

Cropped locks come back

Haircuts reflect new lifestyles

Throughout history, women's hairstyles have reflected their changing attitudes and roles in society.

For instance, during the '60s, women began seeking equal rights, especially in the work force. Many let their hair grow long, perhaps symbolizing their new freedom.

Today, women feel free to balance careers and families. They are accepted as bosses and wives, mothers and professionals. Today's styles, which reflect this independence and confidence, aim to satisfy the working women's fashion needs. Guy Levesque of Syd's Natural Hair, 804 East 12th, says today's hairstyles are designed especially to combine easy care with fashionable looks.

"Although there is no one basic hairstyle that is 'vogue', most women are asking for styles that are simpler to handle," Levesque says.

"Time is important to today's women, and they want clean, soft looks that don't require a lot of time in the morning."

Levesque explains that modern bobs are balanced, offering clean style without sacrificing good looks.

"They have a definite line to them," Levesque explains. "The time is put into the cut itself to achieve ease in handling so that women do not have to spend so much time manipulating their hair. It's shaped and ready to go."

Levesque also stresses that women of the eighties pride themselves on their recent independence and want styles all their own.

"People are individuals and like to look that way," Levesque says. "We have a variety of customers who want a variety of styles."

Still, some trends are obvious. Feminine styles and softer looks attract many women. Levesque says he finds these gentler styles "refreshing," yet practical for working women.

"The feminine aspect of long hair is kept, while the fronts are cut shorter to stay out of their way," Levesque explains.

Another newer trend in the Eugene area bases its styles on individualism and difference.

"New Wave is a movement in itself," Levesque says. "Because the movement seeks difference, its hairstyles are characterized by the extremity of lengths. The tops are cut really short in contrast to the longer lower hair."

According to Levesque, who moved from Manhattan to Eugene just five months ago, New York fashions do reach the West but are not embraced quickly.

"Short hair has taken a while to grab hold out here, although I do see signs of it catching on," he says. "The short and wispy looks are finally appearing in Eugene, but the extreme short styles that find acceptance in New York just have not made it."

"The styles in the West are just more held back," he says.

For the women who wear short wisps, barbers are a cheaper alternative than the high-priced mood of beauty salons. Darrell Meharry, barber at the Red Rooster Barber

Shop, 866 E. 13th, says barbers and beauticians differ by shear style.

While a barber cuts hair according to the head's shape and for maximum maintenance ease, a beautician cuts for a particular style, Meharry insists. Beauticians know more about the chemical aspects of hair design, like permanents and ornate hair designs.

"Every haircut is a style," says Pete Peterson, the barber shop's owner. "Each individual is different. You try to cut with what you have; do something with (the) hair naturally."

Peterson waves his hands wildly over his head to describe the curly, complex cuts that some salons produce. Making a face, he argues that those hairdos may look chic then, but the next day, they look "terrible."

