

York, Pennsylvania

The Greater York Antiques Show

by Lita Solis-Cohen

The rebirth of the Greater York Antiques Show at the York, Pennsylvania, fairgrounds is a phenomenon worth watching. The new owners, Bob Bockius, David Strickler, and Charles Whitney, who have grown up in a business supplying display cases for antiques shows, seem to be doing a lot of things right.

"We were lucky that Donna Burk was ready to sell during the recession," Bob Bockius said on the phone after the third show since Mitchell Displays bought the Burk shows 18 months ago. "We bought before the economy recovered. Our first show had just thirty-five dealers, our second one had eighty, and there were eighty-

ifornia dealer who said, "Don't use my name."

As for the exhibiting dealers, there was a large contingent from Pennsylvania, and a good number of dealers seldom seen in the Middle Atlantic states came from New England, the South, the Midwest, and Canada. They brought some remarkable things that would stop any art lovers in their tracks anywhere.

The reclining leopard hooked rug at Gene Rappaport's stand resembled a folk painting by Morris Hirschfield, and the show offered several other first-rate hooked rugs. The pottery bust of Edgar Allan Poe exhibited by David Good should be either at the Edgar Allan Poe house or in a folk art

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five in this May [2 and 3] show," he said.

Is it true that he had a waiting list of 15 dealers who wanted to get into this show? "More," replied Bockius.

The three partners still run Mitchell Displays, supplying cases to shows and auctioneers as they have done for 25 years. Hanging around shows after delivering the cases, they observed how shows are run. For this show, not only did they deliver the cases, they also built new walls, which they can reuse, that are sturdy enough to support heavy objects. They upped the rent, to the dismay of some dealers. A 20' x 12' booth is \$1400, which included wallpaper, electric outlets, and fascia board, while a smaller stand, 16' x 20', was \$1250. Several dealers shared stands.

Bravo to their show program, which included a dealer list and show map with the names of businesses and booth numbers on one side and names, phone numbers, addresses, and e-mail addresses on the other! Jim Burk never did that; the dealer's name and the town were all you got.

The new owners kept the Burk tradition of a two-day setup when dealers shop each other's merchandise on Wednesday and Thursday. "There was a real excitement. People rushed around to see what would come out of the boxes. There was a buzz," is the way Bockius put it. "There was a great sense of camaraderie. Younger dealers helped older ones with setup; we were all there to lend a hand, as we always were. We all started as porters in our 20s," he added.

The partners were thrilled to see more than 300 in line for the 10 a.m. opening on Friday morning. The first person in line was Karen Beekman, a collector/dealer from Michigan, and the second was a Cal-

museum. There was good pottery of every sort—early salt-glazed, creamware, tinglazed redware, yellowware, mochware, spatterware, Gaudy Dutch, transferware—and some of it seemed to be selling. A.J. Warren of Wilton, Connecticut, seemed to be selling briskly, as was Dennis and Dad Antiques. There was some first-rate cast and hand-wrought iron, plenty of woodenware, some of it turned and painted, and some colorful grain-painted furniture.

There were good chairs from all periods. Jim Kilvington's Pennsylvania ladder-backs, which he had shown at the Philadelphia Antiques Show, were top of the line. A number of the York dealers had exhibited at the Philadelphia show the week before. In addition to Kilvington, Kelly Kinzle, Stephen Still, Jeff Bridgman, and Greg Kramer drove their trucks right to York after having packed out in Philadelphia, so they had brought a few of the same things because they were on the truck with their stock for York.

There was a real rush when the show opened at 10 a.m. The aisles were crowded, and it seemed like old times, but late Friday afternoon was a quieter time, and Saturday's attendance was disappointing. The weather was too nice; Saturday was one of the first nice days to get out in the garden, so only the die-hards came to the show and did some buying. Plus, competition from shows in Ohio and Indiana may have kept some people from driving to York.

Selling was good for some and disappointing for others. The large number of dealers offered a lot of competition. Those who did not sell well said they bought well, and some said they made sales after the show when customers reconsidered.

Bockius said the Greater York show is just beginning its reinvention. He sees the



Doug and Bev Norwood of Timonium, Maryland, asked \$3600 for this hooked rug, approximately 36" x 24".



Raccoon Creek Antiques, Oley, Pennsylvania, asked \$32,000 for this Quaker single-door cupboard in red paint and \$16,500 for the cats and dogs hooked rug.



Robert Conrad of Yeagertown, Pennsylvania, asked \$2850 for this pair of heart-shaped wooden folk art frames decorated with lovebirds. They sold.



The Garthoeffners of Lititz, Pennsylvania, said they sold so well at setup that they had little left for the show. This tin tray painted with a still life was \$8000.

economy improving and hopes that new legislation will help young people refinance their college loans and be able to buy houses, furnish them, and discover antiques.

"We raised the booth rent so we could do more advertising," said Bockius. "The market now dictates a two-day show. I hope one day we will need three days again." In the meantime, Bockius said their aim is make the Greater York show a not-to-be-missed event.

