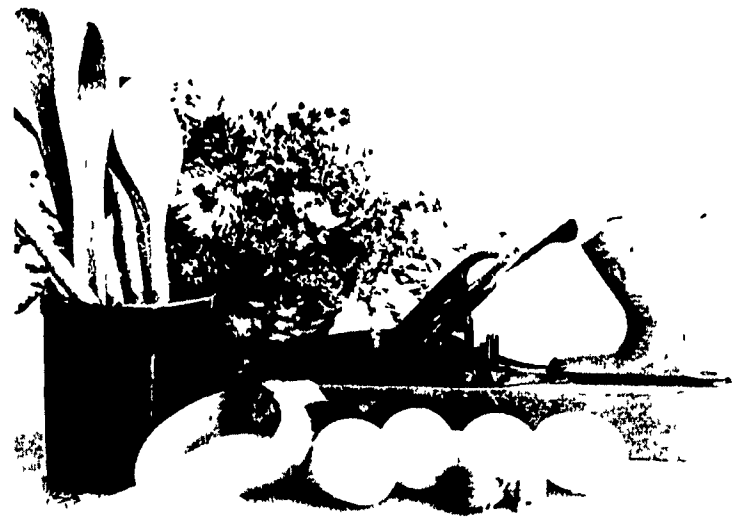


Homestead Notes

Pat Erway, Editor



In the Heisey Candlery

Of Waxes, Wicks & the Witness Tree

If there's an unusual candle you're looking for, Bill Heisey is the man to see

William H Heisey, Mount Joy R1 first started making candles about 15 years ago, and has now expanded his hobby into a small home business

Like most amateur candle makers he began by using "anything around the house" for molds

In the fall of 1969 he sent for a catalogue which contained different molds and scents for candle-making, and that's when he began making candles in earnest

His first efforts, he said, still involved "making candles for ourselves and for gifts" At that time he became interested in making candle "clusters," which are arrangements of candles of the same shapes, but of various heights and diameters He made clusters for use in his church at Christmas, and last year completed seven arrangements which were used with greens in the church windows and vestibules

Church members and friends began buying candles from Bill, and, as he says, "One thing led to another, and soon I decided I'd better get a Pennsylvania sales license"

His first candles were mostly variations of round candles, but then he began creating designs and had his ideas converted into usable molds by a local tinsmith

At Christmas he was asked to show the art of hand-dipping candles as part of a candlelight tour sponsored by the Mount Joy Business and Professional Women Various crafts were demonstrated at Walnut Tree Farm Mount Joy, as part of the tour

Bill had never made hand-

dipped candles before, but characteristically set about learning the technique He had seen a demonstration of hand-dipping at Pennsylvania Dutch Days in Kutztown, and gathered his equipment with that demonstration in mind It meant designing his own wheel on which to hang the candles He in turn mounted the wheel on a stool to make it a suitable height

He explained, "The candles had to be dipped for three seconds each time, and the wax should not be allowed to harden between coats." It's a slow process, but the results are well worth the effort

Bill buys wax in bulk from local petroleum dealer He explained that there are different kinds and grades of wax These waxes have "different melting points as well as a flash point, when the wax will burst into



Bill Heisey removes a giant candle from its mold. The candle is six inches in diameter and twelve inches high, but he has even larger molds.



Standing at the stove in his basement where he prepares his wax, Bill Heisey dips some of the hot wax into a mold.

flame." As for developing different colors and scents, he said, "It takes common sense and a feeling to know just the right time to add the color and scent" He said he has found some colors will fade if reheated after a day or so, and some scents are not as strong if heated too long. "These factors are pretty important when you're making a batch of several matching candles."

Bill soon learned of an organization for candle-makers: the International Guild of Candle Artisans. The Guild now has over 700 members, about 60 of whom are from Pennsylvania.

Two years ago, Bill and Margaret Heisey attended the Guild's yearly convention, and talked enthusiastically of its benefits Bill said, "The meeting is a series of workshops which

teach various candle-making techniques." Margaret added that although the workshops can only accommodate a limited number of actual participants, they do allow others to listen in to

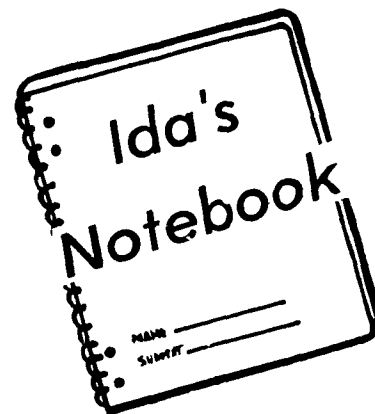
gain some valuable information. One of the workshops she attended was in making candle rings.

