

Stone Road success story from beginning

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When the right combinations are working stick with them. The right combinations seem to work for Mobray Sifton, and sticking with them is just what he is doing.

Stone Road Mall, the Sifton built commerce centre on Guelph's south side, is a replica of Westmount Mall in London.

Many of the privately owned stores are branches of Westmount stores. The brick and stone walls are the same, even the lettering of the name.

Stone Road has a few more angles and corridors, than Westmount, but a visitor to the Guelph location has to pinch himself to make sure he is here, not in London.

Mall manager, Larry Broadley, himself a graduate of Westmount, has only one explanation for the startling similarity.

Accurate Records
"It works!"
It certainly seems to anyway. After a year and a half the per foot dollar figures, which Mr. Broadley claims are the most accurate record are all up from opening year.

And they are all up by a phenomenal degree. The lowest monthly increase was in August, a mere 20 per cent over last year. All the rest are at least 30 per cent better, and June was a remarkable 42.2 per cent rise.

Somebody should tell the Stone Road merchants about the problems in the Canadian economy. They can't be noticing many with increases like that on their books.

But besides the outward appearance, the same personnel in management and some of the same shops, Stone Road is benefiting from some definite Sifton philosophies.

Hours Enforced
Westmount was always a strict enforcer of store hours. The merchants were forced, once the hours had been set, to remain open for just that length of time each day.

Both here and in London, the stores are open from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. each day. And, except for those regulated by the government all stores are open exactly those hours.

The type and size of signs are also regulated, the cleanliness of the place is a must. The appearance must remain as consistent as the hours.

"If a shopper comes here and finds a store closed it will turn her off from coming again," Mr. Broadley said. "And it will not be the single store which suffers, but the mall as a whole."

"It's a team, a unit, we will be successful together," he said.

Mix of Stores
There is also a mix of stores which is at least consistent with Westmount. Both malls emphasize they are places of fashion. They also try to cover a service need.

At the moment Stone Road is the smaller of the two, having 45 stores and services. Westmount has more than 70. But when the second phase of development arrives in 1977, the Guelph centre will jump to 90 players in Mr. Broadley's team.

Stone Road has carried on another facet of the Sifton mall philosophy, becoming, and remaining involved with the community.

Mr. Broadley keeps a large day record calendar open in front of him at all times. The phone keeps ringing at his side, another group calls, another date is filled in.

In a year and a half just about everyone has been to Stone Road with one display or another. The Salvation Army, the police, UNICEF, some Scottish country dancers have all been there. Next week it will be cheerleaders from area high schools in competition in the great cheer-off.

The groups draw onlookers and the onlookers shop.

And the shoppers and onlookers are coming from a wide area. Mr. Broadley also has a map, there's a large pencilled circle drawn from just north of Hamilton, beyond Acton, well north of Fergus, to the edge of Kitchener and back to Hamilton. This is where the shoppers are coming from.

And Mr. Broadley knows it, he has been known to scour

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