

Antique butter churns add country touch to decor

BY BARBARA RADER
Staff Correspondent

BUTLER — Butter churns from the past have not been forgotten. While some are still in use, most have become collector's items.

Butler Countain Jean Zant recently displayed some of her butter churns at the Red Barn Equipment Store's open house, dressing up the decor for the special event. Butter churns play a similar role in her family's country farm house where they are displayed with other old, but working items.

When the Zang's moved to Butler County from a new home in Pittsburgh 20 years ago, they had no hot water, or bathroom, but they did find a large coal furnace in the cellar. Jean said friends and relatives thought they were crazy for moving into the old home, but time has proven them wrong.

With extensive remodeling in the farm house with the 1876 cornerstone, the Zang's home has a warm country decor with a friendly welcome. Jean's interest in country collectibles began at the auction held at their present home.

She purchased the kettle that had hung in the summer kitchen and returned it to the frame where it had hung for years.

"I guess I became interested in collecting the dairy items from where I work," she explains. Working nearly everyday in a dairy equipment store, she appreciates the farmer and his way of life.

Churning butter began many years ago, but historians have never been able to pinpoint the exact year the practice began. They believe that it may have



Amy and sister Joyce demonstrate the use of the barrel churn in the first step of making butter. Pouring the milk from the wooden pail into the churn.



Joyce Zang demonstrates how the homemaker made butter with the dasher churn. Beside her is a barrel churn.

begun as early as 2,000 B.C. in India where butter was made from buffaloes' milk. In other countries butter is made from the milk of goats, sheep, horses, reindeer - not just cow's milk.

Milk was possibly first made by shaking the milk in a bag of animal skin. Today, the butter is made in large vats in creameries. Pennsylvania is one of the leading

butter producers, ranking sixth among butter-producing states and provinces.

Most of Jean's churns date from the 18th and 19th centuries. She recently added a paddle churn which has the original dairy cow decal on the front with Tiffin Union Churn Co - Tiffin, Ohio, and still bears the original blue paint. An

(Turn to Page B12)



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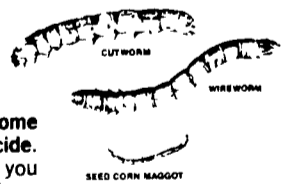
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