

Ian and Claire Finlayson are an artistic team who can bring your dreams to life.

The Gibsons couple work together, designing and creating hand-crafted jewellery that is known throughout the Sunshine Coast for its elegance and old-world quality.

A master goldsmith, Ian had the good fortune to apprentice for four years with world renowned Vancouver jeweller Toni Cavelti, before moving to the workshop of Swiss jeweller, Alois Lander. In the fifteen years that he was part of Lander's team of craftsmen, Ian's sharp eye and dedication to detail earned him a reputation for excellence.

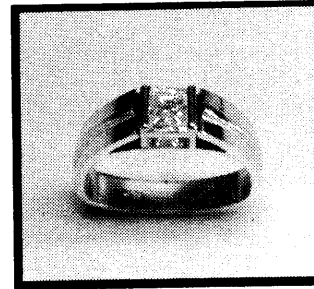
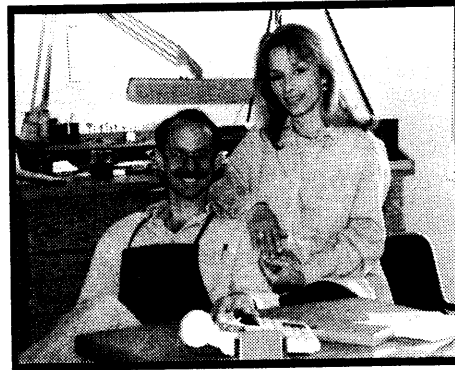
Claire is a visual artist who combines her natural talent and an education in design from the Gemological Institute in southern California to help the Finlaysons' clients visualize their desired piece.

Ian still maintains a studio in Vancouver, but he values the quiet lifestyle of the Sunshine Coast, and the time it allows him to spend with his family.

The Finlaysons' home studio is half office half work space. Claire's desk is home to portfolios full of sketches and watercolour designs, while just a few feet away, bristling with delicate tools, is Ian's bench where he custom crafts works of art in 18 K gold.

"We're hoping to renovate soon," Claire explains. "But because our studio is not a fancy showroom, some people are skeptical at first, perhaps viewing us as hobbyists — although once they recognize the quality of Ian's work, that notion is quickly dispelled. Most of our local work is through word of mouth. Our best advertising, without a doubt, is done by the people who are wearing jewellery we designed and made for them. We spend time determining a person's style and personality, and then design to suit. I can take someone's ideas, do a scale drawing and watercolour it, so that the person has a good idea of what the piece will look like when it's completed — that way there are no surprises." Claire also points out it is important to understand why hand-crafted jewellery is so special. She says the vast majority of jewellery today is mass-produced

Finlayson Gold



in a process called casting, and that much of the jewellery advertised as "handmade" is cast and then hand finished. True handmade jewellery starts as gold plate and various gauges of wire, which are worked and forged into a finished shape then polished.

"Hand crafting jewelry is a very intimate process," says Ian. "Beginning with a client's idea, we can design and create a piece that is very special and unique — everyone who comes to us leaves with something that their imagination has given birth to ... and there's something magical in that."

One of the couple's latest magical creations (pictured) is a ring that is the first in a series. Crafted in 18 K yellow gold, this masterpiece has high-polished rails bordering

bands of twisted gold wire. Perfect round gold beads contrast with a finely textured background. Ian says the creation of this Byzantine-style work of art required the construction of seven separate rings, which are finally forged together and carefully polished. This ring has a remarkable and ingenious feature — the centre stone can be removed and replaced with any other gemstone of the same diameter, changing the look of the ring and increasing its wearability with different out-

fits. The minute mechanism that makes this possible is elegantly simple, and typical of the precision work and mechanical challenges that Ian delights in, and for which he is recognized within his trade.

This ring is for sale and a closer inspection can be had by phoning Ian and Claire for an appointment.

Inside Ian's portfolios are photos of pieces he made while working with Cavelti and Lander. One dazzling piece, worth more than \$200,000 is a complex arrangement of pavé set diamonds, a large flawless sapphire, and fresh water pearls.

"But please don't be intimidated!" says Claire, laughing. "We get just as much satisfaction in a small job beautifully done. We'd never turn our nose up at even the smallest repair job or consultation — we really just enjoy what we do, and big or small, lavish or simple, every piece someone brings in or wants to us to create is important to us. With us, your jewellery need never leave the Coast and Ian can usually offer you a finished piece within a week or two."

