



## ***A Phoenix in Glendale***

*Written by Linda Palacios • April 1, 2010*

*When you hit rock bottom, you only can go up from there. Read on to see how the owner of the recently restored Century House did just that and found triumph through tragedy.*

It only took the flame of a small candle. After all, you have to "smell it to sell it," Century House Owner Susan Kreuzmann says. The Century House manager had gone through the daily routine that morning when she opened up shop the Saturday after Thanksgiving 2008. Part of that routine was lighting a candle to light up the room with a fresh scent.

Before long, the candle lit more than just the room as flames engulfed the almost 150-year old building of the Century House. The flames destroyed the entire inventory, and Kreuzmann's dreams literally went up in smoke.

But from the ashes arose a new Century House. "It didn't take long to know that I would like to go back to it again," Kreuzmann says, so she set a goal to restore the Glendale company before a year's time. She worked through the insurance red tape. ("That isn't easy when your papers are very crisp," she says.) And she met with architect Rod Sidley, who helped her meet National Historic Registry standards.

Kruezmamm met her goal with a Nov. 10 re-open date. Now, with just a couple façade changes, the Century House has been restored to almost its exact specifications on the outside, and on the inside, the once not-so-retail-friendly setup has been changed with Century House operations in mind. The interior changes include much more open space and more natural light. And a bright pink door meets the customers first thing and invites all of you and yours

This "ladies place," as Kruezmamm calls it, offers unique items that work well for gift giving — even if it's to yourself. And since rebuilding inventory, Kruezmamm says she has "better and prettier merchandise." Beyond the hand-picked items to be in the store, Century House also sells Pandora jewelry and Vera Bradley bags.

No matter your purchase, though, Century House can provide a gift box and a pretty satin pink ribbon to complete the package. This gesture only shows one side of the customer service. While this part of the business failed to suffer from the devastation, the employees have started appreciating their customers even more because of the generous outpouring they experienced when tragedy struck.

To check out the new and improved Century House, head to Three Village Square in Glendale, Ohio. Also, feel free to call at (513) 771-6175.