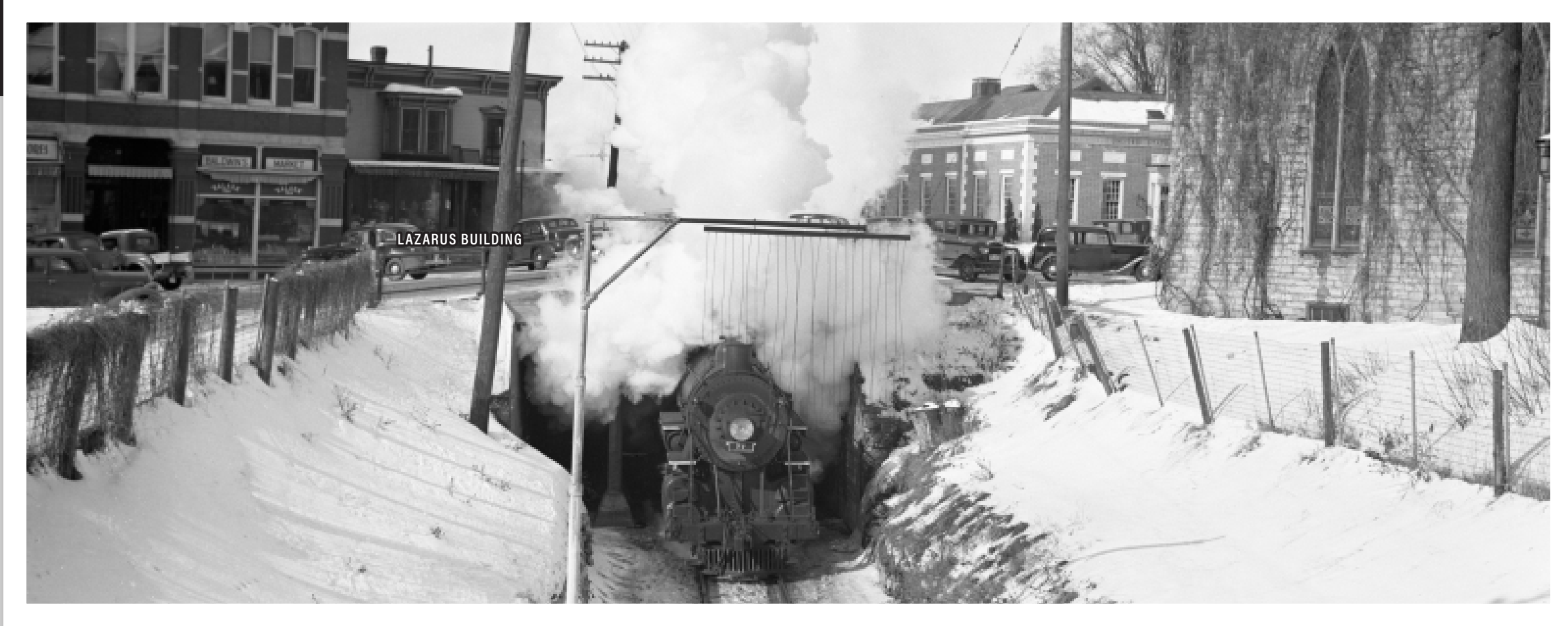


# Lazarus Park

Lazarus Park was created in 2021 as part of the Middlebury Bridge & Rail Project through a unique partnership between the Town of Middlebury, the National Bank of Middlebury, the Marble Works Partnership, and the Vermont Agency of Transportation.

The park is named after the Lazarus family, whose department store occupied this site for most of the 20th century. The park incorporates granite blocks taken from the rail corridor while the labyrinth, funded by St. Stephen’s Episcopal Church, creates a contemplative space in the center of town. Lazarus Park and Printers Alley form an accessible gateway to Riverfront Park and the historic Marble Works District. Between 1898 and 1931 the Marble Works district was the home of the Brandon Italian Marble Company, a significant contributor to Middlebury’s growth in the early 1900s.



Looking north towards Main Street, 1939, with the first Lazarus Building visible left of center. Photo courtesy of Henry Sheldon Museum

## The Lazarus Department Store

In 1911, Harry and Stella Lazarus opened a clothing store called the Middlebury Supply Company in what became known as the Lazarowitz Block, a two-story, Italianate building constructed in the late 19th century. The building stood in the location of Lazarus Park. In 1946, Harry’s son Stanton took over the business and renamed it the Lazarus Department Store. A fire in 1964 destroyed the original building. Following the fire, the store moved into the adjacent Beckwith Block (now the Duclos Building) until a two story replacement, seen in the photo below, was built on this site in 1970. The Beckwith Building was also the home of the well-known United Five and Dime store, which was run by Stan’s brother Eugene “Mike” Lazarus from 1939 to 1985. In 1984 Stan Lazarus sold the business to long-time employee Helen Haerle, who moved the store back into the Beckwith Block and operated it until its closing in 1996. Several businesses rented space in the Lazarus building from 1984 until its demolition in 2015.

