ist at 14, the younger Booth had worked together with his father earlier to create the first two-way radio between police headquarters and its, at the time, one cruiser working the streets of Belleville, thus giving the city one of the first police radio systems in Canada.

Immediately after the Second World War, the Booths began their entrepreneurial journey by bringing their existing small repair service out of the basement of their home to the building on the corner of Pinnacle and Market streets in Belleville. It was initially a radio and appliance repairs business built simply on the experience and skills the younger Booth had acquired while working for the radar department at research enterprises in Toronto during the war. Both had no formal training in electronics but possessed natural talent for the business which blossomed rapidly demanding bigger premises leading them to the J.T. Warren building and then again to 170 Front St., in the former Intelligencer building.

After the fire in 1968, the business was moved to a new location on Bridge Street East. The business moved through several locations in the following years and when Booth's found its final home on the Market Square, the business had finally got into furniture and carpet sales.

HOWARD BOOTH

The Booth's newly acquired warehouse adjoined the west wall of Memorial Arena and for years, the converted warehouse remained Booth's commercial house, which brought together his numerous downtown stores carrying appliances, furniture and carpets under a single roof.

Interestingly, with this move the family-run business came full circle for in 1945 the company first went into operation in what once was the city weigh-scale office at the east end of the rink. Today, volunteers run the Opportunity Shop of the Belleville General Hospital's Women Auxiliary on that spot.

Since the early 1970s Booth's grew steadily and employed about 15 staff members while another generation of the Booth family, his son John took over the business reins until its closure when Howard Booth retired in 1977 due to ailing health. He died nine years later.

cycles. They were dangerous, you know. They didn't wear helmets those days. He used to firmly tell our two girls, 'I never want to catch you on the back of a motorcycle.'

"One day two of their friends came to us while we were in our backyard and my husband said to them 'I know what you're going to say. You want to go out on these motorcycles. If you want to go out, walk up the road with your friends, the motorcycles stay here'," said Ethier.

The seriousness of the danger was brought home to the Ethiers when a relative was killed in a moped accident.

Ethier recalled working at Booth's when the store was located opposite city hall on Front Street. Fire destroyed the building that housed the store in 1968. Ethier was in the middle of her work day inside the store when it happened on what she felt was "a coldest day ever."

"It started in the little restaurant beside us. Apparently, the grease caught fire. I remember the bookkeeper telling me 'Grab the books and let's go.' So we ran out. That was a big fire and it burned down the whole building. The damage was quite heavy but nobody got hurt," she recalled.

Booth's began operation in 1945, a brainchild of Howard Booth and his father, Arthur. An amateur radio hobby-

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