

Neighbors



GEORGETTE AND VAROUJ KAVOUKIAN
(Mr. Kavoukian designed the beaver charm he's sporting in honour of Festin du Castor held at Embrun recently.)

For the Kavoukians, the jewellery and watchmaking business runs in the family.

Varoujan Kavoukian, operating out of a recently-renovated store at Embrun, began to familiarize himself with the twin trades as a boy in Cairo, Egypt. There, his father maintained the clocks in King Farouk's palace while his uncle operated three jewellery stores in the city.

Varouj, as he likes to be called, plunged into the business in earnest after his family immigrated to Montreal in 1962 when he was 15. In 1972, he moved to Ottawa and helped the Hudson Bay Stores establish a jewellery department after the company bought out Freiman's. He still handles watch repairs for the Bay.

A little less than a year ago, Varouj and his wife Georgette set up shop in a building on Embrun's bustling Notre Dame Street. Extensive renovations were undertaken and the store was officially opened in June. The next big event in the short history of Kavoukian Jewellers and Watchmakers will be Aug. 28 to Sept. 9 when a gala first anniversary sale has been scheduled.

Why did Varouj and Georgette settle at Embrun when neither has family ties to the area? After moving from Montreal to Ottawa, they discovered they much preferred living in a small city. Carrying the feeling a step further, they decided they would be even more comfortable in a rural community. They drove through Embrun one day, liked the commercial atmosphere, and thought the village could support a new jeweller.

Have the Kavoukians ever regretted the move? "Not at all," Varouj replies. "We feel well accepted here and while it takes time to build a reputation, we've been encouraged so far."

Varouj says he finds it particularly flattering that local residents seem to take pride in his remodelled store.

"They like to show off the store. They come in with out-of-town friends just to show them what I've done."

Georgette and Varouj have no language difficulties as both are fluent in French and English. Varouj also speaks Arabic, Turkish, and Armenian.

Married for three years, Kavoukians have two daughters — Ani, 2, who's named after an ancient Armenian city, and Hasmig, 6 months, who's name is Armenian for "jasmin". The family resides temporarily in a rented home at Limoges.

Russell Fire Hall may expand

Cramped conditions at the Russell Village fire hall may be eased within a couple of years, Chief Jim Eadie reports.

The vacant lot adjacent to the hall has been purchased by township council with a view to eventual expansion, the chief explained. The lot was the site of the George McCaffrey warehouse which was destroyed by fire.

"There's definitely a need for more space," Chief Eadie noted. The Russell Volunteer Fire Department's four vehicles can be accommodated in the existing hall but only with skilful manoeuvring.

If expansion does occur, an additional one or two bays will be built.

The chief is proud of his 16-man fire fighting brigade and feels its image in the community has improved in recent years. While there will always be a few critics, he maintains "the boys are digging in and doing a good job."



Jim Eadie

The brigade is now well equipped with a one-year old pumper worth \$49,000, an emergency van, water tanker, and 1952 vintage backup pumper. There's also a good supply of secondary equipment.

The department this year is operating with a \$15,000 budget from council. One of its main projects for the year will be to install, at a cost of \$1,000, a vinyl liner in the cistern below the firehall.

The cistern, which has been deteriorating, is handy in storing a few loads of water for emergencies. The main water source is the John Buchanan quarry south of the village.

Chief Eadie said this summer has been a good one so far as the department is concerned with only a couple of minor grass fires despite relatively dry weather conditions.

He noted close cooperation exists between the Russell and Embrun fire departments which are still independent despite suggestions they be merged.

"Embrun's ready to help us with a big fire at a moment's notice and we do likewise for them."



(Photo by Rowsell)

Plug pulled

The shrunken Castor River may have had some local residents blaming the exceptionally dry July weather. Although rain was scarce last month, the drop in the river's water level was a result of the reservoir

being drained behind the Russell dam. The temporary action was to permit the excavation of the riverbank for the installation of a pumping station at the South end of the Concession Street bridge. It's all part of the Russell sewer

project. The river's current through the village was once strong enough to power a lumber mill, the foundations of which are exposed at the top of this view looking east from the bridge.

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KAVOUKIAN

JEWELLERS — WATCHMAKERS

COMING SOON

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ANNIVERSARY SALE

BIGGEST SALE OF THE YEAR
OUR PRICES WILL NEVER BE AS LOW
Aug. 28 to Sept. 9