

“Those were the days when consumers either bought drugstore products like Jergens and Pond’s, or they went for the high-end department store cosmetics,” Heron recalls. “These products stripped hair and skin of their natural protective mantle instead of nourishing it and balancing it.” Of course, they also made money for the companies that produced them—something that didn’t especially concern Body Time’s founders, who were, Heron says, “hippies who cared about local living.”

As small-scale rebels, Short and Saunders not only created products that, says Heron, were “‘natural’—whatever that meant in 1970,” but engaged in “the very progressive practice[s] of doing away with packaging, refilling containers, and custom-scenting lotions.” And eventually—perhaps to their surprise—their influence was felt around the world. As Heron tells it, shortly after English entrepreneur Anita Roddick visited Short and Saunders’s store (then known as The Body Shop) in the ’70s, she launched her own body-care business. Like Short and Saunders, Roddick encouraged customers to refill their containers, custom-scented her products—and called her enterprise The Body Shop. In 1987, Roddick purchased the Body Shop name from the sisters-in-law—who adopted Body Time as their new moniker—and expanded her enterprise to over 2,000 franchises worldwide. At her death in 2007, Roddick was one of the wealthiest women in England.

Today, Body Time still sells the traditional products with the familiar black-on-white labels, as well as a botanical line that is eco-certified according to European standards, both online and at four retail shops in the Bay Area. “In the age of 800 numbers, we still respond to customers individually,” Heron points out. “And,” she says, echoing her mother’s trend-bucking tone, “we have stayed independent.”