

South Charlotte

MAY 2020

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CULTIVATING

EMPOWERED WOMEN MAKING
AN IMPACT IN CHARLOTTE

AS PART OF OUR CELEBRATION
OF WOMEN IN THIS ISSUE, SOUTH
CHARLOTTE LIFESTYLE MAGAZINE
CHOSE TO PROFILE THE CAREERS
AND CONTRIBUTIONS OF THREE PRO-
FESSIONAL LEADERS WHO ARE MAK-
ING AN INNOVATIVE IMPACT IN THE
CHARLOTTE COMMUNITY.

Photography by Kelly Merritt.



COMMUNITY

ARTICLE MELINDA BURRIS WILLMS

Michael Harrison Photography



GEORGIA DUNN BELK

Georgia Dunn Belk is President and CEO of the British West Indies Trading Company. Georgia's path to entrepreneurship was an unusual one, as she explains: "When I started the beverage business, it was about maintaining culture and traditions that have been in my family for 13 generations. This mission is the heart and soul of my business."

Georgia has an intriguing family history that traces back to Tudor England and the court of Queen Elizabeth I. Georgia's ancestor, Thomas Harriott, was a renowned British scientist who undertook a 1585 exploratory expedition to America to chronicle the voyage and collect botanical samples on behalf of the Queen. Thomas collected samples, including ginger root, and off the coast of North Carolina, fermented various botanicals, making him the first of the British on record to make beer in the New World.

Thomas Harriott's descendants settled Bermuda and the Caribbean, including the Turks and Caicos Islands, where Georgia and her family maintain close ties. While speaking with Island Elders and combing through family records, Georgia discovered beverage recipes at risk of being lost with the passage of time.

Georgia was inspired to continue these traditions and her Islander Ginger Beer and Harriott's Hard Lemonade were born. Georgia takes pride in having achieved business success while reviving a family tradition with deep roots in our collective history. To this end, Georgia provides complimentary presentations to museums and other nonprofits across the country dedicated to honoring cultures and traditions. The material is designed to inspire others to preserve what is unique about their family history and their community's way of life.

To learn more about Georgia's journey visit, BwiTradingCompany.com.

Daniel Gray Photography

