

Milton Means Business

Floral creations McPhee's business



Photo by GRAHAM PAINE

Martha McPhee operates Maranatha Flowers.

By LISA CARTWRIGHT
The Champion

People come from all over southern Ontario and the United States to purchase the floral creations of Campbellville's Martha McPhee.

Ms McPhee is the owner of Maranatha Log House, Flowers and Seasonal Decorating.

Located on Guelph Line, her workroom and shop are situated

inside her 1850 log home, a historical building belonging to John Carnegie, one of the first members of parliament.

Her shop consists of unique cards, antiques, some of her floral creations and fresh flowers.

Ms McPhee doesn't carry mums or carnations, but only high-quality flowers that are different from the everyday.

Even her roses are different from the ones people get elsewhere.

"People come from all over for my roses," Ms McPhee said. "I see it as it is better to have one beautiful rose, then a dozen roses that last overnight."

Returning to nature

The smell of dried flowers, and the friendly bark of Dexter, a 14-year-old English cocker spaniel, greets you as you enter the shop. Ms McPhee's workshop is located off the shop overlooking the backyard.

The spacious workshop has large windows that look out over the 240-acre woodlot. Deer and coyotes can often be seen from the home.

Most people are looking to return to nature, said Ms McPhee, who works with interior designers to create floral window treatments and wall sculptures.

People "want to let the outdoors in. They want to get back to nature and feel part of the earth."

The mother of four grown daughters creates spectacular flower arrangements from tiny bouquets to large wreaths that hang on the wall, to wall sculptures using roots and vines to window treatments that allow the daylight to come in.

European look

Her floral art is based on country English garden and European looks.

When Ms McPhee does interior design work, she will go to the client's house to get a feel of their style.

"I try to get that person's personality into what I am doing. I am not one of those designers who try to push my personality."

Ms McPhee also does the flowers for weddings. She will

have several consultations with the couple in order to discover what they like. She will also find out the height and size of the people in the wedding party, colours and styles of the dresses and the couple's flower preferences.

Home for all seasons

In addition to people coming from across the continent to buy her arrangements, her home, which has been called a home for all seasons, and her work have been featured in magazines and captured on film. She also does the styling for magazine photo sessions.

Ms McPhee has spent 35 years in the industry and taught floral design for 15 years. She had a shop in Burlington, before moving to Campbellville.

People who seek out her work do so because they are looking for something different, she said.

"Each thing I do is like a work of art. It is unique onto itself."

And the talented artist doesn't know what she is going to create until she begins.

"I am not sure what I am going to do until I am doing it. It is a God-given gift that I can look at someone's house and say they should do that and this."

Prayer part of work

Ms McPhee said prayer goes into her work as well.

"Before I do anything, I pray for it. I think God is a real important part of my work, and a very big part of my life."

Ms McPhee works with a variety of natural materials including artificial, dry and real flowers, greenery, roots, berries and fruit.

For Ms McPhee, it is a love of the job that keeps her creating new pieces of art.

"I love my work. I can express myself. I have had an illness, and without my work I don't think I would be able to cope with it."

Maranatha Log House, Flowers and Seasonal Decorating is located at 125 Main St. S. in Campbellville.

McPhee gives back

Martha McPhee of Maranatha Log House, Flowers and Seasonal Decorating uses her art for charity work.

At Christmas, she decorates one or two houses for the Burlington and Hamilton Junior League's House Tour.

She has also decorated homes for Appleby College and last year decorated three homes in Milton in support of the United Way.

She also gives gift certificates to charities and is involved with the church.

For goodness sake . . .



A good health tip from Milton District Hospital



How visible are you?

The winter season means shorter days, poorer visibility due to blowing snow and increased braking distances for drivers. If your usual exercise routine includes an invigorating evening walk or jog, make sure you are visible in the dark. Drivers must be able to see and recognize you before it's too late. Tote a lit flashlight along on your route or wear reflective tags and rings (like headbands, wristbands, a belt and ankle bands).

"For goodness sake" is brought to you courtesy of



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Bob Reid, CFP

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If you have already made (or plan to make) a contribution BUT still have room to contribute more, an effective strategy is to borrow and have the tax refund pay out the loan completely? It depends on a number of factors, but we can prepare an accurate estimate in just a few minutes.

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