

Willie Stratford Finds

Tailor Made Attire Unnecessary

By Deborah Gates
Post Staff Writer

He even wanted creases in his overalls back when "jeans" weren't popular. No wonder Willie J. Stratford, manager of the West Trade Street station Post Office and public information officer of the U.S. Postal Service of Charlotte became one of The Charlotte Post's 10 best dressed men.

The son of Rosie Stratford, with a son Willie Jr. and daughter Pi Denise, Willie said "I don't want anybody to give me ties," adding, "they don't buy what I want."

Willie grew up in Charlotte where he graduated from Second Ward High School and Johnson C. Smith University earning a degree in History and Social Science. "There weren't many jobs for blacks except to preach and teach," he said for his reason going to Washington, D.C. and Massachusetts to work in the railway will service and as a milling machine operator, respectively, in his young adulthood.

Back in Charlotte in 1952, Willie said he became the first black to work in the transfer office of the U.S. Postal Service at the old Southern Station. If the saying "clothes maketh the man" holds water then maybe the root to Willie's success came from the dampened eyes of his employers.

Willie said he buys his clothes from Belk, Harris Hart, Ivey's, Tate Brown, or "anywhere I see something I like," he said.

Not so ordinary about his shoes, Willie likes them Italian made. "I'm not caught up in brand or store names but I like foreign made shoes," Willie said.

Wearing a 39 regular at 5 feet 7½ inches and weighing 153 pounds, Willie feels his unique size allows him to buy clothes "off the rack," finding tailor made attire unnecessary. "A lot of times I've been asked to model but had other commitments," he added.

Willie revealed his favorite



WILLIE STRATFORD
...Clothes maketh the man

colors as being blue and brown. He said his outfits are business orientated, allowing for casual attire depending on the occasion. "A lot of times you may see me in pin stripes," he said.

Free time activities for Willie include writing poetry and short stories. He is a member of-get ready-executive board of the Boy Scouts of America, Charlotte Mecklenburg Human Relations Committee, United Christian Ministry's Incorporated, National Conference of Christian Jews, Sunday School teacher at Asension Lutheran Church, Society of Wing Haven Foundation, Friends of UNCC, Good Fellows Club, Black Political Caucus, board of directors of Youth Homes, Inc., board of directors of Echo Advisory Board, Charlotte Public Society, Charlotte Chamber of Commerce, Mental Health Association of Mecklenburg County, board of directors of

Central Charlotte Association, board of directors of Charlotte Council on Alcoholism, Alumni Association of Johnson C. Smith University, Metrolina Native America Association, Political Black Leadership Caucus and executive board of directors of Charlotte Little Theatre.

Willie said his business clothes are conservative, but on Saturday he can be caught in shorts or of course, blue jeans. "I put a lot of money in clothes," Willie admitted and added, "I'm a compulsive buyer." What the heck, "everybody's got their own thing," Willie confessed. Another one of Willie's things is dating his mother and grandmother whom he says he loves very much.

If you want to step out like Willie J. Stratford, in a pin striped suit and Italian shoes, step into one of his favorite stores and get an offer you can't refuse.

Retirement Party

Held For Mrs. Booton

A retirement party was held Friday, June 24 in the lobby of Mechanics and Farmers Bank main branch to honor Mrs. Laura M. Booton, former bank secretary and present administrative assistant.

The wife of Ray Booton of 1722 Van Buren Avenue, Mrs. Booton has been employed at Mechanics and Farmers since 1962 and as administrative assistant since early this year.

According to Sandra Heartley, assistant cashier at the main office, "a tribute recalling her past with the bank" was made to Mrs. Booton by A.E. Spears, senior vice president and chairman of the

local board of managers. Out of town guests who

attended the party included John H. Wheeler, president of Mechanics and Farmers, J.B. Anglin Jr., bank comptroller and Helen Chavious, note teller, all from the Durham office.

Other party attendees were members of the Charlotte Board of Managers and their wives and officers and staff members of the three offices in Charlotte.

Ms. Heartley said that Mrs. Booton was one of those who picked the site of the main office of Mechanics and Farmers bank.

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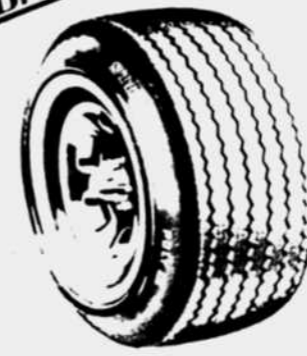
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Remember - Go To Church Sunday

Rev. Norman Kerry Wouldn't

Be Caught With A Hand Bag

By Deborah Gates
Post Staff Writer

"I don't consider myself a student of dressing," Rev. Norman E. Kerry said. However, someone does, for he has been chosen as one of The Charlotte Post's 10 Best Dressed Men.

