

# MALLS & MAINSTREETS

MONDAY, JUNE 23, 1993

## SHOPPING CENTERED



LINDA BACHRACK

## Treasuring the hunt

Summer seems the perfect time to while away an afternoon browsing through antique store. Everyone loves a treasure hunt. The anticipation of discovering the unexpected is surpassed only by the excitement of procuring that long sought-after collectible.

Antique buffs can spend hours poking through jam-packed nooks and crannies, searching for something that has a special, personal appeal. It's often an emotional quest, a stirring of forgotten memories.

This shopping phenomenon, likened to a scavenger hunt, is embarked upon by two distinct types of individuals — those who seek specific items for wise investments and those who let their hearts do the shopping, ignoring trends and unearthing jewels that only they can fully appreciate.

Nostalgia seems to be driving many of today's collectors.

"People are looking for the things they grew up with," said Angela Mifsud of Memory Lane Antiques, 12 Forest Place in Plymouth. That explains the popularity of merchandise manufactured in the '40s and '50s. Notable is the rise in value of Duncan Phyfe reproduction mahogany furniture, sewing accessories, Weiss and Miriam B. Haskell rhinestone jewelry and colorful pottery from Hall, Roseville, Hull and McCoy.

### Prints from past

My favorite collectibles are the cheerfully printed cloths that were draped over kitchen tables in the '30s and '40s. These sturdy cotton textiles exhibit fruit and floral patterns in bright and pastel hues. I've transformed the vintage fabrics into window treatments and pillows, but they really enliven the table and look particularly pretty on a patio or deck. Expect to pay between \$12 and \$40 and don't expect to find a wide selection at any one store. That just makes the hunt more fun.

Josephine Watson of Northville, a longtime antique collector, cited English bone china and Victorian furniture as two of her favorites. She also looks for cranberry glass and hallmark silver. Many collectors have a passion for pitchers and most would agree that a pictured Hamlet Quimper design is a true find (\$145). This artifact early 20th century piece from the famous French company is an example of the eclectic mix of beautifully displayed antiques at L'Esprit, 336 E. Maple in Birmingham.

Ed Throckmorton guided me through his shop, which features a cosmopolitan melange of French, American, English and German furniture and accessories. Star and moon motifs are still hot, according to Throckmorton, as are unusual examples of ironwork and architectural. Included are ancient stone troughs that make great sinks or birdbaths.

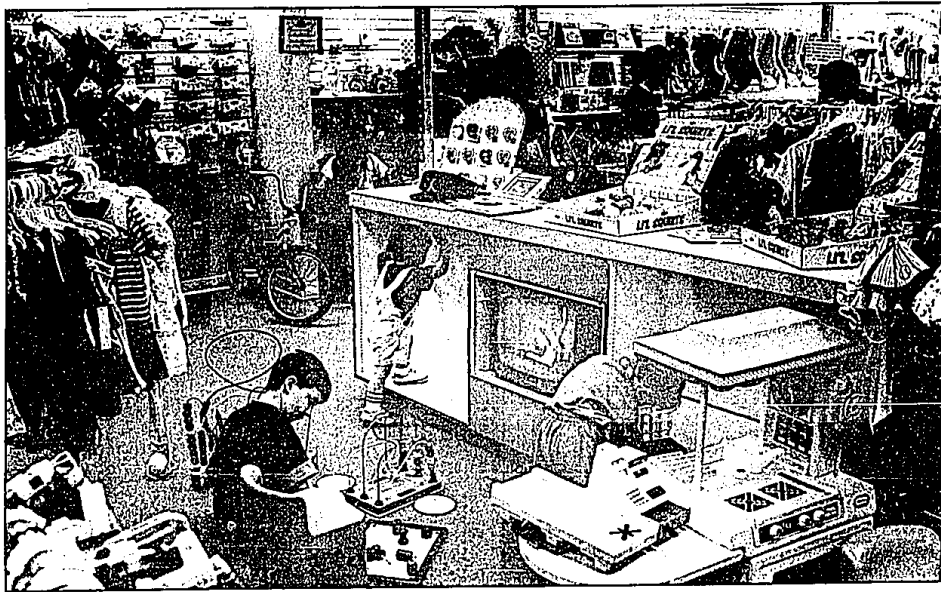
### Collectibles count

Sharon Hood, owner of Bits and Pieces in Plymouth's historic Old Village district, finds that people are looking for collectibles this summer, not true antiques. People "ooh and aah" over the Civil War-era gown, for instance, but they're not buying.

