

MALLS & MAINSTREETS

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SHOPPING CENTERED



Linda Ann Chomin

Tiffany archivist discusses history

BY LINDA ANN CHOMIN
STAFF WRITER

Anita and John McMartin of McMartin's Jewelry believe it's their role to not only offer one-of-a-kind jewelry designs, but educate customers about their industry as well.

Following this philosophy, the husband and wife design team will present a series of informative lectures through 1997. They are in the process of renovating and renaming the John McMartin Jewelry Arts Gallery after its chief artisan.

To kick off the series, the McMartins scheduled a book signing for Janet Zapata, art historian and author of "The Jewelry and Enamels of Louis Comfort Tiffany" from noon to 5 p.m. Saturday, March 1 at their shop, 440 North Main in Milford.

In addition to the signing, at 6 p.m. Zapata will give a slide presentation and lecture on "A History of American Jewelry in the 20th Century" followed by "The Jewelry and Enamels of Louis Comfort Tiffany" at 7:30 p.m. Space is limited. Register by calling (810) 684-8895.

"We want to begin educating customers about the jewelry industry and about jewelry as an art form that's why we're turning our showroom into a gallery and offering guest lecturers," said Anita who grew up in Southfield and until recently co-owned Your Jeweler's Bench in Farmington Hills before marrying John McMartin in 1995.

"The more customers know about jewelry, the better decision they can make about their purchases," she insisted. A former archivist for Tiffany and Co., Zapata curated several exhibitions for the firm including "The Silver of Tiffany & Co. 1850-1987" at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston in 1987 and "Tiffany: 150 Years of Gems and Jewelry" at the American Museum of Natural History in New York in 1988.

A consultant for the jewelry department at Christie's in New York City and for the Louis C. Tiffany Museum in Nagoya, Japan, Zapata recently finished writing an essay on "The Nature of Diamond Jewels" for an exhibition opening in November at the American Museum of Natural History in New York.

Along with writing for magazines such as American Craft and Jeweler's Circular Keystone, Zapata is currently co-curating "The Gitter and the Gold: Fashioning America's Jewelry," an exhibition for the Newark Museum on the history of jewelry making in Newark, New Jersey.

According to Zapata, Newark at one time made 90 percent of the 14 karat gold used by Tiffany and Cartier.

"No one has even looked at Louis Comfort Tiffany's jewelry before. Most only know him for his stained glass. His jewelry designing began in 1898. In 1902, he continued with Tiffany Furnaces designing jewelry and enameling on copper followed by the years from 1907 to 1933 at Tiffany and Co. when he switched to enameling on gold and silver instead of copper," said Zapata, who frequently lectures on American jewelry and silver.

"Louis turned to nature for inspiration in all his work. The slides show the influence in a necklace of black opals and enamels in the Metropolitan Museum of Art collection. The opals take the shape of grapes. Another piece, a 1/2 inch brooch in the shape of an iris, reflects an interest in naturalism dating back from the late 19th century."

Zapata's lectures will include the introduction of platinum, art deco in the 1930s when American design broke with European design, the reintroduction of the figure in jewelry design, and the big, bold 1980s designs of 1980s by Elsa Peretti and Paloma Picasso "for women who are buying their own jewelry."

"At the end of the 19th century platinum was introduced and was widely used for diamonds. It replaced sterling silver because it tarnished. Now, at the end of the 20th century, the metal is titanium, used in airplane parts," said Zapata.

"I see the future as bigger and bolder designs by independent designers and diamonds which have been set in prongs now being set between shanks."

Jacobson's readies for the future



Jacobson's fights for its survival by closing weak stores and modernizing favorites.

BY JUDITH DOWNE BERNE
SPECIAL WRITER

Few shoppers surveyed last week at Jacobson's flagship store in Birmingham were concerned that the store will go the way of those in Dearborn, Kalamazoo and Jackson whose closings were recently announced.

"No way," said Dee Lane of Bloomfield Hills, representing the majority. "I think Birmingham is very well supported. I've been to the Dearborn store. It is not as well stocked."

She particularly shops the children's, linen and shoe departments. "I love the shoe salon. It's well-selected and intimate. They're so customer-oriented. They make me feel welcome."

Debbie Padool of Farmington Hills is concerned.

