

hip capitalists

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his store opened at 16th and Q, however, he started with a \$500 cash investment in posters.

As the anti-war protest and peace posters gave way to Easy Rider pictures and giant mugshots of Robert Redford, and then moved on to love poems, posters sold steadily and still account for about 25 per cent of his sales.

His sister, Virginia, said she's glad to see the sweetness posters give way to the popular pen and ink art-type posters. She now does all the store display and goes on the buying trips, because Holoubek's main concern now is a silkscreen printing company that he's operated out of Milwaukee for four years. While he said he likes to keep the two businesses separate, he said that the shop has helped him keep aware of trends.

Remember the Ricky-Ticky Stickies, he asked, those stock-on flowers people put on their volkswagons? He watched that trend live and die. And his sister says they still have beads left from when everyone was stringing their own. They don't sell very well anymore.

Holoubek sees reports of merchandise sold and handles accounts for PJ's. He's busy, and only able to stop in Lincoln for little more than an occasional day.

Business is not a part time thing, said Holoubek, who employs up to 15 persons in the printing company. It's growth doubled this year, he said, and one never reaches a point where he can level off and say "this is how big I want to be."

Decals are very big right now, said Holoubek, showing a Harley-Davidson No. 1 decal. His company designs and makes product and dealer identification displays, like the Boone's Farm Strawberry Hill Wine liquor store displays.

Like Hollingsworth, he went to UNL but graduated in 1967 with a degree in advertising. However, he said, ad agency jobs didn't pay that much, so he looked elsewhere.

The co-owners of The Dark at the Top of the Stairs, a gift shop in the Menagerie's second level, also came to own a shop after doing other things.

Robert Byers, 27, designed displays for Brandeis for eight years after a short time in art college. Rodger Nelson, also 27, taught after getting a speech and drama degree from UNL, and now holds a full-time job while Dark is getting off the ground.

Nelson said that vague plans for owning a shop go back five years, but became serious only after a trip through the New York shops last year.

"I've always liked a small shop, the quaint and the different," he said.

He said he felt the store would bring something to Lincoln it needed—"a bit of New York and San Francisco."

The first step was finding out what they had to find out and seeing the bankers. About the first banker, Nelson said: "I think the guy thought we were crazy. He didn't know what we were talking about."

The \$10,000 capital finally came from two personal loans.

The two visited a Chicago merchandise mart—a 25-story display for buyers—in August. In September they went back to order their merchandise, not being sure until the last minute that they even had a place to sell it.

They signed a lease for space in the Menagerie, where rents run \$6 per foot on the ground floor and \$4.50 a foot on second floor.

The shop opened selling such things as imported dried flowers, wooden trains made by the New Market Wooden Toy Company in Omaha, patchwork from Grand Island and Raggedy Ann dolls from Herman, Nebr.

Reflecting their interest in display, orange-haired dolls sit sociably on barrels crossing their long, flowered legs. Nothing sits in rows and its "kind of like an apartment" said Nelson.

The Dark is the only locally-owned gift shop in the complex.

"I've got nothing against chain gift stores," said one shop owner interviewed, "but they all look like a Stuckey's Truckstop."

"We have nothing in our store that we wouldn't want ourselves," commented Terry Moore.

Outside the Dark, workmen are still pounding and sawing to ready three other second-floor shops: the Runza, Heads Together, a hair salon for men and women, and the Hollowood and Vine Twin Theatres.

The ideal situation, said developer Coveney, would be to have half chain shops and half locally owned shops. But for him, having chain shops leases is an economic necessity.

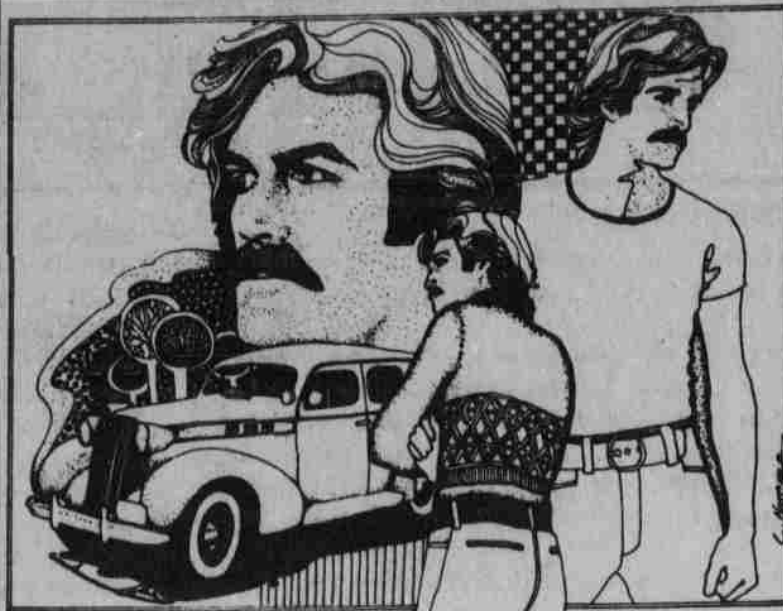
The Menagerie project cost \$500,000 and he needed signed leases for collateral. Leases from locally owned shops are worthless if they go bankrupt, he said.

Coveney pointed out, however, that his shops are managed by the young. The companies were started by fairly young men who "get into something and go like crazy," he said, making them millionaires in the process.

The owner of the Schaak Electronics Company, managed in Lincoln by Greg Harris, 25 is an example.

According to Harris, corporation owner Richard L. Schaak started with one store in Minneapolis. He began 1972 with eight stores, and will close the year with 16. At age 32, Schaak is a multimillionaire.

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