



# THE VFG NEWS

SHARING OUR PASSION FOR VINTAGE FASHION

---

*May 2024*

# Vintage in My Blood: A Life of Collecting and Creating

—BY **MELINDA UTAL** (VINTAGE FRIENDS)

I grew up in my mother Lita's antique shop, *Surprise in Store*, in Glendale, California. Even before that wonderful time in my life, I palpably remember her pushing me in my stroller through the Los Angeles Goodwill with her dumpster-diving friend and mentor, Marg, and her little girl, Colleen. The women wore pedal pushers and shirts tied at the waist. At two years of age, I peered through the understory of clothes hanging together on the used clothing racks and started to notice different fabrics. I looked at shoes along the wall with worn-down heels. I inhaled soft, dusty smells, heard a boy banging on a tinny, out-of-tune donated piano.

As a teenager in the late 1960s and early 1970s, I wore vintage clothes and, to the prom in high school, a pair of incredible 1920s pink satin heels and a long peasant dress we bought at an MGM Studio costume department sale. Part of the magic was knowing that my great-great aunt was one



Her mother's dress

of Charlie Chaplin's leading ladies in the silent film era, Edna Purviance. Sometimes, as an older person now, I even feel more at home in a thrift store than I do in my own house.



Edna Purviance

When my mom died, I inherited family heirlooms and things that she herself had thrifted—Eisenberg rhinestone jewelry, Catalina pottery, antique beaded bags, Victorian monogrammed silverware.

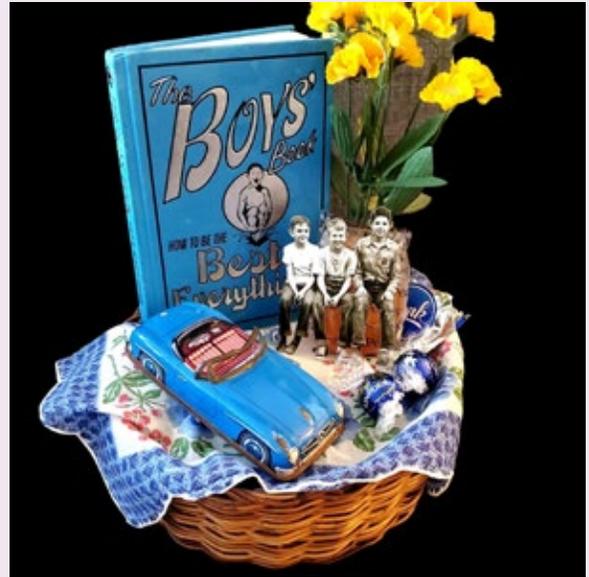
I have some of my mother's 1950s dresses, including her rick rack and silver ribbon-banded patio dress with its heavy circle skirt sewn by my grandmother. For me, loving vintage is not about clothing labels or designers. It's about sensory details, handwork, and embroidery, the textured

slide of fabric rubbing against itself, and the beating of my own heart. Because it just seems to be in my blood, I've sold vintage clothing and hard goods on online platforms since 2010, after working in other careers and raising two sons. And I have always thrifted.

Now, I make what I call ReCollection Vintage Gift Baskets. In creating each one-of-a-kind basket,



I immerse myself in the quiet adventure of looking closely at found vintage items. I combine old textiles and embroidered hankies, toys and small dolls, hand-painted plates and tea cups, small bits of old ephemera and photographic images. I add in imported soaps, teas, and chocolates, when that feels right. I'm sure that in time, the juxtaposed



pieces will come out of their basket settings, taking on life stories of their own as they find their way to a new generation of lovers of vintage treasures.

You can find Melinda's Etsy shop, including her ReCollection gift baskets and vintage fashion [here](#).



Melinda Utal

# SPRING BRIEFS

**JENNIFER BINNS** (Hollie Point) contributed a photo of homemade paper dolls to Janine D'Agati's and Hannah Schiff's new book, *From Sleepwear to Sportswear: How Beach Pajamas Reshaped Women's Fashion*.



