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REASONS FOR COLLECTING

By Ossie Bladine

Building forts has long been a pastime for kids. In my younger days, I would take the family sheets and anchor them to whatever posts I could to turn my bedroom into one semi-long connection of tunnels. The construction process was fun, but it was the finished project that, once inhabited by myself, allowed the imagination to soar.

Forts could become anything with a spark of creativity, including my own trading post or collection grounds.

One fall day, I thought the colors of the leaves outside were particularly eye-catching. I noticed the tidbits of originality in each, and decided — at least for that day — I needed each one.

So I collected dozens of — hand-picked — leaves that all seemed museum worthy at the time. Many were tossed on top of the sheet-roof of the fort. The best looking ones were kept inside the fort like treasures. Of course, my mom considered the scene more of a yard than a museum, and the collection was soon dispersed back into the outside world.

The fascination of collecting certainly begins at our earliest days. There's plenty of literature

out there describing why this happens, and the benefits kids' collecting has on development.

For my son, it's Hot Wheels cars and toy monster trucks. So. Many. Monster trucks.

My daughter is only two, and hasn't yet fixated on one thing or another — she prefers to spend her time playing with big brother's collections.

As I meet more and more collectors out there, I'm beginning to wonder about the psychology behind it. I know there is plenty of psychoanalysis to study (Freud's explanation is a little unsettling), but prefer to hear the layman's reasons.

In discussing this issue's cover story, the subcategory of breweriana that is beer can collecting, I asked Michael Boardman if can collectors are more historians or more people just looking for another excuse to get together and drink beer. Laughing, he said a little of both.

Of course, there's no one reason that fits all. Everyone has their personal, philosophical or psychological logic for collecting.

So, let's have it. Send us an email at oldstuff-news@gmail.com and let me know: Why do you collect things?

NORTHWEST HISTORY

STATEHOOD FOR WASHINGTON ORIGINALLY MET WITH INDIFFERENCE

By OS Staff

Blacksmiths pounded their anvils, men fired their revolvers and saloon doors began swinging wildly on November 11, 1889, in towns throughout the Washington Territory. President Benjamin Harrison had just issued the proclamation of statehood for Washington, and celebrations were in order.

Neighboring Oregon had become a state 30 years earlier. The residents of Washington Territory had not been too interested in following suit at the time, however. The question of statehood had been submitted to voters in 1869, 1871 and 1873, but the measure was always met with indifference.

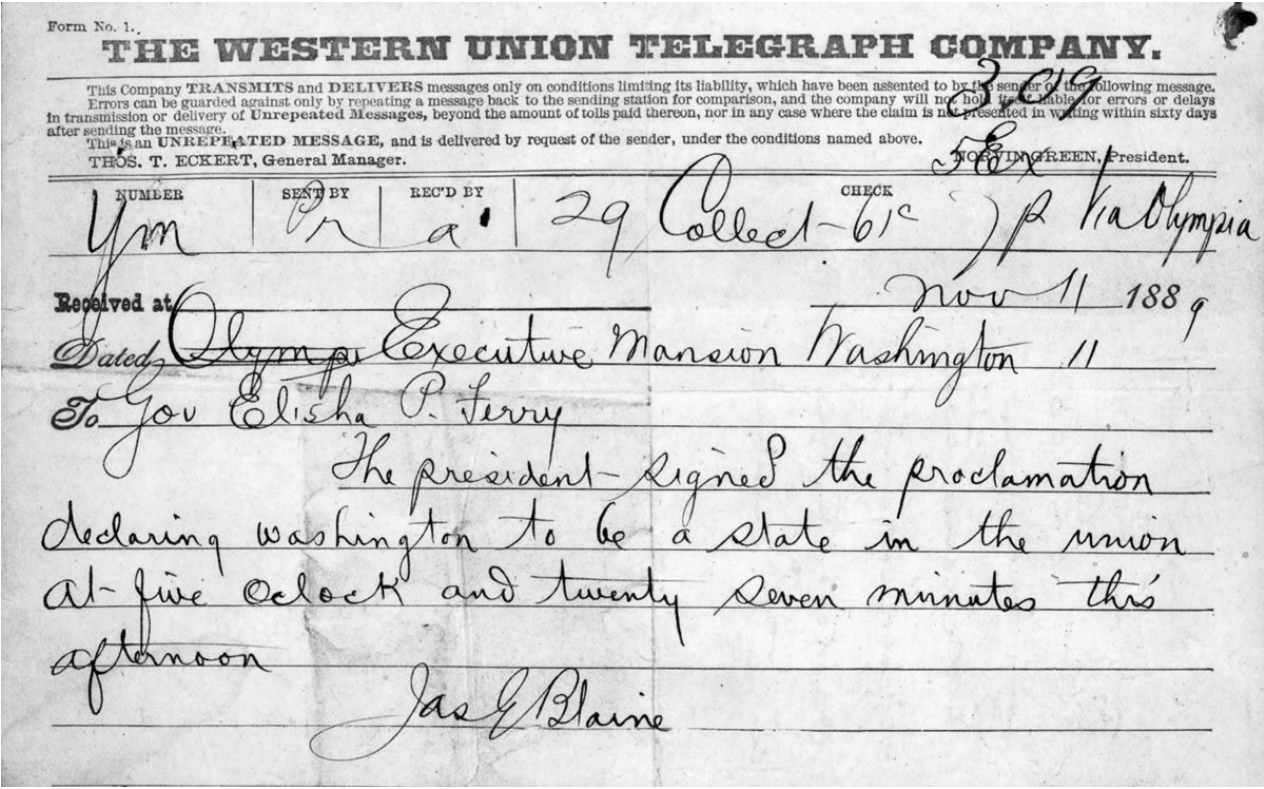
By 1876, the population in the territory had increased to about 40,000 and the people finally authorized the election of delegates to a constitutional convention.

Most of the convention debate centered around women’s suffrage and the prohibition of liquor. Finally, both items were omitted from the proposed constitution and, at a fall election, it was accepted.

It was still necessary to convince the United States Congress that statehood for Washington was a good idea. Several bills to this effect were rejected for a variety of political reasons.

When a bill for annexation as a state finally passed both houses of Congress in 1886, it was vetoed by President Grover Cleveland.

Cleveland lost the election in 1888, and the



Telegram declaring Washington a state. / Washington State Archives

issue of statehood for Washington, along with North Dakota and Montana, again surfaced.

By this time, there were 239,000 people living in Washington and the clamoring for statehood was getting loud.

Finally, on February 22, 1889, Harrison signed the enabling act and another constitutional convention was held on the 4th of July. Woman’s suffrage was the hot issue once again.

For a brief period, from 1883 to 1884, the Territorial Legislature had allowed women the right to vote in all elections. Then the courts pronounced the legislative act unconstitutional. The new constitutional convention delegates abided by this ruling, the men voted to accept the proposed constitution and Washington officially joined the Union as a state on November 11, 1889.

CALENDAR OF SHOWS AND SPECIAL EVENTS

OREGON

OCTOBER 13
Vintage Rose Collector Shows
Portland, OR

OCTOBER 13
Picca-dilly Flea Market
Eugene, OR

OCTOBER 24, 25, 26
The Farmhouse Show’s Autumn Vintage Faire
Turner, OR

OCTOBER 24–27
Monticello Antique Marketplace’s
Expo Storewide Sale
Portland, OR

NOVEMBER 2, 3
American at Heart’s Christmas Open House
Portland, OR

NOVEMBER 3
Vintage Rose Collector Shows
Portland, OR

NOVEMBER 3 & 17
Picca-dilly Flea Market
Eugene, OR

NOVEMBER 9
Oregon Creative Doll Collectors’
Doll Show & Sale
Salem, OR

OREGON (cont.)

NOVEMBER 15–JANUARY 5
Monticello Antique Marketplace’s
Vintage Christmas Show
Portland, OR

NOVEMBER 22, 23
A Vintage Flea Holiday Market
Aurora, OR

DECEMBER 1
Vintage Rose Collector Shows
Portland, OR

DECEMBER 1 & 15
Picca-dilly Flea Market
Eugene, OR

JANUARY 18, 19
Christine Palmer & Associates
Antique & Collectible Shows
Clark County Event Center
Ridgefield, WA

FEBRUARY 1, 2
Christine Palmer & Associates
Antique & Collectible Shows
Washington State Fair Events Center
Puyallup, WA

FEBRUARY 8–17
Lincoln City Antique & Collectibles Week
Lincoln City, OR

OREGON (cont.)