"I'm just about out of oak furniture," she said. "And good cut glass, not pressed, is popular." She also has a hard time holding onto sports memorabilia, especially vintage golfing gear. In addition, her rainbow-colored Fiesta, Vistosa and LuRay tableware is literally selling out of the window.

Carol Butaguan, visiting from Minneapolis, is always on the lookout for Fiesta ware, and was lured by Hood's window display.

"I also collect Depression glass," she said. "The pressed patterns are easiest to find." Her friend, Madeline Tracht of Plymouth, sets a vibrant table with her inherited set of Fiesta ware. She loves to mix and match all of the colors. "I'm constantly searching for the divided serving dishes," she said. It's fun to scout around for inexpensive little collectibles, but occasionally you want a centerpiece, like the pictured armchair from Watch Hill Antiques, 830 E. Maple in Birmingham. Open just four months in the downtown location, this shop features exquisite painted European country furniture, virtual conversation pieces around which to decorate a room. Most are late 18th to mid-19th-century examples from Austria and Germany, ranging in price from \$600 to \$9,000.



JIM RIDEN/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Passing the time: Tyler Curtis, 6, his brother Chad, 19 months, and sister Erin, 5, play while mom browses through the racks at the Lots for Tots resale shop in Rochester Hills.

## Stores bloom for Secondhand Roses



"I got it at a thrift shop!" one woman proclaimed with pride. The age of recycling and value consciousness has brought secondhand stores into the 90s.

By SUSAN DEMAGGIO  
STAFF WRITER

A back-to-basics movement with eyes on the environment has given secondhand shops a new reason-to-be.

Several local consignment shops have moved into larger quarters recently, reporting that more people than ever before are stopping in to sell suits, dresses and children's wear that deserve a second chance with a new owner.

"The frivolousness of the '80s is gone," said Kathy Newton, owner of "Lots for Tots" at Livemore and Walton in Rochester Hills. "Then it was not socially acceptable to visit secondhand stores. Now, neighbors go out shopping together and it's considered prudent to use and recycle durable goods."

Newton started her children's resale shop several years ago in a small Walnut Street basement in

downtown Rochester.

"We just blew out of there in no time," she said, "moving to larger and larger locations. In fact, we just opened a franchise store in Madison Heights, the demand is so great."

By controlling the quality of items for resale and designing the interiors to be shopper-friendly, today's suburban resale shops are pretty, airy and almost sophisticated. Items are clearly tagged, displayed according to category and size, and there are also amenities such as seating for the weary, cartoon monitors for children, and Victorian, full-length mirrors.

Some shops even hold clearance sales where markdowns are taken on merchandise that is not moving.

Business is 'steady'

At "Regeneration" in downtown Plymouth in the Westchester Mall, business is steady, according to owner Vikki Keehm.

"Last year, our first year in business, we paid out over \$14,000 in consignments," she said. "Customers like the store because it's set up like a boutique, not a resale shop. We look at 'Regeneration' as a service, providing the opportunity for women to own a \$150 Leslie Fay dress for just \$25. You might think our customers are low-income, but this is not the case. Our customers are anyone with an eye on value who loves a good bargain."

"Regeneration," like many other resale shops, offers clients a 50/50 split on the sale price of the garment. The price is set by the owner with input from Keehm. Garments are kept for a few months and then the owner has the opportunity to reclaim or donate the item.

"The store name comes from a suit, framed and hanging on a wall in the store, worn 50 years ago by my husband and recently by my grandson," she said. "It could still be worn by somebody else."

To recycle the unsold items, Keehm works with area churches and homes for the aged.

Mary Shook, owner of the 18-year-old "The Clothes Horse" in Troy, said the notion that resale shopping

is "hush-hush" is "pooch-pooch."

"Resale shopping is smart shopping," she said. "My customers are working women who need the suit and blouse but can't afford the department store prices."

Shook sells designer and name brand women's apparel in a lovely boutique on South Boulevard and Crooks. She recently moved from a smaller shop on Square Lake, leaving the spot to "The Kids Closet," a new resale shop for infants and toddlers. Ellie Vanilderden of Troy said she has made some wonderful purchases at "The Clothes Horse" and other area resale shops.

