

*Indian jewelry was the style — the rage — it was in vogue.*

I worked feverishly to build my wholesale business. My mind never stopped, always thinking of how to improve, expand, increase sales. Besides, Indian jewelry was beginning to experience a broader appeal and style.

It was definitely the style in Gallup. The locals, particularly those of us in the business, had our own style. The gals were “cowgirl-chic” in bellbottomed jumpsuits with heavy silver and turquoise concho belts cinched around their hips, nugget necklaces, heishi or squash blossom necklaces, lots of bracelets and heavy earrings. And most topped off the look with bouffant hairdos. Many of the traders had a “business-western” look, and most wore heavy turquoise nugget watchbands, matching belt buckles, and bolo ties. Fancy cowboy boots in lizard or ostrich were a sign of success.

More people around the country started wearing Indian jewelry. Movie stars were seen in magazines sporting squash blossom necklaces and concho belts. Indian jewelry was gaining popularity on a grander scale, and I was in a position to profit from its popularity.

Then it hit. Like a turquoise tornado.

The Boom.

Indian jewelry was the style — the rage — it was in vogue. *The Wall Street Journal* called it an investment.

My business exploded — it was wildly successful. All the traders were experiencing the boom. Leroy Atkinson kicked into high gear, hiring more silversmiths. Joe Atkinson and his brother Lynn were in the middle of the boom, too. So was Armand. Gallup was the eye of the storm. Wholesale fed the whirlwind, and Indian jewelry stores lined the streets.