## FASHIONING ALOHA AT HoMA

Need another reason to visit Hawai'i? The Honolulu Museum of Art's exhibition *Fashioning Aloha* delves into the diverse motifs that have shaped aloha wear over nearly nine decades, featuring a range of garments,



including holokū, mu'umu'u, holomu'u, and aloha shirts.

Garments are paired with their textile motifs' source materials from the museum's collection, such as traditional Hawaiian kapa (bark cloth), Japanese kimono, a Chinese dragon robe and cheongsam, and Hawaiian quilts.

VFG Member

**E. TORY**

**LAITILA** (Mr.Tory) is the curator of textiles and historic arts of Hawai'i at HoMA and curated this exhibition, where fellow VFG Member **LINN ALBER** (Linn) met up with him. Linn reports that the show is fabulous! For more information: [Fashioning Aloha at HoMA](#).



Fashioning Aloha runs until September 1, 2024.



## TIGHT KNIT IN RENO

Reported by **SUE BRODER** (sues\*stuff)

Long-time VFG member **ANNA NEWMAN** (anna\_newman) is curating an exhibition at The Holland Project Galleries in Reno, Nevada. The exhibition, *Hand Wash Only*, is presented by Tight Knit Group, which Anna formed with fellow MFA candidates at the University of Nevada, Reno, to share interests in

fiber arts. Anna’s own work frequently uses vintage fabrics and/or materials, as do many of the participants in this group and in the show.

Anna invites anyone in the Reno-Tahoe area to come by the show and visit the Fiber Lounge, a community crafting space open every Friday from 3–5 pm during the show. “We have tons of vintage and new fabric and yarn to share and swap,” she says.

The exhibition is on view May 8 – June 29, 2024



Anna (left) with her Tight Knit colleagues



## JANE MORGAN’S ICONIC GOWNS TAKE CENTER STAGE FOR VARTALI’S 46TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

New York’s Vartali Salon celebrated its 46th anniversary with a fashion show curated by Guild member **BONNIE BIEN** (Bonnie Bien), owner of LaPresse PR, featuring vintage ensembles from Jane Morgan’s “In My Style” collection. The VIP event showcased iconic designs by Monte Streitfeld of Strega, Gunter Project 2/Gunter Ruecker, Donald Brooks, Rubin Panis, and Stephen Yearick.

Models with hairstyles inspired by those of the 1970s and 1980s wore the outfits. Notably, Jane Morgan performed in some of these gowns for President George H. W. Bush and at the UNICEF Ball. The tribute to vintage fashion, hair and music was a spectacular way to celebrate Vartali’s anniversary and Jane Morgan’s 100th birthday (she blew out candles on May 3). A selection of the vintage designer gowns will be installed at the Ogunquit Playhouse in Maine on June 24th.

The event was captured by photographer Gerardo Somoza, with hair by Vartali Salon and makeup by Makeup by Manee. *Portland Monthly* featured the show (“[The Prime of Miss Jane Morgan](#)”).



# Welcome to our newest members!

## **JENNIFER DARLING** (Voluptuous Vintage) Gosport, UK

Despite the setback of a car crashing through the main wall of her shop (!), “Mrs. Darling and her dolls” are Keeping Calm and Carrying On, focused on online sales through her [website](#), which features a curated selection of reproduction and authentic vintage pieces, as well as styling services. Jennifer’s credentials include a BA in fashion history and textiles, and she also offers design, tailoring, and restoration services. You can connect with her on various social media platforms, including [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), [YouTube](#) and [TikTok](#).

## **STEPHANIE HOUSE** (StessiB) Haslemere, UK

Stephanie has built a successful online presence over the past eight years, with a particular focus on curating an impressive collection of vintage bags, as showcased in her [Etsy shop](#). Her background is steeped in creativity, having served as a senior marketing manager for the world’s largest rock school! Additionally, Stephanie is a skilled sewist, a valuable asset in our profession. You will want to follow her on [Instagram](#) and [Pinterest](#).

