

# Seaside business exceeds expectations

## Patrons continually streaming in, plus many referrals and return customers

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SEASIDE — On a brisk February afternoon Paula Johnson was busy unloading boxes of new inventory as customers continually streamed through the door.

Now approaching her second year in business, the At Home on Broadway owner has been amazed by the attention at her Seaside store.

“I’m surprised at how well I’m doing,” Johnson said in between unpacking boxes of records and vintage dishware.

“I’m just thrilled with how I’m getting so many referrals and return customers.”

It’s become a common theme over the past several months, Johnson explained, where customers browsing the aisles often pause and take a photo of an object that soon leads to a sale.

“It’s often someone here vacationing or someone back home wherever that may be. A lot come in a just say ‘I used to have this,’ after they got a text from their mother or brother, and they buy it,” Johnson said.

### Unique, rare and vintage

The source of Johnson’s inventory is a personal collection she’s amassed over the years in Portland.

“I go back to Portland once a month and I’m always in the process of emptying my storage units there,” Johnson said.

“I’ve seven storage unit and two houses and a storage shed that I’m trying to unload. It brings fresh inventory to the store as well. There’s always something new.”

The latest trip included a set of Bridgewood & Son antique porcelain dishware from 1885, the same year the American Civil War ended.

Antique salt and peppershakers and a collection of classic Hall and Lipton teapots, some still with their unique warming lids sit on a shelf near the back of the store.

“Usually the warmers were lost,” Johnson said.

“I’m doing a little more focus on tea, which will be served in the back room.”

An entire set of hard-to-find Desert Rose dishware, made in the U.S. in the early 1900s, rests on a table near the center of the store.

“It’s pristine condition. There’s not a scratch or crack,” Johnson said

There’s also Nicholas Unger and Pendleton hats from 50s — some still with their original box — as well as mid-century furniture.

There’s an entire shelf dedicated to Pyrex dishware, including rare colors and designs, from a \$10 butter dish to \$150 bowl.

“The hot air balloon design is the most rare that I have. It’s very rare to find one,” Johnson said.

Among the more expensive items is a \$740 Hoosier cabinet, a type of kitchen cupboard workstation made popular in the late 19th and early 20th century, before built-in kitchens became more widespread.

“They usually didn’t make it to the West Coast. People would bring them East Coast and drop them off midway on their trip here because they were so bulky on their covered wagons. It was someone’s entire kitchen,” Johnson said.

Among the biggest surprises is the popularity of record albums. Johnson sold four albums before she had unpacked the box earlier in the day, she said.

“Records have taken off. Vinyl has had a resurgence from time to time but right now it’s hot.”



At Home on Broadway owner Paula Johnson, left, interacts with customers as they browse the store.

### Filling the kitchen niche

Johnson targets different demographics by carrying a mix of vintage housewares in addition to contemporary collections, including lines from Martha Stewart, KitchenAide, Cuisinart, The Sharper Image and Le Creuset.

After the recent closures of the Kitchen Collection and a clothing store at the Seaside Outlet Mall, Johnson sought to fill the void by carrying contemporary kitchenware and women’s plus-sized clothing.

“I’m selling a lot more new products,” Johnson said.

“I’m starting to carry plus-size clothes in the because the store that carried them at the mall closed. They’re Nordstrom labels but not Nordstrom prices.”



A broad selection of vintage and contemporary homewares are available at At Home on Broadway in Seaside.