

# Mermigas is the name, stains are his game

## Same Day Dry Cleaners' owner is always on lookout for tough stains

By Carol Johnstone  
Special Features Writer

**G**eorge Mermigas, president and owner of Same Day Dry Cleaners, laughs and gestures expansively as he heads back to an inner office.

He points out the crisp, white silts that slowly sway and jerk past on their hangers, on their way up and around the conveyer belt that fills the long, high room in the main plant on 6100 Young Street in Halifax.

Entering the office, he shuts the door shut on the clink, clank and hiss of the machines and presses and seats himself behind his large brown desk. It's covered in order forms, pamphlets from International Fabricate Institute and brochures on new, environmentally friendly machines using silicone-based solvents that he's considering buying in the next year or two to replace his 'perc'-using machines.

"I owned Same Day Cleaners for

the last 13 years and have been in the business for 28 years since I was 16, back in 1973, October 13th, a Friday, my lucky day," he says.

That's the day he arrived in Montreal from Greece on his way to visit family friends who owned a dry cleaning business in Charlottetown, PEI.

"They asked me to come to visit and if I felt like it to make application and stay in Canada. And, that's how I did. That's how I started and that's how I stay. I liked the job," he says.

The dry cleaning business is never boring for Mr. Mermigas.

"Every day I'm looking for new opportunities, new challenges. Specially difficult stains."

The most difficult are food stains, particularly mustard or ketchup, because they contain dye.

Most people are embarrassed by stains, trying to nib them out on the spot with water, and then putting the garment away until it's wanted several seasons later. That's a

mistake. Summarizing from a leaflet on his desk: Never rub a stain, blot it instead; if you use stain removers, test for colour fastness on an inner seam before using; don't iron stained or soiled clothes; never put a garment away with stains on it; but bring it to the dry cleaners as soon as possible, telling Irim or her what and where your stains are and what you've done to try and remove them.

He usually gets up between 5 and 5:30 a.m. and works until closing time six days a week.

"I'm not only supervising, but I'm doing the actual dry cleaning. Every garment goes through my hands," he says laughing. "Every garment has George's initials on it."

He even has Iris cell phone number posted on the door on Young Street in case of an emergency pick-up on a Sunday.

Mr. Mermigas now has 35 employees and an additional eight drop-off locations; the most recent acquisition at a Sunnyside Mall location nine months ago.

For the past 12 years, in conjunction with CHNS Radio, Same Day has cleaned about 50 and 60,000 used winter Coats for distribution throughout tire Maritimes to those in need.



Joseph Robichaud Photography

**George Mermigas** is president and owner of Same Day Dry Cleaners at 6100 Young Street in Halifax. Mermigas has been in the dry cleaning business for over 28 years.