

## CHAPTER 1

### **FUTURE SHOCK (1956)**

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In 1956, as the Cold War with the USSR intensified, it might have been an atomic bomb that hit ground zero three miles west of downtown Evanston, or it might have been a chemical/biological weapon that spread its invisible poison. But it wasn't. In fact, it was the opening of Old Orchard Shopping Center, a much more seductive, but equally damaging, modern weapon meant to destroy or at least cripple Evanston's status as the retail and business center of the North Shore.

Old Orchard had what shoppers seemed to be longing for: a critical mass of retail space which acted like a powerful magnet; a sophisticated mix and physical arrangement of retail goods; the beauty of coordinated architecture and landscaping that caught peoples' attention; the cosmetic appeal and marketing that few could resist; the highway accessibility that Evanston lacked; and the killer agent—unlimited free parking. The biggest psychological blow was that Old Orchard's major anchor was Marshall Field's—destined to replace Evanston's older, smaller Marshall Field's which had served customers of the North Shore and southeastern Wisconsin for decades.



*Coordinated Architecture*



*Entry Pylon*



*Landscaped Parking*



*North Court*

Actually, it was not one blast, but several that brought downtown Evanston to its knees in the decades to follow Old Orchard's opening: Edens Plaza, Golf Mill, Northbrook Court, Lincolnwood Town Center and eventually Old Orchard's expansion -- not to speak of many smaller explosions of strip commercial centers throughout the North Shore.

The impacts were dramatic and well documented. In a 1966 Chicago Daily News article it was stated that "Field's sales in Evanston dropped from \$10 million in 1955 to \$6 million in 1963." Broader evidence stated in the article related to the assessed values of all real estate in downtown Evanston. Between 1959 and 1966, Cook County Assessor Cullerton "cut assessments on land by 33 percent."

<b>NORTH SHORE SHOPPING CENTERS OPENED</b>				
<u>NAME</u>	<u>YEAR OPENED</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>SIZE, Sq.Ft.*</u>	<u>ANCHORS*</u>
1. Old Orchard	1956	Skokie	1.3M	Marshall Field's Montgomery Ward
2. Eden's Plaza	1956	Wilmette	0.3M	Carson, Pirie, Scott
3. Golf Mill	1960	Niles	1.0M	Sears Roebuck Kohl's J.C. Penney F.W. Woolworth
4. Lakehurst	1971	Waukegan	1.2M	Carson, Pirie, Scott J.C. Penney Montgomery Ward
5. Hawthorn	1973	Vernon Hills	1.1M	Marshall Field's Carson, Pirie, Scott Sears Roebuck
6. Northbrook Court	1976	Northbrook	1.0M	Neiman-Marcus J.C. Penney
7. Hawthorn Hills	1986	Vernon Hills	0.2M	J.C. Penney Kohl's
8. Town Center	1989	Lincolnwood	0.7M	Carson, Pirie, Scott

\*Most of these centers have subsequently been expanded and include more and/or different anchors.  
Source: Chicago Sun-Times, Chicago Area Shopping Center Guide, 1989

Over 70 key businesses closed or relocated from downtown Evanston in the decades following the opening of Old Orchard. These included all of downtown's department stores, movie theaters and furniture stores, and most of its upscale apparel stores.

Once the damage was inflicted by new retail shopping centers, competing office parks in growth suburbs like Des Plaines, Lincolnshire and Lake Forest captured Evanston's major office headquarters.

Evanston was not the only victim. Larger and smaller communities throughout the United States were also subjected to similar attacks, underlying which were economic and cultural trends that accelerated evolutionary changes in the retail industry and the broader society. Some have called this "future shock."

But the blows were not fatal. Like London during the blitz of World War II, downtown Evanston did what it had to do to survive, eventually recover, and thrive anew. Also like London, it has become an inspiration to others and a model of revitalization effort and ingenuity.

<b>BUSINESSES CLOSED OR DEPARTED BETWEEN 1962 AND 1982</b>	
<u>Department Stores</u>	<u>Furniture Stores</u>
Marshall Field & Co.	AA Furniture Stores
Wiebolt Stores	Barnitz Studios, Inc.
Sears Roebuck (Appliances-Catalogue outlet)	John M. Smyth Co.
Montgomery Ward (Catalogue outlet)	A.L. Stein Co.
Lord's	John A. Colby & Sons
<u>Groceries</u>	Crost Furniture Store, Inc.
A & P Stores	<u>Gifts</u>
Smithfield Foods, Inc.	Blue Parrot
Kroger Co.	Cellini Shop
Shop & Save Food Mart	Tatman's

<u>Apparel</u>	<u>Jewelry</u>
Bobbie-Ree Shop	Busch Jewelry
Blum's-Vogue, Inc.	Cellini Shop
Bramson, Inc.	Cruner Jewelry
Brazen Creations	Lemma Jewelers
Carlyle's	Manlier Jewelry
Charlotte's	Nelson Jewelers
Dore Mode's, Inc.	Waite Miriam
Edith Millenry	Zane's Jewelers
Gingiss Bros, Inc.	<u>Pharmacies</u>
Hickey-Freeman Clothes	Layman-Sargent's Inc.
Jerome's Inc.	Lamar's Pharmacy
Kingston Shop Ltd.	Carey Pharmacy
Lassers Clothier	Hoo's Drug Store
Lytton's	Harbinger Drug Co.
Maurice L. Rothschild & Co.	Shrout Pharmacy
Maternity Modes	Walgreens
Wally Reid	<u>Restaurants</u>
Baskin	Antony's
Jerrold's	BG Evanston Restaurants (2)
Peck and Peck	Cooley's Cupboard
Ruth McCollough	Tally-Ho of Evanston
Grad About Shop	Peacock's (Ice Cream)
Edgar Stevens	Dominion Room
Selig's Varsity Shop	Corner House
William's	John Evans
Betty's of Winnetka	Sheridan Coffee Shop
Georgiale Mangas, Inc.	Venetian Café
Merle Dress Salon	<u>Movie Theaters</u>
Roberta Balfanz	Valencia
<u>Books</u>	Varsity
Kroch's & Brentano's Inc.	<u>Miscellaneous</u>
La Chance Book Store	Wilt Luggage
<u>Hotels</u>	Woolworth's
Pick Georgian	
North Shore	