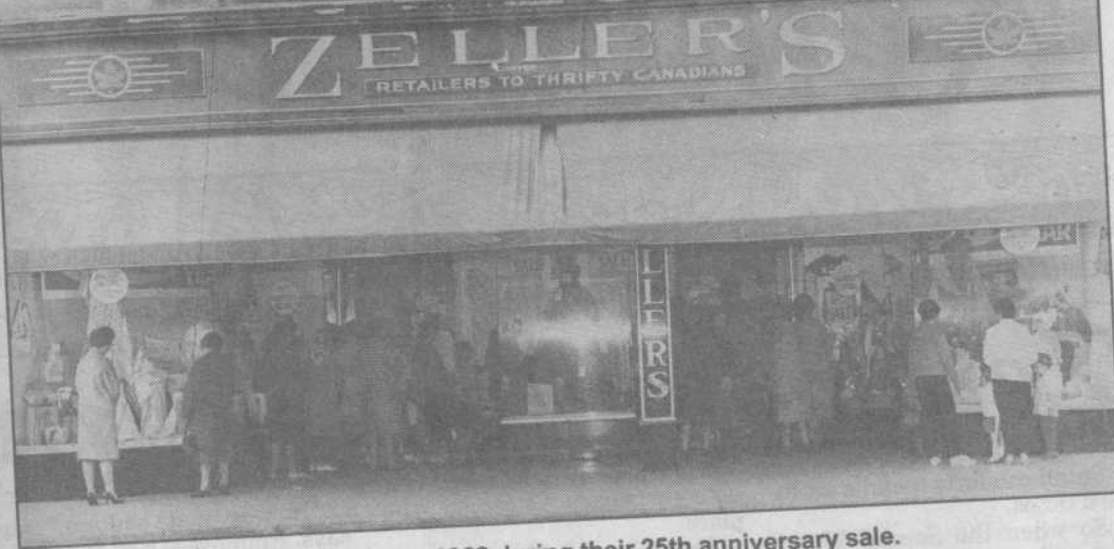


Zellers Department Store

Intel. Nov. 7, 1994. Remember Okeex.



The front of Zellers in 1962 during their 25th anniversary sale.

After becoming manager Oliphant had to check the store before closing at night and liked to have someone with her for security. Usually her husband came to escort her at closing, but if he couldn't make it, she recruited a police officer from the street.

"They were very nice, even if they did like our candy," jokes Oliphant.

Crago and other staff members came to know many of their customers and some patrons even asked for specific sales clerks.

But although the sales women might know a customer's first name, the clerks were supposed to be more formal.

"It was policy to call them Miss or Mr.," says Oliphant. The rule also applied when employees were speaking among themselves.

"We weren't allowed to call them by their first name when we were working with them in the store."

Dress for work varied with the season. In summer Oliphant and Crago were expected to wear pastel colored clothing, but nothing flowery. In the winter they wore black or navy blue, until later years when the store abandoned its dress code.

Crago believes the number of sales clerks made for better service because "you could work one-on-one."

As well, the department stores worked closely with each other. If one business didn't carry an item or was sold out, the clerk often recommended another store that had it.

Company functions included a summer picnic in Cobourg with employees from the Zellers stores in Oshawa, Pe-

terborough, Lindsay and Belleville. In the fall there was a company dance, hosted by a different Zellers store each year. For a short time there was also a Zellers bowling team.

Although Crago enjoyed her time with the company, she left Zellers in 1951 to take a job with Simpson-Sears in their order house. She is now retired.

Oliphant continued at Zellers and held every position before becoming manager. In 1971 she received a gold watch from the company for 25 years service. When the store closed in 1977 she took over the Trenton branch. She retired in 1982.

A Zellers store has since been opened in the former Towers building on Dundas Street West, just outside Belleville's city limits.

Of her 36 years with the company, Oliphant says, "I loved every minute of it. I liked working with the people and I liked meeting the people who came in the store."

Good people make good memories.