



The 6100 block of Mellor Avenue in Catonsville offers leasable commercial space while maintaining a neighborhood feeling. - Napoleon Martinez/For The Examiner

American folk arts thrive in Catonsville warehouses

By Marie Gullard
Special to The Examiner

Along Frederick Road, the heart of Catonsville's business district is characterized by colorful buildings with quaint storefronts, the emphasis on the preserved Victorian aesthetic.

By contrast, one block south of district's heart, is the "Mews at Mellor." This block-long retail center, managed by Thornhill Properties in Towson, consists of two large nondescript warehouses, both designed for retail and service space.

Several groups of iron steps lead from a large parking lot to the almost unnoticeable storefronts.

But these three shops are actually internationally recognized as a hub for craftsmen and experts as The Stitching Post, Seminole Sampler and Cloverhill Yarn Shop.

All three shop proprietresses maintain that their comprehensive stock of goods, each dedicated to one particular craft, coupled with their close proximity to Baltimore/Washington International Thurgood Marshall Airport, accounts for their extensive clientele.

In business at the Mews since 1989, the 3,400-square-foot space of The Stitching Post is all about materials and lessons for every passionate stitcher's level of expertise.

"We have over a hundred vendors we deal with," owner Melinda Zachary said. "A lot of our inventory is based on customer request."

Next door down, Seminole Sam-

» **The Stitching Post**
67 Mellor Ave., Catonsville
410-788-7760
the-stitching-post.com

» **Seminole Sampler**
71 Mellor Ave., Catonsville
410-788-1720
seminolesampler.com

» **Cloverhill Yarn Shop**
75 Mellor Ave., Catonsville
410-788-7262
cloverhillyarn.com

pler specializes in every conceivable implement for the quilter in its 3,300 square feet of space. Shelves upon shelves of fabric bolts, from satin to gingham, line the walls.

Shop owner Linda Schiffer grew up in eastern Kentucky, where homemade quilts were an integral, practical part of every room's decor.

The origin of the craft, totally American, fills her with pride, as does a European clientele unable to find the selection of materials at home.

"Service is my priority as a businesswoman," she said. "Helping people to begin."

The fragrance of new wool is palpable beyond the front door of Cloverhill Yarns, a 1,600-square-foot space where owner Chris Gahs bases her business on personal service, as well as lessons.

"The other two shops play into the picture of our success," she said pointing out that visitors from all parts of the metropolitan area will come and make a day of it, going from one shop to the other.

Next week, *The Examiner* tours the 200 block of Main Street in Annapolis.