

# KEEPING IT IN THE FAMILY



Jocelyn Bisson and his daughter, Marilyse, take a break during a renovation project at Marilyse's first home in Chelsea in 2013. The two renovated the entire three-season cottage together. Photo: courtesy Marilyse Bisson

## GENERATIONAL HILLS BUSINESSES PASS THE TORCH TO THE KIDS



BY TREVOR GREENWAY  
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Everything Marilyse Bisson learned about building houses, she learned from her dad.

Everything Stéphanie Gauvin learned about selling houses, she learned from her dad.

And soon, Century 21 real estate broker Stephen Lynott "will not be able to keep pace" with his son, Patrick, who will eventually take over the family business.

These are just three stories of generational Hills business owners who are passing the torch to their children.

"At 16 years old, [Stéphanie] told me that she wasn't going to go to CEGEP or anything like that," says Jean-Pierre Gauvin, the founder of Gauvin Realty in Wakefield. The real estate company is celebrating 30 years of business this year, and Jean-Pierre says he has no hesitations about handing the keys over to his capable daughter. "She said, 'I'm going to take over the business.' She was 16 years old. I was laughing and said, 'Go for it.'"

And go for it, she did. While Stéphanie says she doesn't remember the specific conversation, she says she was certain that she wanted to sell homes from a young age, and that the school route wasn't up her alley.

"I wasn't really a school girl," admits Stéphanie, who remembers going on house visits with her dad as a young girl. She says that "going to the office" when she was a kid was always exciting. "I didn't really skip school or anything like that, but it just wasn't my niche to go to college. But for real estate, it seemed like the doors were wide open. It was an opportunity."

Jean-Pierre founded his Wakefield realty company in 1994, and it quickly became one of the top real estate companies in the region. He says the sky's the limit for his daughter.

Stéphanie officially took over as owner of Gauvin Realty in 2017, but she says she will always turn to her dad's expertise whenever she needs help. Her dad doesn't expect too many calls.

"She's better than me," says Jean-Pierre, his eyes softening as he looks across the desk at his daughter. "She runs the office better than me, and she sells more than I ever did."

Stéphanie's happy to see her dad finally retire after 35 years of selling homes in the Hills. Based on everything she's learned from her papa, she's confident that she'll be able to keep the Gauvin legacy going for years to come.

"It's the honesty," she says, when asked what was the most important lesson she's learned from working alongside her dad. "Everywhere we went with people, he was always honest, and that has really helped the business grow."

Hills builder Marilyse Bisson knows how far honesty goes in the construction business and, like Stéphanie, learned the value of being true to yourself and your clients from her dad, Jocelyn Bisson. The two worked together for years at his Armoires Bisson & Fille construction company before she started her own construction company, Mavie Construction, in 2018.

"He was always honest," says Marilyse. "My dad always cared about the clients, and he gave exceptional after-sales service."

Marilyse remembers being barely able to walk but wanting to be just like her dad – the big, tough builder who could fix anything. So he would arm her with a hammer and finishing nails on job sites and give her small projects that may or may not have been part of a renovation he was working on.

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Marilyse Bisson at six years old with her dad, Jocelyn, circa 1989. She loved it when he wore his his shirts that showed the logo of his kitchen reno company, Armoires J. Bisson Inc. Photo: courtesy Marilyse Bisson

Low Down on Home & Gardens

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Jocelyn Bisson died last spring, leaving Marylise and her sister Raphaële without their funny, caring and loving father.

“He was such a great dad with great values and a huge heart,” says Marilyse. “He was always so proud of his daughters. We never doubted his love.”

Parental pride is something Stephen Lynott knows a lot about. His son Patrick – without any coaxing, he says – chose to follow in his father, grandfather and great-grandfather’s footsteps and has been working at Century 21 Macintyre for the past two years. The Chelsea real estate company just celebrated 70 years of business in 2022, and Stephen doesn’t think it’s too far off to see his son running things in the near future.

“We have always been close, but real estate is not for the faint of heart, and we support each other very well,” Stephen tells the Low Down. “To watch him grow up and to work side by side with him and to share our

generational differences and put that to work for people has been truly rewarding.”

Stephen says that in real estate it’s always important for brokers and agents to be selling homes in the area in which they are knowledgeable. Seventy years in business has helped shape the company’s roster with these talents, but with Patrick being immersed in real estate his entire life, those seven decades of knowledge are already permeating through.

“The benefit that a family local business brings is that our brokers for the most part have grown up in the community they serve,” says Stephen, adding that Patrick’s “true blue passion for the industry” would make his grandfather, Frank Macintyre, and his great-grandfather, Duncan Macintyre, the founder of D.E. Macintyre Real Estate, “truly proud.”

“It adds a flavour to the family recipe that is hard to replicate.”



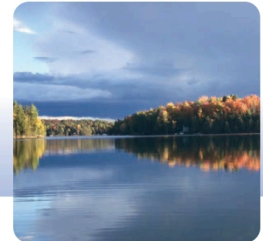
Stephen Lynott (right) says his son, Patrick, will one day take over the family real estate business in Chelsea. Patrick will be following not only his father’s footsteps, but those of his grandfather, Frank, and great-grandfather, Duncan, who founded D.E. Macintyre Real Estate 72 years ago. Photo: courtesy S. Lynott



The real estate firm Jean-Pierre Gauvin founded is celebrating 30 years in the Hills this year. His daughter, Stéphanie, took over the business in 2017 Photo: Trevor Greenway

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