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Local resident spreads her wings in new arts and crafts boutique

By DENISE McDONALD
 Robin Mortson has found her "nest."
 On September 26, the Gormley resident officially opened her own fine arts and craft boutique, appropriately entitled Robin's Nest, at the corner of Leslie Street and 19th Avenue.

"I've always wanted to open my own business," says Robin, "but up until the beginning of September, 1986, I wasn't sure what kind of business it was going to be."

According to Robin, she's been actively involved in arts and crafts since a very young age and became particularly interested in fine art during her years spent at high school.

Arts degree

After graduation, she spent the next four years at York University and obtained a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree with a major in painting and graphics.

"It was a very disciplined course involving every aspect

of art, from design elements to color theory," she says. "It's definitely made me look at things a lot differently than most people would."

After determining what type of endeavor she wanted to pursue, Robin began scouting out a suitable location to house her boutique. She eventually decided on her grandparent's farm house.

Built in 1812

"It was built in 1812 and has

been home to seven generations off the farm," she explains. "I thought it would provide the perfect country craft atmosphere for Robin's Nest."

After completing major renovations to the residence, Robin had to decide what to call her new boutique.

"It took me the longest time to figure out the name," she says. "Everybody kept saying, 'What are you going to call it? Robin's Nest? It fit the

atmosphere, sounded countryish and was easy to remember, so that's the name that stuck."

Specializing in water color paintings, pencil sketches and pastels, as well as a variety of woodworking articles, contemporary and traditional silk arrangements and many more items, Robin claims all her merchandise is unique to her boutique and cannot be bought anywhere else.

Family affair

"I make 99 per cent of the stock myself, although a few of my friends do have some items here on consignment," she says. "However, Robin's Nest is a total family affair, everybody has their hands in it. I'm partners with my sister Roseann, my mother does the books and my Dad does the woodworking."

When asked where she gets many of the ideas for her original merchandise, Robin says: "I seem to be able to pick things up extremely fast and they never seem difficult. And I'm always thinking about how I could do things, new ideas are always popping up in my mind."

"I never use patterns when I'm sewing," she continues. "I just look at them and recreate the article in my own way."

Robin says she would also be glad to commission portraits for customers and specializes in people and rural settings.

Part-time job

When not busy with Robin's Nest, the vivacious young businesswoman says she also holds down a part-time job, resulting in a seven-day work week.

"But I enjoy it," she adds, "I couldn't think of anything else I'd rather be doing. I've always done it and I always will."



Gormley resident Robin Mortson claims to make 99 per cent of her boutique's merchandise herself and says she specializes in articles that can't be bought in any other store. Here she displays some of the unique wares that can be found at Robin's Nest, located at the corner of Leslie Street and 19th Avenue.

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