FEBRUARY 16
Vintage Rose Collector Shows
Portland, OR

MAY 16, 17
Medford Armory Antiques & Vintage Sale
Medford, OR

WASHINGTON

OCTOBER 4
Olde Central Antique Mall’s Ladies Night Out
Port Orchard, WA

OCTOBER 4, 5, 6
Custer’s Antique and Collectors Sale
Spokane, WA



PLEASE NOTE: Times and dates are subject to change. Please call before making any long-distance travel plans based on listings.



Left to right, Blitz Weinhard from Portland, Hop Gold from Vancouver and Sicks' Select from Salem. Below, Heidelberg from Tacoma. On the Cover: Jubilee series Rainier cans from the Seattle wind tunnel find. / All photos courtesy Tim Hoffman

A CAN-DO ATTITUDE

Beer can collectors making headlines as national association's 50th nears

By Ossie Bladine

In 2020, the Brewery Collectibles Club of America will celebrate its 50th anniversary, which could draw extra attention to its largest annual event, the CANvention, scheduled for Sept. 10-12 in downtown St. Louis.

This year’s CANvention actually garnered plenty of press itself. The Associated Press ran a story in August about the event held in Albuquerque, “Beer can enthusiasts head to New Mexico for ‘CANvention’.”

In the Northwest, the biggest recent headline in the beer can collecting world – and for can collectors of all types – was “The Great Boeing Wind Tunnel Find” (title of the cover story of the September-October issue of Beer Cans & Brewery Collectibles magazine).

In 2016, a crew was hired to demolish a wind tunnel that had just been decommissioned. It was the testing site for military technology in the mid-1950s. Part of the facility was two spheres, each 38 feet in diameter and 25 feet tall. They would fill with pressurized air, which then would blast out through a small tunnel during testing.

One of many problems engineers faced was that condensation would build up and then hit the models at supersonic speeds. The remedy, it turned out, was to fill the spheres with cans – millions of cans.

“Any round cans could be used to fill the order — including misprints and other rejects. I can imagine the American Can Co. salesman being the hero and getting a nice Christmas bonus that year,” wrote Carl Scheurman, author of the magazine article.

When the demolition company made the find, Boeing agreed to salvage and sell the cans with a profit-share. Local collectors were contacted and an auction was planned. There were thousands of soda and soup cans in the spheres, as well, but about 80 percent of the 3 million cans were for beer, including Olympia, Heidelberg, Lucky Lager and many more, according to the magazine article.

But the gem of the find was about 225 variations of Rainier Jubilees, totaling about 40,000 cans.

“Up until 2016, nice condition versions of these cans would sell for up to \$100 to \$300 apiece,” wrote Tim Hoffman, treasurer for the Rainier chapter of the BCCA, on his website rainierbeercans.com. “There would be a huge commotion if somebody brought even a few of these cans into one of our local Seattle Rainier Chapter of the Brewery Collectible Club of America shows.”

Scheurman, Hoffman and eight other collectors pooled their resources and came away with most of the collectible beer cans. The demolition company put them in boxes, about



1,000 to a box, Hoffman said. The winning collectors went to the holding site, held their own lottery to decide in what order they would choose, and then started making their selections.

Hoffman launched his website, and began taking some of the cans to the many collector’s shows he attends each year. He said he ended up selling a large share of them to a new microbrewery.

“Sometime in the next year will see a micro-brewery with a wall of Rainier Jubilee beer cans,” he said.

Michael Boardman, liaison to the BCCA for the Cascade chapter based in Portland, was one of the follow-up purchasers from Hoffman and crew.

“I wanted one of each color of the find,” he said, noting that unlike more “purist” collectors,

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he didn’t care which brewery was labeled on the can. The nuances of labeling is what got many excited. “There were cans no one has ever seen,” Boardman added. “To the average person they’re the same, but to the collector they are different.”

Like Hoffman, Boardman has been collecting since the 1970s. He said his collection is at around 4,000, with 2,500 of them on display in a room of his home.

“It was cool because you could get a couple cans and put them on your shelf, kind of like your own wallpaper,” Boardman said of his collector beginnings.

“Back then, collecting was a big fad,” Hoffman added.

Both noted how beer can collectors are, as Hoffman put it, “becoming antiques ourselves,” following the same pattern as many other hobbies. However, they also said that both chapter continue to attract new members. The microbrew boom of recent years helps attract



younger collectors and breweriana enthusiasts.

Hoffman said the most interesting finds are the mid-1930s cans that didn’t have pull tabs and required instructions printed on the can explain how to open it. He also noted post-Prohibition cone top cans that mimicked the shape of bottles.

But it’s not just decades-old cans that collectors seek. Boardman collects new cans – or at least he did.

“The craft can movement has been going crazy for a while,” he said. “Fifteen years ago I started trading with guys back east. There’s so many great labels and great beers, as a collector you have to pick and choose. The sheer number has gotten to become overwhelming.”

Some only collect what they drink, while others strive to acquire them all, said Boardman, who also has around 600 taps and plenty of other breweriana memorabilia.

Both the Rainier and Cascade chapters hold multiple events of their own each year. The last



Rainier jubilee series beer cans found in the Seattle wind tunnel find. Right, a Martin’s cone top bottle from Selah. / Courtesy Tim Hoffman

one of 2019 is the Turkey Pluckoff Show at the Eagles Hall North Portland, 7611 N Exeter St., Nov. 9-10 from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Entry is free; tables are \$10.

“Collectors get together to see who might have a new find, hopefully try to bring new stuff,” said Boardman, describing it as part swap meet, part social event. He said some members of the Seattle chapter usually come down and hang out, too, and they encourage noncollectors to attend as well.

“It lets members of the public come in with questions, who maybe found some old cans in the attic or something,” Boardman said. “We’re really just trying to promote the hobby.”

And, they’re there to wonder when and where the next big find will occur.

“I think everybody is now saying, ‘Are there other wind tunnels with the same thing?’” Hoffman said. “I think the answer is yes, but probably not one with the variety like (the Boeing wind tunnel find).”

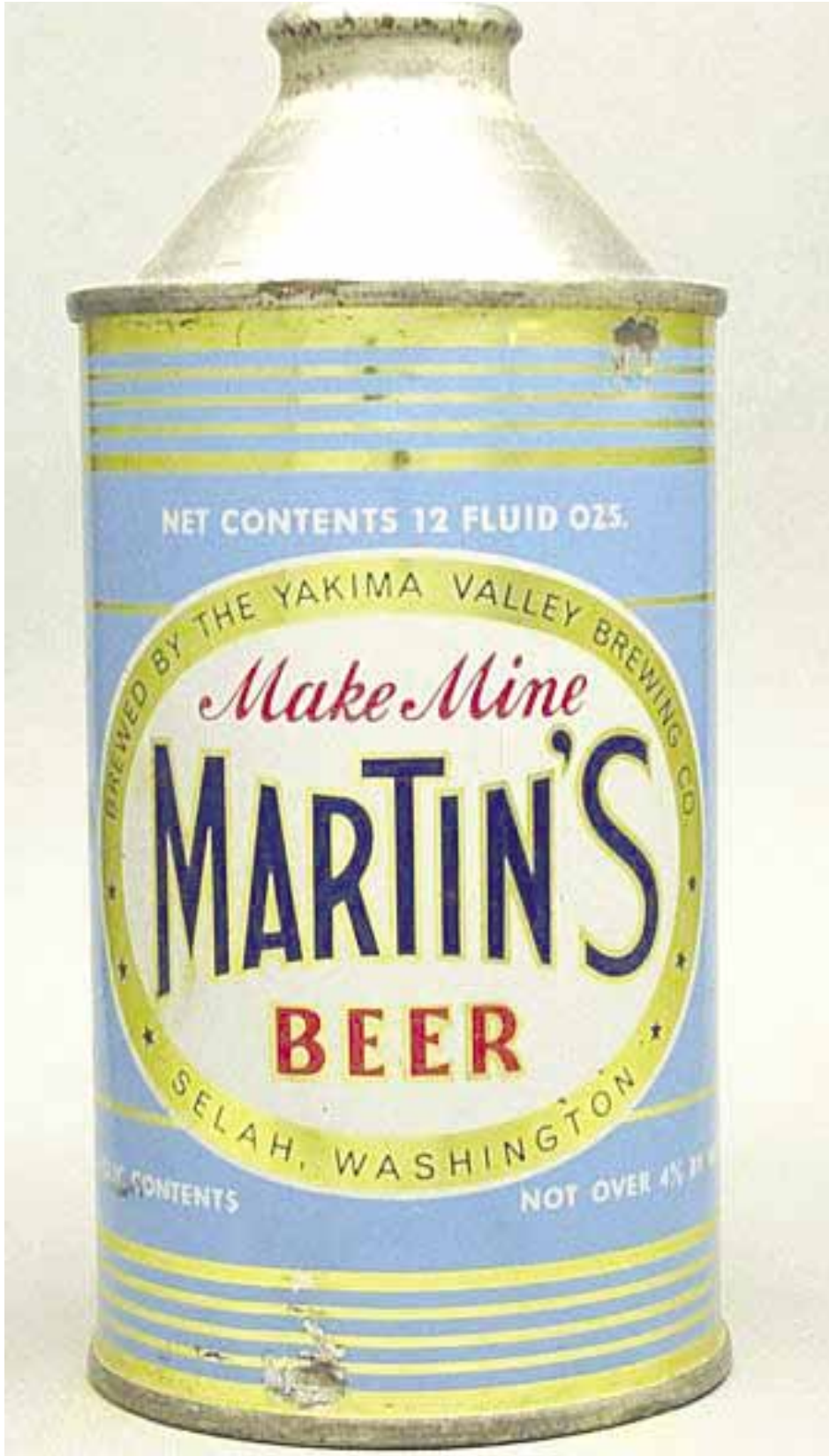
A similar find, at least in size, was made in the Los Angeles area a few years before the Seattle one. Such occasions cause a great buzz, but also can disrupt prices.

