

Resident stitches window decor

By NANCY AUSTIN

When Betty Ward opened a curtain shop in Plymouth, she did it wisely. She converted a big old house into her headquarters, making sure before the purchase that its location would suit her needs.

The Corner Curtain Shoppe on Starkweather, adjacent to the railroad tracks, has just the right doors and windows to display the New England style window dressings—the shop's specialty.

Mrs. Ward, a Farmington resident, lives with her family in a 135-year-old home, which she intends to restore as close to the New England tradition as possible.

Feeling "a bit like pioneers," her spirit of adventure prompted her to open the shop.

"We are the first ones to bring New England curtains to Michigan," said Mrs. Ward. "In fact, there aren't even any company representatives anywhere in the Midwest. We have a unique shop."

Mrs. Ward explained that the New England look is characterized by natural fabrics and color. It is a simple look. "It is one style that goes well throughout the entire house," she said.

But many people mimic the Williamsburg style with it. "Williamsburg is a more formal look that appeared in the prosperous homes in the South," Mrs. Ward explained.

HER BUSINESS is not limited to just curtains, however.

Glancing about the shop, you are immediately impressed by the colorful variety of ruffled bedspreads which coordinate with the window treatment, calico print tablecloths, accessory pillows, and curtain stenciling handsomely displayed against antique sideboards and old oak cabinets.

She said, Mrs. Ward's daughter, said she helps helping people solve their problems. The enthusiastic team boast

about their customers who come not only to buy, but also to chat about themselves. "We have a personal interest in our customers," Cheryl said. "We like the smalltown atmosphere here, and the type of decorating the people do."

Coordinating wallpaper with window treatment is an important part of the total look, so Mrs. Ward will trim your choice of curtains with matching wallpaper fabric, make decorative pillows, tablecloths, placemats, and other accessories.

She does much of the necessary sewing herself in her studio on the second floor of the house. "If people bring in their measurements and possibly a sketch, we can almost always solve a problem area. We will even customize ready-made curtains for a problem window."

CUSTOMIZING has been a big part of Mrs. Ward's sewing business. She has had a drapery-making business in her home for 12 years. For 10 of those years she lived in an old home in Livonia. People were so enthusiastic about her decorating that they asked to tour her house.

She spent so much time showing people through that she decided to take the business out of her home. It was then that she began teaching drapery-making classes in Livonia with the night school community education program. This continued for three years. Opening her own shop was the next logical step.

Another part of her business is decorating model homes. "I am doing this as a small part of my business," she said, "but I am anxious to expand it."

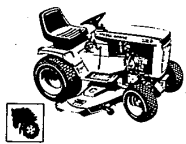
"Right now, I am doing a model home in the Farmington Square subdivision, being built by Joseph Kaufman," she said opening a new bolt of fabric with matching wall paper. "This is going into the bathroom and the shower curtain will coordinate with the window curtains. This color blue and white print will give just the right effect."



Cheryl and Betty Ward (right) show an assortment of cushions, pillows and quilts. (Staff photo by Gary Caskey)

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