

Iconic Main Street Antique Store set to close after more than three decades in business

January 2, 2012

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After close to 32 years in business, an icon of the Vancouver antique trade will be closing its doors in the new year.

Second Time Around Antiques, at 4428 Main St., was one of the first antique shops to open on what is now known as Antique Row, the stretch of Main between 26th and 29th avenues. What started out as a small used furniture shop in 1980 will close as one of the largest – at 8,000 sq. ft. – antique stores in the Lower Mainland.

"We were there from the start, when our part of Main Street was nothing but used furniture stores, where you had to sift through a lot of junk to find something of true value," says Mark Porter, who owns the shop with his wife, Tracey. "We were one of the early players, who began importing furniture from abroad, which stepped up the quality and the selection on the street."

The Porters say they're getting out of retail sales because of the huge time commitment and physical demands of the business, which is open seven days a week.

"As we get older, it's getting more and more taxing to maintain the volume of furniture needed to keep the store full," says Mark.

But they're not leaving the antiques business behind. The couple says they will begin concentrating more on online sales. They've also decided not to sell the business so that they can keep its name for potential future endeavours.

Beginning this Saturday, January 7, the store will be holding a closing sale, with everything—ranging from late Georgian pieces to mid-century modern—discounted at 25–60 percent off or more. (The store will be closed for pricing January 5th and 6th).The sale will continue until the store closes, in the spring.

"We're loaded to the gunnels," says Mark, "and we're prepared to sell at prices never seen before. We want the floors bare."

In 1992, Second Time Around Antiques helped put Main Street on the map by hosting a successful fundraising campaign for the newly opened Canuck Place Children's Hospice. From then on, the area became known as Vancouver's Antique Row.

The shop has been voted Vancouver's best antique store several times by readers of the Vancouver Courier, the Westender and recently Where Magazine. Mark and Tracey credit their success to their ability to keep up with changing trends and providing service seven days a week to their customers, many of whom have become like friends.

"It's been a lot of fun in many ways, including buying in England, Europe and the U.S.," says Tracey. "We've met so many great people, including those involved in the movie industry, who have been renting furniture from Second Time Around for over 25 years. We will miss the community and our long-time customers very much."

Contact:

Tracey or Mark Porter, 604 879 2313

info@sta-antiques.com

Second Time Around Antiques

4428 Main Street

Vancouver B.C.

HYPERLINK "<http://www.sta-antiques.com/>"sta-antiques.com