

Chanel Jones – We've got you framed

Members of the Denbigh and District Probus Club enjoyed another wonderful lunch at the Oriel Hotel, St Asaph at their meeting on Monday 13th May. The speaker after lunch was Chanel Humphreys-Jones.

Chanel is currently a partner in the popular business Cathedral Frames situated on the High Street in St Asaph. The business was launched in 1997, and has been manufacturing bespoke picture frames for the public over the past 27 years.

Originally from Abergele, Chanel attended Ysgol Emrys Ap Iwan school and later qualified as a hair stylist at Coleg Llandrillo, achieving the award 'Student of the Year' 1980. Chanel spent 10 years in the Hair and Beauty industry before taking time out to raise her family of two.

Chanel then decided to open her bespoke Picture Framing business and has been running it successfully over the years with her business partner Tim. They chose a niche picture framing business following much research into a variety of businesses and shops and observation of St. Asaph High Street.

Their High Street premises, which was in a conservation area, was sympathetically renovated and upgraded by the couple. It was formerly (at different times), a cobblers, bakers and fruit and flowers shop.

Chanel has developed a natural artistic flair in creative, practical, and social skills. By being the main contact at the business, she has gained invaluable experience, developing excellent customer interaction, with a keen sense of humour, which has helped the business grow over the years. Both Chanel and Tim had no formal training in picture framing but they were both keen to learn and have patience and make sure everything is right and to an extremely high standard.

She explained to the Probus group members and guests, the process of framing including the machinery and tools involved to ensure that the highest quality frames and mounts are produced to excellent standards. This included producing the mitres, glass cutting, types of glass, health and safety considerations, the impact of mounts and selection etc. The talk was illustrated via images and numerous samples were circulated to demonstrate the methods and materials used.

Other types of work are undertaken including the framing of needlework pieces and Chanel described the preparation involved before framing to ensure a quality result. Pieces need to be steamed, stretched, and squared and a mount made with the piece laced up with needle and thread on the back prior to framing.

The business uses acid free and PH neutral materials wherever possible in their work and all pictures are taped up and finished with the appropriate fixtures and picture cords.

The Covid lockdown periods - first lockdown of 13 weeks, second lockdown of 17 weeks plus a 2-week fire-break, making a total of 32 weeks loss of business, certainly had an impact as it did on many other businesses, but they are pleased that it survived and it is a great achievement that they are still on the High Street. Chanel put this down to it being a niche business and good old fashioned customer service!

They do get asked about the restoration of art work and they do not restore oils and watercolours and they make sure customers are aware, but they will look at pieces and do their best with any old pictures that they are asked to work on.

Chanel acknowledged that learning is a lifelong activity and as with most of us, they always come across a challenge of the week!!

The opening hours of the shop currently are Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, 10.00am – 4.00pm.

The next Denbigh and District Probus Club meeting will be on Monday 3rd June when Helen Papworth will give a talk titled H.M. Stanley the Scramble for Africa. The following meeting will be on Monday July 1st when Wendy Grey-Lloyd will talk about Thomas Howell – The legend and the legacy.

New members are always warmly welcomed.

For further information have a look at the club web site denbighprobus.com or contact the Membership Officer Andrew Faulkner for more details prior to an introductory visit to a Probus meeting.

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