“That’s an extreme example of flooding the market,” Boardman said. Scheurman addressed that in his article:

"When someone asks me what this find will do to the value of the Rainier Jubilees, I say this is a whole new class of Jubilees with a different price point. These cans are accessible to the average collector, where a grade 1 all original Jubilee may not be. There are thousands of different Rainier Jubilees, and this find included only about 225 of them. It’s just as important to remember what was not found in the wind tunnel (no Brewery Series, no 15/16oz cans, no Christmas Jubilees and none from the first sets)."

For more information about the Cascade Breweriana Association, visit www.cascadebeer.com or email cascadebreweriana@gmail.com.

For information on the Rainier Chapter of the BCCA, email tim@beer-cans.org or find the “Rainier Chapter BCCA” page on Facebook.



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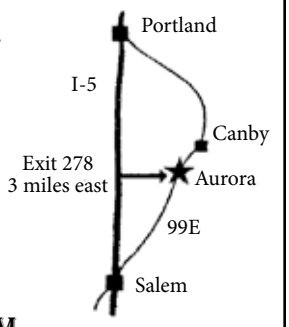
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TRADITION OF SANTA CLAUS MERGED PAGAN AND CHRISTIAN BELIEFS

By OS staff

While the Christmas celebration of today recognizes one of the most important events of the Christian faith, many of its observances are adaptations of early pagan religious activities.

“St. Nicholas was a happy solution to the problem of gift giving...”

Since pre-Christian times, it has been traditional to give presents at about this time of the year. In Rome, presents were given during the Saturnalia festival, and in the northern countries of Europe, it was believed the god Woden rode across the frozen wastes to bring gifts to his people during the middle of the winter.

St. Nicholas was a happy solution to the problem of gift giving, allowing the pagan custom which everyone enjoyed to continue under the respectable auspices of a saint. The original



The German so-called "Belsnickel" with feather tree branch. / merrytheschristmascollection.be

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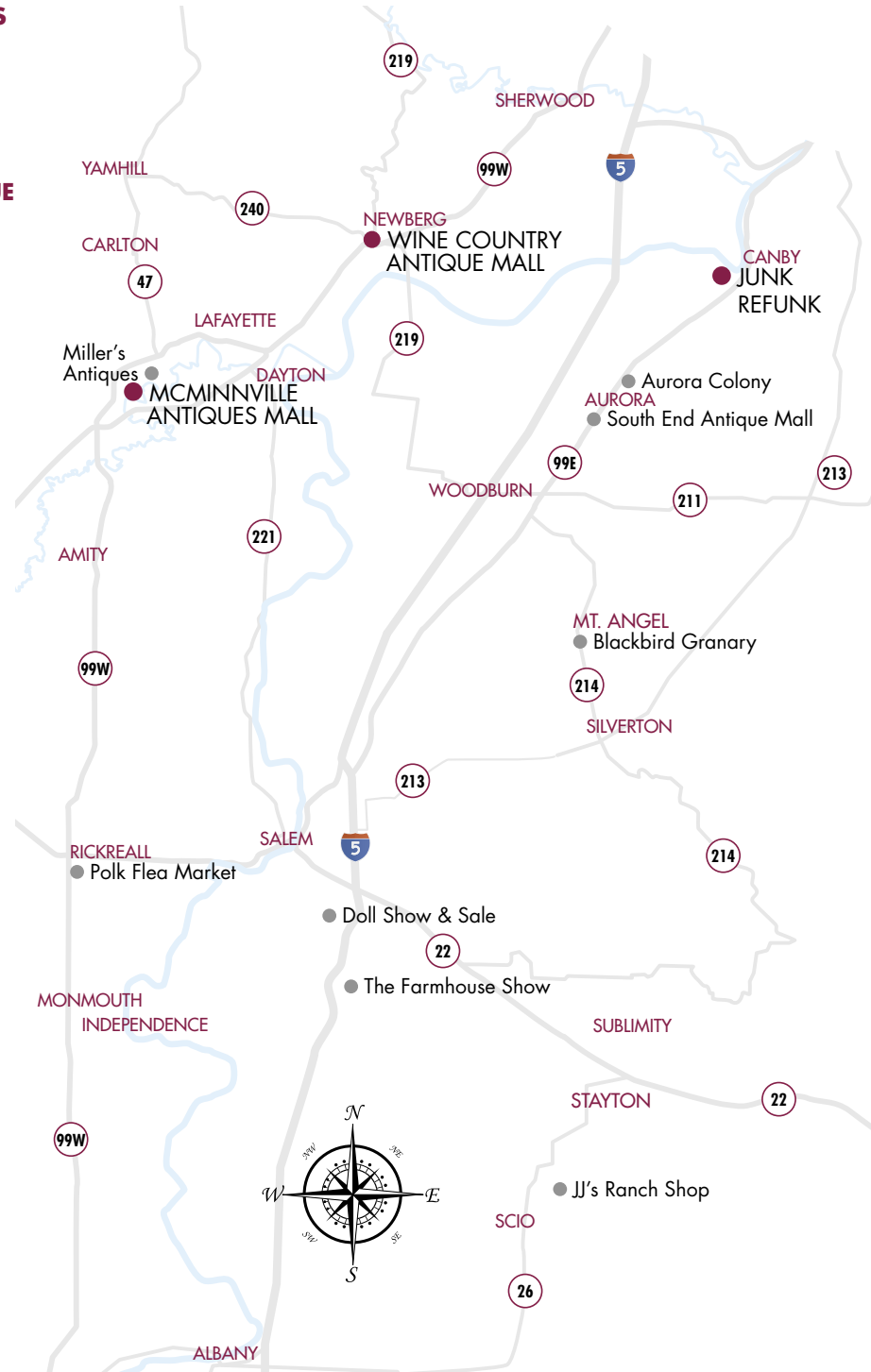
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St. Nicholas was the Bishop of Myra, who lived in the 4th century. He was widely known for his gift-giving and on his death, his good works were remembered and he was canonized.

By the 16th century, the idea of a personified St. Nicholas had begun to merge with that of another figure, Father Christmas. Father Christmas was originally a character from early folk drama. He was red-faced (probably from wine), thin and stern; he also always wore a red robe trimmed with fur and a crown of holly or mistletoe on his head. As this character developed, he was shown to carry a yule log, switches for children who misbehaved or a bag of toys.

