

Antiques bazaar turns mill to mall

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More Information

[The Depot at Gibson Mill](#)

320 McGill Ave., N.W., Concord.

Hours: 9 a.m.-9 p.m., Monday-Saturday, 11 a.m.-6 p.m. Sunday.

Details: 704-280-4278, thedepotgibsonmill.com.

CONCORD A new Concord antiques mall is set to bring about 130 vendors to a renovated textile mill - and, the owners hope, create a destination that will lure visitors from nearby Charlotte Motor Speedway and Interstate 85.

The Depot at Gibson Mill is slated to open Monday on McGill Avenue N.W., about half a mile east of U.S. 29/601, near downtown. It will sell a range of antique furniture and collectibles, with booths filling an expansive room, along the lines of Charlotte's Sleepy Poet Antique Mall.

With its sturdy brick walls, well-worn wooden floors and light flooding through large windows, the Depot building itself is a certifiable antique. Formerly Cannon Mills Plant 6, its oldest parts date to 1913, said George Liles Jr., one of the owners of the Gibson Mill complex and a partner in the antique mall.

He and three partners bought the site out of the Pillowtex bankruptcy in 2004, and its three buildings now house offices, a banquet room and other businesses. The original structures on the site were constructed as Gibson Mill in the late 1800s, and made gingham fabric.

The mall may benefit from renewed interest in recycled and used products sparked in part by the recession. Though the broad cutback in consumer spending has affected antiques dealers, especially on the lower end, many shops are seeing an uptick in business now, said Suzy Fincannon of the Davidson-based Antiques & Collectibles National Association.

The Sleepy Poet, located in a 50,000-square-foot former auto parts building on South Boulevard, has seen positive foot traffic lately and experienced sales increases in the last quarter of 2009, owner Dickson Shreffler said.

"What we've seen over the last year is people buying 'green' and recycling furniture, and finding out they can buy good, usable merchandise cheaper than they can new," he said.

The Depot is the brainchild of Gary Pigg, whose parents own Décor & More, a furniture business in an adjacent building, Liles said. The family had a network of vendors to draw from, he said, and saw potential in the vacant Gibson Mill space.

Pigg, a partner in the business, will manage the mall. It will start with 35,000 square feet and aims to expand into 44,000 next door, Liles said.

This week, vendors were hard at work setting up their spaces, filling the Depot with the sounds of hammering, drilling and sawing. And in keeping with its name, yes, it's next to working railroad tracks, with trains rumbling by to provide a reminder.