

## Young's Greenhouse and Flower Shop

Founded: 1873

Location: Fifty-acre farm bound by Coldwater, North Clinton, and California Roads (4131 North Clinton Street), Fort Wayne (1873– )

Christian Jung was born in Oberdiebach, Switzerland, in 1852; three months later his family immigrated to the United States. They settled in Goeglein, near Fort Wayne. The family later changed its name to Young. Christian and his brother Henry worked in the greenhouse of Henry J. Rudisill in Fort Wayne, growing vegetables in the winter months to keep his grocery store stocked. When Rudisill sold some of his family's landholdings, the brothers managed to buy a fifty-acre triangle of property bounded by what is now Coldwater Road on the west, North Clinton on the east, and California Road (later Coliseum Boulevard) on the north. They operated a truck farm, selling vegetables at the Barr Street market downtown. The brothers built a greenhouse to grow plants early for spring planting, and they began to grow tomatoes, lettuce, and cucumbers in the winter. A few years after they began the business, Christian and Henry split the land and formed separate businesses. Henry moved to the western side of the property and Christian stayed on the east, and the two brothers competed amicably.

Christian Young began a floral delivery service as requests mounted for flowers for funerals, weddings, and hospital patients. Gradually the family business became a full-service florist. It was carried on by Herman A. Young, who operated the Herman Young Greenhouse and Flower Shop located at 4400 Leo Road. "Flowers for All Occasions, Funeral Homes Our Specialty," he advertised. Herman entered into a partnership with his sons, Kenneth and Chester, and they managed the business jointly

until Herman died in 1966. Chester died in 1972. Kenneth, the grandson of Christian Young, operated the shop with his wife Norma at 4131 North Clinton Street. They owned 4.5 acres (the rest of the original plot was sold over the years) and four greenhouses, one for potted plants such as tulips and hyacinths, another for plants that started to bloom in February, the other two for tropical plants and plants that flowered in the spring. Their work staff grew to ten, including their son Kenneth B. Young II.

In 1996 Kenneth, better known as K. B., oversaw the company with the help of his children, Blake, Brian, and Andrea, his wife Sandy, and his mother Norma. In 1999 the company began replacing the old 1920s greenhouses with new ones. The project was expected to be completed by the summer of 2000.