The European version of Saint Nicholas continued to be lean, almost gaunt, even into the early 20th century. His hands were often shown tucked within the sleeves of his robes, as though he were trying to keep them warm. If they were showing, they might be clutching a Christmas tree of dyed goose feathers, a bunch of holly, or a shepherd's crook. His robe could have been almost any color - white, yellow, pink, green, or black, among others.

Santa Claus (a derivative of the German form of Saint Nicholas) as he is commonly thought of today developed in the United States in the early 1800s. His Americanization occurred almost completely upon the publication of "The Night Before Christmas," written by Clement Moore in the 1820s. The image he created in that poem became the accepted one of Santa Claus.

It was Thomas Nast, an illustrator for Harper's Weekly during the Civil War, who first depicted Santa in a red suit instead of a robe. It was also Nast who gave him a home at the North Pole, and a toy workshop there.

There are now a countless number of Santas for the collector. Early paper-mache figures from the Victorian period were made in Germany. They are sometimes referred to as belsnickles, from a German word meaning Santa dressed in fur. These early figures were frequently made as containers to hold cookies, candy or small gifts.

Composition Santa figures began to be made about the same time in Germany. These were dipped in plaster and then painted and finished in fine detail. Those made prior to 1900 were often dressed in a material called canton flannel. Later pieces were dressed in felt, as the flannel became scarce.

Santa figures, both the plump and the thin varieties, might also be dressed in furs or velvet suits, especially if they were being used to decorate a table or mantel. While red was the



common color in the United States for Santa's clothing, green, white and blue were also frequently used.

A cottage industry developed in Germany at the start of the 20th century which made figures from cotton batting, or cotton wool as it was called in Europe. Die cut, embossed pictures were used for the faces and hands. Papier mache or bisque heads were also used with these figures. They were set on wooden bases and frequently carried the goose feather trees.

Santa Clause was appearing in a variety of materials by the turn of the century in the United States. Lithographed tin was used for children's toys; chocolate molds produced edible Santas. Lightweight Santas of celluloid and heavy ones of cast iron were used to bring Santa into the home in a variety of ways.

There were a number of composition Santas imported to the United States from Japan during the 1920s. Some of these imports had cloth-covered bodies, wore cotton clothing and had cotton beards. Others were dressed in chenille, crepe paper or flannel. Japanese Santas often carried bottle brush trees. Later Japanese imports, through the 1950s, continued to wear cotton beards; they also had reddish clay-based faces and cotton-molded hands.

Pressed cardboard Santa figures also made their appearance in the 1920s. Most were made in the United States, although there were a few imports from Germany and Japan. The first ones, either flat or three-dimensional, have a dull finish. The later ones were varnished, lacquered and painted to give them a shiny finish.



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A collection of (mostly green) depression glass. / Flickr Creative Commons.

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By Mark A. Roeder
Successful Antiques Collecting

Money for antiques is tight for most collectors. Fewer new collectors are entering the market and those already addicted are being more selective with their purchases. Most collectors think twice before making a purchase. When money is in short supply, spending even a few dollars on anything that isn't a necessity is something many try to avoid. Of course, most of us think of antique and collectible purchases as necessities, but many others do not. This is bad news for sellers, but good news for buyers for now is the time to buy quality antiques.

Like many collectors, I've been more selective with my purchases, but I've actually been buying more instead of less. Why? Some quality antiques are now available for less. I don't mean that values have plummeted and everything is available for a steal; far from it. Most collectors won't sell their treasures at any price, but a greater than usual number are looking for values of some items are weak. Prices have been affected, but it's a hit and miss situation. Prices are weak on some pieces and quite strong on others. What this means for collectors is that there are some good buys out there.

I do a lot of searching on eBay. Every morning I check through the emails for my saved searches. Once a week, I browse through all the listings for stoneware, which often number around 10,000. Most of the time I find little or nothing of interest, but sometimes I discover a great piece at a very good price. I made three purchases of quality pieces in recent months. One was a blue Mayfair Depression glass candy dish in excellent condition for under \$200. The piece is valued in books at just over \$300. Depression glass is one collecting area that has taken a hit. I'm always searching for pieces of green Parrot I'm missing and Parrot turns up regularly under its book value. Another recent purchase was a two-gallon Reppert stoneware jar made in Greensboro, Pennsylvania. The jar has strong cobalt markings and only

one very minor crack. I picked it up on eBay for only \$125, shipping included. I'd expect to find the same piece in a shop priced at least twice that. The purchase that pleased me the most was a piece I've been wanting for years and I mean twenty years and more. I'm a collector of early-nineteenth century stoneware and I've longed for a pitcher decorated with cobalt blue. I've been combining antique shops, malls, shows, auction, flea markets, and eBay for more than two decades, but could never find what I wanted at the right price. This isn't because I expected to pick up a nice pitcher for \$50. I've been searching for a good buy, not a bargain. While a bargain-priced early stoneware pitcher isn't an impossibility, it's so unlikely it might as well be. Not long ago I bid \$650 on such a pitcher on eBay, but was outbid. Then, I spotted another. It had a very minor chip on the lip, barely noticeable, and a couple of small cracks on the bottom. I determined it was worth about \$500 to me. The minimum bid was \$395 and shipping \$20. I waited until near the end of the auction and placed my bid. I waited and watched. The seconds ticked down. The auction ended and I was the sole bidder! I picked up the piece for more than \$100 under my bid. Some might have had buyer's remorse at this point, thinking the purchase was a mistake because no one else as interested. I knew better. This wasn't a \$1,000 pitcher, but it was definitely a \$500 pitcher and I'd seen pitchers in similar condition I liked less sell for \$700 and more. I picked up a quality piece at a good price.

I can hear some of you thinking, "Wait a minute! That pitcher was damaged! How is that a quality piece?" It's true that an undamaged example would be a higher quality piece. If the pitcher was marked it would have been a higher quality piece, too. The lack of a mark and the slight damage do detract from the value. The same pitcher, in perfect condition and marked would be worth perhaps \$850 to me. Pristine condition isn't a necessity to me when it comes to stoneware. Marked pieces are wonderful, but un-

marked pieces are just as beautiful. Therefore, to me, this was a quality piece at a good price. Like many collectors, I have different standards for different antiques and collectibles. What is acceptable in stoneware is not in Depression glass. The blue Mayfair candy jar I purchased was in mint condition. Even one small chip would have greatly reduced the value in my eyes. I recently spotted an identical candy jar, with chips to the lid and base, for a starting bid of \$45. I didn't even bother to put it on my watch list because the damaged piece wasn't of interest to me. I might have paid \$30 for it to use, but to collect, no.

