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New bakery rises in the Brooklyn Arts District, pays homage to family roots

By **Shea Carver** July 6, 2023

A new bakery, The Jelly Cabinet, is located at 1011 N. Fourth St. (Port City Daily/Shea Carver)

WILMINGTON — At 1 a.m. Phillip Jones awakes to weigh ingredients and prepare his mise en place for a day's worth of baked goods to sell at 1011 N. Fourth St., a long building triangulating the corner of Davis and Fourth streets.

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Once Throwback Bakery – and before that Red Eye Bakery – it’s now The Jelly Cabinet, inspired by days spent in Jones’ grandmother’s kitchen during youth.

“She had a jelly cabinet in her house and being a kid, I couldn’t use a knife and cook on the stove, so I was getting a lot of ingredients together and mixing things, grabbing them from her ‘jelly cabinet’ because that’s what she kept all of our baking ingredients in,” he said.

The original jelly cabinet now sits in his bakery as well.

It officially opened its doors on July 1 at 8 a.m. Three hours later, Jones sold out of more than 400 sweets and pastries, with roughly 150 people coming through the doors.

“It was overwhelming but exciting,” he said.

His mother, sister and aunt helped customers while he managed the baking. Jones was up for 22 hours to ensure everything was freshly prepared: chocolate chip and peanut butter cookies, cinnamon buns, coffee cake with a streusel crumb, a Danish with garlic-and-herb goat cheese topped with fresh tomato, smoked ham and Havarti croissant.

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“It was probably the most popular item that we sold out of first,” Jones said of the croissant.

More savory options are likely to come, including scones. However, The Jelly Cabinet also has taken on the most popular order from its former tenant’s menu. Throwback Bakery was revered for its blueberry biscuits, smothered in icing.

love. So I've definitely decided to keep them."

Yet, Jones altered the recipe slightly, adding more buttermilk to the biscuit to help the crumb's moisture and upping the salt slightly.

"I prefer to add a little bit more salt into the baked goods just because, with all of the sugar in it, it really helps level everything out," he said.

*Iced blueberry biscuits, cinnamon buns and German chocolate cake from The Jelly Cabinet.
(Port City Daily/Shea Carver)*

The Jelly Cabinet menu consists only of six or seven items right now, but selections will rotate.

For instance, he wants to put on special a 30-minute chocolate cake for his grandmother, Deborah Philligin, makes for family and friends for birthdays and special occasions.

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It's a simple chocolate cake base, Jones explained, yet is baked in a broiler pan, with icing made on the stove.

with chocolate and peanut butter chips, coconut and sweetened custard poured atop before being baked in the oven.

"They're so nostalgic for me," he said. "She made them for us when we were kids."

Jones will be creating one-of-a-kind items, such as a "cruffin" — a mix between a croissant and muffin. It's essentially Jones' regular croissant dough, baked and rolled in sugar, before being filled with cooked jams or a ganache. Jones said he's still "nailing down" the recipe but imagines the cruffins only to be available as Saturday specials.

"And the fillings will never be the same," he added.

Jones is already thinking ahead to working on some collaborations with nearby neighbors, too, such as baking a sweet sandwich to bookend Boombalatti's homemade ice cream. It's located across the way from the bakery, beside Palate.

As the bakery finds its footing, Jones also plans to take orders for specialty cakes and other one-of-a-kind items customers request.

The 27-year-old baker got his start working at Apple Annie's for seven years and attending Cape Fear Community College, finishing his culinary arts degree in baking in 2016. A year later, he was invited back to teach a cake-decorating course, which led to more teaching opportunities. Jones now is an instructor in CFCC's Department of Baking and Pastry Arts.

"It was definitely not on my bingo card," he said. "But I've learned just as much from the students as they have from me."

Jones will open The Jelly Cabinet on Thursdays through Sundays, 8 a.m. to 2 p.m., until school starts back in August. Then it will open Friday

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"The teaching is flexible," he said. "So I'll be getting off at like 12:50 on two days out of the week, so I can run over there and get some stuff prepped for the weekend."

The bakery is within walking distance, a half-mile from the school. Jones had been considering opening his own business for a while but held off. He said self-talk

better timing.

“Finally, after I’d say years of trying to pick the perfect title, it’s like, you’re just gonna have to let it happen,” he recalled. “There’s no perfect time to do anything. I had let the idea go of all of that – and then a bakery showed up.”

His sister found a place for sale on Facebook Marketplace. Though numerous people were interested in Throwback’s location, Jones said he and the owner clicked. Jones even went in and worked with him for a few days to understand the ins and outs of running a bakery.

“It was meant to be,” Jones said. “I’m excited to see where this endeavor takes me.”

*Phillip Jones in The Jelly Cabinet, his new bakery at Harnett and
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