## **BETH KUCHAR** (onesweetthread) Ashtabula, Ohio

Beth offers an impressive collection of vintage fashion gems. Her Etsy shop, [OneSweetThread](#), is a treasure trove of unique finds that will leave you wanting more. In addition to her Etsy presence, Beth also maintains a standalone website at [onesweetthread.com](#). To stay up-to-date on her latest offerings and behind-the-scenes insights, be sure to follow her on social media platforms including [Instagram](#), [Threads](#) and [Facebook](#).

## **JESSIE JOHNSTON** (jjshoard) Imperial Beach, California

Jessie’s vintage stock is a testament to her keen eye for unique finds, and she is also creating vintage-inspired jewelry with the look of Bakelite and Lucite. If you are a fan of Hawaiiana, you will be especially pleased with her [Etsy shop](#)’s choices, including several His & Hers wedding/honeymoon sets. You will want to follow Jessie on Instagram too, at [@jjshoard.vtg](#).

## **KERRY HARRIS** (RevivalsUK) Whitstable, UK

Kerry is a seasoned vendor of over over two decades. Through her Etsy shop, [RevivalsVintage](#), she curates a unique blend of vintage attire, jewelry, and collectibles, with a soft spot for kitschy treasures. To stay updated on her latest finds, be sure to follow her on Instagram at [@revivalsvintage](#).

## **NATASHA EGAN-RONAYNE** (missbootybarefoot) Cambridge, UK

We’re thrilled to welcome back long-time member, Natasha!! This talented individual is the mastermind

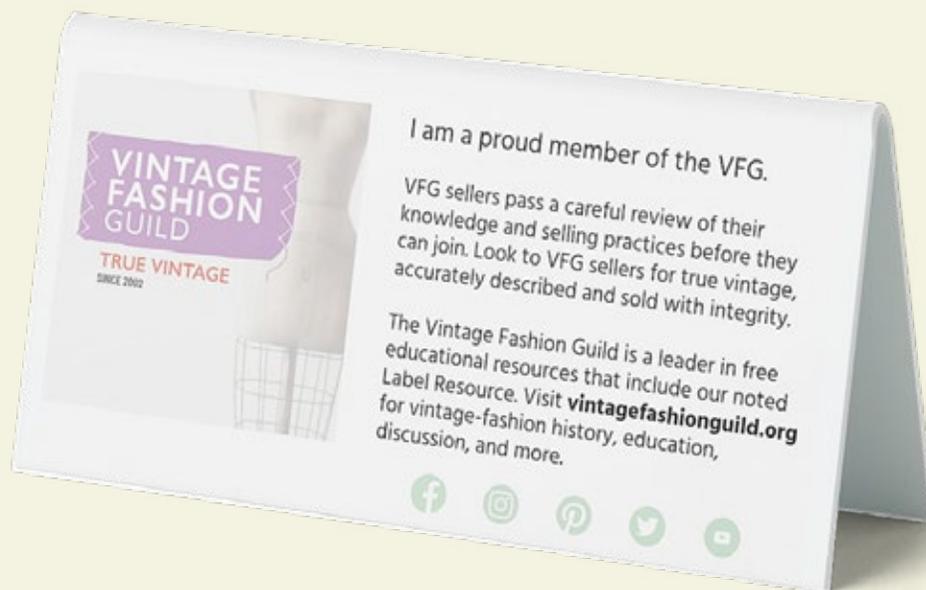
behind [BarefootVintageShop](#) on Etsy and [BarefootVintage](#), a website showcasing an exquisite collection of boutique clothing spanning from the 1930s to the 1980s. Be sure to stay updated on Natasha's latest finds by following her on [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), and [Pinterest](#). Welcome home, Natasha!