Surely all this special attention must cost, well... a pile of gold. Not so. Since Ian and Claire carry no stock and do not bear the overhead expenses of a retail operation, their prices are usually well below what you would pay at the better stores in Vancouver.

From one-of-a-kind wedding and engagement rings, to simple repairs, Ian and Claire offer a gold mine of talent. Whether you're creating a gift for someone special or reworking a treasured heirloom, bring your vision to Ian and Claire Finlayson and let their experience and talent work magic.

Call Ian Finlayson, Goldsmith at 886-9590.

They have the Midas touch

BUSINESS FOCUS: Ian Finlayson, goldsmith



Ian and Claire

My wife Claire and I moved to the Coast from Richmond six years ago, along with our three children.

Our reasons? Probably the same as everyone else's

— smaller town, less traffic, cleaner air, better place to raise kids.

As well, I needed to be close enough to Vancouver to continue commuting to work while Claire and I got our business up and running. I knew that I would need to establish my reputation as a goldsmith before we could hope to be self-sufficient, so I worked double-time, gradually acquiring enough business that I was finally able to say good-bye to the 6:20 a.m. — 5:30 p.m. ferry rou-

tine. I now enjoy a 30-second commute to my home workshop. (My commuter buddies will never forgive me.)

We have been very encouraged by the Coast's enthusiastic response to our business. For the past two years we have been fluctuating between steady and insanely busy. Claire uses her education in jewellery design to discern the customer's style and to come up with ideas that suit both budget and taste. I have come to rely on her skills with people and her design ideas. Now I'm able to spend less time talking and more time where I belong — at the bench, making jewellery.

We specialize in one-of-a-kind jewellery pieces, relying very little on mass-production techniques such as casting. Much of our business is diamond engagement and wedding

rings and special anniversary gifts, but we also do repairs.

For people who appreciate fine jewellery but have limited budgets, we will happily redesign their existing jewellery. Because all our work is custom, we don't have to carry expensive stock or bear other costs associated with retail jewellery stores. Our prices reflect that fact.

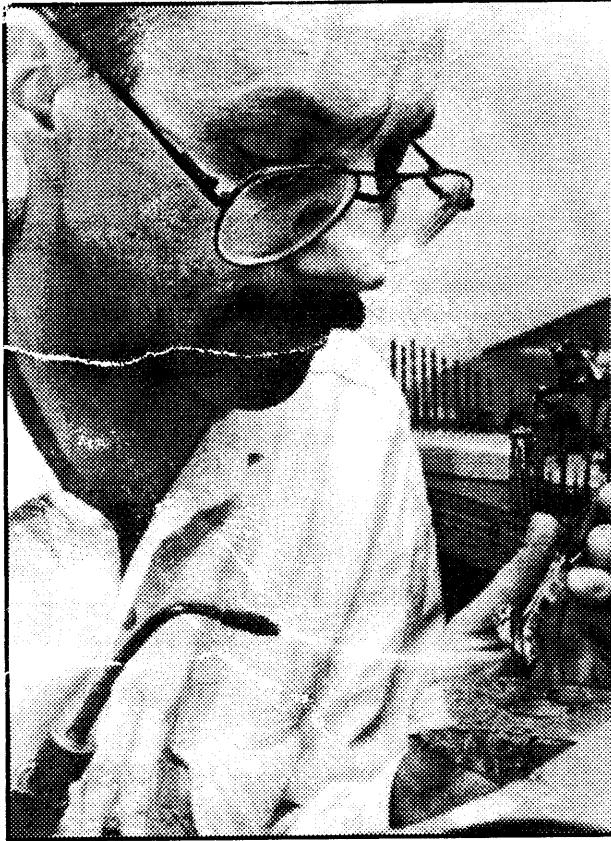
I work mostly in 18K gold, but I will also work in 14K gold or silver.

Lately, I have been doing quite a bit in platinum — an exotic metal that is rapidly gaining in popularity.

We would like to thank the people who have helped make our business rewarding and successful. We also appreciate the support of our local Chamber of Commerce.

Our ideas are free. Call us at 886-9590.

