



Women In Business



Mae Orr

One may think that the outstanding aspect about the Omnia Gift Shoppe, 3201 Beatties Ford Road in the Bitsy Bounty Shopping Center, is its longevity...10 years. But what keeps the customers coming back is the caring and personal treatment rendered by the owner, Mae Orr. "I care about my customers personally and I try to cater to their needs. Most are very selective and the gifts found in Omnia Gift Shoppe cannot be found in every store." Personal and home traditional gifts can be found in the shoppe but the specialties add a tinge of adventure: ceramics, macrame, custom silk floral arrangements by Leroy Wray, handmade clocks made expressly for Omnia Gift Shoppe and now a new feature: portraits by Brenda Yeargin. "These are the unique offerings that attract the customers," Mrs. Orr continued. "I make it a point to get to know what my customers like and what is flattering to them." The shoppe also carries an array of baby fashions and items, jewelry and a cosmetic line that is color-coded. Mrs. Orr, also a health teacher at Alexander Junior High School, received her B.S. degree in physical education from Johnson C. Smith University and her master's degree in education from N.C. Central University.



Vernell Funderburk

Millie Dennis, Alma Ashley, and Vernell Funderburk teamed up to open The Wedding Place in 1981. The three women had worked together at another bridal salon and knew the business well. Vernell has 24 years experience in planning for weddings, and among the three of them, experience totals 32 years.

"We all do everything," is how Vernell explains how she, Millie and Alma divide the work. Actually, Millie takes care of the books, Alma checks in merchandise and calls customers, and Vernell does the ordering.

Some of the special services offered at The Wedding Place, which is located at 223 East Boulevard, include redesigning old gowns when brides bring in the wedding dresses their mothers wore; making their own head pieces, veils, and hats; and making their own flower girls' dresses. In fact, a bride can come to The Wedding Place with her own idea and the women at The Wedding Place can usually make her dream a reality.

Standard services offered include consultation, redesigning necklines and sleeves of gowns, matching shoes, doing all alterations on the premises, and pressing the bride's gown for both picture-taking and for the wedding.



Betty Simpson

Great American Fashions, located at Eastway Dr. inside NorthPark Mall, carries a line of men's dress and casual clothing, as well as accessories and a large part of what fashions are displayed throughout the store is contributed to the store manager, Betty Simpson.

Mrs. Simpson has been working in men's fashions for several years. Her experience has made her a "true professional" in what is stylish and appealing to men.

As manager of The Great American Fashion Company, Mrs. Simpson's duties include supervision of alterations, displays, personnel and attending trade shows. But to make a long story short, Mrs. Simpson really does it all.

Her career in men's clothing began as an alterations person for Mr. Hi-Style. Later she was promoted to salesperson and eventually she assumed her present position. During the course of her career Mr. Hi-Style changed its name to the Great American Fashion Company.

In addition to her managerial duties, Mrs. Simpson still enjoys working as a seamstress. This hobby she performs both on and off the job.

The mother of six and the wife of James Simpson, Mrs. Simpson graduated from Second Ward High School and attends Friendship Baptist Church.



Bessie Deas

Four months after returning to the field of cosmetology, Bessie Deas, a 23 year licensed beautician, opened her own shop, LePetite Beauty Center, located at 439 Bradford Dr.

She has been operating from this location for the past year and a half.

Becoming self-employed has always been important to Mrs. Deas. Maybe it is because she enjoys the freedom, as well as the responsibility that being in business for herself entails.

One of her main objectives at LePetite is to make the woman, age 40 and over, feel good about herself. For Mrs. Deas that means teaching her about skin care, health care, and giving tips on how to apply make-up.

Cosmetology has always been an area that has appealed to Mrs. Deas. According to her, it's rare to be given a chance to work in a field that you love and make good money from it, too.

A 30 year member of Mt. Moriah Primitive Baptist Church, Mrs. Deas loves to read, go out to eat, meet people, talk and make new plans. She is the mother of five and the grandmother of one.

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Betty Pride

Expansion is the smartest move for business owners but there's no need to tell that to Betty Pride. With her business, All World Tours, just over a year old she has already progressed to the point of re-establishing her company to a new, more convenient location. Plus, the new location, Pride-Ross Emporium at 5648 North Tryon St., is a mall-like structure, housing several other minority-owned businesses and Pride is part owner of this market place.

All World Tours officially opened in January 1984 as a professional travel advisory company for businesses and individuals. Pride's company is computerized using the Eastern Airlines System 1. This technology allows her direct access to all major airlines' inventory, major rental car agencies, and almost all major hotels. The result, All World Tours is capable of checking fares and times and confirming reservations for travel and hotel accommodations in a matter of minutes saving the client both time and trouble.

