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DISCOVER MENU



HERITAGE

In 1922, Allen Edmonds founder Elbert W. Allen launched his new shoe company (originally called the Allen-Spiegel Shoe Company) in Belgium, Wisconsin, less than 10 miles from our current headquarters. A family man at heart, Allen knew, as did his future partner and salesman extraordinaire, Bill "Pops" Edmonds, that to be a success they needed to stay close to their roots, knowing that the Midwestern values of hard work, honesty, humility and trust would be the cornerstones of a new kind of shoe company.



Elbert and Mayme Allen gather with the employees. (1923)

We say "new kind of shoe company" because of Allen's innovative manufacturing techniques that relied on Goodyear welting to make fashionable and durable shoes that were nail-less and shankless (meaning they had no uncomfortable metal bar under the instep). The new brand of shoes were an instant success, and when the other shoe companies of the day emulated us, we set ourselves apart by continuing to up the ante on craftsmanship, style and service.

While a great deal of the Allen Edmonds' success can be credited to Allen's groundbreaking ideas, our longevity is also attributable to the company being at its heart, a family business. From 1922 till 1978, either Allen or one of his sons- Bert and Boyd-was in charge of the company, and their strong and steady leadership allowed Allen Edmonds to succeed despite the hard times of the Great Depression, the rationing years of World War II (during which we made shoes for officers to wear with their dress uniforms), and the mounting pressures of foreign competition in the 1960s and '70s.

We credit our strong values and work ethics as the reasons our footwear is consistently chosen by corporate, political, entertainment and community leaders.

Our lineage not only highlights our Wisconsin roots and Midwestern values, but underscores how being an Allen Edmonds Man is passed down from one generation to the next. For us, there is nothing better than having a father bring his son into one of our stores to get him fitted for his first pair of Allen Edmonds. They may not pick out the same style, but this sharing of wisdom and sense of style-getting the most for your money-speaks to tradition and fellowship, and we are honored to be a part of these moments.

As you can imagine, this sort of loyalty has attracted customers from all walks of life, especially those whose drive to be the best has pushed them to the top of their chosen professions. We credit our strong values and work ethics as the reasons our footwear is consistently chosen by corporate, political, entertainment and community leaders. Whether it is receiving a glowing endorsement from the Prime Minister of Canada, Stephen Harper, or Presidents Ronald Reagan, George H.W. Bush, Bill Clinton and George W. Bush all choosing to wear Park Avenues for their inaugurations, we cannot help but be proud that leaders all over the world are wearing our shoes during the most important moments of their esteemed careers.



Salesman hits the road with the mobile showroom



WWII soldiers were customers during and after the war



Catalog Cover from 1949-1950



President Ronald Reagan with John and JoEllen Stollenwerk