The Pastor of Mt. Sinai Baptist Church, 1243 West Boulevard, Rev. Kerry is married to Ms. Willie Jean Kerry, and has one son, Norman Jr.

If you don't know who this best dressed fellow is, you best be sure he isn't the one wearing the pocketless trousers carrying the clutch bag. "I'll never be caught with a hand bag," Rev. Kerry said of the new fad in Europe that has caught on in the U.S.

He shops all over, from Tate Brown to Belk and Ivey's, "wherever there's a bargain," he said. Wearing a 46 long, Rev. Kerry revealed that the sales don't always be to his advantage "because of my size."

Rev. Kerry said he is a Texan by birth. Born in Denton, Texas, he has been in Charlotte for 13 years.

Graduating from Bishop College in Dallas, Texas, where he received a B.A. degree in Religion, Rev. Kerry also attended Shaw University in Raleigh and Southwestern Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas.

Practicing ministry in Belmont, N.C. for 2½ years, Rev. Kerry said he came to Charlotte "because a church became vacant so they asked me to serve." "Belmont was a small town and I wanted a challenge," he added.

A conventional dresser,



Rev. Norman E. Kerry
...Keeps up with styles

Rev. Kerry said he likes to keep up with the styles just as long as they aren't too way out. Brown being his favorite color, Rev. Kerry tries to wear a variety of colors, wearing basic suits that complement many occasions.

Revealing that his wife likes to buy nice things, he said, "she encourages me to buy more," and admitted, "sometimes she helps me pick out clothes."

Considering himself a stingy man, Rev. Kerry said his wife wishes that he buy more. "I select, he said, and concluded, "I'm picky."

Rev. Kerry said when he came to Mt. Sinai, a reported 300 members turned out to be 100 or less. He confessed that the situation frustrated him but he said "I rolled up my sleeve and started working."

According to Rev. Kerry, renovating the church gave the congregation a sense of pride, and since their moving into a new facility, the congregation has reached a total of

900 members. Rev. Kerry said that people today are constantly talking about churches going down, but he said he would like the reading audience to know that his church takes in new members almost every Sunday. "The personality of the minister helps make decisions of the congregation," Rev. Kerry said.

Rev. Kerry said his church is a friendly one, with a bit of old-fashionism drawn in. "People feel like they are at home," Rev. Kerry said.

He also revealed being an "old car buff." The restoration of an old '56 Lincoln is his collector's item. He is also a sports fan, who enjoys basketball, football and baseball.

Rev. Kerry is a member of the NAACP, Baptist Ministers Conference, the Baptist State Conference of North Carolina, Black Ministers Fellowship and the National Baptist Conference of America, Inc.

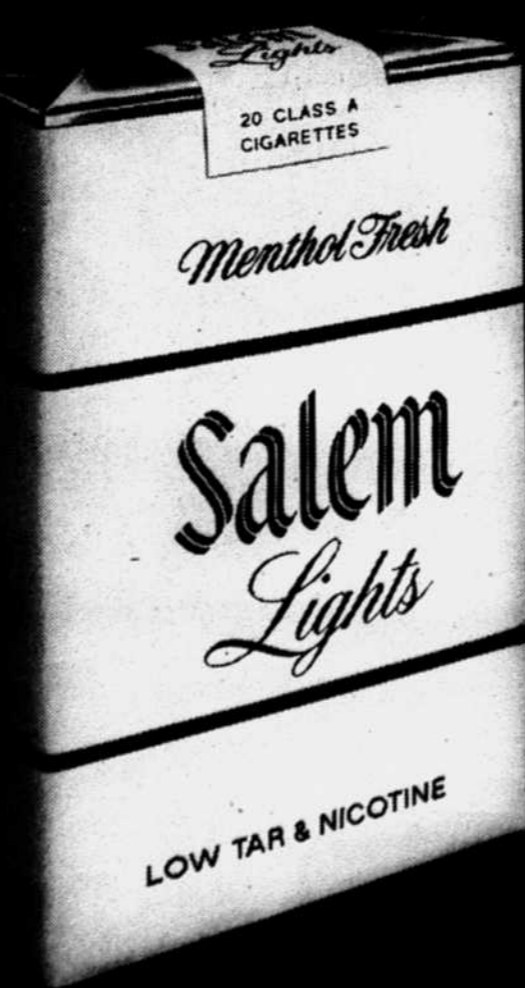
Rev. Kerry said he most admires his father, who was also a Baptist minister. "He was an outstanding preacher, who dedicated his life to helping men and women," Rev. Kerry said.

At 6 ft. 1½ in. and 215 pounds, Rev. Kerry wears ties to accentuate his suits. He buys shoes "wherever I can find them."

Very fond of hats and caps, Rev. Kerry usually wears hats on Sunday. "I wear caps weekly," he said.

So if you still don't know who this best dressed man is, in this age of the afro, he'll be the one NOT wearing the pocketless trousers, but wearing a hat WITHOUT the clutch.

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