



HEATHER CASSANO | Staff Photographer  
Eleonore Dunn has owned Eleonore's Hair Design since 1980. She has seen the town of Elon change from coffee shops and Winn Dixies to Elon University's student center and dorms.

# Campus ✂️ Cuttery

## Eleonore's Hair Design in business since 1980

Marlena Chertock  
Design Editor

Since 1975, the shop between Live Oak Communications and Harold Acting Studio has been a barbershop and in 1980, it became Eleonore's Hair Design.

The shop is adorned with old-style barbershop chairs and wooden dressers that give customers a nostalgic feeling.

In 1965, owner Eleonore Dunn, at age 19, immigrated from Germany to the United States with her husband, a serviceman for the U.S.

"I always say you have to be young, dumb and stupid to leave your country," Dunn said. "But I don't regret it."

Dunn became a hair dresser in 1976. She went to a Burlington cosmetology school that no longer exists, she said.

"Maybe it's because I was the oldest one, and I had three small sisters, and I would do their hair all the time," she said. "I reckon that's why I wanted to do it. Early on, I always messed with hair."

Before Dunn, the barbershop was owned by Sally Bear, Dunn said. In Aug. 1980, he had a heart attack while cutting hair and passed away, according to Dunn.

But the history of the building goes back even further than that. The building was built in 1891 as a post office, the first one in Elon, she said.

She's seen the town change from coffee shops, laundromats and Winn Dixies to the gym, the student center and dorms, she said.

Employee Shannon Carver has worked at Eleonore's Hair Design since July. Before coming to the Elon hair salon, she worked at Sure Style in Burlington.

"I just didn't have that many walk-ins," she said. "The place was in downtown Burlington, and it was dead."

Carver said she was always interested in cutting hair.

"I can remember sitting in a chair as a little girl, putting Meemaw's hair up in pigtails," she said. "I can remember putting her hair in curls when I was a little older, nine or 10 years old. I would just sit there and read the directions and do it like they said."

She pursued cosmetology after high school but got married and had a full time job, she said.

"Something had to go," she said. "And it was school."

Carver went to get her degree and had to start her hours over because she had waited 11 years, rather than

the allotted 10. She went to Leon's Beauty School in Greensboro, because it was a fast, no-nonsense program, she said. She graduated in 2008.

At Eleonore's, Carver said between she and Dunn they see about 20 customers a day. Customers often drive long commutes from Greensboro, Roxboro, Henderson, Cary and Chapel Hill, Carver said.

Parking can be an issue, according to Carver.

"It brinks on ridiculous," she said. "I can't get someone in and out of here in under an hour. (Dunn) once had a customer, and we had to move her car three times to keep her from getting a parking ticket."

Carver said so far it looks like Tuesdays and Thursdays are off-days, but there's no way to tell.

"I was in here one day, alone, bored and dyed my hair 'Rockstar Red,'" Carver said. "It's faded to orange-brown. I'm 43- years-old, but I'm young when it comes to hair."

Carver said as the year goes on and when new students get settled in, they'll get busier. She said she's not discouraged.

Carver mostly cuts college students' hair and Dunn cuts the professors' and locals' hair, according to Carver. Dunn has some clients who are in high school, college and senior citizens, Carver said.

"She does a good job because she's got a magic brush," Burlington resident Ruth Proctor said of Dunn.

"Don't forget the magic scissors," Burlington resident Francis Vanderford added.

Dunn said her customers panic when she tells them she's taking a vacation to Germany. She said they think she will stay there.

"I miss my siblings, I miss Germany," she said. "But I don't want to (go back to live there). I would be OK if there were two chains here, a good bakery and good butcher shop."

Carver said she has cut Executive Vice President Gerry Francis' and student athletes' hair.

"They're local celebrities in their own right," she said. "Everybody who walks through that door is a customer, and everybody's special in their own right. I wouldn't do any more for Ashton Kutcher than I would for you. Though I might drool a little and be more nervous if it was (Ashton) Kutcher."

Eleonore's stays open until the last customer is served, Carver said. Usually, one of them will stay until 4 or 5 p.m.

The shop is located at 102 N. Williamson Ave. and can be reached at 336-584-4211.



MARLENA CHERTOCK | Photographer  
Owner of Eleonore's Hair Design, Eleonore Dunn, prepares one of her clients' hair to be cut.

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