

THE BON MARCHE

The Bon Marche has been an integral part of the Northwest for nearly 100 years. Established in 1890 by Edward Nordhoff and his wife, it was named after a fine store in Paris which Nordhoff admired as a young man.

The original store was at First and Cedar Streets. Their 30 ft. front dry goods store was operated by both of them. Nordhoff brought the first supply of pennies to Seattle in 1893 and began the penny economics of 69¢ and 98¢ pricing. In 1900 The Bon Marche moved to a larger location at Second and Pike Streets, then enlarged the store in 1905, and again in 1912.

Finally in 1929 the move was made to the present location into the art deco elegance of a building which was just completed and designed especially for the department store. The new five-story building occupied a full city block, and was the first store in Seattle to have "moving stairs" escalators.

In the early 1930s The Bon Marche became a part of Allied Stores Corporation. Expansion of The Bon Marche and addition of new stores followed World War II when Puget Sound population increased and many people settled in the suburbs. Allied Stores Corporation pioneered the concept of suburban shopping centers, and The Bon Marche expanded into the new centers.

Over the years The Bon Marche has opened or acquired stores throughout the Northwest, and currently operates 40 stores in the six states of Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana, Utah, and Wyoming. The complex operates under the leadership of Wilbur J. Fix, chairman and chief executive officer, and Robert Mang, president and chief operating officer.

In late 1986 a merger between Allied Stores Corporation and Campeau Corporation was finalized. Almost a year later Fix and Campeau announced exciting new plans which involve a complete reconfiguration of downtown Seattle Bon Marche. Construction starts this year and when completed an atrium will extend through the central core of all ten levels of the store and be topped with a massive skylight on the roof. This extensive construction will transform a Seattle retail landmark into a world class shopping experience for The Bon Marche customers.

The Bon Marche is proud to be involved in Washington State Centennial, and to be the corporate sponsor of The Centennial Tribute to Northwest Black Pioneers.

Sketch identification copy

The Bon Marche - 1890 at First and Cedar

The Bon Marche - 1988, 4th and Pine, operating a total of 40 stores

The Bon Marche - 1990, the interior of the downtown Seattle store