

shopping

KEVIN SHEEHAN



► Steven and Brian Beaucher sell antique maps and vintage transportation memorabilia.

Mapping out a way to a viable retail location

- The Beaucher brothers have moved to bigger quarters
- It's 'a place with things you won't find anywhere else'

Somewhere between Google Earth and GPS, the common atlas lost its functionality. And yet, Steven Beaucher has built a burgeoning business revolving around the near-extinct guides.

With his brother Brian, Beaucher began collecting maps — of Boston, its neighborhoods and elsewhere — years ago. In 2004, the two went into business selling them, first out of their house, then in a small Harvard Square shop. About a year ago, they relocated to WardMaps' current Porter Square home.

"A lot of people in Boston are interested in place, and how the city has changed over the years," says Steven Beaucher, co-owner of the map mecca.

The store sells antique and reprinted maps, vin-

On the cheap

A tip for art and map enthusiasts alike: WardMaps also does framing — and customers say it's cheaper than anywhere else.

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tage transportation memorabilia and, most recently, work by independent artists through brother company Boston Coasters (it shares the store with WardMaps).

"We've tried to create a place with things you won't find anywhere else," Beaucher says. "Not just in Boston, but anywhere."

The brothers get their maps and art everywhere: auctions, consignment sales, attics, Brooklyn street fairs. Among their favorite finds is an authentic Arlington T station sign.

Our favorites include a 1722 black-and-white map of a somewhat recognizable downtown Boston and a vivid photograph of Fenway Park at sunset. The store can print the images on fine paper for frames, or on coasters, serving trays, journals and bags — just to name a few options.

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