

# Fishermen end a way of life to start a new business

by Stella Shepard

Self Employment



Gordon, left, and Carter Gotell own and operate Absolute Custom Kitchens. The brothers gave up a lifetime of fishing to start a carpentry business. "Fishing is still part of our family life," says Gordon. "We have a brother who fishes and also offers sea experiences to the public through his business, Tranquility Cove Adventures."

**G**ordon and Carter Gotell are brothers who were raised in a third-generation fishing family from Georgetown. The two brothers answered the call of the sea and began fishing with their father at a young age. They spent a lifetime fishing the waters of PEI.

Fishing was more than just a job to Gordon. It was a destiny marked at birth that later became a passion and a celebrated way of life. He clocked 28 years in the fishing industry.

Carter worked the waters as a fisherman's helper with his father and later with Gordon's fleet. He also fished clams on his own for six months of the year. Seasonal employment allowed Carter to do carpentry work for family and friends in his backyard shop.

## A new career

Economic times were changing within the fishing industry.

"We talked about starting a business for a couple of years," says Carter. "I thought about starting a backyard carpentry business since I already had the shop. It was simple math. The fishing industry was no longer viable for us. We knew that we had to do something different."

"We know the carpentry trade," says Gordon. "We're self-taught carpenters who built our own homes. It was a risk leaving the fishing industry. I wanted to be a fisherman since I was young child. I sold my fishing fleet and gave up a way of life that I enjoyed. But I have no regrets. I thought I would miss fishing but I don't."

## From the sea to the land

The brothers decided to retire from the waters and open their own business, **Absolute Custom Kitchens**, in 2008. Absolute Custom Kitchens is located in New Perth. The business offers residential custom cabinets, planning and designing kitchens, and building mantels, vanities and entertainment units.

## Steps to a new career

Gordon and Carter contacted **Karl Johnston**, Self Employment Manager at **Active Communities Inc.** Karl assisted Gordon and Carter with a business plan and offered advice. Gordon and Carter were eligible for the **Self Employment program** administered through **Service Canada**. The Self Employment program provides financial assistance and entrepreneurial support to eligible participants to help them start their own businesses. The Self Employment program assists individuals in the development and implementation of the business plan through technical and consultative expertise.

## Exceeds business plan

"We've been in business for almost a year," says Gordon. "Business is good. We are doing better than what we predicted in our business plan. We enjoy the work and we like being in business together. There are many benefits to starting your own business. The first step is taking the risk and getting started."

For more information about the Self Employment program in eastern PEI, contact **Karl Johnston** at 838-7034 or toll free at 1-800-953-4030.



For more information about **Absolute Custom Kitchens**, contact **Gordon** or **Carter Gotell** at 838-4480 or visit their website at [www.absolutecustomkitchens.com](http://www.absolutecustomkitchens.com)