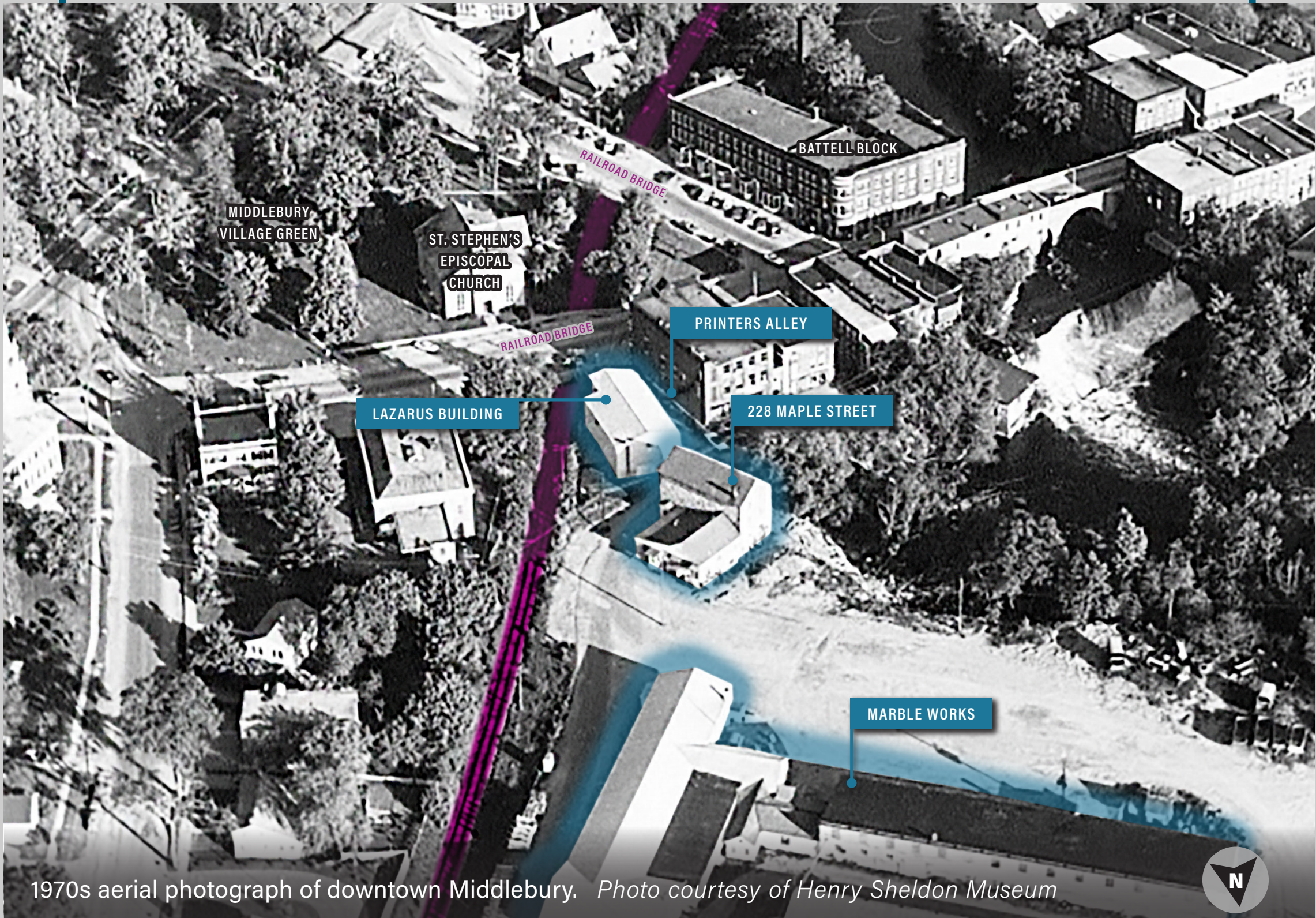
The Lazarus family, one of the first Jewish families in Middlebury, were esteemed for their generosity and civic mindedness. The family donated its historic North Pleasant Street home—today it is known as Havurah House—to the Jewish community of Addison County. The Stanton S. Lazarus and Eugene M. Lazarus Scholarship for Community Service, awarded annually to a Middlebury Union High School Senior, honors the long history of public service by the Lazarus family.



1979 photograph of the Lazarus Department Store, built after the original store burned in 1964 and demolished in 2015. Photo courtesy of Henry Sheldon Museum

## Printers Alley

Printers Alley is named for Middlebury’s many historical printing presses, newspapers, and publishers. The village’s first newspaper, the *Middlebury Mercury*, was published in 1801 by Joseph Huntington and John Fitch, who also built the first printing office in the village. The printing and publishing business thrived in the early 19th century and by the 1850s, over 15 different newspapers had been published in Middlebury and there were at least six printers in the village. The publishing industry eventually consolidated and by the 1920s, Middlebury had only one newspaper, the *Middlebury Register*. One of Vermont’s longest running newspapers, it was founded in 1836 and closed in 1947, at which point the *Addison County Independent* was founded. The limestone and marble mill building in front of you, which was built in 1825 as a gas works, was the first home of the *Addison County Independent*.



1970s aerial photograph of downtown Middlebury. Photo courtesy of Henry Sheldon Museum

