

Isadore Berson

From Retail to Photography

Isadore Berson was the founder of two well-known retail chains, the Youth Centre clothing stores and the Bradlees department stores.

Mr. Berson was also an accomplished, self-taught photographer whose work won him many international prizes from the Photographic Society of America and similar organizations in India, Pakistan, Scotland and South Africa. His photographs have been exhibited at the Chicago Botanic Garden, the Minneapolis Institute of Arts, the University of Hartford and the University of Connecticut Medical Center.

He began his business career by opening the first Youth Centre store in Springfield, Mass., in 1937. The company grew into a 17-store chain in Connecticut and Massachusetts by the time it was sold by Mr. Berson in 1978. During the 41 years he operated the stores, Mr. Berson's wife, Marian, was the company's vice president.

Mr. Berson founded the Bradlees chain in 1958, but sold the company five years later. Bradlees was one of the nation's first discount department stores.

Mr. Berson died at his West Hartford home on Oct. 27. He was 93.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2004/12/26/nyregion/the-extraordinary-who-lived-among-us.html>