

BRIGHT LIGHTS HUGO KOHL ('89)

When is a showroom a museum?

Vintage jeweler Hugo Kohl ('89) rescues the technology of a bygone era

Jewelry maker Hugo Kohl's ('89) passion for collecting and preserving history fueled his entrepreneurial venture located in the newly renovated Ice House in downtown Harrisonburg. Kohl's vintage jewelry showroom is also home to the Museum of American Jewelry Design and Manufacturing, displaying more than 3,000 hand-engraved hubs, dies and rolls originally used to make jewelry during the Industrial Age.

Like many entrepreneurs, Kohl built a business enterprise around a deep affinity with his craft. On his website, Kohl describes saving the jewelry-making technology of a bygone era: "I learned that the pieces I had saved from the scrap yard were exquisitely crafted hubs, blocks of steel with intricate designs hand-carved into the top surface dating back to the 1800s. In any case, I was hooked on the subject, fascinated by the work-

manship, and determined to find and collect every hub, die and roll I could get my hands on, while also figuring out how to put versions of these designs back into production."

Today, as customers browse Kohl's retail space, they have a bird's-eye view of artisans busy in the workshop below.

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FOR MORE INFORMATION

Explore Hugo Kohl's vintage jewelry online at www.hugokohl.com and be sure to visit the museum and showroom when you're in the 'Burg.



Georgian, Victorian, Edwardian, Art Nouveau, Art Deco and Retro Art design periods are represented within the museum's collection of engraved hubs. A number of the designs have been put into production by Kohl.



PHOTOGRAPH BY MIKE MIRIELLO ('09M)

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