



ABOVE Some of the pieces for sale at Elaine Phillips Antiques in Leyburn. **LEFT** BADA's chair, Louise Phillips. **BELOW** An early Swedish folk art chest, part of the stock of fellow BADA member Robert Young Antiques.

PROFILE

Louise Phillips

The first female chair of BADA in its 103-year history talks about her love of antiques, her passion for the trade and her hopes for the future of the association

INTERVIEW **JANET GLEESON**

Love of the profession is part of the fabric of her being, says Louise Phillips: 'To use a well-worn expression - like a stick of rock, it runs through me.' Her parents were avid collectors with wide-ranging interests and Louise grew up surrounded by a fascinating variety of objects. 'When I was born, they lived in a modern apartment furnished with Hille furniture designed by Robin Day, but their real passion was early oak furniture,' she explains.

While her father pursued a career as a women's fashion designer in the late Sixties, her mother alleviated the boredom of being left at home with a small child by starting her own business,

Elaine Phillips Antiques, trading in 17th and 18th-century oak, Delftware, metalware, tapestries and treen. 'To begin with she operated from our home in the Yorkshire Dales. Then, one day, she announced she had taken a lease on a shop in Harrogate's Royal

Parade.' Meanwhile, Louise had left home and was working in fashion and fashion PR in London. But her heart wasn't in it. Her father had already left his career as a designer and joined the flourishing family business.

Antiques were in Louise's blood and she yearned to come home and join the firm, although her mother had other ideas. 'She fought against me joining the business, saying there was no future in antiques.'

That was 35 years ago, and Louise recalls that when her mother did relent, the three of them working together could be challenging at times. 'In my first week I was instructed by my mother (using my own money) to go out and start buying stock for the shop. I didn't know where to start and came back with a 17th-century oak gateleg

