

MADE IN AMERICA

HILLARY LEWIS

Pink Eyed Sissies

LIFE THROUGH ROSE COLORED LENSES

There is something about the 'vintage' era, something that brings warm thoughts and memories to those who lived it. Life was more family centered. Sandra and Sue of Pink Eyed Sissies fondly remember those times. The sisters love reminiscing about the things they did together when they were young. They were to be at the dinner table every night at six o'clock and they ate dinner together as a family. After dinner, they sat and watched television together. Sundays were always spent in church and in the car driving to visit family in rural Michigan.



Going to the mailbox was special as you could hope that there might be a beautiful hand addressed holiday or birthday card, maybe even with a dollar tucked inside. A letter from Grandma could change the entire day. The dying art of snail mail leaves us nostalgic for vintage postcards and well sculpted hand writing. This nostalgia is what inspires Sandra and Sue with each of their jewelry designs.

It all started when the sisters came across a beautiful, faded red velvet box full of antique optometry lenses in 2009. The lady selling the lenses proclaimed that she did not know what anyone would ever do with them. Something about those lenses struck a chord with Sandra and Sue though, and they knew they could not leave the Elegant Antique Flea Market without them.



It took a year of trial and error for Sandra and Sue to decide what to do with the lenses. They knew they wanted the lenses to be vintage pendants, so they started shopping for jewels, beads, and postcards to make their necklaces. Thus Pink Eyed Sissies was born.

It took a lot of fun, and a few glasses of wine, before they came up with the name Pink Eyed Sissies. It had to be catchy and it had to reflect who they are. 'Pink' was easy. Both Sandra and Sue love everything pink. With their jewelry built on optometrist lenses, 'Eyed' came quite easily as well. They touch on the idea that 'Pink Eyed' represents them well because they are so very tenderhearted, but they are quick to proclaim

that they are not sissy girls. 'Sissies' reflects the fact that they are a sister duo, a pretty strong and tough sister act.

Once they had created enough pieces they packed up and headed to Plymouth Art in the Park in Michigan, nervous that they would sell out! After the show, they cried. They realized they were completely unprepared for real life in the show world. The logistics of getting packed, getting somewhere they had never been, and setting up was overwhelming. Looking back, they did very well at that first show but, more importantly, they learned a large lesson. Everywhere you go you have to rethink your booth and you have to rethink your customer base. You have to be willing to change, and change often.

When asked where their inspiration comes from, they state that it comes from their beautiful, talented parents who dearly love them. They laugh as they explain their mother told them to say just that. They love to mix colors, textures, and patterns and are eternally grateful to their biggest supporters, their husbands, who have gotten accustomed to living with constant creativity.

Each and every piece they create is their favorite: examining the lenses and the beads, and how the different post cards look in different lenses. Some pieces get named because they remind the sisters of someone in particular, but each piece has a place in their hearts. Some customers are drawn to the nostalgia of the postcard pendants, while others find the overall design appealing. Generally, monograms are the most popular pieces.

For more information, or to order a pendant necklace of your own, please visit www.pinkeyedsissies.com





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