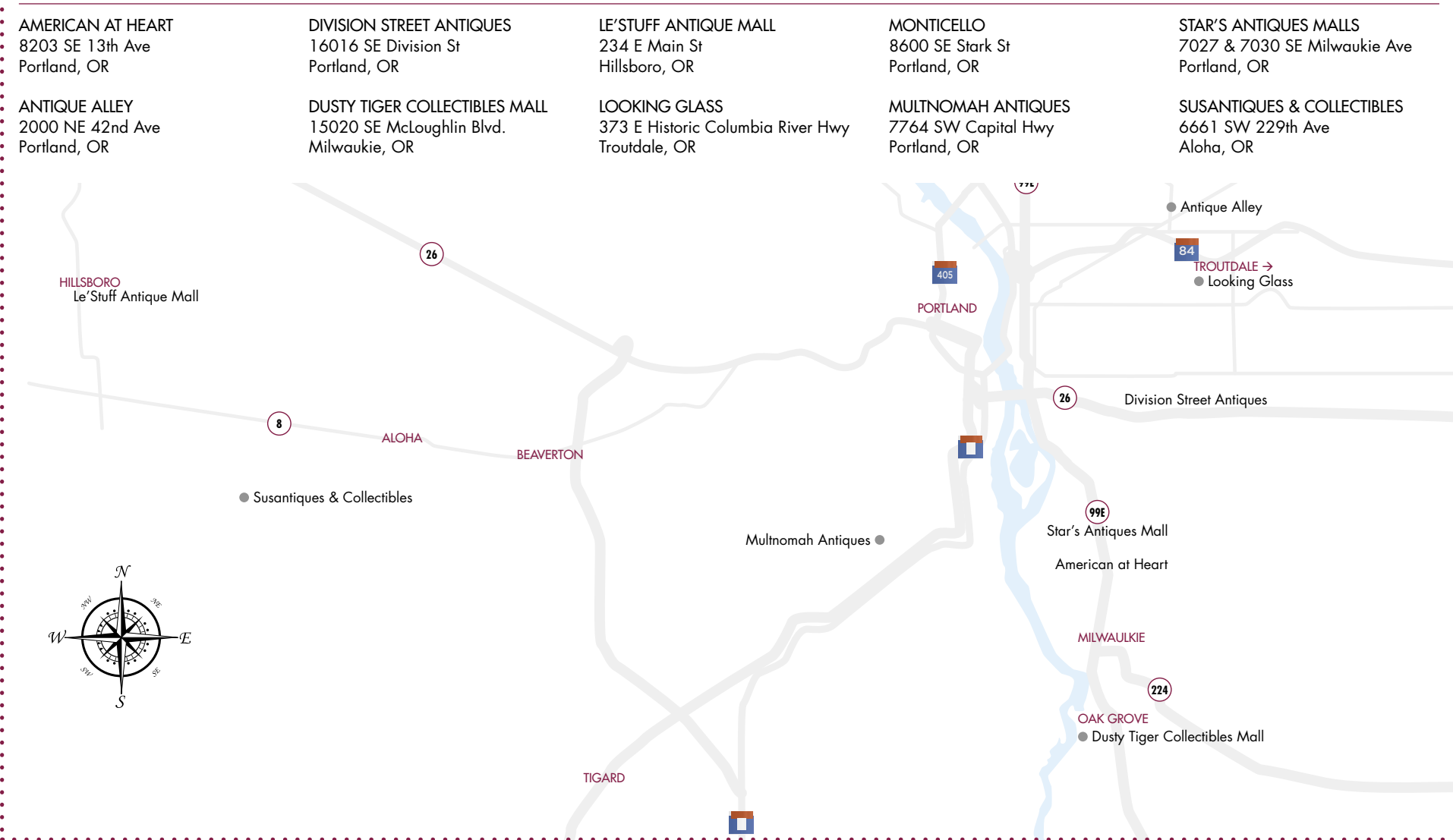
Don't expect to scoop up quality pieces at bargain or even good prices with ease. Many collectors, myself included, will hold onto their good pieces rather than sell them for less than they desire. I'm more likely to give a nice piece to a friend instead of sell it for considerably under value. I constantly browse for antiques because I love it. Even so, I usually leave a mall or shop without finding a "good" price on what I consider to be a quality piece. I put good in quotations because the going-rate is still a good price on a nice piece. I'm not disappointed when I don't find what I'm seeking, just as I'm

not disappointed when I don't find a bargain on more run-of-the-mill antiques. Even now, such finds are rare; they just aren't as rare as they were.

With all this said, now is the time to buy quality antiques and collectibles. They can't be found with great ease, but they can be found more easily than in recent years. Unfortunately the cause of better prices, a lack of available funds among many collectors, also makes affording a quality piece difficult. This is why one should be patient and save up funds for the day a special piece appears. I find myself hitting eBay harder than ever. Browsing for antiques on eBay is free and it's fun. Browsing in antique shops, shows, and malls can be inexpensive as well, as long as one doesn't have to travel far. The potential rewards are worth some cost and remember that an outing to a nearby antique mall or shop, even a failed one, can be fun. Gas for a trip to the antique mall will likely cost less than a ticket to a movie and we all know which is more enjoyable. Now is the time to buy quality antiques and collectibles, so get out there, search, and hope I don't get there before you.

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FAMOUS SINGING FAMILY REMEMBERED START IN OREGON

By OS Staff

Every Sunday afternoon for several years, people came for miles around to the DeMoss home in Eastern Oregon to listen to the music of the seven members of the family – mother, father and five children.

The DeMosses had come to Oregon in 1862. Altogether they played 41 different instruments, and had worked up various arrangements of duets, trios, quartets and community song fests. It was said that the children learned to sing before they learned to talk.



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It took considerable urging from friends to persuade the family that they should take their music on tour, but finally they decided to visit other mining towns and remote outposts of the Oregon territory. These tours were so successful that soon the family's reputation spread, and they were booked for gigs on the East Coast and even in Europe.

Fame and fortune did not make the DeMoss family forget Oregon, however, and wherever they traveled on concert tour, they always ended their performance with a tribute to the place that had started them on their upward climb. This tribute was a song, "Sweet Oregon," composed by Henry DeMoss at the age of 20. For many years, the song was so popular that it was virtually the state song.

*Sweet Oregon
I'm thinking now of a beautiful land,
Where the mighty Columbia rolls down to the
seas,
And the pines gently echo the breeze,
Like a beautiful dream to my memory come.
Oh! Oregon, my home.*



DeMoss family on the stagecoach they used for touring, c.1900. / Courtesy Oregon Hist. Soc. Research Lib.

To learn more, search online for "DeMoss Family Bards of Oregon – Horner Museum Tour Guide Series."

