

# THE HERALD SUN

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## Rock and Shop at Golden Belt immediate hit

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DURHAM -- Perhaps the strangest thing about Rock and Shop is that it took until 2004 for someone to hit on the idea.

If you guessed that a weekend afternoon event combining shopping, a cash bar stocked with wine, draft and bottled beers, live music and a fashion show held in a recently renovated historic textile mill was likely to draw lots of visitors, then you take the biscuit. That's exactly what happened when inventor Michelle Smith's traveling flea market arrived Saturday at The Cotton Room, the Golden Belt complex's brand-new event space.

Most of the mainly young, hip-seeming twentysomethings who thronged the vendors' tables browsed and bought vintage and renewed clothing, jewelry and art.

Shoppers Diane Dennis and Carrie Reuben of Cary, for instance, were struck by the eco-friendly nature of the event and its venue.

Reuben praised the vendors for "bringing vintage jewelry into something new. It's like the combination of something old, but making it contemporary."

"I love the reuse of the building, that they were looking to reuse some old space," Dennis said.

John Giustiniani, the co-owner of Wake Forest's GC5 vintage and gift shop, said that the crowd "far exceeded my expectations. I mean, I wasn't sure what to expect, but the turnout's been awesome."

Saturday's event was a first in three different ways, Smith said. It was the first time Rock and Shop was held in Durham, it was the first time the market put an emphasis on vintage materials, and it was the first time the entertainment included a fashion show.

Smith said she believed that close to a thousand shoppers attended the market.

"We thought Durham would be a really good fit just because of Durham's culture," she said. "We thought the vintage aspect was a good fit."

Smith, a Raleigh designer and online boutique owner who met her husband while waiting in line for a Yo La Tengo performance at the 2002 Full Frame Festival, hopes to hold Rock and Shop in Durham every spring and fall in addition to having an annual Raleigh edition.

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