

Bernice Bienenstock Furniture Library ^[1]

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Bernice Bienenstock Furniture Library

by Joe Exum Brown, 2006

Bernice Bienenstock Furniture Library in High Point is considered to be one of the largest and most comprehensive [furniture](#) ^[2] publications libraries in the world. Founded in 1970, the collection and its ancillary services had their origins in the personal collections of Nathan (Sandy) Bienenstock of Pennsylvania. Bienenstock's family-owned *Furniture World* ^[3] magazine began publication in New Rochelle, N.Y., in the 1920s. His company subsequently bought the *Southern Furniture News* in [High Point](#) ^[4] and renamed it *Furniture South*, a subsidiary publication of *Furniture World*.

Bienenstock retired in 1970, leaving the publication business to his son and moving to High Point. He brought his invaluable collection of furniture publications, which dated back to the eighteenth century and included the complete original volumes published by Thomas Chippendale, George Hepplewhite, and Thomas Sheraton. In High Point, Bienenstock purchased the handsome Colonial Revival home that houses the library from the estate of Charles S. Grayson, a physician and four-term mayor of the city. It was one of the few remaining homes from the city's early development along its main thoroughfare.

A special display case in the Bienenstock Library holds Chippendale's first, second, and third editions of *Gentlemen & Cabinet-Makers Director* ^[5], published from 1754 to 1762. Along with those editions are Hepplewhite's *Cabinet-Maker and Upholsterer's Guide* ^[6] and Sheraton's *Cabinet-Makers and Upholsterer's Drawing Book* ^[7], all dated from the mid- to late 1700s. While the entire collection of nearly 6,000 books is officially valued at about \$2.5 million, these volumes and a number of others are considered priceless.

Bienenstock's wife Bernice died in 1984, and the library was formally named for her by the Furniture Library Association. The building in which it is housed is on the National Register of Historic Places.

Additional Resources:

Bernice Bienenstock Furniture Library official website: <http://furniturelibrary.com/> ^[8]

Image Credits:

Bienenstock Library draws furniture designers, enthusiasts. YouTube video. 1:57, posted by FurnitureToday, April 6, 2012. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hHfxzaUhiMo> ^[9].

Subjects:

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[UNC Press](#) ^[12]

Authors:

[Brown, Joe Exum](#) ^[13]

Origin - location:

[High Point](#) ^[14]

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