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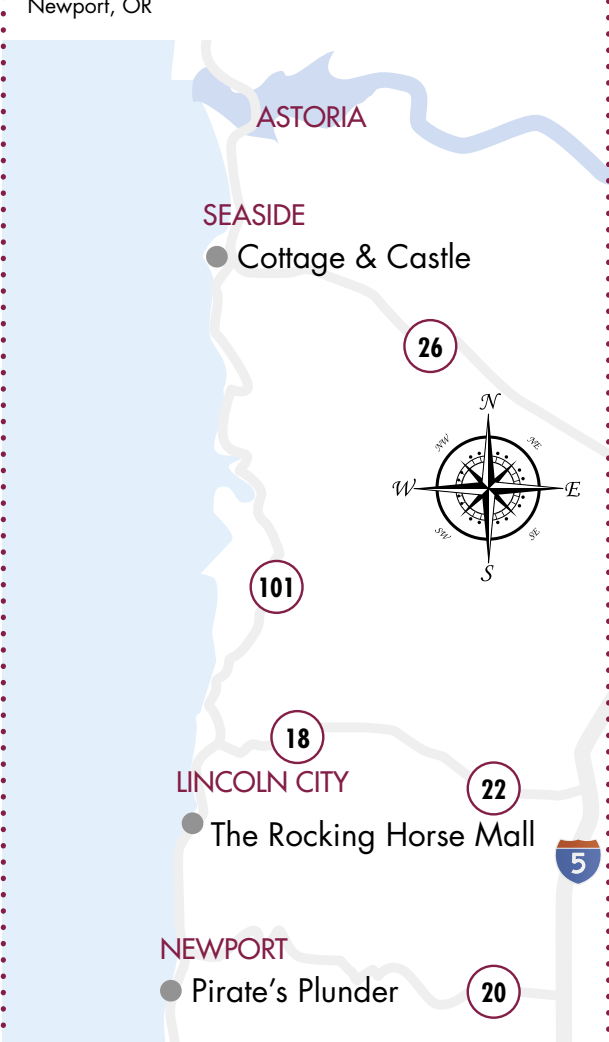
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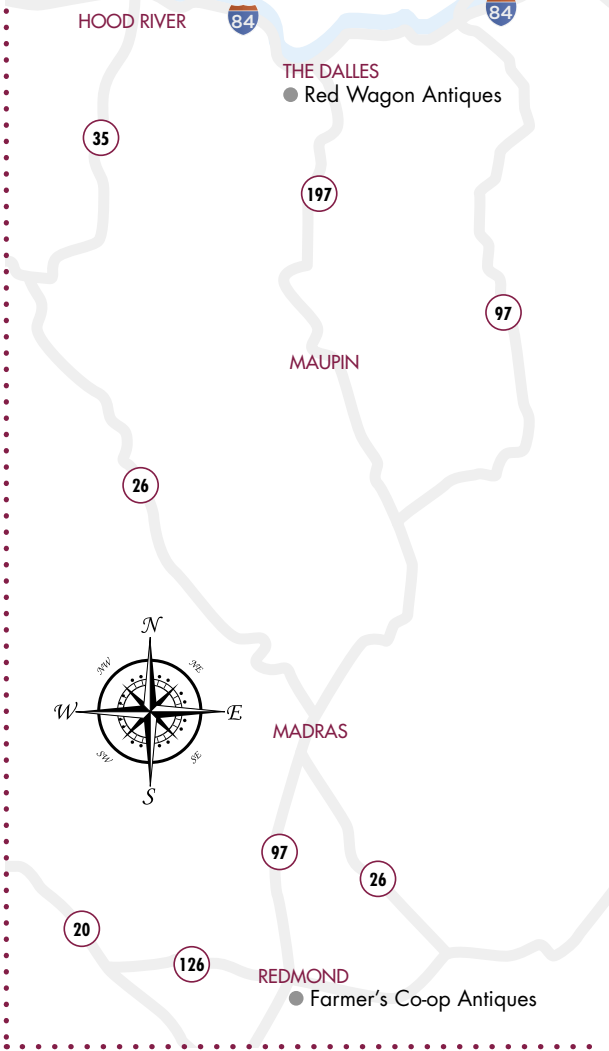
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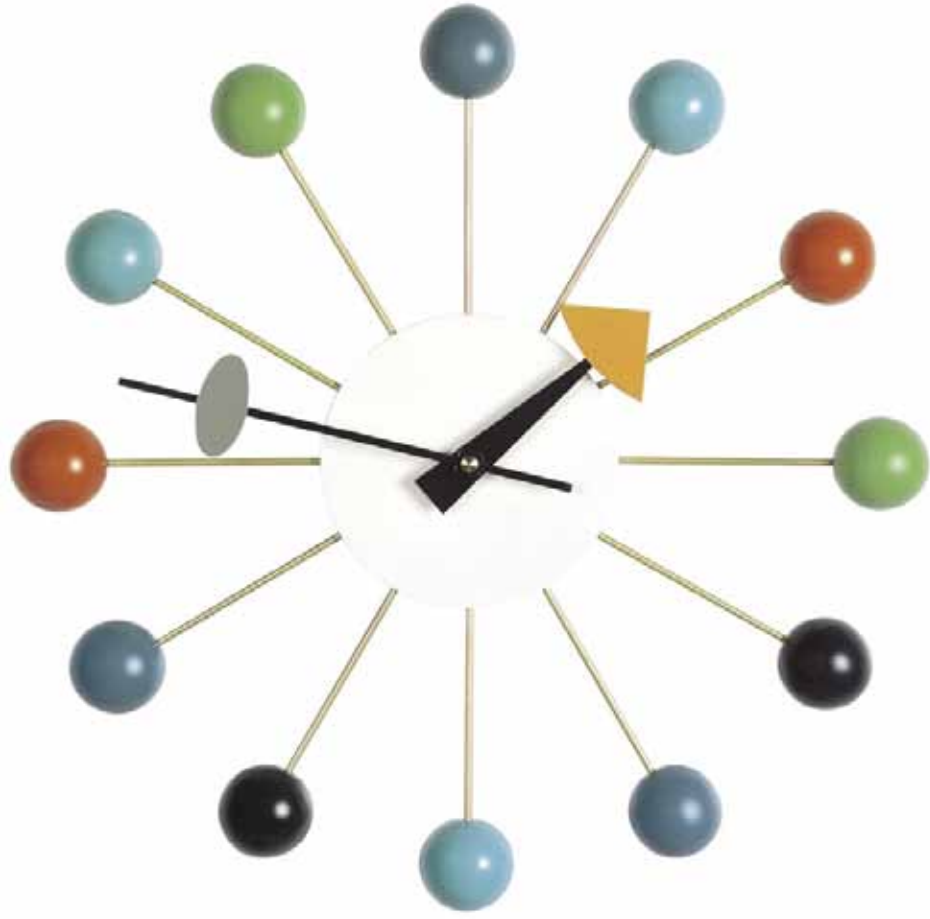
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ABOVE: Wag-on-the-wall clock. C. 1870, Germany / P4A.com, Beaver Creek, OH 45431-234

RIGHT: George Nelson, "Vitra Ball " wall clock. / 1stDibs



By Anne Gilbert
The Antique Detective

Clocks have come a long way since the water clock of ancient times. These days they have many functions in addition to keeping time. They can be decorative, entertaining and sometimes mysterious. Their names can depend on their shapes and purpose. For example, the "mystery" clock. The works are completely hidden, and it appears to work mysteriously, often with human figures that move without impulse. It was invented by magician Harry Houdini in 1923 for Cartier.

Historically, it was during the reign of Louis XVI that the elegance of clock making reached its peak. Precious materials were used to frame the clock face. This included tortoise shell with brass inlay and horn mounts with lacquer and bronze. One of the most expensive clocks was the Louis XVI mantle clocks with garniture. Reproductions have never stopped being made. However the repros are of gilt metal not bronze.

As for entertainment, consider the clock with the figure of Napoleon on top that walks back and forth and in and out of his tent. Or, the blinking eye clock. The eyes connected to the escarpment of a human or animal figure, move without apparent impulse. Originally it was made in Germany in the 17th century, and in America mid-19th century.

Some clocks, such as the Atmos, had a scientific purpose. This shelf clock, invented by the French in 1913, showed constant changes in atmospheric temperature that then kept the mainspring fully wound.

The name for any clock with weights and pendulum not enclosed in a case was "wag-on-the-wall."

One of the most popular styles was the "banjo" wall clock, resembling the shape of a banjo. First introduced in America as the "improved Timepiece." it was patented by Simon Willard in 1802. So popular it has never stopped being made.

By the late 19th century gilt-bronze mantel clocks with figures of poets and Caesar reclining on a marble base, were popular.

Clocks became important decorative accessories during the Art Nouveau, Arts and Crafts, Deco and Modern periods. Many cases were designed by a famous artist or important porcelain maker. They reflected the designs, motifs and materials of their decades. Even Rene' Lalique created a frosted glass clock with intaglio-molded female figures in the Art Deco style.

The face of the wall clock changed forever in the 1950s. American designer George Nelson created a totally new concept. Known as the "Vitra Ball "clock, the hands moved against the background of a wall. They didn't

See **CLOCKS**, 14

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LEFT: Windmill French industrial clock. / Private collection

RIGHT: Mystery clock designed by Houdini. / Cartier Jewelers, New York

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Clocks *Continued from 13*

require numbers since time could be told by the positions of the hands on the balls, spheres, or whichever twelve representational forms were mounted on the wall. Nelson created an entire series for the Howard Miller Clock Company of Zeeland, Michigan to the late 1950s. They had many names such as "the atom", "the giant sunburst" and "the asterisk." Their materials were mixes of Lucite, chrome, plastic.

Fast forward to the 1960s and 1970s. Clock designs reflected the Pop culture of the era. Artists such as Peter Max turned his Pop Art designs into clock faces. The next cultural influence, psychedelic,

resulted in brilliantly colored clock faces.

Reproductions are a continuing problem. Banjo clocks have been reproduced since their introduction. Blinking eye clocks are being produced in China. The repros eyes move side to side. Real ones up and down and are human figures not animals.

Collectors can pay a little or a lot. Currently a George Nelson Lucite and brass can cost over \$4,000 for a rare example. The more common Nelson "Vitra Ball" "wall clock can be priced for \$400 or more. A rare industrial windmill form clock is the currently dealer priced at a whopping \$33,900.

ABOVE: Banjo clock, 1835. Sylvester Edgarler, Roxbury, MA.

RIGHT: Felix the cat novelty clock. / Private collector



THIS AND THAT

Campeche Chair

By Terry and Kim Kovel

This Mexican chair with its leather sling seat is known as a Campeche chair. The style was inspired by a Roman magistrate's chair, which had a similar shape and sloping seat that was considered very restful. More recent Campeche chairs were made in the 19th century in Latin America, the Caribbean, Spain, the Balearic Isles and other nearby areas, and Indonesia. They are named for the Bay of Campeche in the Gulf of Mexico, or perhaps the town of Campeche in the Yucatan where they were made.

