

Not your average museum:

Former thrift store provides creative opportunities

Kellye Coleman
Reporter

Elsewhere Collaborative is said to be a living museum, a space in which visitors are invited to create, explore and collaborate.

"We like to say that when you enter the space, you activate the museum," said Christopher Kennedy, Elsewhere's education curator.

Located in downtown Greensboro, Elsewhere provides a unique opportunity for creativity and curiosity.

The walls are packed with shelves of fabric, books and action figures, items collected by Sylvia Gray, the former owner who used the three-story space as a thrift store. After she passed away in 1997, her grandson gathered with several artists to transform the space into a location for ongoing, collaborative projects.

According to Kennedy, Elsewhere is all about "mixing things together and using our collective knowledge." The museum's various initiatives, such as employing artists in residency, internships and school programs, reflect the staff's goal to serve as an outlet for the creativity of others.

Having visited Elsewhere with a group of friends, junior Ellie Erickson described the museum as eclectic. She said she was curious from the moment she stepped inside.

"I was immediately interested in learning more," she said. "Everyone inside seemed to be very artistic."

Visitors are able to interact with the space itself. The confess-a-torium, an enclosed booth with journals and pens, is the spot for visitors to confess their sins or read the sins of others, written in a Post Secret-like fashion.

Every nook and cranny of the space is meant for visitor interaction.

Not only is one invited to create and explore, visitors are also encouraged to read one of the hundreds of books lining the shelves.

"I like how all the books are color-coordinated," Erickson said. "It almost feels like it's artwork."

The museum recently received a city grant to place solar panels on the roof of the building, and according to Kennedy, the staff hopes to set up a solar charging station outside of the museum, which will allow individuals to charge electronic devices as they learn about solar energy.

At 8 p.m. Each Friday, Elsewhere hosts various

events, from dinner parties and open houses to sidewalk lectures and performances, large windows opening out to the sidewalk to create a small stage. The museum also features programs for individuals, groups and schools.

"We work with all the major universities," Kennedy said.

They provide tours and workshops, and accept interns from colleges across the country.

Samm Rohrborn, an Elon senior from New Hampshire, served as an operations intern at Elsewhere last summer as one of 20 interns the museum hosted this year. After working at the front desk, helping with public relations efforts and translating many advertising materials from English to Spanish, she says a visit to the museum is a great idea for any student.

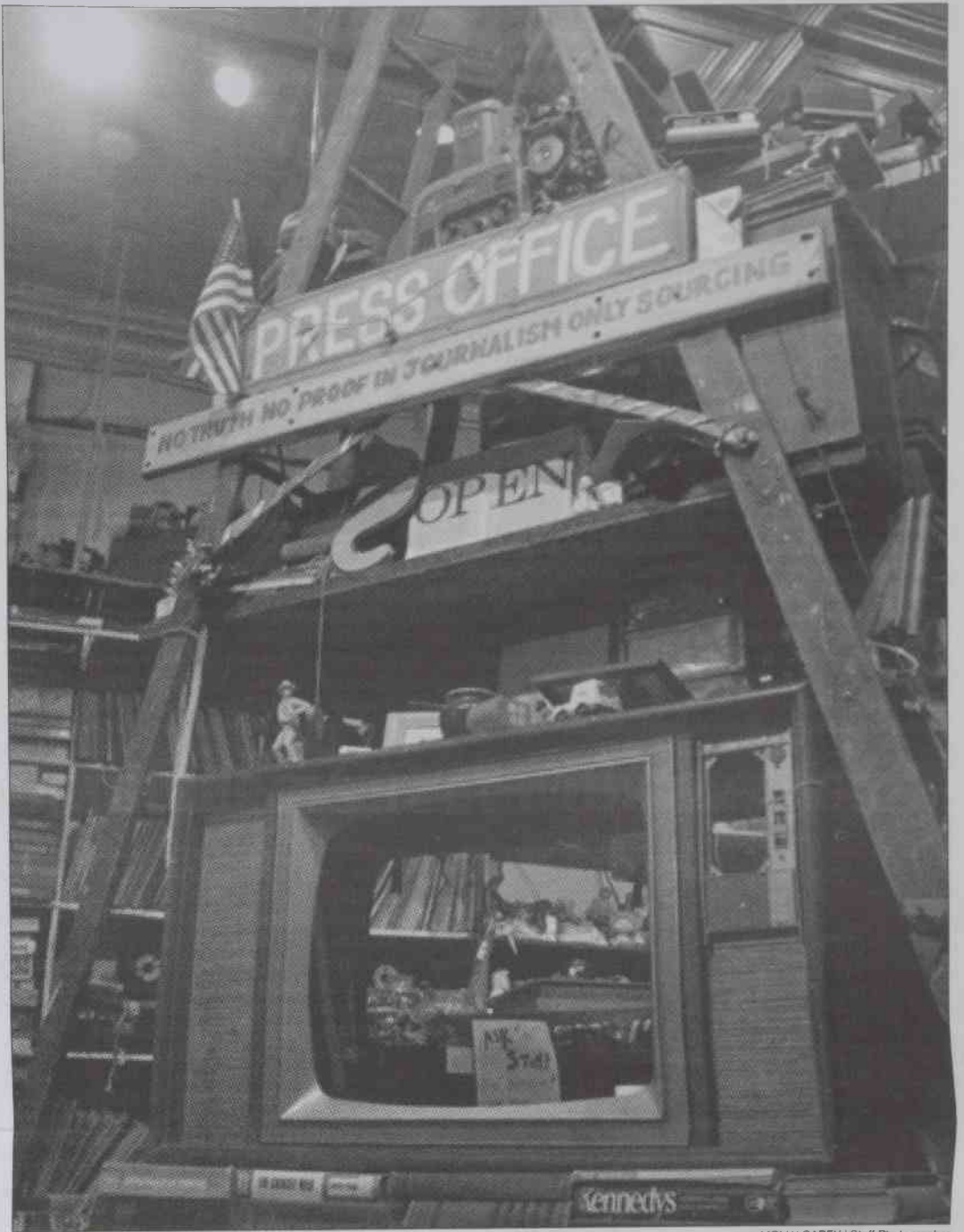
"Elsewhere is a place where you can completely immerse yourself and relax in a creative and playful environment," Rohrborn said. "It is encouraged for visitors to make their own sculptures or design art pieces."

