



By Carolyn Lee

The Imperial Republican

Things have changed slightly at Prior's Fabrics and Gifts in Imperial since the death of owner Lila Prior this past September. However, service continues as always, and new ideas are being discussed.

Janet Prior is the manager of the store at 525 Broadway, which is owned by the Lila Prior Estate.

The daughter-in-law of Lila, Janet also has a love of material. She sewed clothes for her children for years.

When they left home, she turned her attention to quilting, "my love," she explained.

The focus of the store is changing a bit, "with more of an emphasis on quilting," she said. Janet stressed, however, that "We're not going to drop our fashion fabrics."

Fashion fabrics are those that are not 100 percent cotton, with which you sew clothes. "We're the only store in quite an area that has fashion fabrics," she said.

The store also carries a large selection of 100 percent cotton fabrics for quilting, as well as gift items.

Janet Prior said that after the first of the year she'd also like to offer classes on quilting and sewing to the public at the store.

Lila Prior opened Prior's Fabrics and Gifts on Dec. 1, 1980. In a 2003 interview, she said "Our aim is to stock good quality fabric and gifts. Honesty and good public relations are high on my list of priorities."

Prior to her death, Lila instructed Janet to always buy good quality material. Janet said she plans to take that advice.

Part-time employees at the store are Ann Strand, Linda Greene, Mary Lee, Lillian Wellman and Jacquelyn Greene.

Janet gives them free rein to decorate the store windows and try new ideas. "It's exciting," she said. "The best part is we have a good time."

Prior's is open Monday through Saturday.