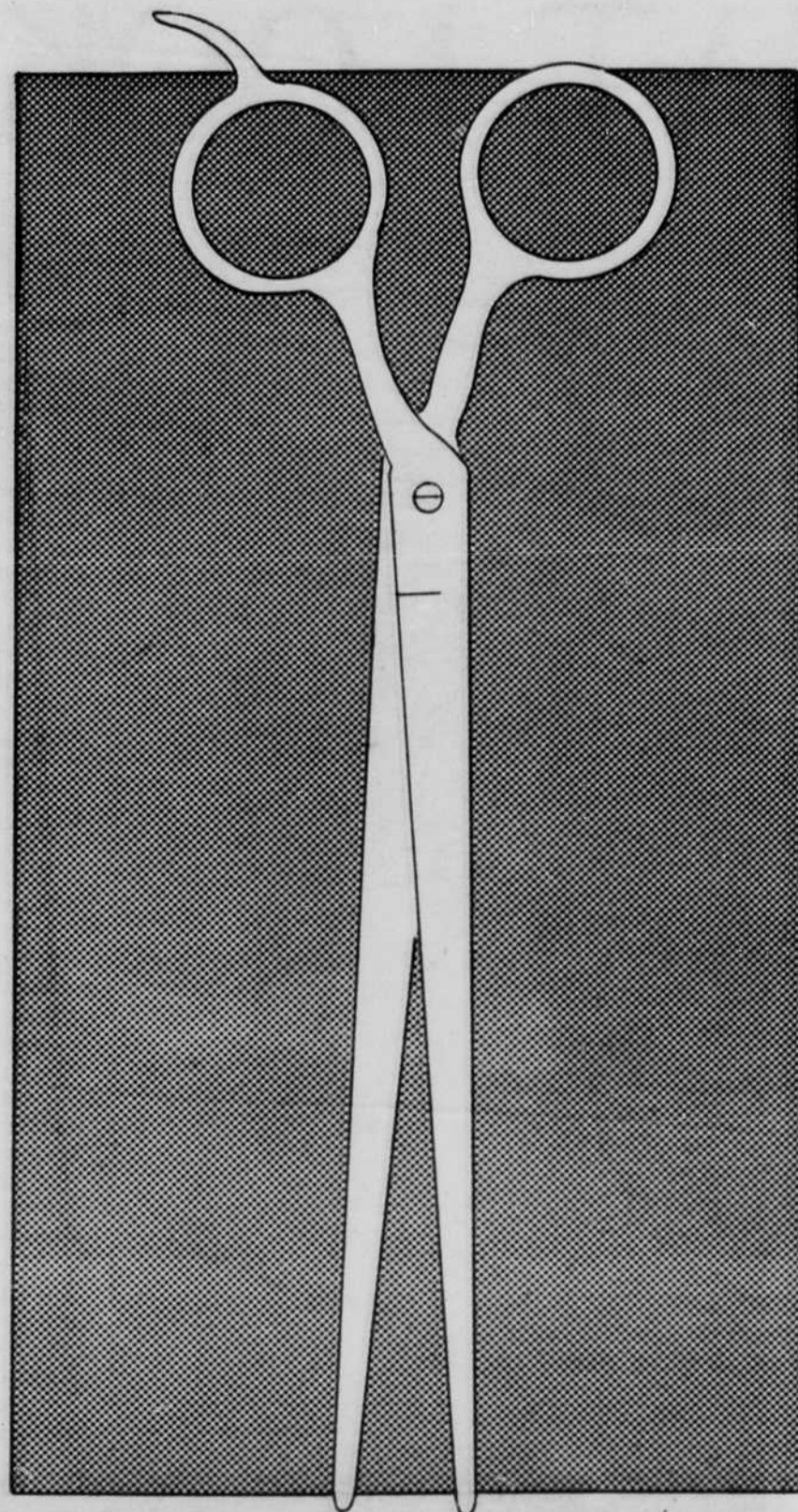
"I really think you pay a lot for the atmosphere," he says. "Some people, guys and gals, are real happy with that." Except that they could get the same cut, without style, somewhere else.

Meharry estimates that about 20 percent of the Rooster's customers are women. More females frequented the shop in the mid-'70s when the "shag" was the rave.

"Short hair is definitely coming back," Peterson says. A few weeks ago, he cut two flat-tops and a crewcut in one day, something the amazed barber hasn't done "in years."

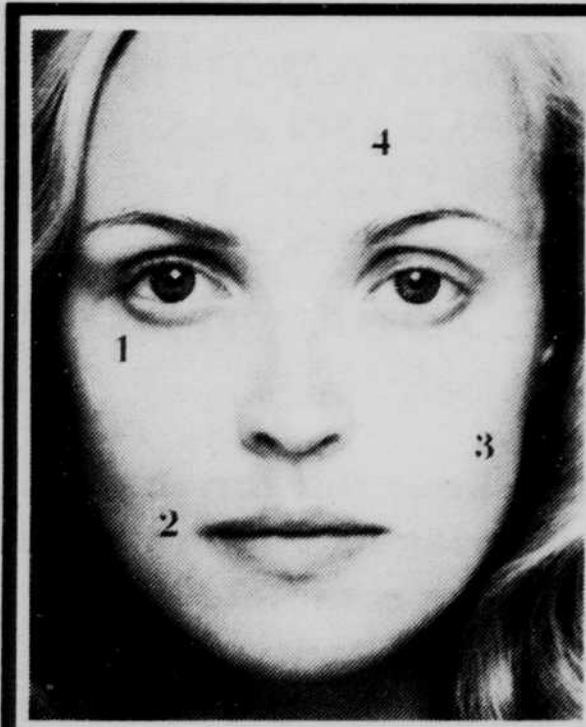
"Of course, that was just before Halloween, Pete," Meharry adds with a laugh.

By BRENDA THORNTON



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