

Impressive changes at IGA in West Lorne

By Jerry Morrow

Shoppers at the West Lorne IGA are going to be impressed with the changes Steve and Brenda Browne have made. Two weeks of renovations that shut the store down for three days last week have created a new and modern shopping environment.

The dairy section was extended, the frozen food section enlarged, meat department freezers were expanded and new checkouts were installed. Some new shelves have been added and the stock has been re-arranged to be more convenient. Buggies are being stored outside to create more space.

The renovations were part of the deal when the Brownes bought the store in April. Originally a movie theater, the building has been an IGA store for more than 30 years.

"I always wanted my own store," Steve says. He brings 17 years experience to the business, gained working for Oshawa Foods in Peterborough, Brampton and other cities. When the store in West Lorne became available, he jumped at it because it was almost coming home. He comes from the St. Thomas area.

The move was a little more traumatic for Brenda, a native of Mississauga. "It's a big change," she admits, "but it's a change for the better. We have kids and you can't beat a small town for bringing up a family."

She is also a veteran of Oshawa Foods, working as a cashier, in a store office and in the office of the franchise division. She is running the office in the store here now with help from Steve's sister Sharon Smith.

The renovations which cost "close to six figures" were done with help from specialists from IGA who worked with department managers to modernize the store. "It's really nice. It's opened the store up a lot," Steve



Steve and Brenda Browne of West Lorne IGA

says.

The biggest problem was having to close for three days. "We turned away a lot of business."

The staff of 30, 10 of them full time, "loves what we've done," Brenda says. And Steve says the customers have also been impressed.

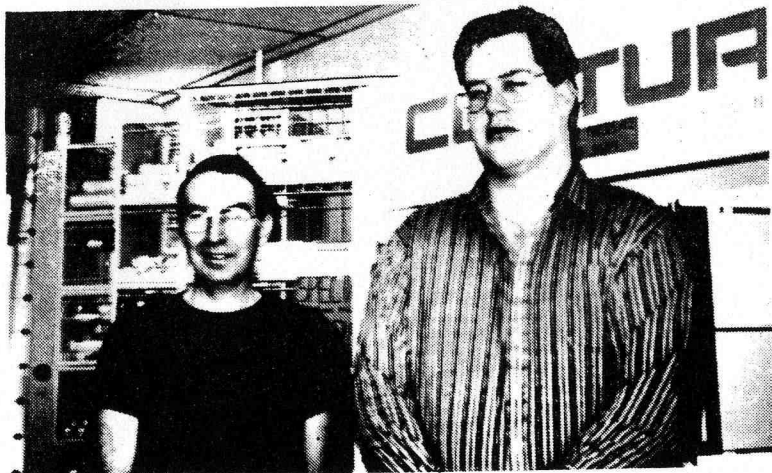
They're not done yet. "One day I'd

like to expand," Steve says. "The aisles are too narrow. It's tight in there. We'll have to see how the business goes."

The Brownes are going to give everyone a chance to see what they've done with an open house from 6-8 p.m. Monday, August 8 and a grand re-opening on Tuesday, August 9.

NEW BUSINESS OPENS

June 9th
1994



by Carrie Kelly

There's a new business in West Lorne. Partners Jack Ripley and Mike Crump have opened Ripley's Quality Home Centre which is located in the old Prim Fashion store. Jack

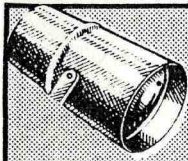
and Mike offer a wide selection of decorating supplies including Pittsburgh Paints with a price range from \$9.99 to \$24.99, a computerized paint chip board and a range of 15,000 colours to choose from.

They also carry Sunworthy Wallpaper and samples of carpets, ceramic tiles, vinyl tiles, resilient flooring, interior vinyl wall covering, and suspended ceiling tiles. With most of these items, Jack and Mike offer 24 to 48 hour delivery from the suppliers in London.

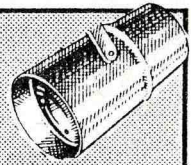
They stock wallpaper and painting accessories and will also handle Erie Flooring's hardwood floors. They also sell decorative wreaths and hats made by Mike's wife Carol, stained glass pieces by Gord Jenkins from Belmont, and wood clocks by Mike's father Bill Crump in Wingham. Jack said that they are open to new ideas for products.

Jack also commented that they will be using local installers to do the work, for example Ron O'Danski has agreed to install flooring, and anything that doesn't conflict with local craftsmen, Jack will do himself.

The store has been open since May 30 and both Jack and Mike are pleased with the response so far. Their Grand Opening is this week, June 9, 10, and 11 and they will be offering specials, draws, coffee and donuts. For more details on the Grand Opening of Ripley's Quality Home Centre, see their ad in this paper.



Spotlight on Business



By Ruth Ferguson

It's been almost 23 years since Prim Fashions first opened for business on West Lorne's Main Street. The store was originally owned and operated by Anne Cornwall and Marion Wright and the current owner, Louise Begin, took over on December 6, 1990.