The partners have also worked on two Michigan shows they bought recently: Michigan Modernism and the Southfield Pavilion Antiques Exposition. They had put together one Modernism show

in Southfield in April and are putting together two Southfield Pavilion shows for next season. "We are hoping to build our show business slowly; we are looking for a slow, steady growth. We want to make our shows accessible to everybody, with a broad mix of dealers, the full gamut. From Handel to Willie Nelson is my music analogy," said Bockius.

The pictures and captions show only a fraction of the broad range of material that was available at this big York show.

The next Greater York Antiques Show will be held October 31 and November 1. For more information, contact Mitchell Displays at (856) 686-9000; Web site (www.greateryorkantiquesshows.com).



Taking up the entire foyer, the stand of Greg K. Kramer & Co., Roberson, Pennsylvania, was filled with furniture, paintings, folk art, and ceramics of all kinds.



Jeff Bridgman of York County, Pennsylvania, asked \$19,500 for this Civil War period Confederate third national flag—a pattern that was adopted just 36 days before the war ended. It was one of several items in dealers' booths that had been exhibited at the Philadelphia Antiques Show the week before.



Heller Washam Antiques, Portland, Maine, asked \$5800 for this China trade painting from the first half of the 19th century that depicts the Dutch galleon on the Yangtze River between Whampoa and Shanghai.

- SHOW -



The new logo for the Greater York Antiques Show shown on this truck is now also displayed at Memorial Hall East at the York Expo Center. The show is now in its 45th year and managed by Mitchell Displays.



James Grieco of Stockton, New Jersey, asked \$950 for this small Berks County, Pennsylvania, blanket chest with sponged decoration. From left: the Crolius, Manhattan, jug was priced at \$1950 (it sold); the Worcester, Massachusetts, jug, \$950; and the Jones, Greensboro, Pennsylvania, jar, \$325.



One of a pair of toile cache-pots, \$12,500 the pair from Lisa McAllister of Clear Spring, Maryland.



David Horst of Lebanon, Pennsylvania, asked \$4200 for the Mantzville Hotel sign. An unframed German fraktur (\$650) is propped up on a 27-drawer painted cabinet (\$490) that is on an Ephrata farm table (\$1650). The painted blanket chest with green sponged drawers, Lebanon County, Pennsylvania, was \$5500.



Ruth Rogers of School House Farm Antiques, New Holland, Pennsylvania, asked \$1400 for this large red kugel with a French cap.



Van Anda's Antiques, Lititz, Pennsylvania, asked \$4800 for this hooked rug, a copy of a Navajo rug.



Jewett-Berdan, Newcastle, Maine, asked \$12,500 for the Vermont painted blanket chest with two drawers. The Indian basket on it was \$1450, and the watermelon still life, \$3200.



Two of a set of four French plates decorated with rabbits, \$275 each from Sally Good of Dresher, Pennsylvania.



Spatterware bull's-eye cup and saucer, \$395 from Margaret Johnson Sutor of Lafayette Hill, Pennsylvania.



Hollis Brodrick of Portsmouth, New Hampshire, said he rarely does shows but didn't want to miss this one, so he shared a stand with Bill Kelly of Limington, Maine.



Would you expect to find Peruvian gold earrings, priced from \$800 to \$1500, at the York show? Hollis Brodrick asked \$950 for these.



Vernon Gunnion of Strasburg, Pennsylvania, asked \$125 for this priced three-volume catalog of the Parke-Bernet Galleries auction of *Arts and Crafts of Pennsylvania and Other Notable Americana* from the collection of Arthur J. Sussel, 1958, when a Dutch cupboard was \$750 and the fraktur of General and Lady Washington by the artist known as the Sussel Artist sold for \$3800. That fraktur had already appeared in publications by Henry Kauffman, J.J. Stoudt, Jean Lipman, and the Harry Stone Gallery.



Dish-top walnut candlestand, probably Pennsylvania, \$7800 from John Chaski of Camden, Delaware.



Bill Kelly offered this 9' long x 38" wide New York state farm table with a four-board top. It can seat 12 and was priced at \$4900.



One of a pair of pewter reflector sconces, \$2200 the pair from Hollis Brodrick, who said he bought the sconces from a collector who had purchased them years ago at the sale of the Lillian Blankley Cogan collection.



The best of its kind. This English wrought-iron gridiron, illustrated in *Colonial Wrought Iron: The Sorber Collection* (1999) by Don Plummer, was \$3800 from Kris Johnson of Tex Johnson & Son Antiques, Adamstown, Pennsylvania.



Ruth Van Tassel of Malvern, Pennsylvania, asked \$6500 for the walnut blanket chest with three drawers, \$1900 for the late 18th-century Indo-Dutch Colonial candlesticks, \$3000 for the 19th-century lantern clock, and \$3400 for the Bible box. The 1830-dated Pennsylvania sampler by Margaret Childs (center), worked in Mrs. Catharine Buchanan's school in Marjetta, Pennsylvania, in its original frame and glass, was \$7500.



