

His jewelry store a dream come true

When Lloyd Barthau's jewelry repair and retail business opened its doors for business for the first time on Sept. 12, 1968, he not only fulfilled a dream but he also realized a personal victory over a near-crippling handicap.

"From the day I met him he talked about having his own store, and took him 18 years before he finally got it," commented his wife Kathleen.

He spent nine years of his childhood lying flat on his back on a hospital bed suffering from tubercular hip. At 18, he was finally free to pursue his career ambitions.

Mr. Barthau has vivid recollections of his doctor's parting advice: "Remember Lloyd, you have got two strikes against you. Don't strike out."

The Main St. jeweller now walks with a limp which is a discouraging reminder of his disability and yet, paradoxically, it encourages him to overcome his physical limitations. So far, he is batting a thousand.

"I decided to make and repair watches because of my disability." He explained that he needed a profession where he didn't have to stand for extended periods of time.

Over the years he has gained an education as a jeweller as well which culminated in 1978 when he was named Jeweller of the Year by the Canadian Jewellery Travellers Association. In 1983, he was elected President of the Toronto District Jewellers Association.

The store has undergone at least seven extensive renovations and expansions since its inception.

"Our first store was very cramped," he said.

"When we opened up the store we didn't intend to have a watch maker and a jeweller on the premises," Mrs. Barthau said. Her husband added: "I did all the work myself at one time, now of course, I do have people working for me."

Mr. Barthau believes that the key to a



LLOYD AND KATHLEEN BARTHAU
Further expansion underway

successful jewelry business is the range of services that are offered, such as engraving, re-setting, appraisals, and repairs, and a knowledgeable staff.

Today, the store has more than 1,000 sq. ft. of display area, and come this September, the store will be experiencing its largest expansion—at least by one-third—to date.

"We've grown so much...it was getting too congested," he said.

Traditional stores change with times

The days of the traditional hardware store, says Jamie Perkin, have gone the way of the buggy whip. The Perkin family opened the Home Hardware store in 1980 at Woodbine just north of Hwy. 7 after a blaze claimed the original century old building in 1978.

In 1916, Joseph W. Perkin worked at the Main St. hardware store in Unionville for three years before buying out the former owner in 1919. In 1959, his son Reg G. took over the family business with the help of his three sons: Don, 29, Jamie, 33, and Fraser, 37.

"I am supposed to be retired, but I like to come in sometimes and give them a hand," commented Reg Perkin.

The first hardware store was a wooden frame structure, featuring tinwear hanging from the ceiling, tractors and lawn mowers out on the front porch, bins of nails, and odds and ends behind the front counter.

"When we were in Unionville we were actually occupying two buildings," explained Jamie Perkin.

"It used to be that the old building was just a garage for storing the delivery truck until we needed more space," he said. "We then tore everything out of there and made it into a hardware store selling nuts and bolts, and at the other building we sold things like appliances."

The family commemorated the store's centennial in 1973. It was rebuilt following the fire, and currently houses a beauty parlor and a travel agency.

The new location, which occupies a spacious 10,000 sq. ft., provides a "...great blend of housing and industry." Large businesses locating in the Markham area and extensive housing developments have contributed to the Perkins Home Hardware success story.

Aside from the traditional fasteners and nails of infinite variety and sizes,



JAMIE PERKIN
People like family business

they also offer a selection of hand tools, plumbing fixtures, fuse-panels, extension cords, items for the kitchen, and cleaning supplies.

According to Jamie Perkin, about one-quarter of the store is devoted to a wide array of paints, stains, and finishes.

"Probably the most interesting thing that I have found has been that people still like dealing with a family business."

Escape from Laos led him to Canada

In 1974, Soumesay Southesay narrowly escaped capture as communist insurgents rolled through Laos. Impervious to the buzz of bullets around him, he swam across the snake-infested Mekong river toward freedom.

Freedom, however, meant five years in a Thailand refugee camp before coming to Canada in 1979.

Since 1985, Mr. Southesay has been the head instructor of the Markham branch of Jong Park Tae Kwon-Do. His diminutive stature belies his strength and expertise in the field of the ancient martial arts.

Born in 1959, he has trained in the martial arts since he was five. In addition to being a third Dan black belt (there are

nine levels) in Tae Kwon-Do, he is also a first Dan black belt in Karate, is skilled in Kung Fu (for which there is no ranking in the orient), and is a Mu Thai kick boxer.

Tae Kwon-Do originated 1,300 years ago in Korea as Tae Kyon. It was a form of fighting used at the time which placed a heavy emphasis on using the feet. In Korean the word "Tae" means to kick, jump, step, or the flying of the feet.

In 1955, the Korean General Choi created Tae Kwon-Do by combining the leg fighting of Tae Kyon with the hand technique of Karate. "Kwon" means to punch, strike or beat in Korean, while "Do" refers to art, technique or way.

As the founder of Tae Kwon-Do centres, Master Park Jong Soo—an eighth Dan black belt—popularized the sport while touring 44 nations around the globe.

"It is the balance, the Yin and the Yang, of hands and feet," commented manager Lee Hayes.

Mr. Hayes described the martial art as an alternative method to getting in shape. "It is better than bouncing up and down, or sitting on a weight bench...with the added bonus of self defence."

"Tae Kwon-Do gives a person the confidence in their ability to extricate themselves from a dangerous situation," whether it be an "overzealous date" or an armed assailant.

Most people are able to defend themselves after six months of training. It usually takes about three years to earn a black belt, he said, "...and that's just the beginning."

Training consists of classes at least twice a week, although Mr. Hayes strongly recommended three times a week as a regular workout.

Markham Jong Park Tae Kwon-Do, open seven days a week, is located at 25 Heritage Rd.



SOUMESAY SOUTHESAY
Formidable warrior

Clothier likes the 'feeling' of Unionville

Since opening Mariani's Custom Clothiers in Unionville more than three years ago the emphasis has been on "... classic designs and yet a fresh new look every year," says owner Larry Mariani.

Mr. Mariani, a 25 year veteran in the clothing trade, noted that his decision to locate on Main Street was primarily influenced by it's "...small town feel."

The century old building, a former post office, blends into the surrounding ambience and charm of the rustic Main Street locale; symbolizing the store's philosophy toward integrating the classical and the new.

The trend in men's fashion, he pointed out, is toward comfortable clothing, and the use of a wider array of color and pattern mixes. Items reflecting these trends were bought by the store on recent buying trips to New York City, the West Coast and Europe.

"We offer a complete line of mens wear," he said. "Everything from socks to hats, shoes, shirts, ties, and sweaters."

The store offers a wide selection of imported European apparel from England, France, Italy, Spain, and Germany. Some of the name brands include men's attire by Armani, Valentino, and Cambridge, and shoes by Bally.

"Our clothing is made from the finest linens, cottons, and wools rather than synthetics," he said.

"I want to emphasize that we offer only the better quality selection of fine menswear which is complimented by our experienced tailors on the premises," he added.



LARRY MARIANI
Has classic designs

Mariani's two tailors, both trained in Italy with almost 30 years experience, not only do fitting but can also make custom clothing "...for the young professional who wants to make a statement."

An experienced staff is on hand to help customers select from a full range of accessories, including European sportswear, silk ties, and fine cotton dress shirts.

"Even the simple addition of a colorful puff or a conversational tie clip can spruce up an existing suit," he said.

Mariani's Custom Clothiers is located at 186 Main Street in Unionville (477-0808 or 497-6687).