

# The Fashion World's Seeing Double

BY MARJORIE MEGIVERN

Like the chewing gum ad says, you can "double your fun" by looking at the Varnam girls, who are not only a double dose of beauty, but are on their way to dual modeling careers at the tender age of 15.

Sabrina and Serena are fresh-faced, wholesome Varnamtown teenagers whose swimsuit-clad bodies showed up in a recent full-page newspaper fashion ad for a prominent department store. It was their first "shoot," but probably not the last, for the girls have caught the attention of the Eileen Ford modeling agency in New York.

Since they only began learning the business two months ago, the twins, daughters of Ronald and Jencie Varnam, are understandably a little dumbfounded by the pace of success.

"They're sure of what they want for their future, however. 'Ever since I was a little girl, I've liked getting in front of a mirror and messing around,'" Sabrina confessed. And Serena added, "I like being photographed."

Schoolmates at West Brunswick High School and adult friends kept telling the girls they had "model" qualities, so they begged their mother to let them attend a modeling school.

Armed with professional photos, Mrs. Varnam and her daughters went in March to Delia Harper, owner of Delia's Modeling Agency in Wilmington.

"When I first looked at them and their pictures," Delia said, "I saw two girls extremely overly made up, with permed hair, but underneath it all, two beautiful girls."

Delia challenged them to wash their faces and pull their long brown hair back naturally without any curl. "They were willing to do this," she said, "and I knew they had potential."

Two months later the budding models move on Delia's runway with poise and grace, have adopted her dictums against smoking, drinking and junk food, and already see the benefits of this education.

"It helps me in being around people," said the shy Sabrina. "It gives me confidence."

That's the secret to successful modeling, according to their teacher. "You shine anywhere when you're self-confident," Delia said.

Two hours weekly in a basic class has taught the Varnams about runway modeling and posing for fashion "shoots," as well as prepared them to participate in competition at the November convention at Hilton Head, S.C.

They are more than ever intent on a career as models or as booking agents or scouts for modeling agencies.

It was a scout for Eileen Ford who visited Delia's last month on a tour of the south. "They were looking for fresh, clean-looking girls and said they hadn't found any so far, but they chose four girls here," Delia said.

Two of those were Serena and Sabrina, which means that, when they're ready, in about a year, according to Delia, they'll go to New York or Japan or Europe to do some work for Ford's.

"I'll groom them and work on their southern accents," Delia laughed. Next summer they can probably spend a week in New York, getting acquainted with the business.

Delia, a model for 30 years, said agencies today are looking for tall (at least 5 feet 8 inches) young girls (age 12 is ideal), who are wholesome-looking. "The face they want has wide-set eyes, a narrow, straight nose, full lips and high cheekbones," she said.

The Varnam twins fit this description perfectly, so their prospects are bright.

Their mother is happy about their chosen careers. "They've been interested in this for about two years," she said. "As children they were always doing neighborhood shows. I thought at first (modeling) was grown-up stuff, but a year ago I had them photographed and the photographer said they were photogenic."

She's prepared now to let them pursue this career, even if it means sending them off to New York for a while.

The girls have already made some sacrifices, giving up band at school and their membership in Rainbow Girls. They willingly take on the regimen and hard work involved in learning to move properly and achieving that healthy, simple look that's in demand on magazine covers.

Still shy and quiet, Serena and Sabrina are gaining confidence and beginning to believe in a future of whirlwind trips around the world with earnings of \$125 or more per hour.

Their special qualities may even land a movie role for the girls. They were interviewed in Atlanta Tuesday, along with two other sets of twins, for a movie role that would take them to California in the near future.

The next time you pick up a glossy fashion magazine, you may see double, a couple of nice Brunswick County kids who made good.



SERENA AND SABRINA VARNAM enjoy a moment of relaxation between runway sessions at modeling class in Wilmington.

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