

THE PIPES...THE PIPES ARE CALLING...

New music store specializes in bagpipes, Celtic items

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In a narrow building on historic William Street in downtown New Bedford, a city resident, who has dual American and Irish citizenship and an affinity for bagpipes, recently celebrated the grand opening of his store, Joe Piper Celtic and Musical Goods.

Joseph Mone, pipe corporal of the Brian Boru Pipe Band in Falmouth and a member of two Ancient Order of Hibernians bands, one in Newport, R.I., and the other in Manchester, N.H., is a former high school Spanish teacher who started his business about a year ago.

"I was giving bagpipe lessons and selling accessories part time out of my home," he said. "And the number of students and the sales were increasing, so I decided to go full time.

"It's kind of like threefold gigs — weddings and funerals, sales of bagpipes and accessories, instruction and consignment sales. And there will be at least three other instructors teaching out of here," Mr. Mone said.

The store has a small office in the back, ideal for instruction, and another less formal space behind that. "I'm open to all types of musicians teaching out of here," Mr. Mone said.

Since the store's opening earlier this month, a number of people, just from downtown foot traffic, have poked their heads in and asked about the shop that has "Cead Mile Failte" — a Gaelic saying that means "100,000 welcomes" — written on the door.

"I wasn't even open and a lot of people were inquiring about the store," Mr. Mone said. "A lot of people are bringing in their instruments for consignment."

Mr. Mone said he is excited about the prospects his shop's location at 106 William St. has because the block will soon be filled.

Bryan Gitlin, who with Patrick Saltmarsh owns the Cummings Building and Mr. Mone's location next door, predicted that the store will be a success.

"I think it's fantastic," Mr. Gitlin said

"We feel Joe will contribute to the downtown retail landscape. It lends a lot of color, culture and vibrancy. Bringing in boutique or niche retail stores is what's going to make downtown successful. It's a wonderful addition to the colorful landscape of retail stores."

The Artificial Marketplace, a consignment shop in the Cummings Building, will move next door into a much larger space than it currently occupies in the same building, and the Simmons Brothers Movie Company will move from its spot around the corner on Pleasant Street into the spot vacated by the Artificial Marketplace.

Also, Merlot, a wine and martini bar, is opening across the street on the northeast corner of Purchase and William streets.

"The whole block will be filled up," Mr. Mone said.

"And there are new artists going in the Cummings Building. There's going to be a lot of people down here."

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