The artist-in-residency program is an important facet of the museum. Artists from all over the country and various parts of the world come to Elsewhere to participate in what Kennedy calls an "experiential residency." The artists stay for five to six weeks, creating projects and pieces that use Elsewhere as a platform.

"A lot of students at Elon often forget how to play," Rohrborn said. "Many are not in touch with their creativity."



MOLLY CAREY | Staff Photographer
The confess-a-torium is one of the many ways visitors can interact with the art at Elsewhere Collaborative.

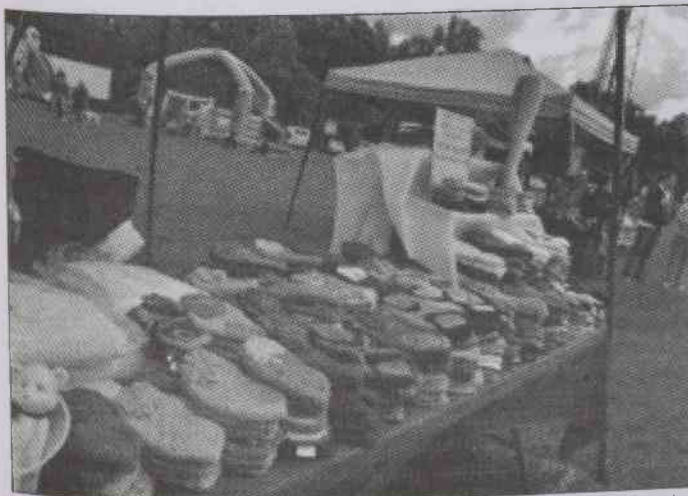


MOLLY CAREY | Staff Photographer
Artists-in-residence create works from the thrift store finds that pack the downtown Greensboro building.



MOLLY CAREY | Staff Photographer
Elsewhere offers internships and school programs to match its mission of creativity and obtaining knowledge.

Plaid festival celebrates Alamance's patterned ties



MERISSA BLITZ | Staff Photographer
Crocheted foot warmers were made by 90-year-old Ruth Pope, who crochets as a hobby.

Merissa Blitz
Staff Photographer

The endless row of plaid flags adorning the quaint, country residences caught the eye of passers-by this past Saturday.

On Oct. 1, the 5th Annual Plaid Day Festival was held on the baseball field behind Alamance Lutheran Church in the village of Alamance.

Plaid Day celebrates the fact that Alamance was the home of the E.M. Holt Mill, which was the first place to manufacture plaid products south of the Potomac River.

Activities for children were set up in a row, including a moon bounce guarded by a purple dragon and a dodgeball bounce filled with chaotic squeals of excitement.

Big Time Party performed a variety of music from Motown to disco to classic rock while festival-goers listened in. Some even

line danced to the sound of the band.

Local vendors and crafters had booths set up in the area between the moon bounces and the musical performance.

Naydine Sharpe makes jewelry made from potatoes as a hobby and sold it at the festival. Sharp said she got the idea for potato jewelry from a friend and decided to try making some of her own.

Kathleen Horner, a senior at Southern Alamance High School, was raising money for Kopper Top, a local nonprofit organization benefitting people through animal therapy, by selling homemade dog treats. The fundraiser was a part of Horner's senior project. During her project, she volunteered with Kopper Top and took some of the animals to visit a senior citizen's home.

The majority of the people who attended the festival donned plaid, showing their spirit in celebration of Plaid Day.