

Feature Business: Turner Floors

By Wanda Kurchaba

A Lost ART

When it comes to advancement in technology it seems as though every industry is exposed to new products and alternative methods on how to get the job done.

For some work however, what is often required is the hand of a skilled professional who has maintained the knowledge of what some would consider a lost art.

Paul Turner is one of those guys. While he's completely up-to-date on all the latest flooring options available and works with a variety of products, some of his favourite projects include the restoration of century old floors.

"It's great to be able to put a new hardwood floor in, but what I really like is having an older home and renovation

project where the wood floors are already installed and are pretty much destroyed. Maybe its dog scratches, glue residue from carpet or they've been painted over - basically they just look horrible," said Paul.

"We have current staining and finishing techniques that they didn't have years ago. So, we can take a floor that you wouldn't even want in your barn and bring it back to a functional hardwood floor that looks beautiful and preserves the historical value. When we use a multi layer stain process, we can create the same look with three dimensional colours and stains that you



often see on the new pre-finished products.”

Paul spent the early years of his career installing hard-wood floors in gymnasiums and community centres for a company out of Calgary. He and his wife Melissa eventually moved back to Brandon where Paul



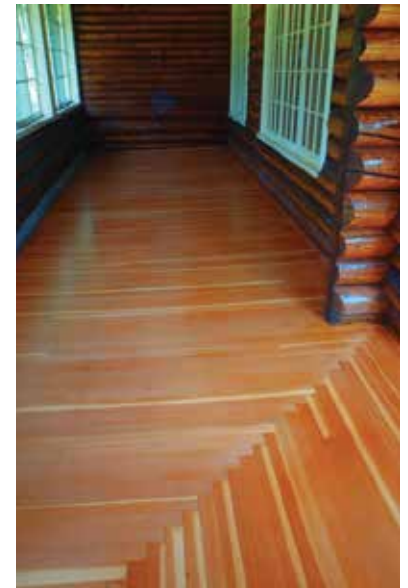
grew up and they opened Turner Floors. They've been in business since 2005.

Turner Floors is a boutique shop that is open by appointment only. They carry a wide variety of flooring - everything from carpet and cork to ceramic tile and laminate; and they expertly install everything that they sell. Paul said they strive to provide their clientele with high quality products, which mostly tend to be Canadian made, that are reliable to work with and provide form, function and style for the customer.

“I regularly go to trade shows to keep up on all the latest products. I think, part of what sets us apart is that I own the company, but I also do the work. I am on-site and I am hands-on with the products and the material that we're using, as well as the techniques that we're using. Since I work with the products, I have the ability to adjust our selection and choose products that are dependable,” said Paul.

Turner Floors has been a member of the National Wood Flooring Association (NWFA) for ten years and Paul has NWFA certifications including Installation and Sand & Finish. He is also just completing the training to become a Certified Wood Floor Inspector.

“When it comes to hardwood, I focus primarily on sanding and finishing, that's my forte. When I do a hardwood installation it's typically to add to existing hardwood floor or to do more specialized work like adding borders and medallions for a customized look,” said Paul.



“What's frustrating in our industry is that many think that it's better to just rip out old hardwood floors and replace them with a new product because there are better margins in selling new product versus refinishing. That means that floors that are able to be refurbished, that are still functional, are getting torn out prematurely.”

As new products become available, Paul says that refinishing hardwood floors is becoming a bit of a dying art, plus many of the skilled workers are retiring and others leave the industry for different opportunities. For him, however saving natural hardwood floors is something that he is passionate about.

“I'm an old school guy. I've refinished floors that are over 100 years old and brought them back to 90-95 per cent of their original condition. If I can do that in a house versus ripping it all out and replacing it, that's what I really enjoy doing.”



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(204) 727-0608
www.turnerfloors.ca
info@turnerfloors.ca