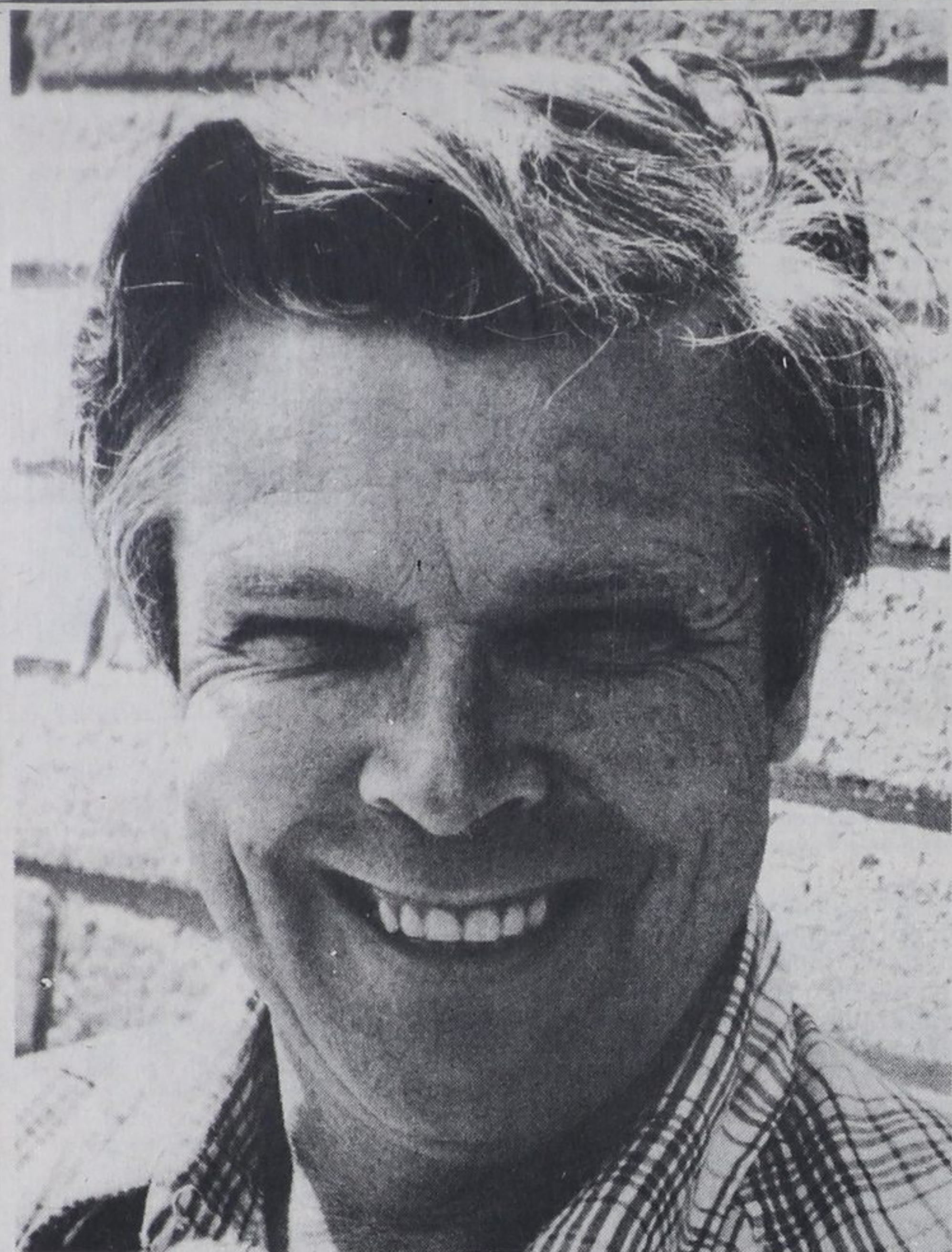


That's My Line



John Nielsen Ceramics maker

John Nielsen is a man who could run faster than he does in pursuit of financial success. He chooses instead to live and work at his own pace and keep control of his life.

Nielsen has opened a small ceramics store at 12 Fifth Street in Midland in partnership with Wendy Maffei. Between Feb. 1 and July 1 he renovated the ground floor and the second storey of the old house, turning the ground floor into a salesroom and workshop, and the upper storey into an apartment.

He could increase the volume of his ceramics business by moving to Toronto where he would be closer to the dealers who seek him out. He prefers Midland as a home. 'I'm in business to make a living, not a fortune.'

He lived in Toronto for 12 years starting in 1957, when he arrived in Canada from his native Denmark. He moved to Midland and opened a car dealership after the chamber of commerce wrote him to say that a foreign car mechanic was needed here.

Nielsen has retired from the car business and taken up a centuries-old craft, ceramics-making, that runs in his family. As early as age three he was sitting on the floor of his grandfather's factory in Denmark. He sat between the workers with his own clay and made his own moulds: "what kid's do." Learning to make ceramics and moulds literally from the factory floor, he was making moulds for steel gears during the Second World War.

He melted aluminum in his apartment in a coal-stoked stove and sold the moulds to his employer. In time he became a mechanical engineer.

Today he is one of the few people in this country who make ceramics moulds. He makes several new moulds a month, and can copy anything that anyone brings him. The volume of the business that he formerly ran in the basement of his Mildred Street home was reproduction cupboard and door knobs. He sold 20,000 knobs last year, all he made, but he could have sold 5,000 more. The demand for knobs has lessened this year because furniture factories have closed for lack of business. Also some buyers are choosing inferior Taiwan-made knobs that sell for the same price as his knobs, Nielsen says.

Several years after arriving in Toronto Nielsen sold a car warmer to Volkswagen that is still part of their cars. Unfortunately he did not patent it. Other inventions of his include an electric paddle and a fire extinguisher.

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Graduate



PATRICIA PELTIER
—daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Jerry Peltier of Penetanguishene, has graduated in the rehabilitation worker program at Humber College in Toronto. Patricia is presently working with Metro Social Services and in September will be relocating to Red Deer, Alberta, to work with Alberta Social Services.

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