### **ANASTACIA BANIKE** (Anastacia) Elmhurst, Illinois

In the northern Chicago suburb of Elmhurst, a unique brick-and-mortar store called [Goods and Provisions](#) offers a curated selection of vintage clothing, home goods, and creative upcycled items. Behind the brand are two sisters, Anastacia and Larisa, who bring their distinct skills to the table. Anastacia, a seasoned commercial photography stylist, takes the reins on visual direction, while Larisa, a former social worker with a passion for curation and history, lends her expertise. The sisters operate two Etsy shops, including [CrazyPlatter](#), which specializes in vintage clothing and accessories. To stay up-to-date on their latest finds and creations, follow Goods and Provisions on [Instagram](#) as well as on [Facebook](#) and [TikTok](#).

### **SAMUEL MEE** (Antique Ring Boutique) Rochford, UK

For those seeking unique and sustainable fine jewelry options, [AntiqueRingBoutique.com](#) is a must-see. Sam's expertise is in vintage and antique rings featuring precious gemstones that exude elegance and sophistication. To stay updated on Samuel's latest finds and inspirations, follow him on [Instagram](#), [Pinterest](#), and explore his [fascinating blog](#).



VFG Member-only items are available in the [Vintage Fashion Guild store](#) on Zazzle. Check out the all the store's offerings [here](#). (Both of these are affiliate links.) 100% of proceeds go to support the VFG.

## A TRANQUIL OASIS WITH COLORFUL TOUCHES—AND VINTAGE FASHION DOWNSTAIRS —BY JEN KARPIN (MORNING-GLORIOUS)

I recently renovated and decorated the apartment above my Morning Glorious shop, and turned it into an Airbnb. It's completely furnished with vintage items I found in thrift stores, at a country auction, Facebook Marketplace, even some curbside finds and dumpster rescues, such as some of the artwork! Of course, the sheets, towels and silverware are new, but most everything was curated second-hand, by me, over a three-month period, and with some help, I repaired, rewired, painted and wallpapered—and made it into a peaceful private getaway.

I am putting the word out that my vintage customers and colleagues can stay in my Airbnb and explore the southern Vermont treasure-hunting scene, with my insider tips upon their arrival, for finding the best thrift shops, charity shops, vintage stores, antique stores, seasonal flea markets, as well as where and how to attend and bid in an old-fashioned live barn-style auction. And, of course, they can shop in my studio located just downstairs from their suite, and just mention "VFG" to get my "friends and family" dealer-friendly prices.

My Airbnb is ideal for a single traveler, or a couple who doesn't mind sharing a double bed. Brattleboro is the perfect historic New England getaway, full of art galleries, interesting restaurants and shops, and the home to some unique festivals and events, like at the NE School for Circus Arts, and nearby Marlboro Music Festival and Yellow Barn. I am about 2.5 hours from Boston, and an hour and 20 minutes' drive north from Brimfield, MA, so it's a great way for any vintage enthusiast to extend their shopping week, by heading to Vermont.

My Airbnb just launched; I just got my first 5-star review, and it is already booked straight through July! But I hope to welcome some vintage-loving friends and VFG members, in late summer and in the fall when the beautiful Vermont foliage season is peaking.

Here's the Airbnb listing: [Tranquil oasis with colorful touches](#)

You can find the [Morning Glorious shop on Etsy](#).

My in-person vintage shop is located at 484 Williams Street in Brattleboro, Vermont (USA), and is open Saturdays 12-5 and other days by chance or by appointment. Jen specializes in "whimsical, colorful well-made garments, 1940s through 1990s, that bring joy to your wardrobe!"



## SPOTLIGHT

### **Guild member and volunteer, LORRAINE BOCHAROVA (The Granny Wardrobe)**

Vancouver, B.C. resident Lorraine is a bright light behind the scenes at the VFG. She has contributed generously, always with enthusiasm, thoughtfulness and creativity.

#### **When did you join the VFG?**

Summer of 2021.

