

# A growth industry

From a simple hair cut to a full permanent, First Choice Haircutters on Mountainview Road guarantees total hair care.



SHARON THOMPSON

First Choice has grown so well over the years because the public likes the concept of no appointments, said owner Sharon Thompson.

Last year the Georgetown store took the bronze medal for the third top store out of 190 locations throughout Canada and the United States, said Mrs. Thompson.

First Choice now has a new line of products created by Heri Reding called Nexius. "It's nature and earth united with science," said Mrs. Thompson.

First Choice strives to meet the needs of all customers not only providing total hair care but by making their store hours more flexible to the public. First Choice is open from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday to Friday and 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Saturday.

Mrs. Thompson, Manager Melissa Harris, Assistant Manager Alda Viueros and the other seven members of First Choice do their best to offer every kind of service including coloring, perming and styling.

All of First Choice's stylists take upgrading courses on a continuous basis, she said.

Prompted by the success of First Choice, Mrs. Thompson opened a clothing store called Tailor Maid last May. The new business is growing fast as well and all five employees are from Georgetown, said Mrs. Thompson.

Together with her husband Paul and their son Steve, who help out from time to time, Mrs. Thompson has guided First Choice and Tailor Maid to become successful businesses in Georgetown.

# Picturesque Inn out in the country

In the past three years Pamela O'Carroll, the owner of the Terra Cotta Inn, has seen her business double.

Located on the picturesque banks of the Credit River in Terra Cotta, the Inn caters to fine dining, employing six full-time and 34 part-time employees.

Mrs. O'Carroll and her husband previously owned and managed a resort hotel for six years. Her husband Dermot works full time in real estate specializing in the hospitality industry.

Although the Inn is known internationally, most of its business is from the area, she said. "We have many overseas visitors who make a point of coming to see us on every visit to Ontario."

One of the goals of the owner is to continue to improve the gardens, walks, ponds and grounds. The beautiful setting is important to customers and especially brides who are using the facilities in increasing numbers.

"Over the past three years our wedding reception business has increased 100 per cent. We plan to

keep growing in this area."

One objective Mrs. O'Carroll has is to host a facility for overnight guests. "Daily we receive calls from people who wish to spend a few days in the area," she said.

The owner is Irish and moved to Canada in 1958. She lives in Oakville and has three children, the eldest is enrolled at Queen's University. A daughter and young son are still both in high school.

Of prime importance to the business is to provide friendly, pleasing service, she says. "Our Victorian decor and antiques add charm and create a pleasant, romantic atmosphere for a memorable dining experience."

A high volume of repeat and loyal customers is a reflection that Terra Cotta Inn is succeeding, said the owner.

The restaurant takes great care using only fresh, nutritional ingredients. There are two chefs: Stephen Bard and Andrew Willoughby plus a pastry chef Kelly Whyte. The Maitre D' is Joseph DeClerc.

The restaurant is open for lunch from noon until 3 p.m. Afternoon tea is served 3-5 p.m. and dinner from 6-9 p.m. Sunday there is a buffet brunch offered from 11 a.m. - 3 p.m.

A special treat on a warm summer's day is the open patio by the river for customers. The restaurant is open November to March, Wednesday to Sunday, and April to October, Tuesday to Sunday.

The Terra Cotta Inn has banquet rooms and caters to wedding and business meetings of up to 100 people. Wedding services have been performed on the grounds during the summer.

# Rat race left behind for store

After 15 years of the "rat race", Marilyn Laugesen was looking for a change.

The owner of Terra Cotta's The Brass Thimble traded in her briefcase and a long career in banking for something she really enjoyed.

Mrs. Laugesen loved to create her own crafts, going to craft shows and living in the country. Thus, the transition opening her own craft store was not too difficult.

However, "running a store is hard work and one has to enjoy it," she said. She credits her success in part to a supportive husband, keeping ahead with the trends and "always on the lookout for a new and unique idea."

The store features wildlife and nature, predominantly in the form of decoys, glass and pewter sculptures. There are also limited edition prints, wooden decorator plaques, thimbles, stationery and ceramics at the store.

Customers will also be able to purchase unusual and functional pottery and pine reproduction furniture.

What's new with the business? The store will be expanding July 1, 1988 and the owner has noticed an increase in area traffic from nearby developments. The shop also offers custom framing.

Mrs. Laugesen wants to maintain a standard of quality at the store, both in areas of merchandise and friendly service. The store has been described by customers as "a special place to visit", and the owner wants to keep it that way.

A change she has witnessed while in the business has been the popularity of quality products and unique items that are Canadian-made.



MARILYN LAUGESSEN



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