"I just asked the salesperson about closing Birmingham," she said. As she got into her car in the



PHOTO BY JERRY ZALINSKY

Service with a smile: Gloria Marlatt (left) assists Anita Feldstein of Bloomfield Hills at the check out counter of Jacobson's Birmingham store.

covered, attended lot directly behind the Birmingham store, she added, "I love the personal service."

Jacobson Stores spokesman Fred Marx emphatically states that neither the chain nor the three stores in the Observer & Eccentric circulation area - Birmingham, Rochester

Hills and Livonia - are in any danger. He ticks them off:

• **Rochester Hills:** "Jacobson's owns that property (at Great Oaks Mall). People don't know how well that store does. They're the only department store up there."

• **Livonia:** "Laurel Park is doing phenomenally due to the whole explosion of the Plymouth-Canton-Northville area."

• **Birmingham:** "Birmingham has tradition. It is their largest producing store. They do as much on the phone and in the shipping room as on the sales floor. They have a rare continuity of staff. What Nordstrom gets credits for - customer service - Jacobson's did early on."

Jacobson's has had financial problems only over the last year and a half, Marx adds. "They're taking action with three stores that have not contributed."

Marx said the Jackson and Kalamazoo stores - among the chain's smallest stores - are in small downtowns that don't draw from other areas. Dearborn, he said, is a mid-size store that is not doing well. It stands on property the company owns and already has had several offers to purchase.

He reminds that although those stores are closing, Jacobson's expanded into Boca Raton, Fla. in November. After the closings, the chain will operate 25 stores in Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, Kentucky, Kansas and Florida.

Marx is also confident that new

chairman and CEO P. Gerald Mills is the person Jacobson's needs to regroup and regain its profitability. Mills, formerly with Hudson's, "is a pro," Marx said. "He'll bring the best out of them."

New players

Mills already has brought in three new people, including Beverly A. Rice, whom he named senior vice president for fashion and merchandising strategy on Jan. 20. She'll orchestrate the planning, development and implementation of the company's fashion themes.

Rice will collaborate with merchandising, marketing and the individual stores to articulate a company-wide fashion identity. She has been vice-president/general manager at N. Theobald, Inc., Gidding-Jenny, and L.S. Ayres & Co.

Marx sees Jacobson's becoming more pro-active in their drive to not only keep their current customer but appeal to others. It's the ability to "become more meaningful to the next audience without giving up what you are."

When Crowley's closes next month, Jacobson's will be downtown Birmingham's sole retail anchor.

"Jacobson's plays a vital role in our economy," reports Geoffrey Heckman, chairman of Birmingham's Principal Shopping District. "I only know what I read in the papers. I have no information on which to be nervous. I know the Birmingham store is an important store in their chain."

Jacobson's History

1899: Abram Jacobson opens small women's apparel shop in Reed City.
1904: Son, Moses Jacobson, moves to Jackson and purchases the Falkner-Porter store.

1920: The store moves to a new, four-story building and Moses Jacobson names it for his mother, Esther Jacobson.
1924: Moses Jacobson organizes Jacobson Stores Inc. and opens stores in Battle Creek and Ann Arbor.

1939: Brothers Nathan and Zola Rosenfeld purchase the corporation.
1942: The Jackson store is remodeled and enlarged and Jacobson's begins an expansion program throughout Michigan, Ohio, Florida, Indiana, Kentucky and Kansas.

1950: Jacobson's opens in Birmingham, adds second level in 1961 and a third-story addition in 1971.

1953: The company opens The Home Store, including furnishings and gifts in some locations, including Birmingham.

1978: Jacobson's opens in Rochester Hills.

1982: Nathan Rosenfeld dies. Russell Fowler becomes chairman of the board. Mark Rosenfeld is named president.

1987: Jacobson's Livonia opens.

1991: Jacobson's ends its never-on-Sunday tradition, opening its stores seven days a week.

1993: Russell Fowler retires. Mark Rosenfeld is named CEO. The company phases out furniture, setting up a consolidation of the Birmingham store from three to two buildings.

1995: Separate Children's Store closes in Birmingham. Moves to third story of former Home Store.

1996: Mark Rosenfeld resigns. P. Gerald Mills is named chairman and CEO. A month later, James B. Fowler resigns as president.

1997: Jacobson's announces the closing of three stores - Dearborn, Kalamazoo and its first store in Jackson.

