

Local botanical emporium blooms

By Sarah Sobanski

No. 5 Bee Botanical Emporium is officially open in Maynooth.

Hosting a holistic and natural sausages barbecue July 30, No. 5 Bee celebrated its official opening with Maynooth residents who appreciate locally-sourced food products and organically grown plants.

Owners Frances White and Carol Dromey first met three years ago. Both White and Dromey lived in the Maynooth area on the weekends, commuting back to larger centres for work ? White as an life insurance broker, and Dromey as a professional gardener.

Both happened to be visiting the Maynooth strip that year. A business owner and mutual acquaintance of White and Dromey, told the two that they simply had to know each other. She made the pair take each others' phone numbers with a promise that they would get in contact with one another.

?She was very persistent. She didn't stop, she just kept saying [you have to know each other],? Dromey explained the strange encounter.

?I don't think either one of us had any interest in exchanging phone numbers. It wasn't that we didn't like each other, we just didn't know each other and that was fine,? added White.

As fate would have it, White and Dromey wouldn't see each other again until a New Years party in 2015. They laughed about where each had the others' phone numbers ? Dromey had White's pinned to her bulletin board, and White had Dromey's in a drawer at home.

By February, the two were playing in a pool tournament together and confiding their similar wishes to open a business in town. It turned out White was a foodie. She loved preparing food and Dromey loved growing it.

In the spring a storefront opened up, and the rest was history.

Today, in a cozy shop at the tip of the Maynooth strip with exposed cedar counters, White and Dromey work in tandem. Instead of focusing on one thing or another, both bring their many talents and ideas together and let them flourish individually. The partnership simply works.

?I wanted to focus on food products, as well as soaps and lotions, and Carol wanted to do plants,? said White. ?There's a cross-over in some of the food products and lotions so we decided we were just going to do a 50/50 partnership.?

The shop's mission comes from the idea of building, understanding and respecting the partnership between people and the natural earth.

?The thing that I've noticed, and what I've been watching very carefully for a number of years, is a resurgence of interest in plants and connecting with the natural world. That was what my whole premise of doing this was, [it] was to promote that,? said Dromey. ?I feel so strongly that we have to appreciate plants and what they do for us, and our connection and relationship with them is just so important to our survival on this planet. Their living beings just like us, different, but just like us. There has to be a respect between us.?

Frances and Carol are looking forward to offering classes and informative seminars in the coming months. Please see their Facebook account No. 5 Bee for a list of coming classes.