

cont. from page 2

## New location, new owners, same Cupboard service and quality

naturally wanted to turn it over to her partner, Cindi Brown. It was Brown who made the decision to move The Cupboard into a brand new shopping area on the Clinton Parkway in 2003. There, the gift selection increased, with shelves bursting with pottery, glassware, kitchenware, decorative accents, lamps and artwork, jewelry and baby items.

Brown continued to use her abilities as an interior designer as she supervised the personable staff. Tara Lytal went in another direction and became the first executive director of Main Street Clinton, employing that lifetime knowledge of her community and her acquaintance with many of its citizens to be a passionate advocate for all things Clinton.

When Cindi Brown targeted March 2018, as the point at which she wanted to retire and devote more time on her interior design, photography and painting interests, new owners were needed to carry on the tradition of excellence. Who better than the little girls who had shopped at The Cupboard from their childhood? Linda Lytal and her daughters, Tara and Heather Broadwater, are the new owners of The Cupboard.

With Tara's love of Olde Towne Clinton and interest in historic preservation, the Lytal ladies decided to move the business into the site of the old Ratliff Motor Company, built in 1926 and still owned by family member Ed Ratliff.

With all hands on deck, the sisterhood of The Cupboard girls (and

some husbands) cleaned, painted and fashioned display areas for the selection of gifts. Heather Broadwater, who had retail experience at a Jackson gift and paper company as well as a national clothing company manager, is the on-site manager. Mother Linda says her role is as "the silent partner," providing advice and pitching in to help when needed. Tara will continue



Photo by Carrie Chennault

as Main Street director, though she'll offer help with merchandise displays and work some Saturdays.

Now, following a grand re-opening earlier this month, Heather Broadwater and Tara Lytal have time to catch their breath and reflect on how their lives have truly come full circle. Heather says they "are just thrilled to be a part of the legacy of The Cupboard. It's fun to work here, because our staff make it such fun. We really are just like one big family."

But, as a business owner, Broadwater is aware of the ever-growing competition of online shopping for anybody who has a computer. To



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counter that modern trend, she says The Cupboard will rely on what it's always offered: the personal touch. Plus, her daughter Morgan, who is majoring in entrepreneurship at Mis-

issippi College, handles the store's online presence, posting pictures of enticing goods on social media.

Broadwater says she has already seen an increase in walk-in traffic, from college students going to and from dorms and classes and people strolling the Olde Towne areas. With the carefully calculated move, the owners acquired more square footage than in the previous location and have arranged the gifts in attractive areas within a large open space. They are also increasing their selections for bridal registries, carrying popular pottery and stoneware patterns for the more casual lifestyle of today's couples.

The light, bright, high-ceilinged building even features a separate kitchenware area, with dishes and pottery displayed to best advantage. The exposed brick walls, antique furniture pieces, and some handmade display fixtures beckon shoppers to browse and find just the right gift. Broadwater is quick to point out that "someone can choose a gift that maybe they saw on Morgan's social media post, call us, and we'll bring it out to their car. We even have a covered entrance where they can park on the front side." And as always has been the case, gift wrapping is free of charge.

Tara Lytal has nothing but fond memories of The Cupboard from her childhood days, saying simply, "To us, it was magical. Now, as adults, it is such a privilege to have the opportunity to own The Cupboard and continue the legacy of local family-owned businesses in our community. Both Jacque and Cindi did such a terrific job with the business; we hope to continue this tradition of excellence."

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