



I admire anyone who can make a business survive

Budding entrepreneurs must be ready to work hard and devote time to their business, says Farm and Household Stores managing director **Bill Jack**

PERSON BEHIND THE BUSINESS

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Q How would you describe your business?

A Farm and Household is a family owned and run one-stop shop offering everything for the home. We are an independent retailer and have been trading for 46 years. We take pride in looking after our customers and providing quality products, service and value for money.

Our premises in Millburn Road has its own car park and over 10,000 sq ft of retail space on two

floors displaying quality household goods and general merchandise and a popular range of home brew items. The building is much larger than it looks as it extends into a sizeable area at the rear.

Being a well-known family business, personal service from our staff of eight is very important and they have a wide and varied knowledge of the items available. We also have a comprehensive website at fhstores.co.uk

We carry an extensive stock. Our lighting department is renowned for its range of lights, lamps and bulbs as well as electrical fires, radiators and heaters while our china department carries well-known makes such as Denby, Portmeirion, Dartington, Royal Scot Crystal and Disney figures. A wedding gifts service is available and also gift vouchers.

The upper floor houses our collections of cutlery, teapots, linen, fireside goods and guards, companion sets and also bathroom accessories including mirrors and cabinets. Downstairs we display kitchenware, Stellar and Judge pans, Le Creuset cast ironware, cleaning tools, weighing scales, ironing boards, bins and rotary airers and a range of tools and utensils.

Q What led you into the business?

A I belong to an era where you did what your parents did and I carried on that tradition. I was told I was not coming straight into the family garage business, so when I was 17 I became an apprentice with the Standard Motor Company cars in Coventry producing Standard/Triumph cars and Ferguson tractors. When I finished my National Service with REME in 1959, we took over an engineering



Bill Jack.

Picture: James Mackenzie

company in Evanton which I ran for 10 years before returning to Inverness and James Ferries and Company.

My father had served in World War I in transport and returned to Inverness where he went into business in the motor trade with James Ferries and had workshops and a garage in Millburn Road. He died in 1951 and my mother, May, ran Ferries. Our current premises started as a garage in 1935 for cars and agricultural vehicles as it was located across from the former livestock auction marts which is now the Morrisons supermarket site.

In 1969, the Ferries garage was built in the Longman and when a showroom was added in the early 1970s, the engineering company took over the Millburn Road site.

We had sold hardware and this expanded following the retirement of some ironmongers in Inverness. We saw a retail opportunity at the Millburn Road site as the future direction of the business, so Farm and Household Stores started as ironmongers in November 1976. It quickly developed into a general store and has been serving town

and country customers from Inverness and the Highlands ever since.

Q What is your greatest achievement?

A Keeping a company going in today's headwinds which are affecting all independent businesses, particularly costs which you can't control. It used to be difficult enough when it was just competition to worry about.

Q Who do you admire in business?

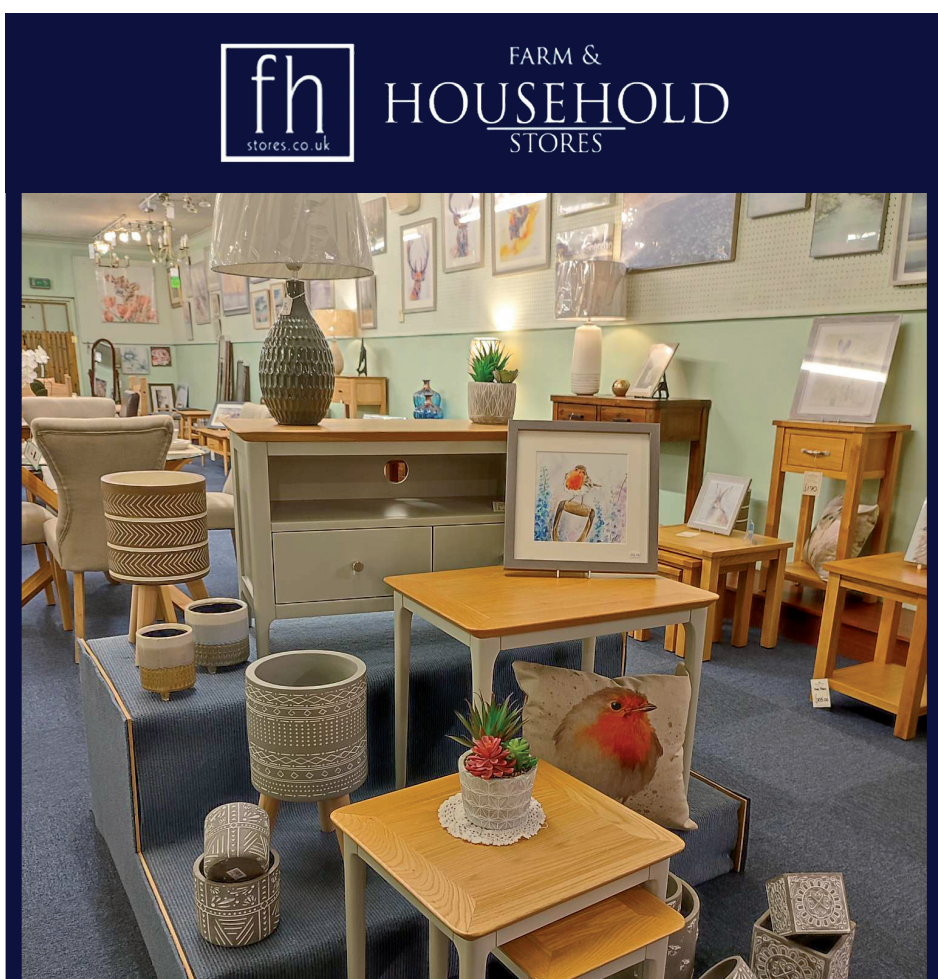
A Anyone who can make their business survive in these difficult times.

Q What's your advice to budding entrepreneurs?

A Running a business is really tough and you must be prepared to work really hard and devote a great deal of your time to it.

Q Can you tell us more about yourself?

A My wife Fiona and I are strong supporters of the RNLI. She was local treasurer for 35 years and we stored their fundraising goods and souvenirs for 18 years.



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