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CARDIFFWORKS

"MY GRANDPARENTS MIGRATED FROM CYPRUS AND OPENED THEIR FIRST SALON IN THE 1960S, THE SAME ONE WE INHABIT TODAY"

CARDIFF LIFE AWARDS 2022

SIMON CONSTANTINOU, an established family-run hair and beauty business on Crwys Road, Cardiff, won the Hair & Beauty trophy at the Cardiff Life Awards 2022. Here we chat with the salon's director and owner Helen Rouse about its heart-warming background...

HAIR & BEAUTY WINNER

Firstly, can you tell us a bit about the business...

I love telling the Constantinou origin story! In a nutshell, my grandparents, Odysseas and Ellou, migrated from Cyprus in the 1950s – by boat no less – and opened their first salon in the 1960s. Odysseas worked hard to uphold a reputation for quality and style, and he went on to compete in hairdressing competitions across the world.

Then as his sons grew up, they also took on the same work ethic and creative flair at these hairdressing competitions. Some of the following generation of grandchildren went on to successfully compete too – including Dody, who now works alongside his uncle, Simon.

You'll spot lots of Constantinou's hairdressers in and around Cardiff, but Simon operates in the O. Constantinou & Sons salon on Crwys Road, this was my grandparents' first salon that we inhabit today (albeit updated and extended) and we still honor the

original salon name on the sign above the door, in memory of the original Mr.C!

What positives has the business had recently?

Our joyous Cardiff Life Award win this year was such a delightful positive. We have also been working to become a dementia-friendly organisation through the Marie Curie/ Alzheimer's Society Communities initiative; this has led to a great amount of press that we hope helps spread awareness of dementia. Ultimately every business offering a service to the public can hugely benefit from this training and support. Adapting the salon to be accessible to someone living with dementia has in turn made us generally accessible for all.

We were also delighted to have recently received the Gold Standard status from the charity Little Princess Trust for fitting and styling wigs for children who have lost their hair through illness.

How else do you contribute to and benefit the local area?

We like to support the local schools and charities with raffle prizes and donations. And we have various

ongoing fundraising and support activities for The Little Princess Trust and Macmillan Cancer Care throughout the year.

What makes your business stand out?

We have a community feel, a 'salon family'. We have a large number of loyal clients who have been with us for many years, travelling from as far as Plymouth and Jersey. We are constantly inspired by trends and changes in the industry and despite being so established, we never want to stop learning; that's what excites and drives us.

What job were you doing before you got into this role?

Prior to joining the family business in 2015, I was a fashion designer for nearly 14 years. I love the trend element of the hair and beauty industry, and I love working with my father, Simon, who never fails to surprise me with his passion and excitement for the industry, even after over 50 years of hairdressing!

What local business people inspire you?

I know this is pretty cheesy, but my father has mentored me to

take the reins of this business. He always seems to have the answer and inspires me with his creative thinking and ability to remain grounded through tough times.

What's new/upcoming?

We are expanding our wigs, hairpieces and men's hair systems department. This is an area that we don't shout about enough, due to its sensitive nature. However, we are seeing an increasing demand and we love watching the confidence grow in clients when they take control and invest in a hair system.

Lastly, how did it feel to win a Cardiff Life Award, and what did you think of the event?

We were both shocked and delighted to win the award! Having won it in 2019, it was a great honour to receive it again and be recognised for our ability to adapt and evolve in an ever-changing industry.

We loved every minute of the night, and I must admit that I continued to dance the night away at the after party in Kuku until closing time! What a great celebration of Cardiff businesses!

For more:

www.worldchampionhairdressing.co.uk



The salon back in the 1960s, opened by Helen's grandparents