

# NEVER WHEN

## Alternate Culture Capitalism



Eppie, "Hippies! Spend money!"

by Isabel Alice Stevenson / Photos by Bruce Curtis

Hippies are busy creating a cultural, arts and hip-commercial center in super-suburban Roslyn, Long Island. The town is in a valley between two large hills where \$75,000 tract houses grow. It's a beautiful, slow-paced, sleepy, former seaport with lovely 18th century houses in the center of town. But Roslyn is getting ready for a brand new set of clothes and many of the townspeople still aren't aware of the change. Young people have been working around-the-clock renovating old shops into bright, clean stores to sell about anything needed to further the Cultural Revolution.

Eppie, now 22, was an early dropout from the suburbs who decided to come back and try to put some life into the middle class ghetto. At his instigation, Roslyn now has a group of determined store keepers whose real interest is to create something to which the commuters' sons and daughters can relate. "Too many parents treat their kids like poodles," he observed.

Never When, owned by Eppie and his cousin Ritchie, is Roslyn's rallying point. Every inch of this huge, three-story house is being used for something. The first floor is a clothing store, basically jeans and T shirts at reason-

able prices. The atmosphere is friendly. I watched one salesman patiently suggest at least five different pairs of pants to a young girl and her mother who wanted something nice for "summer socials." Easy, happy customer-salespeople relations are an important objective for all the stores.

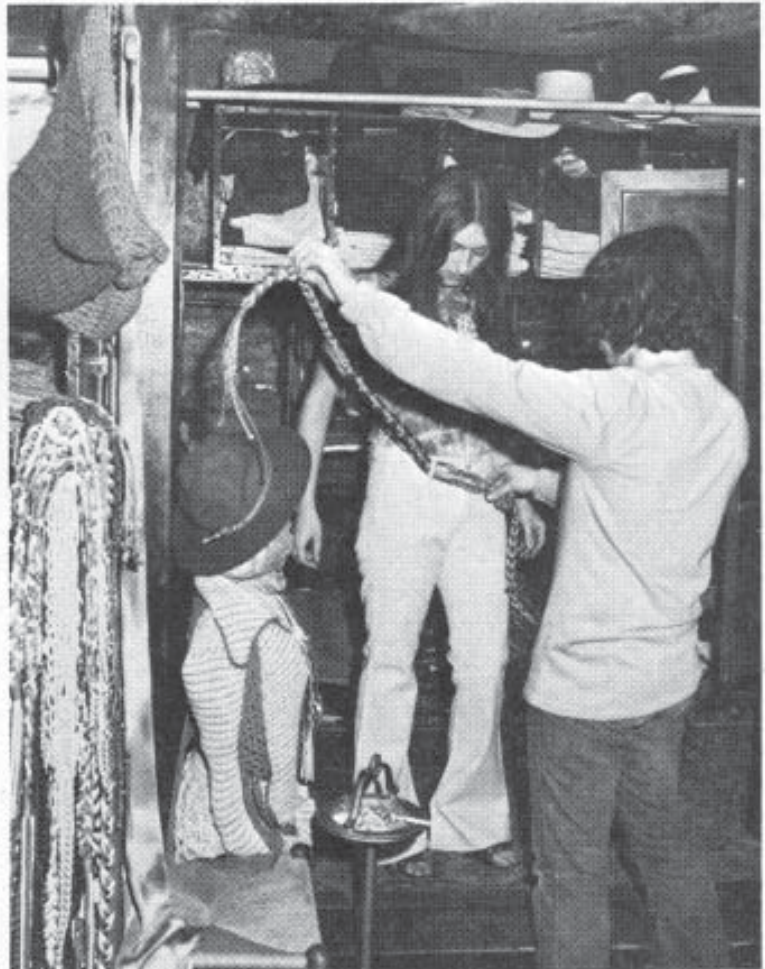
The second floor has The Old Roslyn Silver Works, an old-fashioned Delicacy Shop and a head shop. Donald, owner of The Silver Works, rents a former bathroom for his ready-made and made-on-the-spot jewelry. I saw a girl helplessly gesticulate for five minutes when she couldn't find what she



Never When is Roslyn's rallying point.



**“Community spirit is high; people want to like it here.”**



Hassle-free customer relations communicate happiness.

