

the times. Sorrentino said the people of those years were fascinated by gadgetry. His collection includes a high-backed chair meant to protect its occupants from cold drafts, equipped with a small sliding door in its back for passing things to people behind the chair. Other kitchen contraptions such as pie safes and a multi-gear peeler are displayed.

Despite the austerity of the times, tastes leaned toward bright colors and design, visible in the furniture and the art. Most paintable surfaces were stenciled by housewives and daughters with bright reproductions of fruit, flowers, and sea shells.

Visitors to the collection are often other collectors, who come from all over the country to see the Fairbanks House, Sorrentino said. "Children always love it too," he said. But he feels the house suffers as an attraction by being in Provincetown.

Most local residents have histories and artifacts of their own, he said, and visitors to Provincetown are usually attracted by the shops and beaches. "People just don't come here for something like this," he said. But weekends have brought a steady flow of visitors, and he hopes the summer will bring more.

Folk art has experienced a resurgence of interest in the past five years, after an exhibition in a New York gallery, Sorrentino said. One result, he said, is that once accessible pieces have become rare and expensive.

Sorrentino calls himself a "born collector." His home in Truro is filled with still more folk art, and he also maintains a collection of Navajo artifacts and old maps of Cape Cod.

Sorrentino grew up in Arlington. He attended U.C.L.A. for his undergraduate degree and received a master's from Boston University. For two seasons in 1950 and 1951, he performed as a tenor with the San Francisco Opera. The following year he sang with a New York Gilbert and Sullivan company.

He came to Truro in 1953 to teach music in the Provincetown, Truro and Wellfleet schools. "I taught everything, vocal and instrumental, to everyone from grade one to 12," he said. For the past 15 years, he has owned and operated the *Crow* and *Anchor*. Throughout his careers, he has collected folk art, and is now working on a folk art book for Viking Press.

Sorrentino assumes the expense for renovation, art acquisition and the upkeep of the Fairbanks House. "I haven't applied for any funds, under the bicentennial or anything," he said. He said such financing might put restraints on the project.

The David Fairbanks House is open for the summer every day from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. The house supervisor, Dianne Worthington, conducts tours for visitors. Admission is \$1 for adults and 50 cents for children under 12. With the limited numbers of visitors who know about the house and are interested in the collection, the admission fees defray only a small part of Sorrentino's costs.

But he looks at the project as his own private enjoyment. "It's mine; I've collected it all and I love it all," he said, "and I enjoy sharing it with people who are interested."



One of two parlors in the Fairbanks House