Additionally, All World Tours offers complete sight-seeing packages specifically to Atlantic City, New Jersey, and Disney World, Florida. Also, an extension of the business is its bus charter company.



Zander Green

An unfulfilling job as a cashier propelled Zander Green into the world of cosmetology.

"I had been a cashier for seven years and I was unsatisfied with the low pay. I had been watching other beauticians and I have always loved styling hair, so I just decided to enter the area," recalled Ms. Green.

Ms. Green now works at D'Essence Design No. 2, located at 2628 Statesville Rd., and is elated about being in the area of cosmetology. She graduated from Bands College of Beauty and has been licensed since 1983.

Much of the credit to Ms. Green's start in the cosmetology field she attributes to her father, Willie Green.

The mother of one daughter, Stephanie, Ms. Green is a member of Greenville Memorial AME Church. At D'Essence she specializes in curls, perms and cuts.



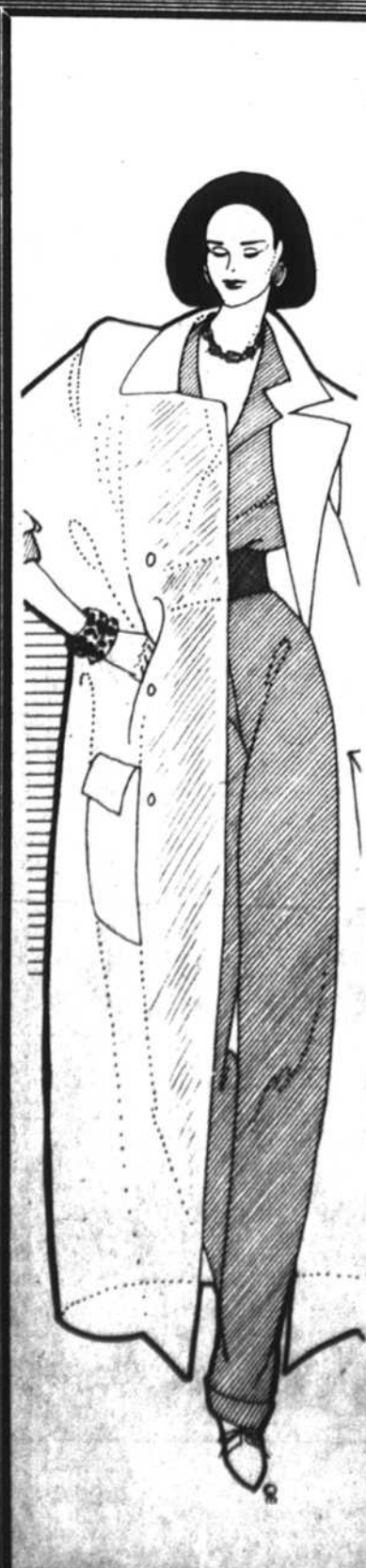
Shelia Mungo

Shelia Mungo has been in business since 1974. The owner and manager of Beckwith Beauty Boutique enjoys her hairdressing and consultant work. Admitting "I've always liked fixing people up, changing them around, and working with fashion," Mungo's services include manicures, facials, hair cuts, styling, and fashion consulting.

Beckwith Beauty Boutique is located at DaleBrook Professional Center, 2506 Beatties Ford Road. The phone number is 392-0026.

A graduate of West Charlotte High School, the boutique owner's educational credentials include Southeastern Beauty College, Bands Beauty College in Charlotte, and Kings College in Charlotte, where she earned a degree in fashion merchandising.

The mother of one daughter, Javonne, Mungo belongs to St. Paul Community Baptist Church, the National Hairdressers Association, the North Carolina Merchants Association, and the NAACP.



Mamie Jones

"Keeping the customers happy is the most important aspect of my job," emphasizes Mamie Jones, supervisor at Hair Original Beauty Center. As supervisor, Jones explains that she has numerous and varied duties which all relate to the ultimate responsibility of customer satisfaction.

But keeping customers contented is a loving chore for Jones. She says, "I've always liked people. In my job, it gives me joy to see the glow on people's faces that comes from satisfaction."

Jones has worked with Hair Original, located at 2020 N. Graham St., for five years. "It's a marvelous place to work," she relates. "It has so much to offer."

Owned by Eloise Ferguson, Hair Original offers the total beauty and grooming experience for both men and women. Specifically, a person can completely indulge in such cosmetic features as facials, manicures, pedicures, hairstyles and cuts. An extra attraction is the center's exercise room useful for keeping the body toned. Yet if all you want to do is relax, television and reading materials are at your disposal.

One of Jones' responsibilities is to see to the clients' comfort while they are at Hair Original. Plus she must also see to the progress of her staff of five.

