

# Lancaster Farming Antiques Center

## Dealers Thrive On Market Potential Of Unexpected Finds

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Food And Family  
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LEBANON (Lebanon Co.) — Warren Miller retired when he was 55 years old and started buying and transporting furniture from the Pennsylvania coal regions to sell in the Hershey area.

That was 15 years ago, and Miller said he no longer deals in furniture because it's too heavy to move.

Instead, he deals in small items, which he and his wife Esther display at the Lebanon Valley Antique Depot, 1251 E. Main St., Annville.

Manager Jim Sadler said, "The Depot is the largest antique gal-

lery in the area. It's expansive, with 160 dealers. We have everything."

But to offer wares that will appeal to buyers requires a lot of guesswork according to Miller.

"Interests change often," Miller said of his experience in the antiques business.

Some items bring surprising prices even to experienced deal-

ers such as Miller. Recently he purchased an old bass saxophone for \$170.

"I was expecting to double the price, but before I had it priced, a buyer approached me and offered me \$700," Miller said.

That doesn't happen every day, but the hope to hit another great find keeps every day exciting for Miller and others like him.

Another exciting sale happened unexpectedly when Miller hung up an old flag with 46 stars.

He wasn't trying to sell the flag, just display it in honor of Labor Day. A Colorado tourist walked in, saw the flag, and knew the 46th star stood for Colorado, the 46th state to enter the Union. The tourist offered Miller \$800 for the used 15x8-foot flag.

To keep things in perspective, Miller said, "But I sell a lot of stuff for \$1 just to move it. It's a lot of guesswork in what's going to sell."

Last year, he couldn't get enough McCoy vases for the market. This year, prices are marked down and the market has dwindled.

Items that continue to sell well for him are collectibles connected to Milton Hershey of chocolate fame. The Depot is located near

Hershey attractions, and many tourists stop by looking for a souvenir to take along home.

Recently Miller purchased several Steuben glasses that Hershey Chocolate gave to employees for its 100th anniversary celebration.

"Everyone who worked there got one, and everyone who didn't wanted one," Miller said of the anniversary gifts that he sells for \$150 with the box.

He also has Hershey collectible plates from 1975 that sell for \$20 each.

Crocks and cast iron kettles hold their values, according to Miller, but

haven't increase for several years. Larry Hicksenheiser displays glassware and children's books and puzzles at the Depot.

"Things are harder to find to resell at a profit," Hicksenheiser said of his 10 years in the business. He started selling his finds at flea markets.

"But I got tired of loading and unloading everything. I prefer to bring things to the Depot and leave them set awhile.

It's the seventh year in operation for the Depot, which is open daily except Wednesday from 9 a.m. - 5 p.m., and Friday until 8 p.m. The flea market operates Saturday and Sunday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

“Prices fluctuate according to interests and the economy. If you buy right, I think you get a better return on your investment than you can in the stock market.”

Jim Sadler

Lebanon Valley Antique Depot



"For its 100th anniversary Hershey Chocolate presented these glasses with the Hershey emblem." Miller said of the \$150 price tag he attaches to the collector's item, "Everyone who worked for Hershey got one, and everyone who didn't wanted one."



Larry Hicksenheiser deals in glassware and children's puzzles and books.



Not every childhood remembrance garners a high price. Here a 1936 "My First Animal Book" sells for \$10. Children's puzzles are also affordable.



Jim Sadler said the Lebanon Valley Antique Depot, 1251 E. Main St., Annville, claims to be the largest antique gallery in Lebanon County. "It's expansive. We have everything," he said.



"I buy anything I think I can make money on," said Warren Miller. He holds an ax that was used to hew logs to remove bark. The ax handle is bent, so that fingers would not get pinched while using it.



These 1975 Hershey Collector's plates are priced at \$20 each.

## National Association Of Milk Bottle Collectors Plans Convention June 6-7

GRANTVILLE (Dauphin Co.) — The National Association of Milk Bottle Collectors will conduct its 23rd annual convention at the Holiday Inn in Grantville (Hershey), June 6-7.

Hundreds of collectors from all over the U.S. and several Canadian Provinces attend. Commemorating the era of milk bottles and other related collectibles, as well as the milkman and milk delivery vehicles, members will transform the hotel into a weekend of nostalgia packed with buying, selling, and trading.

Each hotel room becomes a sales/display room. Larger displays will be featured in a special area during the convention.

Highlights include an auction of bottles and collectibles, a "sundae" on Saturday with the Pennsylvania Dairy Princess scooping ice cream, and an awards banquet.

The public will be able to view exhibits and will be encouraged to meet with members. However, for the security of all the guests in the hotel, all non-members will be asked to register in the lobby.

Participants must wear name tags when walking through the exhibits, hallways, and member's rooms.

To learn more, and join about 2,000 other collectors, yearly memberships cost \$20 U.S., \$22 Canada, and \$25 International. Membership includes a subscription to "The Milk Route," which is the official publication of N.A.M.B.C. since October 1980, a directory of members, and free advertising. For more information, write to Milk Route, P.O. Box 105, Blooming Grove, NY 10914, or e-mail [moto2@frontiernet.net](mailto:moto2@frontiernet.net).

More information on the convention will appear in next week's issue of *Lancaster Farming*.