



H. George Bickelmann sits among his antique treasures in what appropriately may be the oldest farmhouse in Oakland County. (Staff photos by John Stano)



This 18th-century Italian candelabra and American Federal mirror are just two of many antiques in the Bickelmann home.

### Eclectic tastes

## Antiques grace their lives

By Judith Borne  
Staff writer

H. George Bickelmann appropriately lives in what may be the oldest farmhouse in Oakland County.

The antiques expert, who recently shut down his Birmingham antique store to devote more time to appraisals, has settled into the vintage yellow farmhouse on Walnut Lake Road in West Bloomfield.

The farmhouse was reportedly built in 1830. "It isn't a matter of great comment whether it's the oldest," the cultured, animated Bickelmann said. "We just love it."

"We" is Bickelmann and his wife, Jean, a fashion illustrator, who shares his feeling for the house, its setting and the furnishings of many countries and periods collected over their 43 years of marriage.

"We've been collecting since 1939. It gets to be a disease. Everything has been shared," he says with feeling.

"I detect authenticity. Jean decides if it goes in our home," he laughed.

"I have the instinct, he has the knowledge," Mrs. Bickelmann agrees.

Their taste could be called eclectic, in that there is no inclination to furnish rooms in one style or time period.

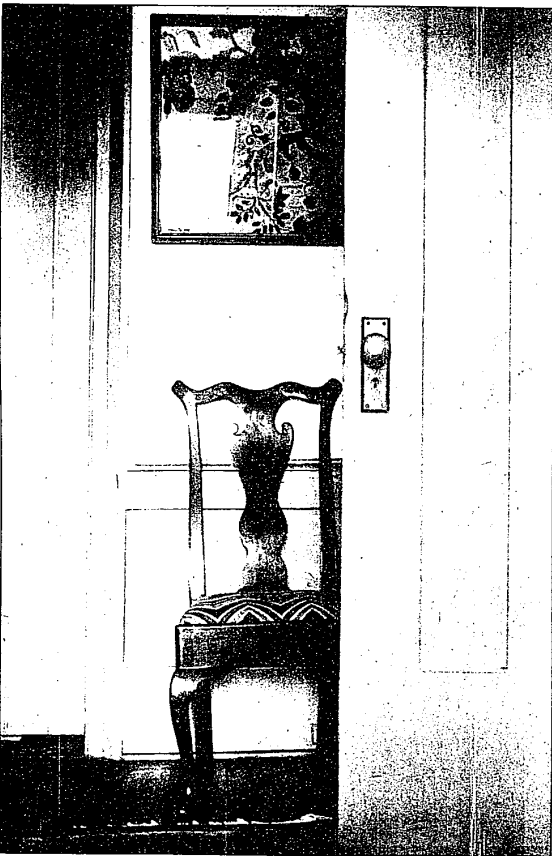
An American federalist-style mirror (1815-1830) is flanked by 18th century Italian candelabra in the dining room which is dominated by a 19th century French wrought iron chandelier.

"If you like it, you have it," Mrs. Bickelmann says. "Beautiful things go together."

FOR BICKELMANN, the appraisal business is merely the next stage in his full life.

Born in New York City, he became a photographer just like his father, his grandfather and his grandmother. He met Mrs. Bickelmann when he was photographing fashions and she was drawing them for *Bloomington*.

Please turn to Page 4A



ABOVE: Another part of the Bickelmann's collection is a Wallace nutting chair, circa 1941. BELOW: This wood carving of Moses dates back to the 1700s where it was exhibited in a German church. RIGHT: Objects like this Art Nouveau candlestick reflect the type of antiques in the Bickelmann household.



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