

Fendleys follow in fine family tradition

By Charlie Gibbs
Herald Special

When John Fendley says he is in a family business, he means it. The owner and operator of Fendley Florists at Northview Plaza in Georgetown is a fourth-generation floral salesman.

It all started with William Fendley, who, in 1883, started

bartering fruit, vegetables, eggs and flowers as a tea merchant. One of his clients was Robert Simpson, the founder of current-day Simpson's department store. William established at 20 Murray Street in Brampton what was to become a century-old business.

Next came his son, and John Fendley's grandfather, Charles.

Charles Fendley expanded his father's business of selling carnations and violets by building several greenhouses. He established a wholesale floral business in 1923.

Charles' son, Albert, expanded the wholesale business to include retail in 1963. At this point, Fendley Florists supplied individuals and groups with flowers across the province.

The fourth, and last (for now) generation ends with John himself, the son of Albert, who branched out the family business into the Georgetown area by buying Harris Floral and Rosedale Floral, the two local flower stores, in 1969. His brother, Gord, and his sister, Barb, still operate the store at 20 Murray Street in Brampton.

But the family connection with flower stores does not end there. The operator of Rosedale Floral at the time of its purchase was Amy Pierce, who just happened to be the sister of Albert Fendley.

Now, John has two children of his own, both of whom show an interest in the flower business. It's a bit early to tell yet, though because Amy is only nine, while Charles is seven.

"Charles is always helping out making flower arrangements," Mr. (John) Fendley said. "Amy too. They both help out with things".



John Fendley is carrying on a family tradition at Fendley Florists that began in 1883. (Herald photo)

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The Fendley's are very proud of their family history. The ledgers of William, John's Great-grandfather, are today found in the Peel Archives. There are only an estimated 12 flower businesses in Ontario that have been under the same ownership for more than a century.

But that does not mean to say that Fendley Florists have not undergone changes. Far from the tea-merchant days of the nineteenth century, Fendley Florists have established a policy of keen market awareness like any business of today must. In 1986, the Georgetown business moved to the Northview Plaza from its previous location of 27 Mill Street, Downtown Georgetown.

"Our current location is far superior," Mr. Fendley said. "Our business has more exposure."

Describing themselves as "The Friendly Fendley's", John Fendley is optimistic about the future.

"We're looking forward to a bright and prosperous future," he said.

Delacourt's meets growing needs of brides

Brides today are choosing elegant china which indicates more people are entertaining at home, according to Vera Delacourt, owner of Delacourt's, Main Street, Milton.

Delacourt's specializes in dinnerware and giftware with a strong emphasis on the Bridal Registry Service.

"We stress service and knowledgeable, friendly staff," the owner said.

Ms. Delacourt said customers have become more discerning over the years, comparing prices and services with care. "We have to be very aware of the competition," she said.

Vera Delacourt keeps up with a staff of two and an extensive advertising network.

"We use the most effective methods to get our message across," she said. "We never underestimate the power of advertising."