

Antique store profile

By: LAUREN WRIGLEY

Early country antiques fill the little brick building in downtown Rocheport. The building's cornerstone is dated 1904, and its historic architecture fits well with the antiques. A waist-high black iron fence separates the building's adjacent garden plot from the sidewalk.

Carolyn Green, 67, and Amanda Canter, 77, rent this building for their business, Friends Together Antiques.

Both women were stay-at-home moms with a passion for antiques. In their free time, the women sold antiques separately out of their homes. They eventually became friends and decided to open a store with Nancy Russell in Columbia named Friends Together Antiques. When Russell retired, Canter and Green moved the business to Rocheport. They have been there over five years, and the new location brings in more customers.

Green and Canter travel to find their merchandise. They buy from a "picker" who finds antiques for them and other dealers by going to farm auctions. The women define antiques as objects that are over 100 years old. Much of what they sell was originally made in the 18th or 19th century.

Canter's favorite part of the business is meeting new people.

"I guess our lives would be pretty boring if we didn't have the shop," Canter said.

Each woman contributes to the business in her own way. Green organizes the displays of merchandise and keeps the store's financial accounts by hand. Canter cleans the store and cultivates the garden.

Over the years, the women have developed a strong friendship. Green's daughter was diagnosed with fatal ovarian cancer this year, and Canter managed the store so Green could be with her daughter. Canter said Green had done the same for her. Green ran the store while Canter took care of her elderly aunt, father and mother.

"That makes you feel close to somebody when they do that for you," Canter said.

Like the antiques they sell, the two women are advancing in age, but they have no plans to quit their business anytime soon.

"We plan to be here for a long time," Green said. "It's our passion in life. We thoroughly enjoy it."