

# Antique stores provide glimpse of past

Analysis By  
Donna Sisson  
Staff Reporter

Antique stores are time machines of sorts. Once inside, you can be transported through time, visiting colonial America by the craftsmanship of early-American furniture and getting the feeling of the 1920s in a group of paintings.

Like historical museums, antique stores give you a glimpse of a bygone era. Unlike museums, antique stores let you take things home.

There are numerous reasons why

people choose to buy antiques. They might use them, buy them as an investment; or they might collect a particular item, like dolls, spoons or crystal. Some people buy antiques just because it gives them the same good feeling as their grandmother's attic.

Nora Houtsma, who has collected antiques for about 10 years, said her interest in antiques grew out of her association with her grandfather's house and the antique pieces there. Houtsma is co-owner of the Rogers House, 2145 B St., a historical landmark that serves as a bed and breakfast inn.

"I like the feel of a piece with char-

acter and history behind it," she said.

Whatever might motivate you to shop for antiques, it is a good idea to know the market, especially if you find yourself wanting to spend large sums of money.

Beginning antique shoppers can educate themselves pretty fast, Houtsma said. Two tools she suggests are local antique stores and price books.

"The best guide in the area is to look at antique stores for a general idea of prices," Houtsma said.

There are price books published, but they just give you the actual value of an item and don't tell you the local price. You might end up paying a lot more or a lot less than the listed price, depending on the area, Houtsma said.

Houtsma said prices for specialized items like dolls and dishes tend to be more stable while furniture prices vary.

Carol Jacobs, who sells Oriental items at Martin Antiques, 230 N. 7th St., gave this advice to the novice antique shopper:

"Come in and talk." People are willing to share their knowledge and will also help you find the types of antiques you are looking for, she said.

A major benefit of buying antiques is

that you can buy items for the same, if not a lower, price than you would pay for a comparable item bought new.

At antique stores you can buy good oak furniture for less money than new oak furniture, Jacobs said. The furniture may not be 100 years old (which would qualify it as a genuine antique), but it would definitely be collectible, she said.

The craftsmanship found in antiques is of a quality that either can't be found in new pieces, or is found only at very high prices, Houtsma said.

Another advantage to buying antiques is that they are an investment.

"Pieces you buy, if you buy well, will either retain their value or go up in value," Houtsma said. If you want to trade or sell later, it's an investment, she said.

If you bought a new couch, you probably wouldn't be able to sell it later for the same price you bought it, Houtsma said.

If you want to get good deals and find bargains, both Jacobs and Houtsma suggest going to auctions.

Auctions are announced in the Lincoln newspaper. Some auctioneer provide direct mailing to people on their mailing list.

Subscribing to a county newspaper is also a way to get notice of the auctions in that area, Houtsma said. Sometimes the prices are better out of town, she said.

At auctions you have to make fast decisions, so it is necessary to have an idea what the item is worth, Houtsma said. Decide how much you want to spend and, hopefully, you will stop there when you are bidding, she said.

Thrift stores are another source of bargains which should not be overlooked when shopping for antiques, Houtsma said.

Rodger Jordann, owner of Rumors, 725 S. 11 St., said he buys some of his merchandise at thrift stores, cleans and repairs it and then sells it in his shop.

If you shop very long for antiques, chances are you will soon be faced with the decision of whether or not to part with your money. To buy, or not to buy? The answer seems to be purely a matter of personal choice.

Part of the decision of how much to pay for an item is whether you really like it and will use it, Houtsma said.

"If it is within your price range and you like it, you should buy it," Jacobs said.

## Antique shops abound in Lincoln

The type of antique store you enjoy the most will depend on your needs. Some stores have a little of everything for browsers, some stores have a lot of everything, piled everywhere for browsers with a lot of extra time; and some stores specialize in one category of antiques for serious collectors or shoppers with a particular item in mind.

There are over 30 antique stores in and around Lincoln. The following descriptions list some of the stores in the general downtown area. The first seven stores are all very close together in the Haymarket vicinity, directly north of O Street and west of P street:

- **Burnham House Antiques**, Suite 204 Haymarket Junction, 700 P St.; specializes in pottery, glassware and china.

- **Pioneer Peddler**, Suite 206

- **Haymarket Junction**, 700 P St. As the name implies, this store has a variety of old plains and prairie-type antiques. It is combined with **Mouse in the House**, a store that sells hand made crafts.

- **Coffee Mill Antiques**, 701 P St. This store has a little bit of everything, with a large stock of linens and brass lighting and also some clothes and glassware.

- **Fringe and Tassel**, 785 P St., is best known for its antique clothing, but also carries jewelry, some furniture and offers costume rental.

- **Larson Furniture and Antiques**, 727 R St. This is a large store, literally piled to the ceiling with furniture, cabinets, couches, tables, beds — if it's furniture, chances are they have it. They also have some decorating accessories like pictures, lamps and

carpets as well as miscellaneous items.

- **Martin Antiques**, 230 N. 7th St. This is an antique cooperative. One person owns the building and several antique dealers market within the building. It has an eclectic mixture of merchandise including jewelry, clothes, Oriental items, dolls, art decorations and furniture. The store also sells coffee and baked goods from Maxwell's Bakery.

- **Swappers Paradise**, 1016 P St., is a small store crammed full with you-name-it from every era and aspect of life. They might even have had the kitchen sink but I didn't see it, possibly because it was covered with other relics of the past. There is also a lot of dust and disorganization, making it difficult to shop. This is the type of place where you feel like you might get a good bargain if you can find it in the heap.

- **Rocking Horse Antiques and Collectibles**, 737 S. 11th St. This was a neat little store with lots of variety. It has a room full of toys, a little room with clothes, lots of jewelry and some glassware.

- **Rumors**, 725 S. 11th St. There are some items of antique quality in the store, but owner Rodger Jordann prefers to categorize his merchandise as "nostalgia collectibles," items that will eventually become antiques. It could be called "kitch" — something that was once made, is not made anymore and will never be made again, Jordann said. Items in the store date from 1920s to yesterday, he said.

- **Kaufman & Doezal Auctioneers**, 916 S. 13th St. Though their specialty is running auctions and sales, they do have a shop with a limited amount of merchandise, mostly furniture.

- **Village Store — Bally Antiques, Inc.**, 710 B St., has a wide variety and a moderate amount of merchandise.

- **The Country Store**, 2156 S. 7th St. The main item here is glassware, with an emphasis on depression glass.

- **Herman's Hutch**, 1627 S. 17th St. A small store with mainly small collectible items.

- **Cosch House Antiques, Inc.**, 135 N. 26th St. The Nebraska Antique Dealers Directory lists this store as "renowned for offering fine investment quality antique examples," and "authoritative in the antique and art field."


- **Jo-em's Nook**, 2712 Vine St. I was unable to visit this store during business hours and I'm not sure when they are open. From the window, it looks like they have mostly old books and some miscellaneous collectible items.

- **American Antiques**, 2208 O St. "Cut glass, depression glass, fiesta, pottery, Madame Alexander Dolls, coins and stamps," according to NADD.

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