

ScotlandShop – popping up in New York

Anna White founder and owner of The Scotland Shop on Queensferry Street is in New York for Tartan Week. She is a Tartan Day rookie and when I met her in Edinburgh she was looking forward to the experience. Yesterday at the Parade she and her family with a couple of colleagues cut a tartan dash with their matching outfits.

She is the woman who has dressed Doddy Weir in his eye-catching tartan suits.

Living on a farm with her husband and children in the Scottish Borders, when it came to finding a marketing job she found she had to create her own opportunity.

At that time she commuted to nearby cities to work but realised that with the strong textiles industry in the Borders and with a love of fashion and colour, she could make a job out of that. She loves the manufacturing process as well.



Anna in her Queensferry Street store

Anna said : “We have a whole network of different suppliers and manufacturers, from tiny one person companies to ‘full on’ factories. All of the fabrics are woven by different Scottish mills.”

Marketing Manager Emily Redman, a textiles graduate of Heriot-Watt University, accompanied Anna on the US trip.

The company has been in existence for 17 years but only opened a shop in the capital in August 2017. Previously, she used an old granary on the farm as business premises suited her family lifestyle and she was always there to meet them off the school bus.

But working in the Scotland Shop is not like working in any other shop, Anna claims : “You are working as a clan adviser, a fabric adviser, a measurer, a tailor. It takes a bit of time for people to feel they know what they are doing.

“We already have a good customer base out in the US, with about 35% of our business being exported there. So we know we have lots of customers there already and that they love our stuff.

“We just felt that the physical presence and the chance to

speak to people face to face would be good. I am always wondering if we should perhaps have a shop out there so this is a good first step to have a pop up shop in the Algonquin Hotel on West 44th St.”



ScotlandShop team in Edinburgh

She explained : “We sent samples ahead, but we are not taking huge amounts of stock because a lot of customers want custom made outfits. They want to see an example of a garment but they then want it made in their own tartan and their own sizes.

“One of the tartans we are taking is the New York City tartan designed by Alistair Buchan to celebrate Tartan Day in 2002. The colours represent the streets and buildings, with green for Central Park and blue for the rivers which surround Manhattan. The two black stripes recall the Twin Towers. It was originally the Tunes of Glory but Mayor Giuliani asked for the name to be changed.

“The other is the Caledonia tartan which is considered a general fabric for those Scots who have no clan connection.

The Doddy Weir suits have certainly brought a lot of publicity to The Scotland Shop but they are also known for their range

of tartan dresses tailored to fit the individual. They make a lot of plus-size clothing, as well as household items like cushions and tablecloths, and they sell fabrics over the internet. But it was Tam the Tailor who created a bit of a stir.



Anna with Tam the Tailor just before the parade

And then there is Tartan Ted – Anna made him for St Andrew's Day last year. He is clad in the United States St Andrews tartan and has been travelling around since November meeting up with the clans ahead of the Tartan Day Parade sending back snaps and stories to his owner.

Anna and her small band are in place at the Algonquin Hotel and have been meeting their clients both old and new – and of course the hotel's cat who has his own Twitter account!

Tartan gifts & accessories inspired from the heart of Scotland at www.ScotlandShop.com