Tony, a former jet mechanic, designs leather.

wanted and couldn't remember what it was called (roach-holder). Donald made one before her eyes in less than five minutes.

The Delicacy Shop is interesting in that it really *looks* like a store out of the past. Maybe that's because the lighting isn't too good. It features assortments of tea, cheese, freshly ground coffee, incense and spices, plus a pickle barrel, penny candies and handmade candles.

The third floor is rented by Sean and Tony, of Heads & Hides, who make beautifully tooled leather belts (like sequences of moons and stars

growing from a woman's head), vests, and handwoven suede neckbands and bracelets.

The salespeople are all young, mostly students who live in or near Roslyn. They are enthusiastic and dedicated to making their hip community a success.

“If I'm going to work in Roslyn I'm going to make sure I like it,” said George, part-owner with Alex of The Stone Cellar (records, books, magazines and pipes). They've attracted a Limbo franchise (the hip clothes well known from St. Marks Place), and Adam & Eve, which moved from the other side of town to join the group

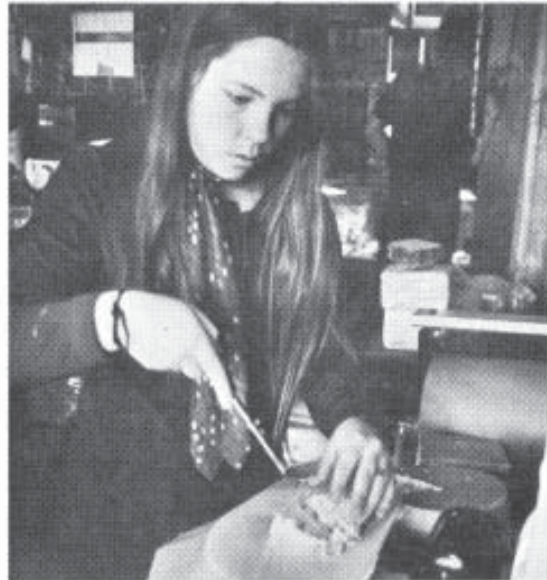
(the jeans-Wallace Beery T shirt syndrome, and finds like Navy Nurse dresses, Australian Army shorts and French Navy underwear). There's also The Hand Crafters Gallery (women's clothing and jewelry—nice long skirts and dresses). More stores are in the planning stage: kids' clothes, pottery, antique clothes, etc.

At this writing it looks like the town fathers have ok'd free Sunday afternoon rock concerts during the summer (in the park around the Roslyn duck pond), starting with Ritchie Havens. Eppie's dream is a coffee house in Never When's beautiful terraced

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Donald and his silver works.



Patty moved from Cambridge to set up Never When.

**“We’d like to provide services – like  
a hip employment agency.”**



Edward of the Delicacy Shop.

back yard.

The kids are all amateurs at what they’re doing but it doesn’t dampen their spirits a bit. They are sincere in their efforts to make their Roslyn experiment work.

“We’re not in it for money,” said Eppie. “We’re in it to give the kids something; a lot of them are really mixed up and they can’t or won’t turn to their parents for help.”

To promote some atmosphere, they’ve arranged Saturday midnight “art” flicks. They are also keeping their shops open in the evening, and persuading others to do the same.

Eventually they would like to get into serious civic gigs like an employment agency that can get you an unstraight job. Meanwhile, the new community spirit is high—everybody knows everyone else—people are continually running in and out of the various stores.

There is a town law which states that no stores can be open on Sundays unless run by a family. This is a real drag because Roslyn is made for Sunday drives, and Sunday business could be a real boon; but there’s reasonable hope for repeal. The streets are paved with refreshments stops. The Old Mill Tea Shop, built on top of a 17th cen-

tury grist mill, is magnificent inside. Beautifully polished wood floors, numerous sets of antique tea tables and matching chairs, and in the attic a museum of glass-encased doll houses, bonnets and spinning wheels. The Tea Shop wasn’t too busy in early June; little old ladies would stop by maybe two or three times a week. When Eppie and I dropped in to say hello, he offered the owner a special discount on exotic blended coffees. “Oh, my customers aren’t fancy,” she replied. “They don’t want anything like that.” Her old customers, anyway. ☺