Steve Smoot of Lancaster, Pennsylvania, asked \$8900 for the painted corner cupboard from Deep Run School, Montgomery County, Pennsylvania, with inverted tulips in the paint graining. The 9'4" long x 54" wide Navajo rug of handspun yarn with aniline dyes was \$3800.



Axtell Antiques, Deposit, New York, asked \$5900 for dressmaker Miss Cate's sign.



English dotware posset pot from the Katharine Prentis Murphy collection (it has a Skinner auction sticker on the bottom), \$11,000 from David Good of Camden, Ohio.



Stephen-Douglas Antiques, Rockingham, Vermont, asked \$7500 for this expressive rug from the Catherine Bishop collection. There was an impressive selection of hooked rugs at the show.



Pottery bust of Edgar Allan Poe, \$24,000 from David Good. It is a first-rate piece of American folk art.



Kelly Kinzle of New Oxford, Pennsylvania, asked \$16,500 for this miniature walnut high chest, dated 1829.



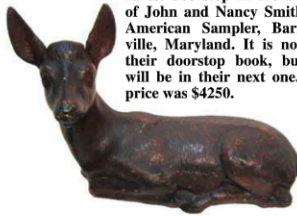
Exhibition piece by J.Y. Oliver of Cambridge, England, with 400 blades and a clock signed by the maker, 1780-90, \$62,500 from Kelly Kinzle.



Baltimore sofa with restored horsehair upholstery, 61" long, circa 1830, \$4450 from Pratt's Antiques.



The 43" x 39" x 19" paint-decorated New York state blanket chest with original painted surface (\$1750) and the English Windsor chair (\$395) were offered by Gene and Nancy Pratt of Pratt's Antiques, Victor, New York.



This recumbent deer was the rarest doorstop in the booth of John and Nancy Smith of American Sampler, Barnesville, Maryland. It is not in their doorstop book, but it will be in their next one. Its price was \$4250.



There were a good many early sales. Ken and Robin Pike of Nashua, New Hampshire, sold this wallpaper-covered box.



Sealyham terrier painted iron doorstop, \$950 from Ken and Robin Pike.



This American woolly needlework by a sailor pictures the U.S.S. *Charleston* flying the American flag. It was \$4800 from Mo Wajselfish of Leatherwood Antiques, Sandwich, Massachusetts, who said the *Charleston* was built in San Francisco in 1888 and by 1891 was the flagship of the Pacific fleet. It was among the first protected cruisers and had an armoured deck.

Wajselfish said he had never done a York show before. "I did it for Bobby," he said. "He is such a positive force in the industry. I have used his cabinets at shows for thirty years." He sold well.



Doug Ramsay of DBR Antiques, Hadley, Massachusetts, asked \$3600 for the New York state sack-back Windsor chair with bold turnings and \$1250 for the circa 1790 Rhode Island stand.



The principals of Mitchell Displays (from left): Charles Whitney, Bob Bockius, and Dave Strickler. In 2012 the partners bought the Greater York Antiques Show from Donna Burk, the widow of Jim Burk, founder of the show. Photo courtesy Mitchell Displays.



This chimney cupboard, of an unusual small size and on black feet, was \$8500 from George and Carol Meekins of Country Treasures, Preston, Maryland.



Philadelphia rod-back Windsor chair, dated 1804 under the seat, \$2000 from Hanes & Ruskin, Old Lyme, Connecticut.



Jim Emel of Dublin, Pennsylvania, offered stoneware pitchers with cobalt decoration. From left: an example from the Remmey pottery in Pennsylvania; one from the Herrmann pottery in Baltimore (\$2750); and a pitcher from Chester County, Pennsylvania (\$1150).



John Neal's creamware milk jug with cows and a milkmaid, circa 1780, was \$1700 from Maria & Peter Warren Antiques, Wilton, Connecticut, who seemed to be selling very well.



Alice and Art Booth of Wayne, New Jersey, asked \$3250 for this late 19th-century rag doll with her original clothes.



Elinor Penna of Old Westbury, New York, offered this Victorian Staffordshire figure of a fireman for \$1100. "It is the only American figure in Victorian Staffordshire," she explained. "It was copied from a Currier and Ives print."



What was selling? Cheryl Mackley of Red Lion, Pennsylvania, said Dresdens, the German pressed-cardboard Christmas ornaments. The goose was \$395; the stork, \$345.



Steven Still of Manheim, Pennsylvania, asked \$2750 for the mid-19th-century Cooley family chest from Chesnee, South Carolina.



Joseph Lodge of Lederach, Pennsylvania, offered slipware plates. The one on the left was \$1295; the one on the right, \$950.



Weary shoppers were offered York Peppermint Patties. "We measure how long people stay at a show," said Bob Bockius. "Many stayed more than four hours."



Gene Rappaport of Strasburg, Pennsylvania, said this hooked rug is the greatest piece of folk art he has ever owned. It does call to mind a painting by Morris Hirshfield. Rappaport wanted \$18,500 for it.



One of two yellow, red, and blue Amish blankets, \$425 each from Bruce Rigby of Lancaster, Kentucky.

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