#### **Please tell us a little about your background.**

I have Taiwanese heritage and pursued my education in England, where I also met my husband. We felt drawn to seeking new experiences and opportunities, so we relocated to Vancouver in 2017. And with the addition of two children and our fur baby, Ferguson, Canada has become our cherished home. Drawing from my formal education and professional experience, I have developed a keen eye for detail and a deep appreciation for craftsmanship; those experiences have proven invaluable in curating my vintage collection, allowing me to bring a unique perspective to the pieces I select.

#### **How did you decide on your business name?**

The decision to name my business "The Granny Wardrobe" was deeply personal and rooted in my upbringing. Raised by my elegant granny, who adored dressing up for every occasion, I inherited her passion for fashion and eye for detail. She was a master at accessorising and had an innate sense of colours and patterns. Losing her at a young age left me longing for her presence, but every glance at

her photos fills me with nostalgia and fond memories. "The Granny Wardrobe" was created as a tribute to her. It's my way of keeping her memory alive and celebrating the timeless elegance she always embodied.

#### **You are the mother of two very young children and a feisty cat. What are some of the challenges and rewards about running your business with little ones at home?**

Balancing my business with two little ones and a very demanding cat (Ferguson is giving me a side-eye look now) definitely has its challenges and rewards. On one hand, juggling the demands of motherhood alongside running a business can be hectic; my time is being cut into small pieces, so it is quite difficult to sit down and focus, which results in my business being quite passive at the moment, but I know this stage will not last forever. However, being able to work from home allows me to spend

precious moments with my children while pursuing my passion for vintage fashion!

#### **You've done a lot behind the scenes for the VFG, from being a wonderful Member at Large on the board, to being on the fundraising auction team. You have also grown our Instagram account exponentially. Can you name a memorable moment in your time as a VFG volunteer?**

There have been many memorable moments, but one that stands out is when we did our first fundraising auction in 2022. Collaborating with fellow VFG members, we developed a streamlined process



Lorraine and son

for the auction, from donation registration to watching bid closing. That auction got a lot of support, with participants donating and bidding generously to support the VFG. Seeing the vintage community come together in such a meaningful way was incredibly rewarding and made me proud to be part of a passionate and compassionate group of individuals.

### **What's your vintage fashion holy grail?**

My holy grail would have to be a pristine 1950s Lilli Ann princess coat. The craftsmanship, elegance, and iconic status of Lilli Ann make it the ultimate vintage

treasure for me. Finding one in my size and in excellent condition would truly be a dream come true.

### **Where can we find your business and social media?**

You can find me on Etsy ([thegrannywardrobe.etsy.com](https://www.etsy.com/shop/thegrannywardrobe)) and my IG is [@thegrannywardrobe](https://www.instagram.com/thegrannywardrobe).

Lorraine, thank you so much for finding time to tell us about yourself with your busy schedule! And our deepest appreciation for everything you do for the VFG.

## The VFG board for 2024

[vintagefashionguild.org/about/board/2024-board](https://vintagefashionguild.org/about/board/2024-board)

President: **MAGGIE MUELLNER**, USA

Vice President: **MAGGIE WILDS**, USA

Secretary: **HARRIET ULPH**, UK

Treasurer: **VICTORIA LAZAROVA**, USA

### **MEMBERS AT LARGE**

Jolene Bramer, Terri Brown, Abby Kuehne, Sandra Mendoza,  
Diana Pelozza, Heather Ramey

 [facebook.com/vintagefashionguild](https://facebook.com/vintagefashionguild)

 [VFG on Pinterest](#)

 [facebook.com/groups/vfgshop](https://facebook.com/groups/vfgshop)

 [VFG on Twitter](#)

 [@vintagefashionguild](https://www.instagram.com/vintagefashionguild)

 [VFG on YouTube](#)

 [@shopvfg](https://www.instagram.com/shopvfg)

 [VFG on TikTok](#)

