

Keep memories alive with Georgetown's Scrapbook Studio

By JENNIFER ENRIGHT

Sherri Bennett says she and her staff take pride in offering their customers not just a product but also a wealth of ideas. At Sherri's store known as *The Scrapbook Studio* in Georgetown people can find supplies for making scrapbooks, but they can also get advice from staff and take beginner and advanced courses on the craft of scrapbooking.

"For somebody that's new to the store we teach people how to make scrapbooks, instead of just photo albums. And we sell all the supplies that they need to do that. And in addition to that... we pride ourselves on giving people lots of ideas."

The Scrapbook Studio opened as a store four years ago, but the business has actually been around for five years. Initially, Sherri ran the business out of her home but in February of 2001 she opened her first storefront location at 48 Main Street South. Then in July of this year the business was relocated to its present location at 102 Main Street South.

Sherri says she first became interested in scrapbooking while working as a sales rep for a die cast machine company. Die cast machines, which are used to punch letters and designs out of paper, are popular at schools. But Sherri says the market was beginning to broaden with the emergence of scrapbooking as a hobby. Unlike photo albums, scrapbooks are albums that include pictures with written information and typically there are artistic flourishes – paper fasteners, coloured papers, die cut letters or shapes – that are incorporated into the album. "Through that job I was sort of introduced to scrapbooking and that was about the same time that our daughter was born. It was kind of a

good fit. I was starting to take lots of pictures."

Sherri, who grew up in Georgetown, moved back to the area about seven years ago with her husband, former NHL defenceman Adam Bennett. They now live in a house in the area with their two daughters, Kaitlyn, 6, and Jillian, 5. A few years after she returned to the area, Sherri opened her business and she says her mom Nancy McIntyre was a big help to her. "On paper I'm the sole proprietor, but I couldn't have done it without my mother."

When she first started her business, knowledge about scrapbooking was limited. But nowadays she says people are more aware of what's involved. In her experience, she finds that people, even if they don't know anything about it, have heard about someone who has done scrapbooking.

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For those who know about scrapbooking, the hobby can be an addictive one. Sherri says people that create scrapbooks usually find it difficult to simply "go back to putting pictures in a photo album." What makes scrapbooking interesting as a hobby, she says, is the sheer variety of options that are available to those who decide to create scrapbooks. People can make scrapbooks that commemorate the birth of a child, that high-

light a particular trip or that detail the events of a wedding. And heritage scrapbooks that encapsulate the life of a particular family in pictures and words are popular as well, says Sherri.

Then there are the variety of materi-

als and techniques that allow people to express themselves creatively. Sherri says people can crop their pictures and embellish the pages of their scrapbooks with papers or stickers and employ different techniques to create interesting images on the page using chalks, paints, templates or die cuts. A new trend in scrapbooking, as well, is creating pages – known as layouts – that have dimensional rather than flat images on them. Sherri says more dimension can be added by using brads or paper fasteners, pieces of fibres or papers that are crumpled to make designs such as flowers. "Albums are starting to get into a lot more dimensional embellishments. It just adds to the interest."

Sherri says it may sound like scrapbooking is something more suitable for a person with a creative impulse. However, she says scrapbooking is something that's open to anyone, even those who claim they aren't particularly creative. And as she stresses people don't have to necessarily create the most fancy scrapbook. They are free to design something simple. "You can do a really meaningful scrapbook if you just buy a nice, safe acid free album and put your pictures in it and do the journaling. It's still a scrapbook."

At her store, she and her staff are all

scrapbook addicts so they are ready and willing to help out customers that come in with questions, she says. For the beginner, there are also classes that introduce people to scrapbooking. "Our beginner class is just a one evening class. It's \$14.98 with tax. Our goal with the beginner class is to keep it really affordable and to not inflict time commitments. So people can come and play around with it and learn the basics and see if they would like to take more classes."

The Scrapbook Studio also offers a variety of other classes including what are called crop nights – or what Sherri describes as something akin to an old-fashioned quilting bee – where people can come in and work on their own projects and socialize. Through classes like these, Sherri says people get to know other people at her business. But staff also become familiar with customers as well. "It's the kind of business where you get to know people. You are helping them scrapbook their most precious memories. It is sort of a personal business. I don't think you could do it any other way."

To contact *The Scrapbook Studio*, people can call 905-702-8140. The website is www.scrapbookstudio.ca. The studio is open from 10 am to 6 pm Monday to Wednesday and from 10 am to 9 pm on Thursdays and Fridays. On Saturday the hours are from 9 am to 5 pm. The store is closed on Sundays.



PHOTO BY JENNIFER ENRIGHT
Sherri Bennett, owner of *The Scrapbook Studio* in Georgetown, displays a kaleidoscope photographic design that can be seen in one of her scrapbooks.



Sherri is pictured here with her husband, ex-Edmonton Oiler, Adam Bennett at the recent Mayor's Luncheon in Georgetown.

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