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By Henry Bury
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Rebecca Burlington enjoyed working in a downtown flower shop so much that she purchased the business.

The 28-year-old Belleville resident is the new owner of Flowers by Dustin at 390 Front St.

"I'm nervous about being in business for myself but I'm excited as well," said Burlington, who has worked full-time at the flower shop for the past five years.

"I wanted to go into something of my own and the opportunity came up to purchase the business."

She bought the business April 11 from Sheila Harris and her mother, Betty, who had owned and operated it since 1978.

"I have a lot to live up to and I'm confident I will," said Burlington. "I learned everything from Betty and Sheila Harris."

Being around flowers and working for herself is a dream come true, she said.

"I'm passionate and enthusiastic about flowers and all things horticulture," said Burlington. "It doesn't seem much like work because I enjoy it so much."

The Quinte Secondary School graduate brings a lot of experience and expertise to her new business.

Burlington worked at a golf course and nursery while earning her Bachelor of Science degree in biology in 1997 from Queen's University. She also graduated with an Ontario diploma in horticulture in 1999 from the University of Guelph and then went to work full-time at

Flowers by Dustin.

She is confident about growing the business.

"The girls here in the shop are fantastic employees and we have a great customer base," she said.

Sheila Harris knows Burlington will succeed in the business.

"She has the same passion that I have for flowers," Harris said. "The

only thing that has changed down at the shop is that I'm not there. But Rebecca will provide much more of her personal touch as the owner."

Al and Eva Dustin opened the flower shop in Belleville during the Second World War.

Sheila Harris worked for the Dustins for two years and then, along with her mother, Betty, pur-

chased the operation in 1978.

"It's been a great business," said Sheila Harris of the Marlbank area. "We have enjoyed the people and working with flowers. It's a passion, that's all I can say about it."

She sold the business because of family obligations.

"I'm still playing with flowers, but at home only," said Harris.