

Lancaster Farming *Antiques Center*

Auctioneer Clerk, Dairy Farmer, Antique Picker Describe Joyce Barners



Joyce's love of cows caused her to start a small collection of antique or collectible models. This particular one was a Bedford fair premium in the 1950s.

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BEDFORD (Bedford Co.) — Joyce Barners lives in a historic house in the historic district of a historic town.

A hand-painted antique ironing board decorates the front door quickly introducing you to the unique individual inside.

Antique lover, Joyce has the ideal job for finding antiques to fill the big house. She is an auctioneer clerk and from this stemmed a side vocation of being an antique picker.

"There are antique dealers and crafts people who specialize in certain items. I keep an eye out for these items and buy them at auctions or sometimes at estates. Along the way, I see a lot of things to buy for myself. Con-

sequently, even a house the size of this one gets full," Joyce said.

There are several craft ladies in Virginia who make chenille teddy bears and Joyce finds the bedspreads. Another specializes in farm tools and another person makes items from old quilts. Some people specialize in doing over old furniture.

Joyce said, "You have to know your market. I usually have a good idea where every item I purchase is going."

And how does Joyce let the auctioneer know she is interested in an item while clerking?

"Oh, that's easy," she said with a smile. "I just kick or pinch him. I'm sitting right beside him."

The main advantage of being a sale clerk is that you get to see every item up close.

"I actually prefer to buy at estate sales, but they are in big demand by all antique dealers."

Joyce collects dolls, lamps, and antique furniture.

"That is what I look for myself," she said.

"I try to be selective when collecting. For instance, all of my dolls are good ones...German. My best doll has her mouth closed. They are worth more that way because most dolls have their mouths open.

"China or bisque dolls are rare at rural auctions," she explained. "Most country children played with rag dolls."

Of furniture, Joyce said, "I like Victorian furniture, but I love anything made from curly maple. I have been fortunate to find several good pieces."

Joyce said, "I got into the antique business many years ago. I always liked antique furniture and when I started attending auctions, I would often buy something and then not have a place to put it. I started selling at a profit and my interest got

deeper. It just grew from there.

"I made a lot of mistakes and learned from them. I don't think anyone could be in the antique business and not make mistakes. But, once you pay a \$100 for something that you can only sell for \$50, you learn. I have shelves full of books on antiques but have learned the most by just doing."

In addition to the person to person selling, Joyce also has a booth at Founder's Crossing, an antique and craft mart, in Bedford.

"I do get carried away just a bit." Joyce laughs as she displays a collection of three chests, one piled on top of the other according to size, and added, "And, they are all full."

Her collections offer side benefits in addition to enjoying the pieces she collects. She said, "I figure it is all part of my retirement. Or, when I need some money in a hurry, I just sell something."

In addition to buying, selling, and clerking at antique auctions, Joyce is also a farmer.

Joyce and her husband own a farm, which was featured on the cover of the Bedford County telephone book for 2001.

In addition, Joyce hauls hay and milks cows for her brother, Larry Beegle, who lives on the farm which has been in the family for more than 240 years.

"I love cows," Joyce said. "I name them, baby them, and we keep them until they drop. To me, it's a sad day when one of my cows dies."

She loves the farm so much she is willing to put up with the inconvenience of milking twice a day despite her hectic antique schedule.

Joyce's husband, Bob, owns a tire and realignment shop near their home.



Joyce's doll collection peers down the stairs from a comfortable position on an antique love seat.



The master bedroom is an antique lover's delight. Carrier and Ives prints of children adorn the walls. The boxes are all handcrafted and add a colorful touch.



An antique clock is one her latest purchases. Joyce said, "I was delighted to tell this lady I would never sell it. A bill of sale showed the clock sold for \$20 in 1916."



Curly maple is her favorite wood and Joyce is proud to own several pieces.