



At this location was the Harry Harris Shoes for Children bootery shop, which opened in 1962 at 409 North Canon Drive. After 58 years of service it closed its doors at the end of 2020 with the passing of Andy Harris (1956-2020), son of the original owner. Harry Jerome Harris (1922-1991) hailed from Detroit, Michigan (born in Chicago), but moved out to Southern California to attend the University of California, Los Angeles where he played football and baseball. He was eventually drafted by the Detroit Tigers to play baseball. Harry's experience in selling shoes began around the age of 19 at the Allen Shoe Store in Detroit. Once he was settled in Los Angeles, he got a job at Rudnick's Sporting Goods at 410 North Canon Drive in Beverly Hills selling shoes in 1949. Harry married Carol R. Arden a year later and they had a son, Andrew Elliott, six years later. Harry stayed in the shoe business to make ends meet for his family despite playing professional baseball. In 1962, he established his own shoe shop specializing in children's shoes right across the street from his old employer. At the time, the Children's Bootery of Beverly Hills at 418 North Canon Drive was the only other children's shoe store in town. It ultimately went out of business in 1977. Early-on, local designer MeraLee Goldman, a former Beverly Hills mayor, helped Harry design the store with its original brightly colored plastic scoop seats, carpeting, wallpaper, and neon signage. It basically remained unchanged to its closing.

The friendly personal service, quality, workmanship, and mega balloons are what made the family owned and operated Harry Harris Shoes for Children an institution within the community. To entertain the kids while waiting to be fitted in the famous nationally known shoe brands balloons were blown up and offered to the young clientele. For a festive atmosphere and to attract attention balloons were also tied and displayed outside and inside the store. Beverly Hills families had loyally patronized the children's shoe boutique for years and pediatricians often recommended the specialty store. Many parents in Beverly Hills bought their child's first pair of shoes at this flagship store (who also provided baby shoe bronzing). Styles ranged from whimsical red glitter Mary Janes to serious grown-up types like loafers, all of which were perfectly fitted by staff. Notable clientele who have bought shoes and had their offspring soles measured have included Frank Sinatra, Ella Fitzgerald, Vidal Sassoon, Henry Winkler, Chevy Chase, Eartha Kitt, Jack Nicholson, and Arnold Schwarzenegger. Upon Harry's passing in 1991, his obituary read "He fit the foot, but he touched the soul."

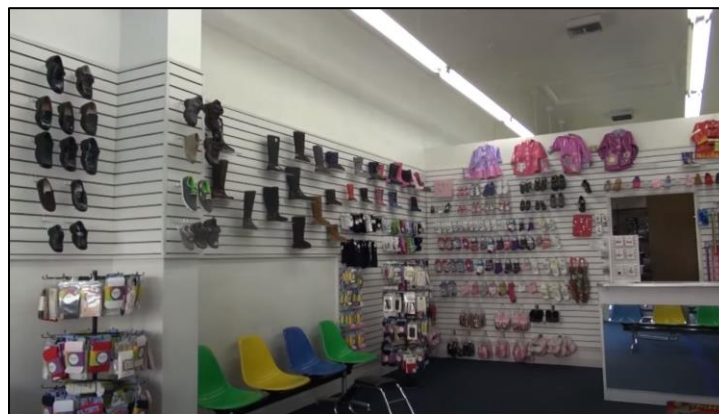


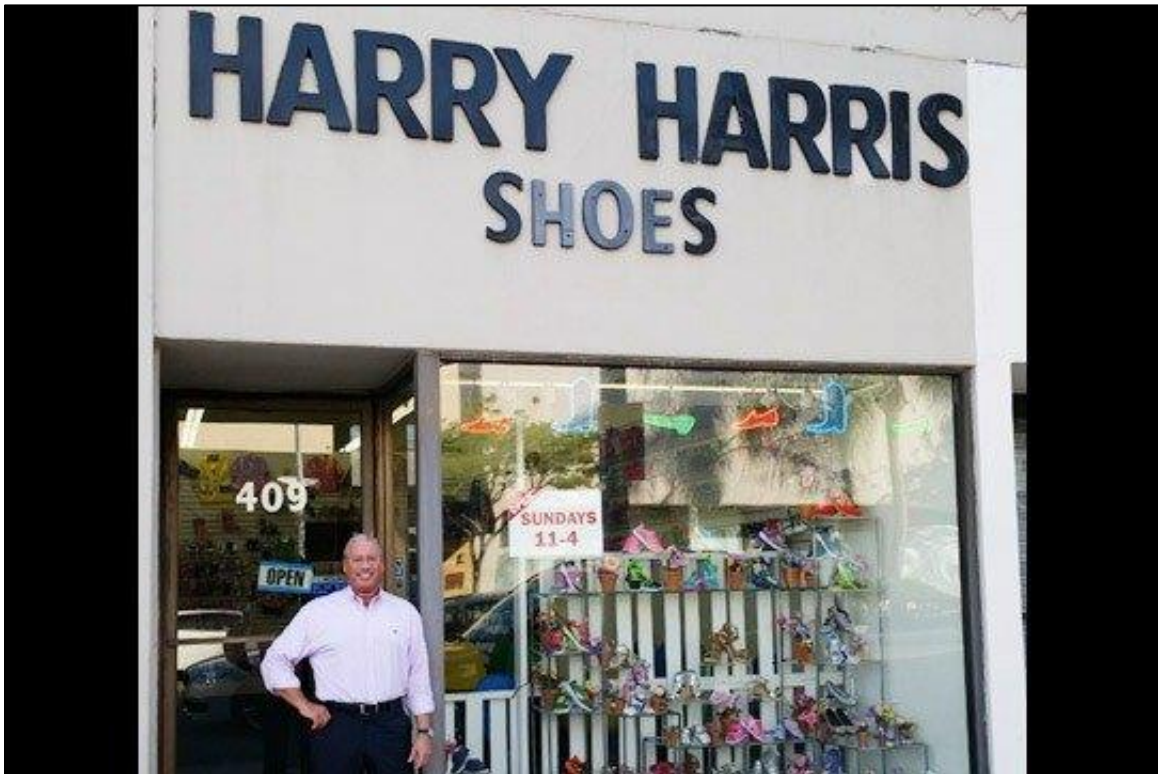
*Proposed Plaque Copy:*

“Harry Harris Shoes for Children was located on this site from 1962 to 2020. Owned and operated by former professional baseball player Harry Harris, it quickly grew into a local institution with its brightly colored plastic scoop seats, neon signage, and tradition of giving out a balloon with every pair of shoes. Many Beverly Hills parents bought their children’s first shoes at Harry Harris Shoes (which also offered baby shoe bronzing), and pediatricians often recommended the for its highly personalized service. When Harris died in 1991, his obituary read, “He fit the foot, but he touched the soul.” The store continued in operation under Harris’s son, Andy, but closed upon Andy’s death in 2020.”

*Recommended Placement Location:* Within the public sidewalk, at center of width of the store front at 409 North Canon Drive.

*Photos:*





*Andy Harris at the longtime Canon Drive location*