If you're a regular customer you would have noticed the new look that the store has. Recently Louise decided that the store needed a change and at the beginning of February the shop received a complete face-lift, making the floor space more open and airy.

This truly is a full line women's clothing store, carrying everything except shoes. Besides the beautiful dresses, pants, and blouses that the store carries, Prim Fashions also carries foundation garments, hosiery, belts, nightwear, sweaters and some costume jewellery. Fashion accessories such as leather and vinyl handbags, gloves and scarves are available to round out your outfit.

Popular clothing lines include Pantel, Kim Kelly Petites, Lori Ann, Tan Jay, Brooke Chapman and New Mode. Scratch jeans, Barbara Sue sweaters, and Olsen t-shirts are very popular. Leslie Belle for half sizes is another hot selling line.

Louise decides on most of the store's inventory by attending fashion markets in Toronto, and most of the clothing lines that she picks are manufactured in Montreal. If it's at all possible she tries to buy Canadian goods.

Prim Fashions has a strong reputation for good quality clothing that Louise plans on continuing. "People can find good quality for a better price than they can in



Louise Begin

the city. We also give personal attention to our customers and ensure a personal fit which you won't find in the city. Our strong point is the personal touch," says store owner Louise Begin.

This bright shop has a loyal clientele, "People keep coming back because they know that the clothes will fit, and if they don't then we'll make it fit."

Prim Fashions offers an alteration service to ensure that each customer's clothes fit properly. Most alterations take about one week. Prim Fashions staff will also assist you in finding the proper colour, style and fit that is perfect for you. And if you can't find anything in the store that strikes your fancy, Louise will try to order one for you that's the correct style and colour for you. If there's one available, then it can usually be delivered in about one week.

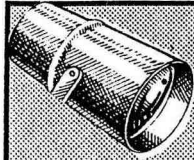
Another alternative if you can't find anything to your liking, then you can always ask Louise to make an outfit for you. By trade, Louise Begin is an accomplished seamstress and can usually finish a dress in about two weeks. You can either bring in your own material or have Louise get the fabric for you. If more than one dress is required then she needs longer to complete the order.

This store caters to all ages and

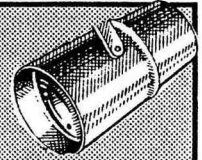
has something for everyone and carries sizes 5 to 22 1/2. There is a wide price range to suit every budget as well. Customers come from London, Muirkirk, Ridg-etown and local municipalities too. Recently some people came from Niagara Falls to shop at this unique ladies wear store.

Along with the owner, Louise Begin, Denise Van Dyke, and Louise's nieces, Denise Begin and Monique Begin also work at the store. Former owner Anne Cornwall rounds out the Prim Fashions staff.

Prim Fashions will be holding a fashion show at the Eagle Community Centre on the evening of March 31 and invites everyone out to see the new spring and summer fashions.



Spotlight on Business



Videos and much, much more

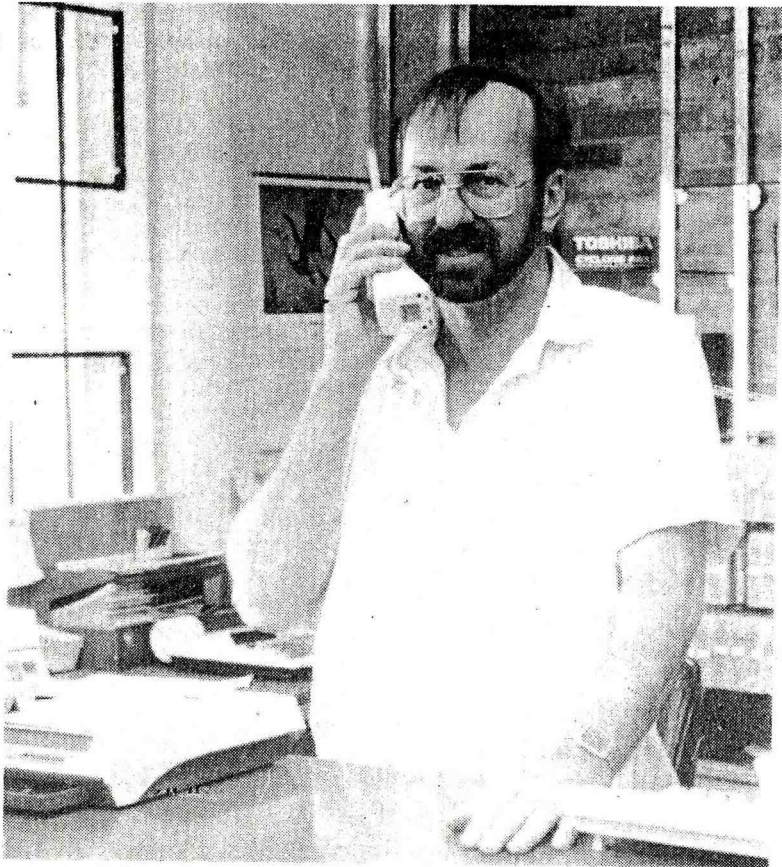
By Ruth Ferguson

On May 6, 1983 Wayne Chevalier opened the doors of his new enterprise, N&W Country Video and Audio Inc. More commonly known as Country Video, this store has everything you'd need for an evening of movie watching.

