

# Goldwaters

Today, Goldwater is a name better known for politics than retail, but long before Barry Goldwater ran for president in 1964, his grandfather Michael arrived in the United States from Poland. With his brother, Joseph, and eventually his sons Morris and Baron, he began a number of business ventures in California and around the state of Arizona, including a failed Phoenix store that closed in the 1870s. The Goldwaters established a successful store in Prescott, then, “about 1892, my father (Baron) wanted to move to Phoenix and my uncle (Morris) didn’t,” Barry Goldwater said in a 1976 oral history recorded by the Arizona Jewish Historical Society. “So they played a hand of casino and my father won, so they came to Phoenix.”

The first Goldwaters Department Store was located at 31 N. First St. in Phoenix, right next to its competitor Korrick's. Baron, who died in 1929, was the store's manager. A mid-century store directory lists departments such as a gourmet shop, boudoir slippers, the Young Phoenician shop, the millinery salon and the fur salon.

Additional locations opened at Park Central Mall in Phoenix and Scottsdale Fashion Square in the 1950s and 1960s. In the early 1960s, the company was acquired by Associated Dry Goods Corp. The new owners kept the Goldwaters name, and in the second half of the 20th century stores opened at Metrocenter Mall in Phoenix, Fiesta Mall in Mesa and Paradise Valley Mall in Phoenix; outside of the Valley, Goldwaters had locations in Tucson, Albuquerque and Las Vegas.

In the 1980s, Associated Dry Goods Corp. was bought by May Department Stores, eventually turning the Valley Goldwaters locations into Robinsons-May stores.

The Goldwater family eventually departed from their Jewish roots, but they made an indelible mark on the general Valley community.

**Clockwise from top:** Goldwaters in downtown Phoenix, courtesy of department storemuseum.blogspot.com; Jewish News ad; Michael Goldwater, courtesy of AZJHS; vintage postcard showing Goldwaters at Park Central Mall; Jewish News ad; Morris Goldwater, courtesy of AZJHS

