

Growing with Markham

Jeweller likes unique atmosphere

By NANCY HOSKIN

For over nineteen years Lloyd Barthau has serviced Markham residents and has taken an active role in growing along with the community.

Mr. Barthau opened his first jewelry store on Markham's Main St. in 1967 after deciding that the village offered a unique atmosphere.

"My wife, Kathleen, and I had explored several areas when we decided to open our first store. We realized that Markham would be a progressive community," said Mr. Barthau.

The family invested in a property that, at one time, housed the local bank, with the bank manager's house sitting adjacent and slightly back. Over the years, the Barthau's jewelry store was located in the bank, while a gift store took residence in the older home. After six expansions over 19 years both stores were recently combined into what Mr. Barthau hopes as his "monument to Main St."

"The street has certainly

changed over the years, but all for the betterment of the community," Mr. Barthau said.

Only five other businesses are still in existence on the Main Street since Mr. Barthau's arrival, including two law firms, Pilkey Glass, the hardware store and Kevin Brown Insurance.

"I think Markham is the greatest little community in Canada," Mr. Barthau said. "I believe if you take money out of the community, you should put it back in. I'm proud of the Main St., and if it weren't for the residents, new and old, we wouldn't still be here."

Negotiations are currently underway to rent Mr. Barthau's original store. He said that the possibility of an anchor store for a new franchise is in the works and may be moved in as soon as January.

"Because we combined our jewelry and gift shops, we were able to free one store. We are sorely in need of further retail space and I feel that this particular store will be a real asset for the Main Street."

Though the population of Markham has nearly doubled since Mr. Barthau moved here, now hitting the 110,000 mark, he feels that the community still remains "a small town."

"Markham will continue to grow, but this only means a flourishing Main St. for both residents and merchants. Both Main Street and Markham have yet to hit their potential," Mr. Barthau said.

"Every week I have new customers browsing through the shop who have never been shopping on Main Street, realizing what it has to offer. With next year's street improvements it will be that much more of a pleasure for people to shop here, closer to their homes."

While competition is a dirty word for most merchants, Mr. Barthau has found competition a challenge, which does nothing more than strengthen his drive as a force to be reckoned with.

"Competition helps keep us all on our toes. Many of us were in business for years before a shopping mall was within miles of Markham. We contended with Cedarbrae and Fairview, before Markville was built, and we've survived to tell about it," Mr. Barthau commented.

A watchmaker by trade, Mr. Barthau has always had his wife Kathleen's help running the store on Main St., while their son, David, operates the Stouffville location.



Longtime merchant

Lloyd Barthau and his wife Kathleen recently completed renovations to their Main St. store. After 19 years on the Main St., Mr. Barthau is optimistic about the downtown business area.



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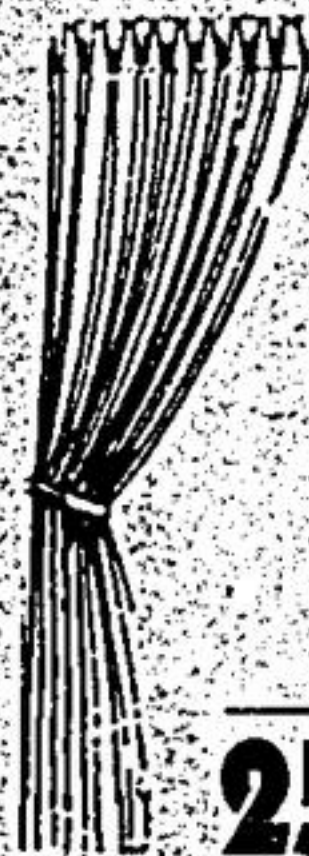
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