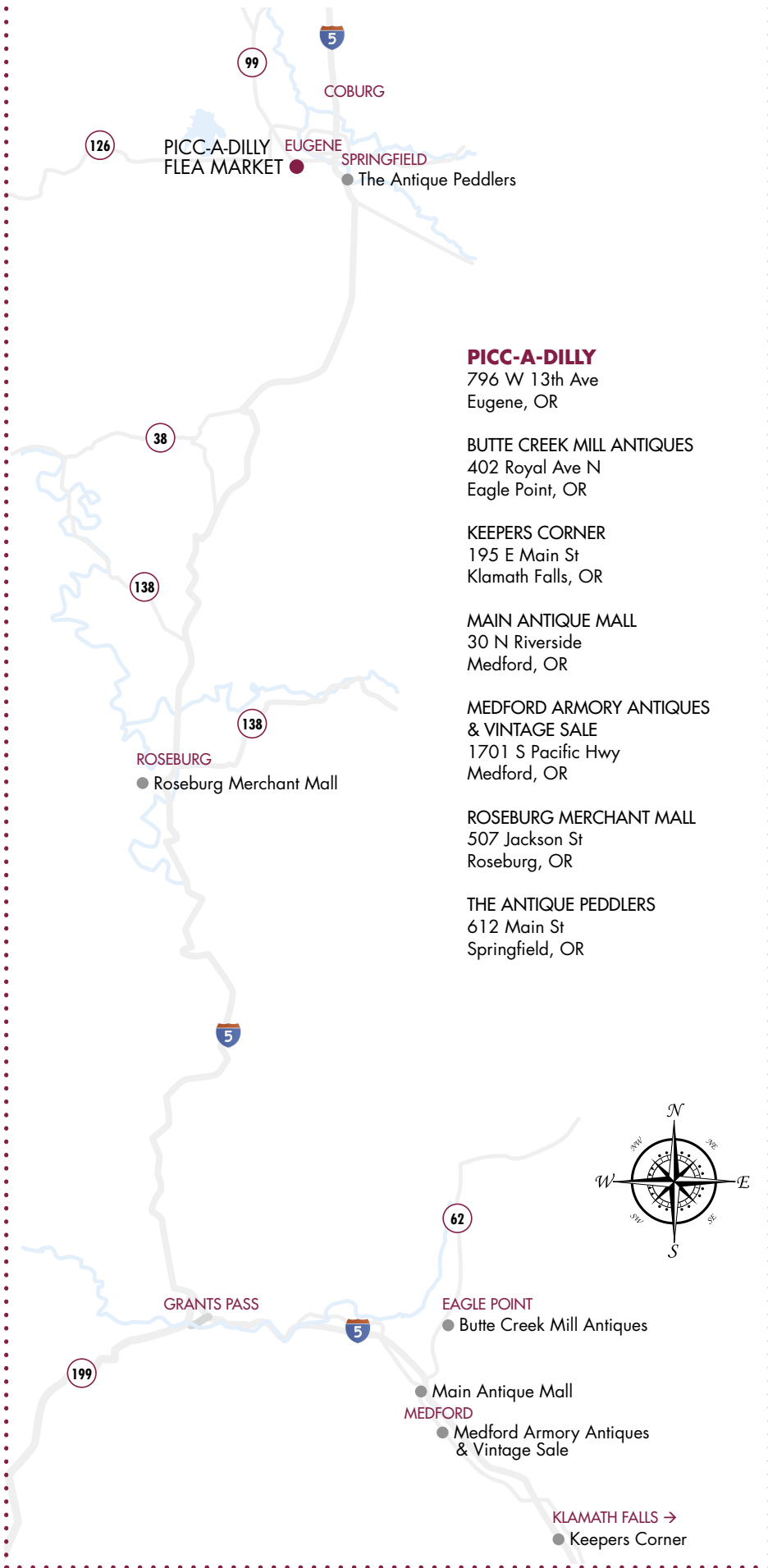
From 1800 to 1825, many of these chairs, sometimes called "plantation chairs," were shipped to New Orleans and used in Southern homes. Presidents Thomas Jefferson and James Madison both had several Campeche chairs with tooled leather seats. By the 1830s, there were many references to the chairs in books and letters.

This chair has two wooden X-shaped sides held together with horizontal rails. The sling back and seat is made of tooled leather with an art nouveau design that suggests a date in the late 1800s. It sold at a Neal Auction last year for \$976.



This Campeche chair is tooled leather and oak. It was made in the late 19th century and measures 33 by 21 inches. It sold for \$976.

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THIS AND THAT

By Terry and Kim Kovel



Watering Can

Ever wonder who invented the first watering can? When were small gardens numerous enough to have customers willing to pay for a better way to carry water to their plants? Historic records say the first was a watering pot made in about 1580. It was a container with a handle and small holes in the bottom for the water to flow out. It was another 50 to 100 years before someone thought of adding a spout. The earliest mention in print was in 1692 in Timothy Keeble’s diary. Early watering cans were made of pottery, then zinc, brass, copper, tin and other metals. They were bucket-shaped, then milk-can shaped and then funnel-shaped. More recently, there were small watering cans that hold liquid in a round ball shape with a spout.

Twentieth-century watering cans can be plastic, tin or even canvas. Every shape includes a round hollow part that empties through a spout with tiny holes. It is called a “rose.” It was the early 1900s before sprinkling cans were mass-produced and had a metal company’s logo included on a tag or impression. And small collectible children’s tin sprinkling cans with colorful decorations were first popular in the 1930s. The most artistic sprinkling cans were made in the Aesthetic style in the 19th century. The painted cans had decoupaged or painted birds, flowers and other outdoor designs. One sold at a Rago auction for \$214. It probably was used indoors.

LEFT: Turquoise blue with gold trim and a bird finial was used to decorate this 19th-century watering can. It sold for \$214.

BELOW: Nine frolicking men and women are pictured on the pleated paper of this antique fan. It was offered for sale last year at a Neal auction.



Folding Fan

A quick look online for a collectible old fan will show electric fans made since the late 1800s. But some collectors want even older fans, the handheld folding fans that were being made by the 1700s. These fans were more than a fashion accessory – they were important indicators of the user’s status and good taste. There was even a “language of love” using the fan that let a lady flirt, ask men to come by to chat, or even hit an irritating person.

Folding fans were made with sticks of bone, ivory, bamboo, wood, tortoiseshell, mother-of-pearl, lacquer, metal or more recently, plastic. They held a decorated cover of silk, paper, leather or canvas. Some had added jewels and artist-drawn oil or watercolor paintings. A talented fan painter was as important as an artist who created portraits or landscapes.

Collectors in the 1950s searched for period fans and often mounted them in half-circle frames. Expensive fans of the past are hard to find in good condition. This painted paper fan with carved gilt sticks decorated with mother-of-pearl was offered for sale at a Neal auction.

Figural Doorstop

How do you keep a heavy door from slamming shut? That was a problem by the mid-18th century when huge brass hinges held the doors. It was solved with wedges, heavy rocks or doorstops of many sizes and shapes. Cast-iron figural doorstops were made in the early 1900s but did not become popular until the 1910s, when many American companies began making figural examples.

One of the most interesting is called “Huckleberry Finn,” a figure of a farm boy in blue overalls and a yellow shirt carrying a fishing pole and bait bucket. It’s 12 3/8 inches high and has a wedge back. The doorstop is marked Littco and was made by the Littlestown Hardware & Foundry Company that started in 1916. It made doorstops, bookends, hammers and fireplace accessories until 1940 and the war. After the war, the company started making cast aluminum products. In the 1990s, it stopped iron casting. One of Littco’s most famous doorstops, Halloween Girl, a costumed girl with a pumpkin in excellent condition, sold for \$29,500 in 2016.

“Huckleberry Finn” is an important book written in 1884 by Mark Twain. It was the first “bookstore” book written in vernacular English, and it included swear words and descriptions of good and bad parts of life at the time. An excellent example of the Huckleberry Finn doorstop with almost perfect paint sold for \$325 in 2016 at an important Bertoia auction of just doorstops.



Huckleberry Finn is the name of this doorstop marked Littco. The 12 3/8-inch-high figure sold for \$325 a several years ago.

Roman Brazier

During the late 18th century, the very rich made a long trip to Europe to admire the architecture and art of Europe, including the ruins of past civilizations. The town of Pompeii was a major attraction. It had been covered with ash and lava in 78 A.D. and forgotten until 1748, when it blocked some construction. Historians have been studying the remains, and the art and culture, since then. The city was a summer home for wealthy Romans, and the eruption covered and saved the furnishings under the rock. Information about furniture and paintings inspired copies in the 18th century.