RINGLEADERS: Ian Finlayson, Goldsmith, Claire Finlayson, Jewellery Designer 886-9590



REPAIRS - ON PREMISES

People who live on the Coast have responded enthusiastically to having a resident expert to handle their jewellery repairs. Most people are nervous about parting with their jewellery, even for a short time, but personally meeting the man who will handle the job helps a lot. With over 25 years of experience, there's almost no type of repair that hasn't passed through Ian's hands.

"Many items require special handling," explains Ian. "Take, for instance, an emerald ring that needs resizing. The emerald can't tolerate heat, so it has to be unset before I can work on the ring."

Even diamonds must be meticulously cleaned with special equipment before heat can be applied near them, otherwise specks of dirt can become scorched onto them.

It costs nothing to have your jewellery checked by a professional. If you think the claws on your ring may be wearing thin, if it has been knocked or bent out of shape, perhaps a timely repair job can save you the grief and expense of having to replace a valuable gemstone.

REDESIGN

A large part of Claire's work involves the redesigning of old jewellery. Many people have items that are valuable but that are never worn, such as wedding rings from a first marriage, inherited pieces and gifts that didn't quite suit.

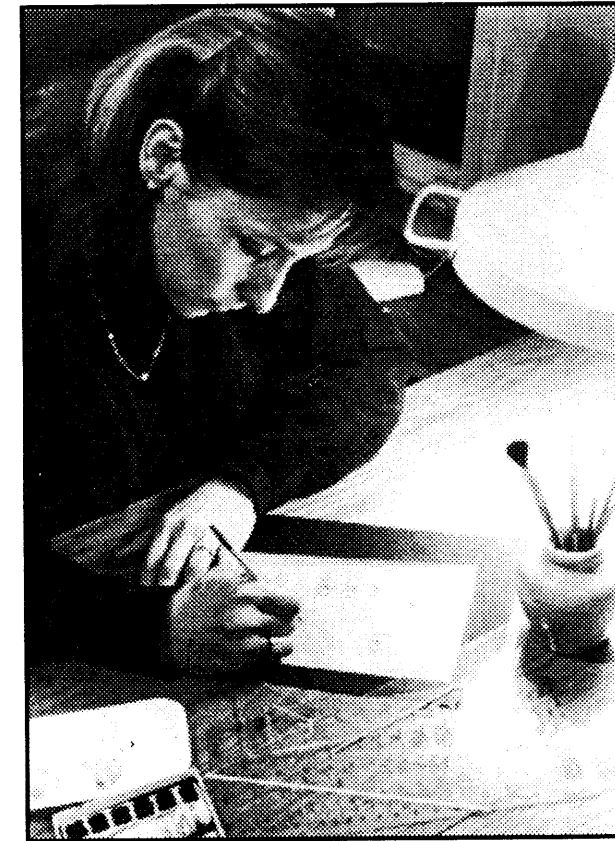
"What good is jewellery that sits in a drawer or box? No matter how much money someone paid for it, if you're not wearing it - let's rework it," says Claire. "If the piece has sentimental value, we can often come up with something that preserves part of the original design, while giving it new style. One of our customers was a young woman whose mother had given her a diamond cluster ring shortly before she died. Although the ring was valuable and meant a great deal to her, it was not something she would ever wear - yet, she was afraid to change it. We took the original cluster, reshaped it just a little, and put it into a wide band. Now it's on her finger where it belongs."

FINISHED JEWELLERY

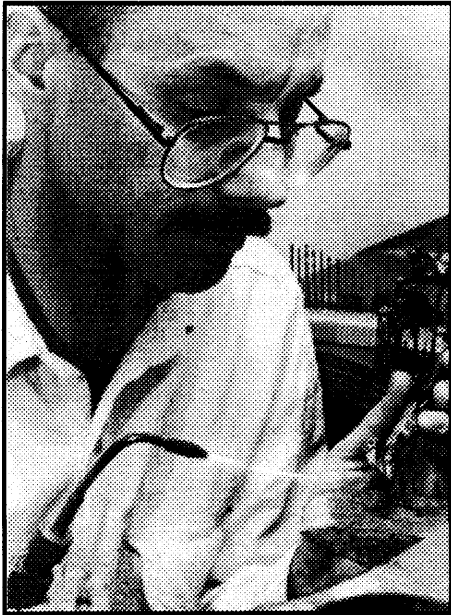
Although known primarily for custom work, Ian

and Claire have access to a vast array of finished jewellery, earrings, Italian gold chains, rings, pearls, coloured stones and diamonds. Customers come in and discuss their preferences. A short time later, items are brought in for customers to choose from. This system works well, because no retailer can carry everything. "If it's out there, we can probably get it," says Ian, "and the fact that we don't have to carry expensive stock is reflected in our prices."

