

Daisy's Clay House  
258 8<sup>th</sup> Street East



If you're looking for something fun to do this winter, there's a new business downtown that lets you get creative with paint and clay – the best part is that you get to take your creation home when the activity's done. Daisy's Clay House on 8<sup>th</sup> Street East is a new family-run business specializing in something that was missing in Owen Sound.

"It's a great family activity for kids to do," says Evan Sansom, who runs the business with his wife and mother-in-law. "Other than going to the movies or going bowling we offer something new and different than what Owen Sound's had before."

Originally from Guelph where this type of thing was quite popular, the family would often take an outing to paint pieces of clay. "We really enjoyed it especially in winter when there's not as much to do."

When they noticed Owen Sound didn't have a clay house, and that the closest one was Collingwood, they decided it was high time to fix that. They set up shop in the downtown core and were excited to join the business community.

"Being new here, the town's got a great sense of community," Sansom says. "Everybody's been super friendly."

They thought that opening by March Break of 2020 would be realistic and on the Monday of that week, they opened their doors to the public. What they weren't expecting was that March Break never ended. The decision was quickly made to keep the schools closed indefinitely.

"We literally got to operate our business normally for a day and then went into shutdown," he says. "We didn't really know what to do."

But they figured out that they could still operate by coming up with take-home packages. They asked people to message them on their Facebook page to select a package, and they would put it together and drop it off at their door. The customer would then paint it at home, and drop it back at the store. Daisy's



would fire it in the kiln and the customer would come pick it up to keep. It was a system that worked and they actually still do take-home packages for those who want them. But when it was safe to do so, they moved back to the in-studio experience. And things were slow for the summer. And then September hit and they got busy. Very busy.

"It was a struggle for the first while but since September it's really taken off," he says. They've been booking lots of birthday parties and are already looking a month ahead for any new bookings. They make it easy on parents and look

after the whole package from treats, to activities and even lunch. Plus, the kiddos get to take something home with them after the birthday party is over.



But this isn't just an activity for kids. It's popular with people of all ages because it's therapeutic. "Time passes easily because people are relaxed and focused on doing something creative and fun," Sansom says. They love to play music in the background as well and have a stereo in the shop. And if no one's in the store, they'll rock out by themselves!

If you're interested in taking on a new activity, pop on in or even order a package to take home. Customers pay by the piece they paint no matter how long it takes them. So there's no rush to get a piece done.

They're open Wednesday to Friday from 3 – 8 pm and Saturdays 10-5 pm. Sundays are by appointment only.

Written by Jesse Wilkinson