

Take a “Mini-Vacation” at the Antique Store With a Heart!!



Marlene Tegge, Owner,
Bucks County Antique Gallery

By: Gayle Crist Shisler

“This place is a priceless gem...it’s like a mini-vacation for anyone who comes here!” That’s what Susan Kolterman, long-time customer and now dear friend of Marlene Tegge, owner of the Bucks County Antique Gallery, says about this magical menagerie of memories and mementos in Chalfont.

On a recent visit there, I was first blown away by how immense the Gallery is—two stories and 12,000 square feet of room settings that Marlene, a former interior decorator, has designed with finesse and a flair for color and texture. Totally unlike any antique store I’ve ever been in, this is not just a showroom with pieces scattered haphazardly here and there. A lot of thought, care, and feeling has gone into the placement of every doily and doll, every toy car and pig cookie jar. Yes, it’s an amazing collection of fascinating finds and whimsical treasures.

But what I also found—and wasn’t expecting—was a place with a very big heart. Marlene and Susan envision it as a cozy, welcoming “hub” where people in the area can have fun and make friends. In that spirit, anyone who stops in is invited to not only browse or buy but to sit down to share fresh-baked cookies and tea (served in antique teacups) with Marlene. “People come in as strangers from many states and countries, but they all leave as friends,” she says with a sincere smile.

Because Chalfont doesn’t have a downtown, her goal is to make the Gallery a local gathering place that builds a sense of community. And, to show how much she cares about her customers, neighbors, and friends in that community, Marlene hosts several events throughout the year to help people in need. “I’ll have a fundraiser for anything you want!”

she proclaims proudly, as she points to a beautiful, hand-crafted quilt hanging on the wall above the entrance—donated by a customer to be raffled to raise funds for a local fireman injured by a hit-and-run driver.

Recently, she hosted a car show that turned out to be very popular, and this fall, she’s organizing a 50s Dance featuring a drive-in movie. The Gallery is also available for groups and speakers to hold events on weeknights, and details will soon be available about an upcoming Singles Game Night and a Ladies Book Club. Plus, every Saturday, there’s a musician to entertain adult and kid customers alike.

Indeed, children are welcome here, and Marlene makes them feel at home with a special play area and a choice of goodies to eat and drink. In fact, recently an 8-year-old girl added a testimonial to the dozens that enthusiastic, complimentary visitors have written in colored marker on the posters lining the wall going upstairs, saying “This place has cool stuff!”

On a more serious note, the Gallery is also a getaway for people with life-threatening illnesses such as cancer. Marlene speaks with emotion about the many women going through chemotherapy who come there to escape the real world for a couple of hours. She has many loyal, repeat customers who visit the store regularly and value it as a retreat from their daily lives. They find that it’s comforting and therapeutic atmosphere—what Marlene says is “like a big home.” And she certainly embraces all newcomers with open arms, as she did me.

One of the reasons Marlene loves being an entrepreneur is that she enjoys inspiring and motivating other women to pursue their dreams. “In the ‘80s, I told the former owner of



this store that it’d be my dream to have a store like this...and now I do!” she quips. “How many people get to have their dream? I want to help other women have their dreams too.” And so she supports fellow women business owners who want to use the store for seminars to promote their product or service.

As I departed the Gallery after just 45 minutes, it was like leaving an old friend. Marlene and the many vendors who sell their wares and artwork—old, new, retro, and vintage—in the nooks and corners of the Gallery have filled it with warmth and personal touches that make it feel like a wonderful home away from home...one you’ll be very glad you visited. Don’t wait! Take a mini-vacation at the Bucks County Antique Gallery this week or weekend. And say hi to Marlene for me! ☺

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Testimonial: “I’m a first-time visitor, and this is the best antiques store I’ve ever been to...and, having a father as an antique dealer, I should know!”

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- Beautiful new paintings by talented local artists
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- Primitives, “shabby chic”, retro kitchenware & MUCH more in beautifully detailed room settings with 12,000 square feet of showroom space
- Accepting quality consignments & vendors
- Children welcome—Special kids’ area with toys and food
- Snacks, drinks, and a warm welcome from the owner to make you feel right at home!



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