Retro fashion and decor

Find mid-century mania at Fred and Ethel's

Leslie Klipsch
Fred and Ethel's has an unmatched collection of colorful vintage flower brooches.

BY LESLIE KLIPSCH

Last month's premiere of the AMC drama Mad Men put me in the mood for clean lines, tulip tables, bold colors and skinny ties. The show, which is in its sixth season and set in the late 1960s, features meticulously curated sets and period costumes that have had a hand in influencing an impressive re-emergence of mid-century style among a new generation.

The Quad-Cities offers a few sources for authentic mid-century home goods and mod fashion — my favorite is the Rock Island retro haven Fred and Ethel's.

For the last 12 years, Jennifer Horvath has been bringing vintage style to the Quad-Cities and beyond. Her boutique, Fred and Ethel's, is a veritable gallery of everything from vintage clothing to jewelry to bar ware to typewriters. Her inventory typically includes a few pieces of furniture — maybe even a Herman Miller chair or an iconic Eames lounge — though she says the larger pieces never last long.

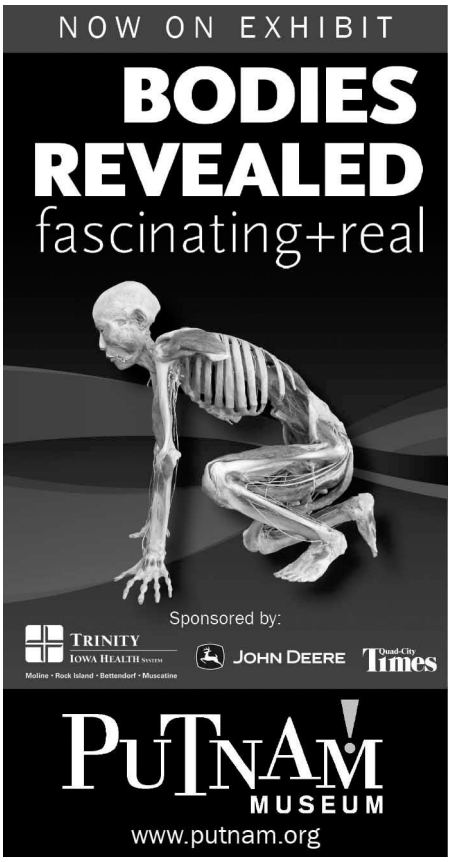
Her clientele includes everyone from men and women seeking a little moxie to professional buyers shopping for a little history. On a recent visit, Ms. Horvath spoke of a customer who stopped in the reputable boutique on a trip across the country looking for vintage clothing to deconstruct and create patterns from. These patterns, made from clothing once worn by men and women who

lived and worked in the QCA, will be sold to current fashion designers and taste-makers.

In order to keep her shop stocked with authentic attire and accessories, Ms. Horvath typically visits several private homes each week. Because of her reputation in the community, she is invited to help people who are downsizing or who are dealing with the delicate task of handling the estate of a loved one who has passed on, an honor she says she takes seriously.

Ms. Horvath grew up in California watching her mother run a million-dollar business that catered to the likes of Jane Fonda and Mark Harmon. Passionate about

Leslie Klipsch
Jennifer Horvath peeks out from behind a rack of clothing currently on display at Fred and Ethel's.



A recent visit to Rocket Resale turned up several rolls of burnt-orange vintage wallpaper, a set of Mode Danish teak flatware, and a pristine mid-century modern plastic shell chair, in addition to the hutch pictured.

Try Rocket Resale too

Since the store opened last summer (1228 N. Brady St., Davenport; 563-320-3557), I've stopped in several times and have been impressed with the down-to-earth proprietor's fantastic eye. Cindy Williams says she shops estate sales, auctions and private homes all over the Quad-Cities.

"I love straight lines and I love happy colors," she says. "I buy the things I love."

As I've poked around Rocket Resale, I've admired some fantastic mid-century lounge chairs, side tables, hutches and accessories — including a pair of cheerful ceramic coffee cups that I brought home last winter. Prices are more than reasonable and Rocket Resale's inventory changes frequently making part of the fun seeing what Ms. Williams has unearthed for curious customers.

fashion and design and inspired by her mother's savvy and her grandparents' classic retro style, Ms. Horvath says she has landed on a fascinating career that she genuinely loves.

"I love what I do," Ms. Horvath told me brightly on an overcast, midweek afternoon as I browsed through her colorful boutique. "I love helping families as they do the difficult work of sorting through old belongings. And I love keeping things alive."

My favorites

Since visiting Fred and Ethel's in April, I can't stop thinking about an adorable silk 1950s party dress in a delicate pastel floral print. Its boat neck, three-quarter-length sleeves, ruched waist and full pleated skirt was eye-catching and flattering, and though it's likely hanging in someone else's closet by now, I can't help but regret not purchasing the darling dress in preparation for the summer wedding season. Paired with a classic nude pump and a set of sparkly earrings, the dress would make an elegant statement. I also loved a vibrant vintage '60s orange and fuchsia Hawaiian print ensemble. Perfect, Ms. Horvath related, for a pool party or tropical vacation.

Ms. Horvath's favorites

Ms. Horvath says her current favorite is a soft, charcoal gray women's cardigan embellished with red and silver beads and sequins — a classic piece. The sweater would be a great accessory to another of Ms. Horvath's top picks: A lovely black-fitted

party dress with a Peter Pan collar and decorative black and silver buttons. Admiring the polished cotton fabric, Ms. Horvath commented on the wearability of the dress … both yesterday and today.

Why you should shop

Why buy a mass-produced knit shift dress or a two-button sport coat from Banana Republic's Mad Men Collection, when you can buy the real thing by shopping at Fred and Ethel's right here in the Quad-Cities? Ms. Horvath's collection is carefully curated, completely authentic, and surprisingly fresh.

When you should shop

You'll find Fred and Ethel's at 1326 30th St., Rock Island. The store is open 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday and 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Saturdays. Check out fredandethels.com and Facebook for more information.

Each month in The Gold Standard, Leslie Klipsch, a freelance writer and editor based in Davenport, shines a spotlight on the gems of the Quad-Cities area — for Gold Book readers. She enjoys reading, cooking, spending time with her husband and three young children and exploring all that the Quad-Cities has to offer.

Modern Woodmen
FRATERNAL FINANCIAL
Touching lives. Securing futures.®

20 years.

NO PAYCHECK?

Not necessarily. When you retire, your bills don't. But we can help you cover them even after your regular paychecks stop.

An annuity from Modern Woodmen of America is a great way to create your retirement paycheck. It's the only personal retirement fund accumulation vehicle that can guarantee a steady stream of income you can't outlive. Call today to learn more.

modern-woodmen.org

Doug Grenier*
FICF, LUTCF
1529 Grant St.
Bettendorf, IA 52722
563-355-2800

Joe Schurr*
FIC, LUTCF
534 W. 1st St.
Milan, IL 61264
309-756-7756

*Registered representative. Securities offered through MWA Financial Services Inc., a wholly owned subsidiary of Modern Woodmen of America, 1701 1st Avenue, Rock Island, IL 61201, 309-558-3100. Member: FINRA, SIPC.