

Venus Jewellers Changes Hands

By *CHRISTINE WHELAN, FEO*

December finds Venus Jewellers, a long-time business in the downtown Bridgeburg area, in new hands. However, long-time and loyal customers need not be concerned. These new hands have learned from the best.

Ryan Warren from Pelham and Arlen O'Neill from Welland officially took over the jewellery store on November 30. They are aware that it's important to keep the operation running and maintain open hours while gradually working on their plans to upgrade.

THE STORY BEHIND THE VENTURE

Ryan and Arlen have been best friends their whole lives. They are confident in their collective strengths, one of which is Ryan's mathematical skills and the other of his sales skills, which will help them succeed in this new journey.

They have had years of influence and mentorship in the business, leading them to this transition. Ryan explained, "My grandfather, Rob Noyes, started his jewellery store 35 years ago. He ran Coins Unlimited in Welland. I grew up around the jewellery store business and the idea of it.

"We'd talk to Papa every weekend, just hang out with him. He's so in love with the business that he'd talk about it, and we'd absorb the

information." When this opportunity came up, they decided to follow through on it.

"Arlen and I spoke with him one day, asking about new business ideas. And he started laughing. He told us Venus Jewellers was for sale. We talked it over, contacted Lesley and started the takeover."

Ryan's grandfather continues to be their mentor.

"We are excited to continue on Lesley's legacy. At the same time, we need to upgrade it gradually and bring a solid jewellery store to Fort Erie."

They were referring to Lesley North. After many years as owner of Venus Jewellers, she has begun her retirement in Welland.

Lesley knew Ryan's grandfather and the family background, creating a more comfortable and smooth transition.

They spent a couple of weekends in the store during store hours with Lesley. She walked them through the business's details and introduced them to customers who came in.

She stressed to Ryan and Arlen that they should stay open no matter what to avoid

losing the current, regular customers. And that is what they are doing.

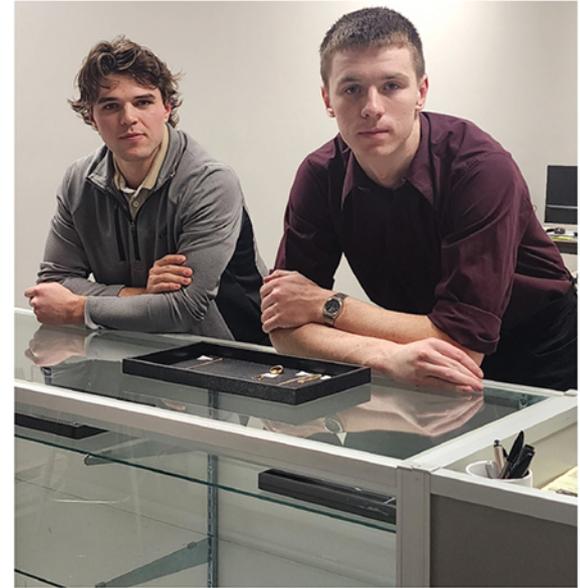
JARVIS STREET

When they found out the store was on Jarvis Street, Arlen and Ryan were a bit reluctant, as they remembered the state of the street during the years they went to school nearby. But when they revisited Jarvis more recently to check out the jewellery store, Arlen and Ryan were surprised at what had been done with the street, the sidewalks, and all the new shops.

"The street has taken a complete turnaround, so we're happy to be a part of it," Arlen remarked.

It will be a slow process, but it is a priority to move things forward in this way to take care of the current customer base, focusing on repairs and battery replacements.

Arlen and Ryan will look more into gold and silver once they get their feet off the ground.



Ryan Warren and Arlen O'Neil New owners of Venus Jewellers

STILL TIME FOR CHRISTMAS SHOPPING

"We've got a couple of new showcases coming, hopefully in the next week or two."

Visit Ryan and Arlen at Venus Jewellers at 23 Jarvis Street. The store's business hours are now Monday and Wednesday from 3:00 to 7:00 p.m. and Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Stop by Saturday, January 11th for a Buy your unwanted Gold and Silver Event 10am-5pm