

Questions:

1. RG Scott's Furniture Mart (address) is a family run business, when did it all begin?

R.G.Scott furniture mart started back in 1979 when we were looking for a building, mainly as an export depot, to expand in to. We were in business in Dane Hill Margate and we had a warehouse, which used to be the Manston Village hall, from which we were sending containers of stuff abroad, mainly USA at that time. The export business was getting more frantic and we needed to consolidate our efforts in one building. So we went property hunting, looking for a big'ish building, preferably in town. so that we could export and have a shop all in one. We thought we might find an old scout hut or similar that we could convert so we asked local agents to look out for something for us. When our agent first showed us "the ice factory" we thought it was amazing but much bigger than we had anticipated .Even though we tried really hard we could not raise the necessary cash to go ahead. So we gave up the chase and treated ourselves to a trip to California as consolation on missing out on this great opportunity. When we arrived home our agent was sitting on our step waiting for us. Do you want to buy the factory or not he asked. You know we do we replied but you know we were unable to raise the cash. Well he said the seller is in trouble and needs to get a contract signed this week so he will reduce the price buy 30% and give you a private mortgage for the amount you can't raise if you sign up for it this week. So there you go we sold our house and our warehouse and anything we had of value and borrowed some from the bank some from the yank we were supplying and the rest we put on the private mortgage and we have been paying it back ever since

2. What do you know about the history of the building?

The building was used by Benjamin Beale, the inventor of the bathing machine as stables and workshops many years ago and in the early part of the 20th century was an ice works, where they manufactured ice for the fishing industry and anybody else before the days of commercial fridges and freezers. Then the well insulated parts were used for many thing such as ice-cream manufacture and cold storage and many other things including storing thousands of frozen turkeys from Monkton court turkey farms back in the days when people only ate turkey at Christmas and Easter. Kent Coast Ice Cream Company was based here at one time as well as Q Ice-cream. In the 60s ,I think, they were bought out by Lions Maid and in the property boom of the mid 70s the Furniture mart ,as we now know it was purchased as part of a much larger property deal involving plants in Folkestone and Ashford. During the property price crash of the late 70s is when the Scotts came to be involved.

3. If you had to paint a picture of what was available throughout the building, how would you describe it to people who have never visited the shop?

Some of my customers have described our place as the place to go to get all the things you never knew you needed, Sarah Vickery, Tracey Emin said her favourite place to go on a rainy day in Margate was Ron Scotts antique store to while away an hour or so. It's difficult to describe but let's try- It's an emporium of all sorts of things antique old fashioned or unusual.

4. Your 'Dip and Strip' area, is this somewhere you would welcome customers bringing in their own 'finds' for your professional assistance?

Dip n Strip is a business run by Barbara in our building which offers a paint stripping and refinishing service but we do welcome people bringing in things they wish to sell or indeed just to ask our or advise about age or possible current values etc.

5. We suspect you sometimes travel far and wide to collect interesting stock, you must meet many people and have many stories to tell would you like to share some of them with us?

We have travelled all over western Europe, the UK ,West Coast USA, Southern Ireland mainly on business and have met loads of super people and a few not quite so super and we could probably write a book about our experience and someday maybe we will. We have bought and sold goods to people from all over the globe and so far have enjoyed nearly all of it.

6. Is there an item in the shop which has been with you a long time that you have become unprofessionally attached to?

In the upstairs warehouse there is a huge corner cabinet which we purchased from a farmer near Waterloo in Belgium. it was in about 50 pieces by the time we got it home but we have managed to restore it and one day hope to change the back of our house so that we might be able to get it in, it is bigger than any of the doors in our house but we are hoping to have a pair of French doors fitted at home soon.

7. Your shop is a collector's paradise, do you have your own personal collections at home?

We don't really have collections at home but our house is full of the things we have found over the years that we like and have found useful like most people I guess but I suppose we have seen a lot more stuff and had it available than most people.

8. Your family are always so very friendly when we visit. What is your secret recipe for running a successful friendly business in Margate.

We don't have a secret recipe but as we are all family we all try to help each other in what we do and I suppose it rubs off on our customers, we are always happy to try and help even if we don't sell whatever a customer wants or needs.

9. You son Benjamin has opened up his own business in the basement of the building called 'Junk Deluxe' specialising in retro and quirky collectables. You must be very proud of him because he has managed to create a thriving business and at the same time charging people can afford and believe in. What would you like to say about this?

Of course we are very proud of our son Benjamin and his partner Hayley as we are of our other children and are very pleased to say they are hard working caring people just trying to make a living doing something they really enjoy.

10. What are your ambitions for RG Scotts Furniture Mart?

My ambitions for R.G. Scotts Furniture Mart are- long may it continue to provide a living for our family and entertain as well as serve our customers, young and old new and regular. I really enjoy the people we meet and our everyday business and I think enjoying what you do is more than half the battle and makes all the hard work worth while

Ron Scott (Sunny Margate)

