

HISTORY

Fabric Boutique, an independent, popular fabric store in Sarasota in the 1980s and early 1990s, offered a Stretch and Sew monthly class that was attended by a group of enthusiastic sew-ers followed, of course, by lunch at nearby restaurants. The owners of this store sold to relocate in Las Vegas, unfortunately the new owners did not continue for very long. Having formed a close bond many of this group of sew-ers continued meeting for lunch, hoping to find another location where we could meet and sew. Even some of our husbands were looking for a place for us! Jack Holland (Evelyn's husband) attended the Sarasota County Fair and while visiting the many exhibitions stopped to talk to Pat and Ruth, owners of the Landings-Viking Sewing Store in Sarasota. Through their offer our problem of a meeting place was solved!!

Some of Landings-Viking customers joined our group and introduced us to the American Sewing Guild. Officers of the Suncoast Tampa Bay Chapter were invited to come and speak to us. An enthusiastic group joined the American Sewing Guild, became active members of Suncoast Tampa Bay Chapter. Some served on the Advisory Board of the Suncoast Tampa Bay Chapter.

With over 125 members the National ASG Association was petitioned asking that the Gulf Coast Sarasota Chapter ASG be formed. 1995 a Chapter was formed with the stipulation that it be named Sarasota/Gulf Coast Chapter ASG. National ASG stated that the name of a geographical location must be first so that anyone could locate the Chapter by looking at a map of the area.

Neighborhood groups were formed in Englewood/Venice, Sarasota (both day and evening), Bradenton, Ellenton, and Brandon (both day and evening). The Brandon groups have since discontinued citing the distance as the deterring factor. Meetings were (and still are) held in stores, libraries and organization meeting halls.

May I digress for a minute and tell you of a funny instance that I can still recall? During a Neighborhood meeting at Sew-lutions in Sarasota, where an overflow crowd was attending, Gail Ceci's husband and co-owner had no place to sit. So being a gentleman he retired to the back room and took a seat upon the large waste paper basket and promptly found himself folded inside said basket. With some difficulty he was extricated - I'm sure he did not find it as amusing as some of us did.

We have a hard working Advisory Board, a wonderful Newsletter issued every other month, an annual Fashion Show by our members, a yearly Educational Seminar, established a Ginny Jahnke Educational Savings Fund, and a large group of enthusiastic, talented members since 1995!!

by Dora Markle