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Timothy's Gallery closes its doors on Park Avenue

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Photo by [Sarah Wilson](#)

Timothy's Gallery owners Carolyn Luce, left, and Jill Daunno, right, are saying goodbye to the business that's brought them joy for the past 26 years on Park Avenue.

- By Tim Briggs
- February 25, 2016 12:42 p.m.

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Known for its trademark cherry red doors and an eccentric fish-hat wearing ballerina named Tallulah, Timothy's Gallery will end its quirky existence at 236 N. Park Ave. after 26 years next week.

On March 1, Timothy's Gallery will close its doors for good. For more than two decades, the gallery has inspired and entertained countless residents of Winter Park and visitors from all over the world. Timothy's owners, Carolyn Luce and Jill Daunno, decided that they wanted to close the gallery on their own terms, leaving behind a legacy of one of the top-25 art galleries in North America that won't be easily forgotten.

"Our intention was joy and our legacy is joy," owner Luce said. "It had everything to do with relationships, people buying our items for other humans. It's a living, breathing entity."

Luce said customers are coming in eulogizing the loss of Timothy's as if someone or something is dying. "And it is," she said.

The joy they created – and are now leaving behind – was something that Luce envisioned in 1990 when Timothy's originally opened. With the company tag line of "From whimsical to wow," Timothy's always intended to supply its customers with quality and quirky products, whether it be a \$15 trinket or a \$5,000 mural.

"The one thing we always asked people who wanted to work with us was, 'Do you know how to do joy?'" Luce said. "It's been a labor of love, it's not a business where the decisions were made just for business. It's an extension of everyone who has been on that floor, it's an extension of a 25 year friendship."

Luce started the gallery in 1990 and her friend Jill Daunno joined her on the journey the next year. The amount of memories and joy created behind the gallery's bright red doors over the past 26 years makes these two friends and owners proud.

Luce describes Timothy's with a nautical "her" as the pronoun, describing the initial idea for the name as one inspired by her son, whose name is Timothy. The gallery is a reflection of Luce's personal livelihood, one rich with family, friendship and joy.

"It's a beautiful legacy and we're absolutely thankful that people would love this gallery as much as we have," Luce said.

Timothy's is known locally for the wooden art piece out in front of the shop, a ballerina named Tallulah. Luce said that Tallulah was created in 1996 by artist Judie Bomberger as a way to lure customers to the gallery at a time when Park Avenue wasn't nearly as popular as it is today.

"I wanted something that was going to stop people, enticing people to come into Timothy's because it was really a dim time, so she sent me a drawing," Luce said. "'This is it! This is perfect!' I thought, so we had a contest for who got to name her and she's been there for 20 years."

As for the future of Tallulah, Luce plans on taking the ballerina to retire with her to her mountain home in Asheville, N.C. to live on her deck. And Daunno is looking forward to her own retirement right her in Winter Park.

"I'm going to be retired and enjoying things, going out and living life with joy," Daunno said.

For Luce and for Daunno, "joy" seemed to be the only way to describe the 26-year adventure. With tears brimming with memories of the impact Timothy's made on its thousands of customers over the years, Luce smiled with a final thought.

"It's just been a joy fest," Luce said. "It really has been."

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Annette Kelly · 7 months ago

I am so sorry to hear this, although I completely understand that living with joy sometimes means changing one's daily lifestyle. Thank you for the beautiful gifts you have made possible for me over the years! EnJOY the future!

^ | ▾ · Reply · Share ▾



Chris Jepson · 7 months ago

I will unequivocally miss Timothy's. Both Carolyn Luce and Jill Daunno were gracious operators of a great "little" art store of American Crafts. The Avenue will not be the same without them. I wish both owners and the wonderful staff of Timothy's all the best. A big loss.

^ | ▾ · Reply · Share ▾



Ed Sabori → Chris Jepson · 7 months ago

Chris,

While I agree the business will be missed, contrary to what some folks may think or are uniformed of, is the role Timothy's landlord Hattie Wolfe played in making sure they were able to stay open as long as they did. Specifically, when the economy tanked, she negotiated a win/win monthly rent agreement with Carolyn that was way below the going market price. Win/win in the sense that, as a Park Avenue merchant and landlord for 30+ years, it isn't always about the money. That said, any business that doesn't admit the reality of having to make a profit, is not a real business.

Ed Sabori



Carolyn Luce, Owner Timothy's → Ed Sabori · 7 months ago

"Real" business? Hummmm... don't know if you are referring to Timothy's in your last sentence, but it always was a "real" business. However, it was always motivated by joy far more than money, it's true. Timothy's opened in 1990 and flourished, even during the years it was the only store on an almost empty block. It did not move into Hattie's space until 2004. In 2009, after the 2008 economic meltdown, Hattie made an intelligent and kind business decision to reduce the rent which she then raised as the economy began to return. It was a win/win agreement for which two women, in tough times, were grateful to make. She kept a very good tenant in unsure times, and Timothy's had time to recover from having an over 30% drop in sales in one year.. that was the world we ALL lived in those days. Timothy's was always a business that wrote a paycheck to owners, maintained a staff paid over the going hourly wages on the avenue, paid MANY American craft artists (so they could do the work they loved) and other vendors always on time.... and never, EVER didn't pay their rent, which before 2009 was \$10,000 monthly and now is \$9,500 monthly. This may not be a "real business" to you, Ed, but it has been to the many, many, many with whom we shared the joy and the money, including our wonderful landlady, Hattie. So... what is the point of your writing this post to a joyful retirement article?

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Ed Sabori → Carolyn Luce, Owner Timothy's · 7 months ago

Carolyn,

First, regarding your initial comment and question, my post and last sentence was an indirect reply to a comment made by a WP/Maitland Observer columnist on Facebook. My intent being to provide a rebuttal (unsolicited by Hattie Wolfe) to his notion that greedy landlords are the cause of small Park Avenue businesses closing shop. That said, in hindsight, perhaps a direct letter to the Observer or a post on Facebook would have sufficed and you would not have interpreted the comment as an affront to you personally. Clearly, Timothy's was a "real business" as demonstrated by its' longevity. The fact that landlords, no matter how magnanimous their actions toward tenants may have been, have to nevertheless accept the fact that IT IS a "real" business. Again, my apologies if I caused you to see the post differently than intended.

Respectfully,

Ed Sabori

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