

Repurpose Boutique & Unique Items offers affordable, creative handmade furniture, home decor and more



Repurpose Boutique is located at 27 Center Street offers one of a kind items you won't find anywhere else!

I don't have an artistic bone in my body. The pinnacle of my ability would be stick figure sketches – that most people wouldn't even recognize. My handwriting is barely legible. My friends call my writing "Heijoelyphics." So, when I see someone draw, paint, sketch or create, I am in awe. I admire what people seem to do so effortlessly. I am a bit envious of the high that comes with creation. Every artist I know seems to be full of enthusiasm, passion and energy. Side effects of the creation process.

One place that excels in this department, and utilizes a

rather uncommon medium, is Repurpose Boutique and Unique Items on Center Street in Fairhaven. The boutique specializes in handmade furniture and home decor – that means that 90% of the items you come across are one-of-a-kind handmade creations.



An example of a repurposed coffee table and window.

You won't find many of the things you encounter here anywhere else on planet earth. The interesting bit is that the vast majority of these items are repurposed – taking two or more items and combining them to produce something different, interesting, functional or appealing.

Co-owners Rachel Collins and Robyn Bucklin are enthusiastic about their venture. It's a vehicle for their passions in interior decorating. They only stock items that they would absolutely love to see in their own home. It's an excellent guideline to produce happy customers.

Most of these original items are the product of Rachel's husband, Shane Collins who is Head of Manufacturing. Shane who is a lifelong carpenter, is not an artist. While I mention art at the beginning of the article, I only bring attention to the creativity that is seen here. These are not Frankenstein creations of some mad scientist. Shane's eye is a balance between function and eye-appeal. One is not required to interpret these items. The only brain work necessary here is

“How would this add to my home?” or “Where would this look best?”

For example, on my last visit I saw two coffee tables. That typically will conjure the standard images of what coffee tables look like: wooden structure with either a wooden or glass top. However, the ones I saw at Repurpose Boutique had a spin on that standard. These two tables had wooden bases – one was an antique – but the glass tops were re-purposed from windows. One top had a single glass pane framed with wood and the other six separate glass panels. Both were UNDER \$200.



The ever changing showroom: every few days, something new and original.

I saw a Reindeer made from re-bar: those long rods of steel for reinforcing concrete pours. The re-bar was also twisted to make legs for another table. A boat that was slightly altered to stand on its stern, thereby converting it into a shelf for books or knick-knacks. There was a figurine card-holder made solely from spoons and forks. One of the more interesting pieces was a wrench fish: a piece of scrap metal, nine wrenches and a pair of needle-nosed pliers welded into a fish!

If you have a cellar or attic full of items just collecting dust, you can bring them in to Repurpose Boutique and share your ideas. If you are like myself and not that creative, then you can describe, or bring in a photo of what you have and Rachel, Robyn and Shane will be more than happy to discuss

what can be designed from them – making you something unique and personal.

Rachel and Robyn said it's not uncommon to hear friends or even customers say "That's cheap. You should charge a bit more." Neither will budge on that. They feel charging exorbitant prices will drive people away. In their minds the items are priced accurately and tacking on extra dollars to turn a greater profit, smacks of greed. From a practical perspective, Shane is churning out items with enough frequency that they wouldn't see the light of day, unless room was made.

If unique items aren't really your thing, there are plenty of "regular" items. Shane has an uncanny ability to take an item that someone would say is too old to be of use any longer, and turn it into something gorgeous. Often all an antique chair or table needs is a little tender loving care and elbow grease. Shane, Rachel and Robyn will sand, stain, repair, nail, or weld a piece until it obtains its former glory...and then some.

In addition, you will find very affordable, handmade jewelry. Affordable, meaning affordable – not lip service. The jewelry ranges in price from \$5-\$30. Stunning, handmade, original pieces of jewelry. Lastly, in an attempt to maintain a variety, Repurpose Boutique has recently started branching out by offering handmade items offered by local craftsman – candles, beauty products and the ilk.



Repurposed items, refurbished, and re-loved.

The showroom of Repurpose Boutique is densely packed with items. You could literally spend 10 minutes and take only one step or two. One thing that will become immediately apparent is that these items automatically generate conversation, even a chuckle. You will be curious on the thought process of how it was made. You will appreciate the craftsmanship and obvious man-hours of effort. You will have questions.

Best of all, this aspect is not limited to browsing the shop. Imagine the piece is sitting in your home generating the same type of discussion, answers and interest.

Every week, the store's identity changes in the sense that when items are purchased, they simply create room for more of Shane's creations. This happens frequently enough that a visit a few weeks apart will feel like you are in a different spot – if it weren't for the smiling faces of Rachel and Robyn.

If you are in need of sprucing up the home, breathing some new life into it, or simply have an idea, but not the know-how, stop in at Repurpose Boutique and talk to Rachel or Robyn. Their artistic, creative personalities mean they are always bubbling with ideas and stimulated by the thought of a project. Instead of spending three, four or five times more money on a product that was made in a foreign country on an assembly line, browse through the items at Repurpose Boutique for a hand-crafted in the USA item, that likely no one else on the planet has.

Repurpose Boutique & Unique Items is located adjacent to Pumpnickels and Euro. You are a short walk to the Millicent Library, gorgeous 19th and 20th century architecture of the town hall, Taber Lodge Building, Unitarian Memorial Church, and memorial brick park. There are some great spots to eat at and it's a fantastic area to stroll and see some local history. There is ample street parking and you shouldn't have to walk more than a block.