The Guild also publishes a monthly magazine, with timely articles on candle-making and related subjects. Margaret says the most valuable part of the organization is meeting the people from around the world and getting so many good ideas from them.

As in any business, Bill Heisey felt his candle shop required a name After a great deal of thought, they chose the name, "Witness Tree Candlery." The name comes from the famous witness oak tree which stands at the Donegal Presbyterian Church, where members of the congregation pledged their loyalty to George Washington and the colonies in 1777.

The Heiseys are active members of the Donegal church, and one of his most interesting candles is a replica of the historic church, made especially for the church's 250th anniversary celebration two years ago. The small wax church is complete

(Continued On Page 22)



Ida Rissér

I've just been listening to a ballad on a record which tells us how "deep our roots are in the soil" And also that as long as our "children are healthy and we have enough food to feed them we are wealthy."

We probably agree with this thinking but too often lose our sense of values and feel that more material things would make us happier I'm reminded of a German folk song which I danced to in "Rural Youth" many years ago

When my father and my mother
Go a-journeying to the fair;
Ach ja! Ach ja!
What if they have no money,
They're as rich as any there
Ach ja! Ach ja!
So let's all try a bit harder to
count our blessings more often

xxx

My family certainly know my likes as evidenced by my Christmas gifts.

One gave a book on "Early

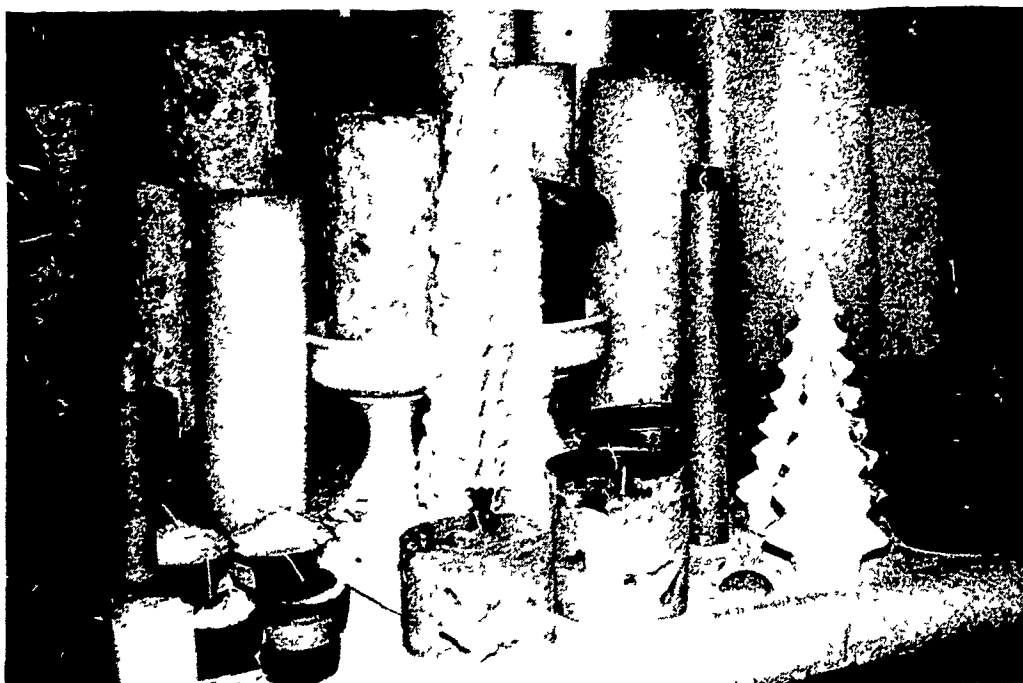
Country Furniture" and I don't tire of leafing through the pages of pictures to see if my few things are similar Then there are 16 pots of herbs which I'm trying to start on the window sill. Another repaired the stereo so I can listen to records of my choice, as I don't like the popular songs on the radio

There is a pretty blue wallet which I haven't used as yet and last but not least a blender. So far, it is almost untouched as I haven't found a need for it but I'm still looking for uses and ideas

xxx

Our children and the neighborhood children and their parents have been ice skating on the ponds in our meadow for the past week

Philip was so busy picking sticks off the ice for his Daddy to start a brush fire, that he didn't notice a small hole in the ice and skated into it. Net result - wet trousers and muddy skates



A few of the unusual candles Bill Heisey has created. A swiss cheese with mice is in

the foreground, as well as a Christmas tree.