

ovations

Houston Jewelry – A New Generation

When Abe "Honey" Donsky founded Houston Wholesale Jewelers forty years ago, little did he know it would become a Houston institution, respected and patronized by loyal customers who enjoyed quality merchandise at affordable prices. Over the years, the family business expanded, merged, changed names and eventually closed the flagship store at Westheimer and Gessner in October of 1992. One thing, however, remained the same — the desire to continue the family tradition of serving the retail trade with the same standard of excellence established by Donsky.

Three generations of family and friends gathered in early November to toast the formal opening of the new Houston Jewelry store. Among the guests celebrating with the Solomon family were Joyce and Arthur Schecter; Puchi and Sam Spritzer, Michael Weisenthal, Judy and Ken Margolis, Joan and Leon Daily, Annette and Sol Weiner, Joan and Marvin Kaplan, Beverly and Dr. John Berry, Sammy Finger, Punkin Hecht, Sammy and Carol Kims, Gary and Joyce Niemitz, Larry Plotsky, Ruth Rubin and Harold Goldstein.

On September 18, 1993, Houston Jewelry opened to an exciting and enthusiastic reception reminiscent of the first grand opening in 1953. Located in the newly-remodeled Jerry J. Moore Tanglewilde Center in the 9500 block of Westheimer, the store was designed by architect Bill Gotsdiner. Fixtures International's David Danberg, whose father built Houston Wholesale Jewelers' first showcases, redesigned the fixtures for the new store. Owned and operated by the Solomon family, the third generation of Donsky descendants are committed to continuing their high standards of retail expertise. Donsky's daughter Dana Solomon, son-in-law Andy and grandsons Rex and Keith decided to open the new Houston Jewelry, an elite and unique specialty store, due to the continued and constant demands from former customers. According to president Andy Solomon, "at Houston Jewelry, we will continue the tradition, begun in 1953, of offering only the best for less." One of the major changes pointed out by Solomon is that there is no more standing in line to pick up merchandise. Computerized cash registers throughout the store insure customers immediate receipt of their purchases.

Houston Jewelry features a large selection of gold, designer sterling and fashion jewelry as well as dozens of fine watch lines and an impressive collection of loose diamonds, Estate jewelry, vintage watches, landscape and fine art photography, antique books and various objects d'art as well as a computerized bridal registry are also offered. Distinguished names in the store's impressive array of gifts include Rolex, Movado, Tag Heuer, Bulova, Seiko, Zina, Baccarat, Lalique, Waterford, Mikasa, Portmarión, Royal Doulton, Cartier, Cross, Chanel, Parker and Mont Blanc. Houston Jewelry has built a state-of-the-art jewelry manufacturing and watch repair facility. Watch and jewelry buyer Sean McNamara is a graduate gemologist and a specialist in vintage watches.



Andrew, Dana, Keith and Rex Solomon.

Photography by Phyllis Hand



Houston Jewelry's elegant interior.

The Solomon family adheres to tradition, not only in their pursuit of excellence in retailing, but in their strong family and education beliefs. Rex and Keith Solomon attended the same prep school as their father and Rex graduated from Brandeis University as did both his parents. Keith Solomon graduated from Amherst College and attended the American Film Institute in Los Angeles. He is pursuing a career in directing and cinematography. Andy Solomon, a board member of the Retail Merchants Association and the Anti-Defamation League, is an active supporter of Houston's charitable and cultural organizations. He is also an accomplished art and landscape photographer whose works are in many famous collections such as the Gersheim Collection in St. Moritz, Switzerland.

One fact that speaks highly of any retail store is employee loyalty. This is extremely evident in the case of Houston Jewelry. Only four staff members are new additions. Many of the remaining twenty-eight have been associated with the organization for ten years with several dating back to 1953. Customers will be happy to see familiar faces such as Sidney Solinger, Sal Vasquez, Harriet Tucker and Hershel Rich.