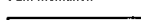
McMahon's designs delight art lovers

BY SUSAN DEMAGGIO
STAFF WRITER

Fantastic buttons take center stage in Pam McMahon's spring collection which surely deserves a standing ovation.

"If you can afford an outfit (\$1,800-\$2,700) sold exclusively through Neiman Marcus you'll own a classic work of clothing art. Each garment element was chosen for its 'whimsy factor' from the colorful contrasting linings to the unique trims at collar and cuffs."

Pam McMahon



"I just wanted to make

clothing that was different and fun," she said at a recent breakfast to promote the Michigan Humane Society's Paws for Celebration benefit Sept. 13.

"Each piece is created by my husband Ed McMahon's tailors in Beverly Hills, from designs I put together in my garage/studio. Many of the buttons are antiques from the 20's and 30's, or we make them. The fabrics are silks and tapestries from European California."

The McMahon's have been married for five years and share a love of dogs, owning five - two golden retrievers, a basset hound and two "precious mixtures." They support many charities including the Chrinshaw Christian Center in south central L.A. for disadvantaged youth and a portion of the profits from The McMahon Collection go to the school.

"I left home very young," Pam explained. "And I am honored and blessed for the way my life has turned out. I want to give something back."

She said that although she lacks formal design training, she's able to draw from a life-long love of beautiful clothes and a creative imagination. The fabrics, linings and trims are selected for nine basic suit styles, some pants, some skirts. The fall collection, McMahon's third offering, will introduce leather, evening clothes and blue designs.

"I'm so proud of her," said Denise Lutz who became close friends with Pam when their husbands both served on the board of directors for an air museum. "Her clothes put a smile on your face because they are so special and wearable."

McMahon said she hopes to eventually design shoes and purses for her collections.

ADDED ATTRACTIONS

THURSDAY, FEB. 27

Trunk Show

Barney's New York has the Robert Clergerie spring collection through Feb. 29 from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. and March 1 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Special orders and company representative will be available.

Somerset Collection South.

Big Beaver/Coolidge. Troy. (810) 643-9696.

Steppin' Out Benefit

Hudson's presents its Advanced Collections for men and women during a fashion show/party to raise funds for agencies providing direct support to Michigan residents living with AIDS. Cocktails 6-7 p.m., runway show 7:30 p.m., Meet designers Max Azria of BCBG and the team from Mondo Di Marco at 8 p.m. Dancing/cash bar from 8-11 p.m. Tickets are \$25. Royal Oak Music Theatre, 316 W. Fourth. (810) 399-WALK.

SATURDAY, MARCH 1

Zelda Spring Show

Henri Bendel presents informal modeling and personal consultations for the Zelda collection 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Somerset Collection North.

Big Beaver/Coolidge. Troy. (810) 616-8875.

Fitness promotion

Health and fitness experts from the Rochester-area man booths and exhibits to promote related businesses noon to 4 p.m. Demonstrations every half-hour through the day. Register for prize drawings. Receive complimentary mail gift certificate good at any store with \$75 in purchases from any mall store.

Great Oaks. Livonia/University.

Rochester Hills. (810) 651-6000.

Disney characters visit

Mickey and Minnie Mouse, Winnie the Pooh and Tigger visit the Fountain Stage to shake hands and pose for photos with young shoppers from noon to 4 p.m. The event will be repeated March 2. It's complimentary and kids will be invited on stage to interact with the four-some. LakeSide, M-59/Schoenherr, Sterling Heights. (810) 247-0762.

News of special events of interest to shoppers is included in this calendar. Send promotion information to: Malls & Mainstreets, c/o The Observer & Eccentric 805 East Maple, 48009; or fax (810) 644-1314. The deadline is Wednesday at 5 p.m. for publication on Monday.

SUNDAY, FEB. 23

Cyberspace Safari

Explore the Internet and discover facts about dinosaurs through a program running until April. Co-sponsored by The Detroit Science Center and seven computer-related companies. Fees. Reservations suggested. School groups welcome. Near Service Merchandise entrance. Wonderland. Plymouth/Middlebelt. Livonia. (313) 677-8400, ext. 417.

WEDNESDAY, FEB. 26

Spring craft show

Local artists display latest works through March 2 during regular business hours. The exhibit contains oil paintings, tooled wood items, applied clothing, furniture and rubber stamps to name a few, presented by Huff Promotions of Canton, Ohio. Livonia Mall. Seven Mile/Middlebelt. (810) 476-1160.