



Father-daughter duo continue family-focused apparel business

STORY BY ALEX J. HAYES • PHOTOS BY DARRYL WHEELER

At the end of World War II, veteran Archie Strickland of Georgia put his army uniform in the closet and began traveling the northeastern United States selling menswear.

The business of selling pants, sport coats and jackets led him to a charming town tied to a great Civil War battle and planted the seeds for a family enterprise.

Sixty-five years later, the Strickland name is almost synonymous with Gettysburg merchandise as the third generation keeps Archie's focus on family and customer service.

"At 70, I am almost a local," Archie's son, Tony, said.

Tony caught the sales bug at a young age. In high school, he sold some of his father's merchandise out of the back of his car. Many years later,

he and his daughter Julie run Strickland Enterprises, which includes a screen printing business and three active stores with one more in the planning stages.

-EARLY YEARS-

Tony and his father opened T&S Menswear in 1969 on Gettysburg's Baltimore Street. Downtown shopping was popular and the father-son team soon opened T&S Menswear - named for Tony and his sister, Susan -

stores in Chambersburg and Waynesboro.

"Friday night was a come to town kind of night for people," Tony said.

From the start, T&S Menswear was a family business. Tony's grandmother moved here to help her son and grandson. The Stricklands took pride in keeping up with trends ranging from bellbottoms, polyester pants and Levi's jeans.

"It was huge, Levi's was a really big brand and they didn't put them in department stores," Tony recalled.

Big box stores soon swallowed some of T&S's business. It remained in Gettysburg until 2017 but the bulk of the product line was a venture Tony began 30 years prior - screen printing.

Strickland Enterprises' evolution began with the



T&S Menswear in 1969

Penn State football team's unexpected win over the Miami Hurricanes in the 1987 Fiesta Bowl. Number 1 Miami was expected to topple Number 2 Penn State, but the Nittany Lions turned the tables and opened the door of opportunity for Strickland.

"I knew this guy was sitting up in Hershey with thousands and thousands of white t-shirts," Strickland recalled.

He changed out of his pajamas at 11:30 p.m., drove to Hershey and helped print PSU victory shirts until the wee hours of the morning. When T&S opened for business the next day, PSU fans in Gettysburg were able to buy shirts to celebrate the win.

- NEXT GENERATION -

A family photo shows a diaper-wearing Julie Strickland wrapped around her father's

arms with racks of t-shirts behind them.

"I remember going to Sheetz (when it was on Baltimore Street), buying two hot dogs and sharing them with my grandparents at the Blue and Gray Gift Shop," Julie said.

She officially joined the Strickland team of employees when she was 15 years old. Unfortunately, her time with grandfather Archie was short as he died from lung cancer later that year.

"My grandfather was a jokester, he was very customer-oriented," Julie said. "People will still come in and ask about Archie, so many people remember him."

Julie worked for the American Cancer Society after attending Elizabethtown College but in 2013, her family business lured her back to her hometown and the Tony and

Julie team began moving the company in a more vibrant direction.

T-shirt racks in Strickland stores were traditionally filled with classic Civil War options such as blue and gray. Pink, green and tie-died were added shortly after Julie's return.

"She brought all of the fashion into the world, that really increased the market for our products," Tony said. "Bringing Julie in was huge to moving forward with this company."

Julie enjoys traveling but her trips are not all pleasure.

"When I go on vacation, I am always looking for ideas to bring back to Gettysburg," she said.

- TRAGEDY MOVES COMPANY FORWARD -

The Stricklands have operated several stores in the Gettysburg area over the years. Tony said it is important to keep up with tourists' demands and relocate when foot traffic patterns change.

Currently, they own two stores on Steinwehr Avenue and one at the Outlet Shoppes at Gettysburg.

A fourth - the company's headquarters since 1981, Blue and Gray Gift Shop - was destroyed by fire on March 1, 2021 when a vehicle struck it around 4:20 a.m. and burst into flames.

The building and merchandise was replaceable,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 21

*Independent, locally owned,
customized investment management*

**No pressure second opinion analysis
of your portfolio**

**HUSTON-FOX FINANCIAL
ADVISORY SERVICES, LLC**

113 Carlisle St., Gettysburg, PA 17325
Ryan@HustonFox.com | www.HustonFox.com
 717-398-2040

215 Baltimore St., Hanover, PA, 17331
Sean@HustonFox.com | 717-633-6844

*Please call for a complimentary, no-pressure introductory meeting
to analyze your existing portfolio, your goals, and, most importantly,
your questions. We accept no commissions.
Please see hustonfox.com*

**We put your interests first and foremost by offering transparent, honest, local advice
and investment management services.**

We are professional investment advisors.

Ryan Fox, MBA | Sean C. Huston, ChFC






but family photos and Archie's World War II medals are gone forever.

"The history of our family and the history of our business went up in flames," Julie said.

The Strickland family counts its blessings and is grateful the crash and subsequent fire occurred so early in the morning when the store and streets were empty. The building had been struck several times before, sometimes in daylight.

The Stricklands heard from dozens of loyal customers after the fire who expressed support but also appreciation to the family for being an important part of their trips to Gettysburg. The encouragement and memories are helping them move forward.

"It is an important corner for Gettysburg, I felt we had no choice but to rebuild," Julie said.

Plans for the new building are still being finalized, but Tony and Julie said it will be more convenient for shoppers and employees. The Blue and Gray Gift Shop was formerly a home, so the floor plan was somewhat awkward for a retail space. And, like many aspects of Strickland Enterprises in the past eight years, Julie's influence will be obvious.

"The new building will



probably have more Julie in it than I would want," Tony said

Agreeing to disagree is part of the Strickland team's success, as well as a rule set by Tony's wife and Julie's mother - no business at the dinner table.

"My dad is one of my best friends and he was best friends with his dad," Julie said. "To be able to see my dad and work with my dad is a real gift."



BUDDY BOY

WINERY AND VINEYARDS



Thank you for your votes!

RED WINES
WHITE WINES
SPECIALTY WINES

BUDDY BOY™
WINERY and VINEYARD

777 Baltimore Street • Gettysburg, PA 17325
www.buddyboywinery.com



Stop In and Visit Us! Sample Some of Our Award Winning Wines!

10th Anniversary
Pick of the Counties
2021 WINNER
in the category of Winery & Vineyard



OUR LITTLE BIT OF EVERYTHING SHOP

SPECIALIZING IN LADIES & GENTLEMAN ATTIRE FROM REV WAR THRU WORLD WAR II

Unique Furniture & Accessories for your home!

- Quality Pre-Owned Clothing -
- Fine Teas & Accessories -

LOCALLY CRAFTED MILITARY LEATHERS
OUR PRICES FIT YOUR BUDGET!

777 Baltimore Street
Suite 104 | 717.338.1776

Open Thurs. thru Mon.
11AM - 6PM;
Closed Tues. & Wed.