### Her routine

"It's part of my routine to once a month visit several secondhand shops in the area," she said. "I make a day of it. You'd be surprised how far \$50 goes when you're not shopping in a mall."

In March, a new kind of resale shop for children opened on Rochester Road between Big Beaver and Wadles in Troy. Owner Kim Lammers buys her secondhand inventory di-

See ROSES, 5A

## Avoid lemons while at secondhand shops

By SUSAN DEMAGGIO  
STAFF WRITER

A "find" at a secondhand shop is only a bargain if it is wearable, comfortable and cleanable.

To ensure that your bargains aren't busts, shop owners and savvy second-time-around shoppers offer the following tips:

■ Don't pay more than a third of a garment's original shop price.

■ Charity shops are a gold mine for vintage footwear.

■ Unless you are an expert seamstress, don't buy anything that needs drastic altering. Modern dry-cleaning methods will ruin ancient, delicate fabrics.

■ Avoid buying anything that is badly stained. Even if your aunt is Heloise, you probably won't be able to remove set stains.

■ A key to the age of the garment is the shoulder cut. Clothing manufactured prior to the 1980s did not have relaxed shoulders or padding.

■ Evening wear bargains come in nostalgic or dramatic shapes from the past and assure that you don't meet your double.

■ Before you buy, check for stains, tears and moth holes and judge the amount of life left in the fabric.

■ Replace missing buttons from the correct period that match the style of the dress or suit.

■ Lace purchases take well to dyes, which give them a new look.

■ Don't overlook the accessory counters that often contain purses, collars and crocheted shawls that add a nostalgic touch to contemporary looks.

MONDAY, JUNE 28

### CARTOON EXHIBIT

Now through July 25 "That's All Folks," overview of Warner Bros. cartoons through 150 drawings, cartoon cells and cartoon screenings. Tuesday through Saturday 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Sunday noon to 6 p.m. \$3 adults, \$1 children. Sponsored by Dayton-Hudson Foundation. Flint Institute of Arts, 1120 E. Kearsley 234-9508.

### BOOK BENEFIT

Jacobson's stores will sell "Songs of My People" (\$24.95), a book depicting black contemporary life as seen through the eyes of 48 African-American photographers. Proceeds go to the Detroit Art Museum's Friends of African and African-American Art. Coincides with museum's black-and-white photo exhibit co-sponsored by Time Warner Inc. through Aug. 29. 644-5900.

### TIFFANY GLASS

The Mole Hole hosts a Moyda Tiffany lamp exhibition featuring more than 75 stained glass lamps and lighting fixtures through July 5. Collection includes Victorian, Nouveau, Deco and nostalgic styles, many handcrafted from original turn-of-the-century molds. Regular store hours.

## ADDED ATTRACTIONS

Downtown Birmingham. Maple/Woodward. 644-8233.

### PHOTOGRAPHY CONTEST

Amateur's black-and-white entries accepted through July 16. Prints must be 8-by-10 or larger. Photos must be mounted, matted or both. Grand prize \$300. Show runs July 20-25. Unlimited entries, \$4 fee per entry. Application form must accompany each photo. Available at mail management office. Lorraine Hall, Seven Mile/Middlebelt. 478-1165.

THURSDAY, JULY 1

### FIREWORKS DISPLAY

35th Detroit-Windsor International Freedom Festival. 10 p.m. Detroit River. North America's largest pyrotechnic display courtesy of Hudson's. Rain date is July 2. 443-6000

SATURDAY, JULY 3

### FARMER'S MARKET

9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Village Commons parking lot, One-half mile east of Farmington Road on Grand River. Repeated Saturdays through October. Downtown Farmington. 474-3440.

SUNDAY, JULY 4

### HOLIDAY HOURS

Most malls will be open for limited hours this holiday from 12-5 p.m. Call for exact hours of your favorite shopping center. Somerset Collection will be closed.

MONDAY, JULY 5

### SENIORS DANCE

11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Mall's lower level community room. Free admission. All welcome. Refreshments served. Westland Center. Wayne/Warren. 425-4001. Shopping news of special events and promotions for inclusion in this calendar can be sent to Susan Demaggio, 805 E. Maple, Birmingham, Mich. 48009, or faxed to 644-1314.