*Located in Woodcreek Park, Gibsons, B.C.
See ad in Sunshine Coast Yellow Pages under "Jewellers."*



RINGLEADERS: Ian and Claire Finlayson of Roberts Creek craft unique works of art in precious stones and metals



Ian and Claire Finlayson have been working on the Coast for over seven years, quietly designing and creating some of the most talked-about jewellery in town. Other than a phone number in the Yellow Pages under "Jewellers," no sign announces their location. Although they're hard to find, word of mouth and repeat customers have kept them busy. In addition to their steady local clientele, they do custom work for some of the most upscale jewellery galleries in Vancouver.

The process of handmaking jewellery

starts with design. Custom jewellery is one of the few areas where people can actually sit down with the designer and participate in the creation of the finished piece. Communication is crucial. "I spend whatever time is necessary with the individual to make sure that all three of us, the customer, the designer and the maker, have the same vision of how the finished piece will look," explains Claire. "Once we have established a client's personal style and budget, I will come up with several ideas for the piece. We have portfolios of our work, so we can take various design elements and create something unique for each person. Some people know exactly what they want; others have only the vaguest idea, and have a hard time visualizing things, but Ian won't sit down at the bench to begin a piece until I'm sure the customer will be satisfied with the finished product. This part of the process is crucial, because no matter how good Ian's work is, if it's not what the customer wants we've wasted our time."

This outstanding level of service has won the Finlaysons many repeat customers, but this is only the beginning of a painstaking process. Once the design has been established and the estimate approved, the job passes into Ian's hands. The relationship between the designer and the jeweller is much like that between an architect and a builder. The designer must understand jewellery making technique, and the jeweller has to be able to translate a two-dimensional



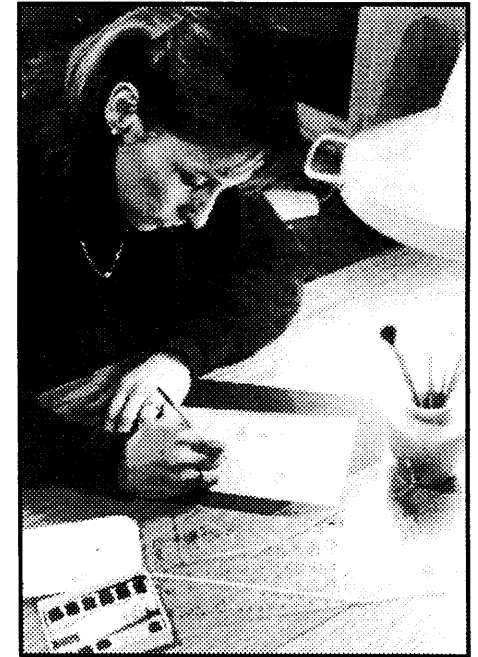
sketch into a finished piece of jewellery, so the working relationship is necessarily close. Much consultation between the two goes into minute details during the construction.

With mass production being the rule these days, people must be educated about what hand fabricated jewellery really is. "When I hand make a piece of jewellery," says Ian, "there is no mold, so each piece is subtly different. The pure gold is melted, alloys are added, and the molten gold is poured into an ingot, then rolled to the required thickness. Then it is cut, shaped and forged. Lately I've been doing more and more work in white gold and platinum as well."

Over 25 years, Ian has mastered a difficult, demanding and ancient craft. There are no shortcuts, and patience is a necessary virtue. But, surprisingly, Ian's work usually costs no more than buying a cast piece in a store. "Our markups are lower, since we don't have to carry expensive stock or pay rent in a retail outlet," Claire explains. "For price-sensitive consumers

who still want quality and beauty, we'll suggest tourmaline rather than the more expensive emerald, for example, or a sapphire as the main gemstone in an engagement ring rather than a diamond. We do a lot of diamond jewellery, but we would rather make something with one smaller, high quality diamond than use a larger stone full of visible inclusions or poorly cut."

Ian and Claire will design your perfect engagement ring, create a gift for someone special, repair or redesign your existing jewellery - and almost everything is done right on the premises.



Ian Finlayson —⊙— Goldsmith
Claire Finlayson —⊙— Designer

886-9590