

sational

to holidays and later



JERRY ZOLYNSKY/staff photographer

Home fragrances by Ashley Brooks available at Jeff Fontana's in Birmingham includes five different scents. \$11 per burlap bag with refresher oil, \$10.50 without oil.

dried flower petals and spices — has graduated from little sachets designed to be tucked between lingerie layers or stored in handkerchief drawers to focal points of decor.

And instead of sprinkling of petals in a small bowl, the new fashion statement is a large bowl filled to the brim with aromatic petals, mixed with pine cones, dried berries, wood, shavings, fruit pits and unshelled nuts, or whatever the fancy dictates as long as it holds a fragrance.

PROPERLY CARED FOR, potpourri is forever. When the ambrosial scent dims, the dried mixture can be placed in a shallow glass baking pan, sprinkled with drops of refresher oil and covered with plastic wrap. After 24 hours, the fragrance is renewed.

There are many ways to freshen a room but none quite so elegantly as with a large bowl of potpourri. I first saw it used this way in the resident castle of the Duke of Northumberland in Alnwick, N. England. My aunt lived nearby and was graciously permitted to take me through the castle.

My first impression was of two liveried footmen standing on either side of a very large reception table which held a huge bowl, heaped with rose petals and lavender. The sole job of the footmen was to stir the potpourri once every 15 minutes to assure that the hall remained filled with the wafting scent.

Later impressions of the castle in-

cluded a sense of wonder at the homeliness of the family rooms. Faded, flowered slipcovered and worn needlepoint foot stools attested to the popularity of the library that was also filled with bowls of garden flowers. And I remember the sitting room occupied the past fortnight by the Queen Mother with her most recent photograph propped up on a table graced by a single fresh rose in a silver vase.

BUT MOST OF ALL I remember the potpourri and I spent much of my time in the north country gathering little bags of lavender and rose petals in an attempt to acquire enough to fill a modicum of a large bowl when I got home. I was never really successful in my quest until several years ago when I discovered large bags of potpourri on Hilton Head Island, called Aromatique that came from Heber Springs, Ark.

It is a pleasure to report that Aromatique is now carried at Bonwit Teller in Somerset Mall; Claire Burke is also packaging potpourri in quantity available at Jacobson's stores, Long's Bath Shop and Peddler's Four in Northville plus a host of other stores, including J.C. Penneys, Hudson's and Crowley's.

Scarborough makes a complete line of home fragrances including light bulb rings and oil, also available at most of the stores that carry potpourri.

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