Along with a wide assortment of movies to choose from including sports, drama, comedy and adult entertainment, you can also stock up on snack items for when the munchies strike.

Movie rental prices vary somewhat depending on the type of movie. Children's and "family" movies are \$1.00, new releases are \$3.00, while most movies are 1 for \$2.00, 2 for \$3.48, or 3 for \$4.35. Movies can also be purchased with a used movie beginning at around \$6.99.

If you don't currently own a VCR, then don't despair, you can rent one from Country Video. A one day VCR rental costs \$7.99 on the weekend, and \$4.99 during the week. To rent a VCR for an entire week is only \$17.99.



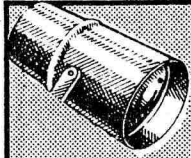
Wayne Chevalier

Wayne does not limit his inventory to strictly movie rentals. He also carries a line of video accessories, headphones, blank video and audio tapes, patch cords, batteries and adapters. He also sells Toshiba TV's and VCR's, including some large screen TV models.

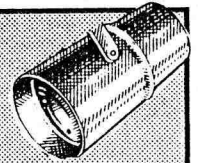
Antenna installations and repairs are also services that Mr. Chevalier offers.

Camcorders are ever increasingly popular items and can be rented for just \$24.95, with each additional day costing just \$10.00.

Mr. Chevalier moved to West Lorne from London in 1979 because he wanted to live in the country. One of the main reasons he chose to locate here was its close proximity to the 401, and he liked the small town atmosphere here.



Spotlight on Business



Besley's

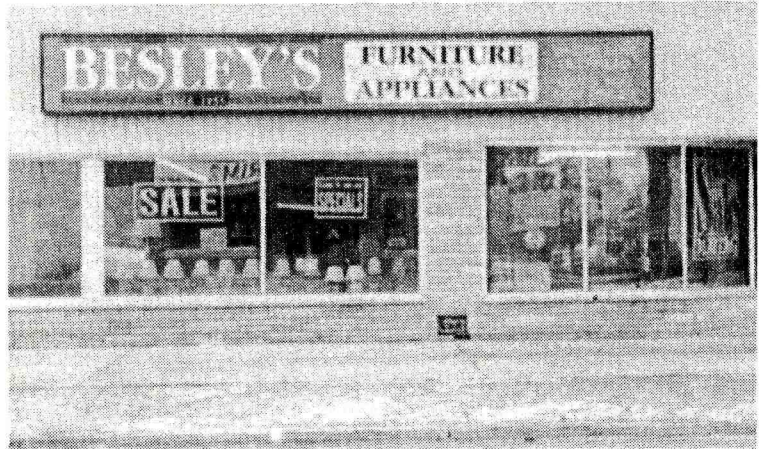
By Ruth Ferguson

In 1955 Al and Gwen Besley and their son, Gerry, opened Besley's Furniture And Appliances at 174 Main Street in downtown West Lorne. Bill, Gerry's son, has been involved part-time in the family owned and operated business since he was a teenager in highschool and has been running the business himself since the mid-1980's.

Besley's is West Lorne's full-line furniture and appliance store carrying such name brands as Maytag, Moffet, Woods and GE.

Any item of furniture that you need, they probably have. Beds, headboards, mattresses, lamps, recliners, chairs, sofas, kitchen tables and chairs are just a few of the things currently in stock. Washing machines, dryers, freezers and refrigerators are the major appliances that they carry. Appliances are available in either gas or electric models. You don't need to worry about repairs either because there is a qualified service man in the area that is able to fix almost any appliance that Besley's sells.

Customers come from as far away as Bothwell, Newbury, Muirkirk, Highgate, Wardsville, Iona Station, Wallacetown, and as



Besley's located at 174 Main St. West Lorne

close as Dutton, West Lorne and Rodney. Another service that Besley's offers is free delivery to these areas and all points in between. Delivery can also be arranged outside of these areas.

Business has been fairly good according to Bill Besley, "1989 was our best year in recent years, 1991 was rather slow and 1992 was our second best year lately. This year we're hoping to do as good as last year or better."

People are still going to buy things if the price is right whether there is a recession or not. Besley's belongs to a "buying group" which allows them to obtain their merchandise at the same price as a larger store but because Besley's overhead is so much lower than those larger stores, bigger bargains can be had at home instead of travelling to a larger centre.

Besley's can also custom order an item for you if you see something in the store that you like but want it in a different colour or material. Free layaway is available and Besley's is currently offering a six month no interest payment plan. Visa and Mastercard are also accepted.

The store currently has two full-time employees, Bill and his mother, Jean, and one part-time employee, Tracey Besley. Ed Bell also works part-time helping with the deliveries.

Besley's Furniture And Appliances is still located at 174 Main Street and is open for business Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays from 9 to 5:30, Wednesdays from 9 to 12 noon, Fridays from 9 to 8 and Saturdays from 9 to 3 p.m.