

Lancaster Farming Antiques Center

Former Chicken Coop, Factory Transformed Into Antique Center

SHREWSBURY (York Co.) — New uses for old items makes up part of the collectibles market. But even buildings evolve from one use to another.

Take the Shrewsbury Antique Center. It boasts 10,000 square feet filled with quality antiques. It's difficult to fathom that the building started out as a chicken coop in the early 1900s and was later converted into a sewing factory before being transformed into a quality antiques shop.

Nancy Hildebrand is one of the 54 dealers with individual booths in the building. She said, "I like

this shop for the variety and high quality. The owner doesn't allow any reproductions or crafts. Everything must be older than 1965. We have a quick turnover of merchandise here, but not in dealers."

Hildebrand and her husband Gerry specialize in primitives, as do some of the other dealers.

"But I try to fill our area with a varied selection to appeal to all types of buyers," Hildebrand said.

Through many years of selling and buying, Hildebrand has garnered a few tips for marketing, which she is willing to share.

"Many dealers crowd shelves and tabletops so full with items that customers don't notice unique cupboards and tables," she said. "If you want to sell furniture, you shouldn't cover it with other items."

A few well-chosen items placed on furniture will capture a customer's eye and bring attention to the item it sets upon.

Hildebrand has an early 1900s jelly cupboard where she displays a few items such as a slaw board, a wooden bowl, a yellowware teapot, and a brown tobacco bowl.

"I could fill these shelves

with a lot more stuff that I have, but then people wouldn't notice the cupboard itself," Hildebrand said.

Adjacent to the cupboard is a large wooden butter churn with original yellow paint. The churn is unique in that it is set on a wooden stand.

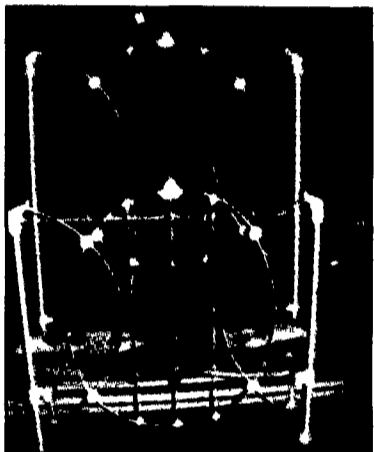
Other booths such as one by Margaret Carroll are filled with Victorian furnishings. A pair of Regency-era pole fire screens with intricate built-up crewel embroidery are especially eye catching and unique. The screens are for sale at \$3,500.

Jane Workman combines country, Victorian, and vintage items in her booth.

"I buy what I like," she said of displaying items from several different eras. Her large collection of vintage tablecloths, aprons, and dresser scarfs are displayed in an oak wall cupboard believed to be built between 1900 and 1910.

A growing market is items from the retro era.

"Baby boomers remember



This white iron bed frame with rails and wheels is listed at \$490.



This butter churn with original paint and stand is in excellent condition.



Displays should be sparse when trying to sell shelves, cupboards, and tables, according to Nancy Hildebrand. Otherwise, customers notice the items on the shelves and not the item itself.



Jane Workman is fascinated by country and Victorian-era collectibles. She holds an apron in front of an oak flat wall cupboard filled with vintage tablecloths, pottery, and other items.



Nancy Hildebrand stands at the old country store display at the Shrewsbury Antique Center.



These Regency-era pole fire screens have intricate crewel-embroidery detail. The screens were used to block the heat from a fire while women sat near the fireplace while completing hand-stitching projects.

growing up with items from the 1940s-1950s, and that is what they want," Hildebrand said of the reason for the interest in retro items of plastic, chrome, shiny leather, and aluminum pieces. A whole section of the center is reserved for retro items.

David Keller said that when he purchased the property about 15 years ago, the building was already used as an antiques shop. Before Keller took over ownership of the center, antiques and collectibles were crowded hodgepodge into the building.

Today's customers prefer orderly arrangements with items that complement each other and prices and information about the items well marked.

"I like the variety that different vendors bring," Keller said. "It works better than having only one dealer displaying items. This way we have items from many different eras."

Keller has expanded the original building. In one end of the building, an old country store is set up. Huge wooden display cabinets, scales, and other items reminiscent of the era are for sale.

"I try to incorporate older styles into the building project," Keller said. For example, he found iron handrailing in a demolished building at Baltimore Inner Harbor that he used. He also used old barn siding on some of the walls.

Shrewsbury is listed in the National Register of Historic Places, and is a delightful village known for its variety of antique and specialty shops.

Shrewsbury Antique Center is open seven days a week from 10 a.m.-5 p.m. For more information, call (717) 235-6637. The center is located one-half mile off Exit 1 of Rt. 83. Follow Rt. 851 west about one-half mile, and turn right on Highland Drive. It's the large yellow building behind the Factory Center.



Dave Keller owns Shrewsbury Antique Center, which has more than 10,000 square feet and 54 dealers. He did much of the work in transforming the building. He incorporated old barn siding and iron handrailing into the remodeled building.