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Cornwall Bakery ready to fire up ovens in Grosse Pointe Park

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A Grosse Pointe Park bakery that never opened, its beautiful facade and luxe wing back chairs inside beckoning customers it would never serve, is a few weeks away from firing up the ovens and turning on the mixers now that a new owner has taken over.

The opening of chef and baker Freeman Gunnell's vision, [Cornwall Bakery](#), will add to the growing food scene in this lakeside community.

Cornwall is a bakery and restaurant that will bake breads and pastries, serve breakfast, coffee, sandwiches and salads, and an assortment of sweet takeaways. Eventually it will offer packaged to-go dinners and changing dishes as customers dictate.

It is expected to open in three to four weeks, Gunnell says. It's located at 15215 Kercheval Avenue, in the spot that was close to opening about a year ago as Bona Fide Bakery but never did. Bona Fide was the brainchild of restaurateur Mindy Lopus of Tallulah in Birmingham and Red Crown in Grosse Pointe. Lopus, who wanted Bona Fide to be a fine bread baker for Red Crown and other restaurants and stores, as well as a coffee shop, no longer runs the establishments.

Cornwall also expects to build a strong business in cake orders; it is in product development, i.e. taste-testing, at the moment.

Lopus's departure left a shell of a bakery that chef and baker Gunnell inherited after striking a deal with building owners and Grosse Pointe boosts the Cotton family, which is responsible for creating or funding several new businesses and projects to improve Grosse Pointe Park's commercial stretch on Kercheval Avenue near the border of Detroit. They also are working to improve the surrounding neighborhood, and Gunnell says they made becoming the proprietor of Cornwall much easier.

"They're really willing to help us do it," he says. "I'm not saying other landlords haven't been good to deal with, but with the Cottons there are obviously more resources to help." For example, they painted the facade a dark, naval-inspired shade of blue that fits with the Cornwall theme. The name comes from the English town on the water, and it's Gunnell's ancestral homeland.

Gunnell and his wife, who moved from Royal Oak to Grosse Pointe Park to be near the business and support the Cottons' vision of building up The Park business district, are in the process of hiring, renovating and adding equipment to the kitchen to take it beyond a bakery.

Gunnell, a longtime chef who honed his trade at establishments such as Da Eduardo in Grosse Pointe, the Rattlesnake Club in Detroit, Holiday Market in Royal Oak, Chamberlain Bakery and Whole Foods, where he baked bread, has carved out a side career in cooking classes and catering, and as time went on demand for his cakes grew and grew.

The interest in cakes is why the new Cornwall will have a window on the cake decorating room. "You can watch the decorating while it's being done. It adds a bit of theatrics to the bakery, something interesting," says Gunnell, who also teaches cooking at the Birmingham Community Center.

He had planned to open a bakery in Birmingham's booming rail district, but the deal fell through, and then Gunnell's equipment provider told him about a great vacant spot in the Park.

Gunnell is also bringing in a display case and has talked with Red Crown about working together. He would also like to partner with the recently opened Atwater Brewery and biergarten across the street.

He believes the bakery will be a nice fit for the community, starting with the British-influenced name that fits in with the Park's street names. He chose the name to honor his heritage and because the seaside theme suited a town known for its love of things nautical.

"My wife and I are so excited to be here," says Gunnell, who has just interviewed a prospective employee for one of several positions he needs filled. "We want to live here and be close to the action."

Source: Freeman Gunnell, owner, Cornwall Bakery

Writer: Kim North Shine

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Cheryl Swarthout · Grosse Pointe, Michigan

This new business sounds like a great addition to all that is happening in GP Park. I also have distant ancestors from Cornwall, so I will be checking it out soon.

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Ooohh, yeah, I will find out.

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