacturing firm making vent appliances for greenhouses. Carmody and Nelson were not only florists but dealers in horticultural goods. They built a greenhouse on Oakley Street, measuring 75 feet wide and 130 feet in length, and established a salesroom on Locust Street between Ninth and Tenth Streets. A move in the late 1880s to Water and Chestnut Streets provided an opportunity to change the name of the business to the “Floral Gem.”

By 1890, when Carmody sold out to Julius Niednagel and William Holbrooks, the enterprise encompassed elaborate greenhouses as well as a retail shop doing about \$6,000 in sales a year. Niednagel was born in Kaleb, Germany, and immigrated to the United States in 1869. He migrated to Evansville in 1887 where he was employed by Carmody. In 1901 he purchased seven acres at 927 Lincoln Avenue and eventually built a complex of greenhouses, changing the name of the store to Julius Niednagel, Florist, around the same time.

Upon Niednagel’s death in 1917 the shop was passed to his sons, Curt and Emil. Curt had already established a rival floral company just south of his father’s business on Kentucky Avenue before World War I. Edgar Schmitt, a designer at the shop, bought the concern and changed the name to Edgar Schmitt, Florist in 1945. Three years later, Edgar named the

business The Flower Shop, Incorporated. Edgar Schmitt passed the business to his son Paul in 1956. Joan Schmitt, Paul's wife, has managed the concern since Paul's death in 1974.