



(Staff photo / Joseph Leonelli)

Flight Apparel owner Al Colangelo watches Iren Waldman work on a piece of clothing.

## Airport Shop Serves Fashion To Fliers and Businesses

By ANDREA HARTLEY  
Special Writer

HAMMONTON — "Hammonton Aviation, this is 48 Tango. Requesting active runway please."

"48 Tango, active runway 03. Traffic in pattern."

"Roger, 48 Tango on base leg 03."

The landing is a smooth one, conducted by visual contact. The pilot flying his private plane continues to use his radio communications informing others of his intentions, "Hammonton Aviation, 48 Tango taxing over to the Flight Apparel store."

"Roger, 48 Tango" comes the reply.

The pilot is referring to Flight Apparel Industries—manufacturers of wearing apparel for pilots and non-pilots as well. The building is located directly across from the Hammonton Airport. Here, he can purchase his wife a jumpsuit to wear when she begins her flying lessons next week, and a business suit for himself, which he knows he can get at wholesale prices.

The 6,000 square foot Flight Apparel store was built in 1970, by Al Colangelo. Attached to the store is the lovely red brick home where he and his family live; and about 100 feet from his front door is a 3,000 foot runway, property of the Hammonton Municipal Airport.

Colangelo, began working as a custom tailor and clothing merchant in Upper Darby, Pa. He had been working in the field since the age of three when he earned 25 cents a week for working after school hours and on Saturdays as an apprentice.

Later, he taught custom tailoring in vocational schools. In 1957, he started making flight jackets for Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association, which was his first national customer.

After spending 15 years looking for a suitable airport to locate his home and business, he finally found the Hammonton Site, Says Colangelo, I flew here, circled the place and looked down. There was a black strip and nothing else, I looked down at the trees and said to myself, 'wouldn't it be nice to have a place there?'

So, I landed. The only one around was an old man in a pickup truck with a couple of kids. I asked him if there was any land for sale. He said 'yes' and offered to drive me across the field. I left my two kids with his kids and went to talk to a woman in a little white house. She said that her husband wasn't home, so I went back the next week and bought 6 acres and the little white house. The whole deal was done on the back of an envelope.

Since 1970 his business has grown 20 times over, his staff has increased, and he has expanded his facilities.

Today, his largest customer is Century 21. Coangelo, himself designed the brown and gold fashion co-ordinates that the sales staff wear, and he supplies them to Century 21 offices throughout the country.

Pilots who fly corporate planes of companies such as Johnson and Johnson, Scott Paper, RCA, and Ford Motors, and approximately 140 others wear apparel designed and manufactured by FAI, as do many local clubs, ball teams and fire companies.

Many of the casinos outfit their employees in jackets, jumpsuits, vests and skirts produced by FAI. The green and white uniforms worn by Super Fresh employees also originate from FAI.

The huge showroom is open to the public, where there is an abundant assortment of jackets, jumpsuits, and raincoats for men and women, and business suits for men.