

Shop with a difference

Head down the garden path for Philippa Lloyd's vintage textiles



A garden shed hunkering next to an enormous laurel hedge is not the first place you'd expect to find a treasure trove of vintage textiles. A few old terracotta pots and cobweb-covered deckchairs maybe, but certainly not a little piece of girlie heaven jam packed with floral pastel quilts, pretty eiderdowns, beautiful blankets and fabric hunting. But then Philippa Lloyd, to whom this shed belongs, is full of surprises.

Far from having studied textiles or antiques, she simply 'started buying and selling stuff - china, bits of clothing, blankets,' four years ago, when her children left home. 'I enjoy buying things more than selling them,' she says, from her Northamptonshire home. 'I like bidding at auction; going to fairs and seeing different parts of the country, but I have to think carefully about whether I'll be able to sell something.'

This she clearly does, as the shed itself testifies. 'I started off in a very low-key way,' she says, 'but soon it picked up and my husband, Richard, got so fed up with the carrier bags full of bits of ribbon, the quilts lying about, the things needing to be repaired and washed, that he built the shed.'

Inside, shelves and drawers burst with embroidered linens, quilts and cushions. Floral tea sets, lampshades, wire birdcages, hand-painted toast racks, old cotton pyjamas and superbly individual hacking jackets, which Philippa customises herself, fill what little space remains.

'I don't sell repro,' says Philippa. 'Everything is unique. People ask for king-size quilts, but they didn't have those in the old days - everything was smaller then. These things are old, they've come from homes, they have a history.'

■ Philippa Lloyd, Fountain House, Helmdon, Brackley, Northamptonshire NN13 5QA (01295 768288). By appointment only.



Philippa's shed is unremarkable from the outside but a different world within, brimming with shelves of plump quilts and cushions. Tables and drawers overflow with printed floral fabrics, lavender bags, jewellery and spotted china while enamel jugs and bread bins grace the floor. Every piece is vintage

