

Profile

BY HOLLY FLETCHER

PHOTOS BY BILL SCHWARTZ

Keeping traditions alive



The Christmas Haus

Fine German Tradition
Ornaments • Smokers • Pyramids
Nutcrackers • Classics

Roger Lund, owner of The Christmas Haus in New Oxford, loves Christmas.

If the name of his business doesn't convince you, just take a step inside the door.

Surrounded by holiday music and twinkling lights, customers will find a large selection of glass ornaments, wooden folk art, hand-turned music boxes and paper mache candy containers – all handmade in Germany.

Lund's wares were previously displayed in the historic 1891 brick house along Route 30, but a house fire more than two years ago forced the shopkeeper to relocate.

"The fire, while devastating, did not devastate us. It actually opened up a lot more opportunities for us here," said the 59-year-old, who has turned his home into a mini shopping village.

The authentic German heirlooms are now housed in three separate buildings behind the brick house. The original barn and carriage house, along with a newly acquired Amish shed, have all been renovated into cheery little shops. In the spring, Lund hopes to include a garden and walking path.



In the carriage house, customers can find Schwibbogen (decorative candle arches), tree toppers and music boxes.

In the middle shop, there are wooden pyramids – a sort of carousel, which uses candlepower to rotate the levels of wood carved figurines.

The barn, or main shop, houses glass ornaments, incense-burning smokers, German nutcrackers, and matchbox miniatures.

Lund travels to Germany each spring to work with the local artisans who supply the items he sells.

"I drive around villages, looking for the word 'werkstatt'



(workshop) written on the house and find out what they make," he said.

Surprisingly, Lund speaks only limited German.

"Sometimes, the craftspeople speak no English, but it always works out and I've never had a problem communicating," he said.

He looks for unusual items, things that are not seen everywhere. "I am not interested in the mass-produced," he said.

Lund is from the Washington, D.C. area where he had an old-fashioned general store with a year-round Christmas department. When the items he ordered from a Spokane, Washington-based company were no longer pure German, he got in touch with the German craftsmen and formed a relationship.

More than 10 years ago, he opened the shop in New Oxford with 100 percent German-made items.

The selection he offers is always changing and growing



and, based on the significant sales increase over the past year, business is booming.

Customer Sharon Sproul, of Stanton, Virginia, visits the store regularly on her way to or from the New England states. She buys ornaments for friends and family.

"We have an incredibly loyal customer base and are quite humbled by it," said Lund. Being along Route 30 is another bonus.

"Many tourists become mail order customers after visiting the shop and seeing the quality we offer. They go home with a unique smoker and their family 'oohs' and 'aahs' over it and the next thing you know, we have an order for four or five more smokers! It's great!"

One secret to his success is being very organized. When he travels to Germany in the spring, Lund is looking ahead to the next year's inventory.

"We usually order in February and the shipments come in May,



"Sometimes, the craftspeople speak no English, but it always works out and I've never had a problem communicating."

Roger Lund

The Christmas Haus owner

*Jens,
Thank you
for everything
- Roger*



“I have been all over the world and love to see different cultures and what others have built in their lives.”

Roger Lund
The Christmas Haus owner

giving us the summer to unpack and get ready for the holidays. It takes a lot of planning,” he said.

When he’s not in the shop, Lund serves as county chair of the Democratic Committee and as secretary/treasurer for the Gettysburg Festival.

“As for politics, I prefer being the behind-the-scenes guy and as for my role with the Festival, I believe it is important to highlight local artists and give them a venue to show their work and be exposed to the public,” he said.

Which is pretty much what he does in his New Oxford shop for German artisans.

Outside of the business, Lund’s personal passion is traveling.

“I have been all over the world and love to see different cultures and what others have built in their lives,” he said.

His degree in sociology could explain his interest in people and their cultures. “Their culture is exposed through the crafts they do and I find that fascinating,” he said. “I strongly believe in keeping those traditions alive.”

The Christmas Haus is open daily from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

For more information visit thechristmasha.com or call 717-624-9646. 📞

