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Darien Sport Shop Celebrates 70th Anniversary, New Commercial Features Darienites

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Seven decades after it was founded in 1946 by Stephen Zangrillo, Darien Sport Shop is celebrating the 70-year anniversary and has launched a video commercial filmed in Darien and showing town residents.

Here's the store's announcement about the commercial and the anniversary:

Commercial

Just in time to kick off the Fall season, Darien Sport Shop is pleased to announce the premiere of its Fall 2016 campaign commercial launched in celebration of the company's 70th anniversary.

The film was produced by Connecticut-based Hostage Films, a commercial and film production company led creatively by director and cinematographer Ruben Latre and executive producer Melissa Beth.

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Ruben Latre is an award-winning commercial director from Barcelona, Spain who in his first year directing commercials was thrice nominated in the category of Best New Director, ultimately taking home the honor at APCP Madrid.

Latre's work has been featured in Adweek, honored at the Director's Guild of America in Shoot's New Director's Showcase and shortlisted at the AICP Awards. He is recognized around the world for his visual style and sensibility.

See the commercial here:

The commercial was filmed entirely on location in Darien. A casting call for local talent resulted in an overwhelming response of hundreds of submissions from the area.

With such an incredible amount of local talent, the selections took months to complete and the final casting is entirely comprised of community members from Darien and Fairfield County.

It is the first time in the company's 70-year history that it has filmed a commercial on location outside of the store. A holiday version of the commercial will be seen later in the season.

The film opens with a group of Darien middle school boys playing football on the expansive field at the beautiful Ox Ridge Hunt Club.

The lovely grounds and riding ring provide the backdrop and staging for the next scene featuring equestrian style. A picturesque home in Darien was the setting for the back to school scene, as well as the gorgeous sunset fire pit scene.

Darien's Lanphier Day Spa and Salon generously provided the hair and makeup artistry seen on the models. All clothing worn by the models can be found at Darien Sport Shop.

Models:

- Football Scene: Brooks Barry, Quinlan Daly, Emmett Heissan, Marc Heissan, Jahmal, Marajah, Thomas Rossi, Jr., Harrison Slotkin
- Ox Ridge Scenes: Lindsay Dimonekas, Jill Franklin, Erica Hall, Zoe Seavey, Chris Stewart
- Back to School Scene: Allyson Spellman Becker, Shayler Becker, Katie Servidio
- Fire Pit Scene: Breda Casey, Sarah Dimonekas, Danielle Kohlberger, Adrienne Niederreither
- Hair & Makeup: Lanphier Day Spa & Salon

The commercial is airing locally on cable channels and can also be seen on the Darien Sport Shop YouTube Channel.

History was truly in the making when Stephen Zangrillo, known affectionately as “Mr. Z,” opened the Darien Sport Shop in August 1946 as a one-room 400-square foot sporting goods shop after returning home from serving with the U.S. Army during WWII.

He founded the store with little to no money in his pocket, but saw the business grow and expand over the years to become an iconic shopping destination which today is a renowned three-level department store that carries fine designer apparel, accessories, sporting goods and gifts for men, women and children.

His founding principles: The customer is always right, and the focus on building long-lasting relationships set a precedent in the industry and has transcended generations.

Darien Sport Shop is more than just a store; it is an icon of heritage, innovation, fine quality, and outstanding personal service. We are dedicated to being a good neighbor in the communities we serve and supporting local causes. We are honored to uphold our heritage and values and grateful to our family of loyal customers we have served for the past seven decades.

- 1946 – Mr. Z opens first store on the Post Road across from the railroad tracks (currently the Dunkin Donuts building). In 1946, Harry S. Truman is President, the first digital computer is unveiled, ‘It’s a Wonderful Life’ premieres and the New York City Ballet is established.
- 1950 – Moves a few doors down to double the space, a great accomplishment in only four years
- 1954 – Purchases the land at 1127 Post Road (current location). The grand store entrance is on the Post Road side.
- 1963 – Opens ski shop on November 22, 1963, sadly, the day that President John F. Kennedy is assassinated.
- 1978 – Adds on the 12,000 square foot women’s wing of the first floor. Starts town of Darien holiday tradition of Christmas tree lighting festivities, which has grown to become a highly anticipated annual event
- 1994 - Gina Zangrillo joins Darien Sport Shop
- 1996 – Celebrates 50 years of business in Darien
- 1998 – Adds on men’s 12,000 square foot addition on first floor
- 2004 – Adds on atrium to entrance of store
- 2015 – Stephen Zangrillo passes away, leaving behind a legacy of extraordinary service to the community and the retail industry
- 2016 – Celebrates 70 years of extraordinary service and style