A brazier that was used to heat a Roman bath in the city and a similar one in a brothel were copied and sold in the late 1800s. The popular bronze brazier had a pieced rim and a three-part foot with men with paw feet holding the fire pit on their heads. These copies were made with a green patina. One sold at a Cakebread auction in New Orleans for \$500. It is 10 inches high and almost 6 inches in diameter.



Three men with animal feet hold this Roman brazier on their heads. It is a copy of an excavated piece from Pompeii that was buried in 78 A.D. Many pictures and artifacts showed life in the town, a place for entertainment and erotica.

TIP: Use a Depression glass or plastic knife to cut lettuce. The lettuce won’t turn brown.

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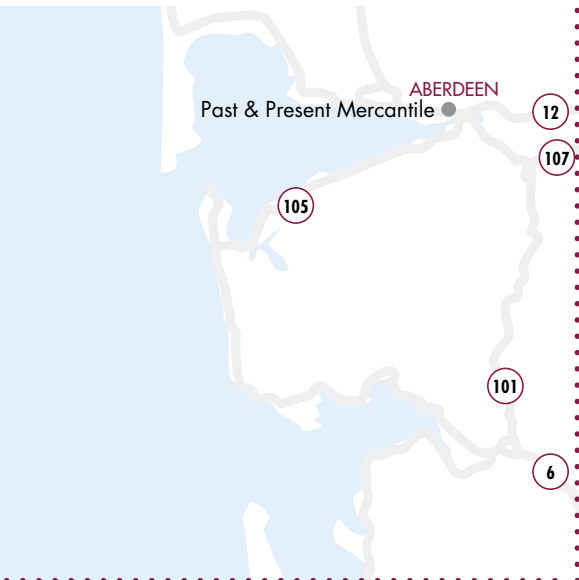
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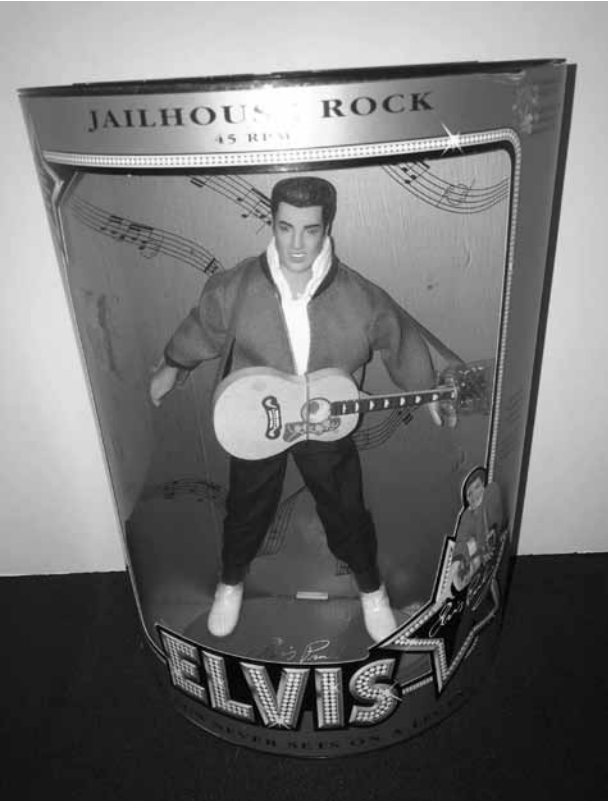
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Q: I have an Elvis doll made by Hasbro in 1993. The box is labeled "Elvis Jailhouse Rock, 45 RPM." The doll has never been on display and the box has never been opened. Can you tell me what is in the box and whether it has any value?

A: In the 1990s, Hasbro made three Elvis Presley dolls to honor the King of Rock 'n' Roll. Your doll's box includes a numbered 12-inch posable Elvis doll dressed in a red jacket with black trim, a white shirt, black pants and white shoes. He has a removable guitar to commemorate the photo shoot for his hit record "Jailhouse Rock." The doll is packaged with a doll stand that has an Elvis facsimile signature and a certificate of authenticity. The other dolls in the series commemorate Elvis "Teen Idol" and the Elvis "'68 Special." Each doll's value today is \$30 to \$40. Sometimes Elvis memorabilia sells higher around Jan. 8 (his birthday) and Aug. 16 (his death).

Q: My sister and I have a first edition of "Paper Dolls and How to Make Them, A Book for Little Girls" by Anson D.F. Randolph. It reads "Entered according to Act of Congress in the year 1856." The book has plates of dolls and doll clothes in color and black and white. We'd like to know how to go about selling it.

A: The first paper dolls were made in France in the 1700s. The first paper dolls made in the United States were printed in 1854 and were sold in boxed sets. Your book was the first American paper doll book. This book has been offered for sale online for over \$700. You can try contacting a used bookstore to see what it will offer, or you can contact one of the online booksellers that deals in old books. If you don't have access to a computer, your local library reference department may be able to help you. We checked retail prices at bookstores for you. One wanted \$750, another \$695. The condition is very important when setting a price.

Q: My mother has my grandparents' desk. It is knee-hole style, with a curvy front, two drawers on each side and a drawer in the middle. The label on the back reads "Cherry and Maple/Atlas Furniture Co., Jamestown, New York." What is it worth?

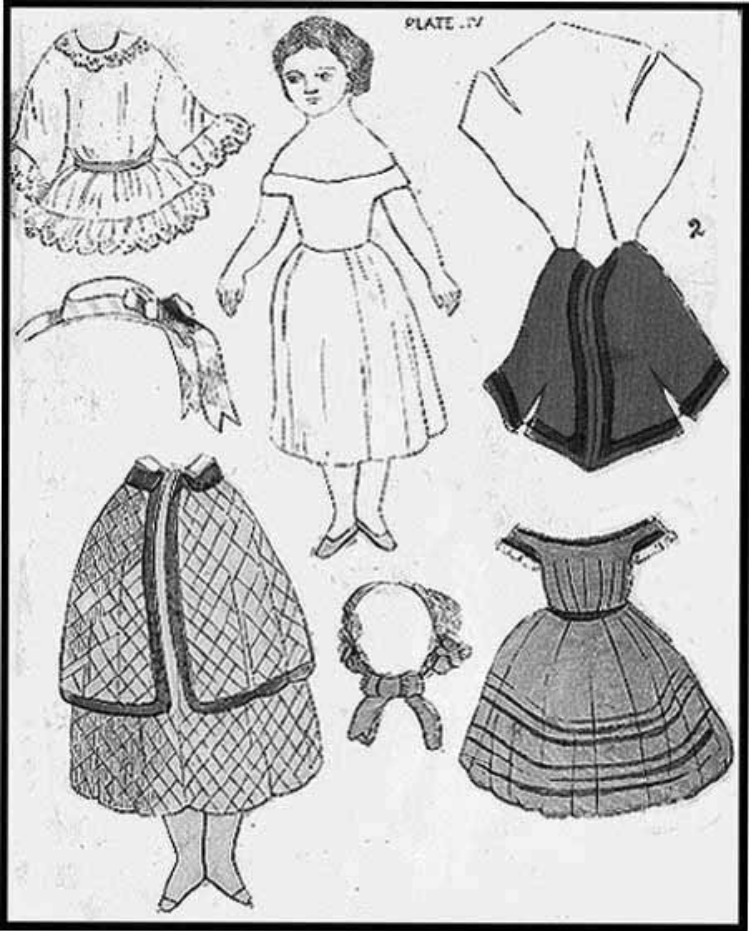
A: Atlas Furniture Co. was formed in 1883 as the Swedish Furniture Co. by Swedish immigrants Lawrence Erickson and Gustave Holmberg in Jamestown. The name was changed to Atlas in 1871. Atlas advertised as "Manufacturers of Bedroom Furniture," making "better" grades of bedroom furniture, including dressers, chiffoniers and toilet tables from walnut, mahogany and other woods. Atlas closed in 1941. Your desk would sell for \$50 to \$100.

Q: I found 10 unused World War I postcards. The title of one of the postcards is "Les Americains au Camp d'Auvours." I've spent hours online and can't find anything similar. Are they worth anything?

A: A military camp has been located at Champagne, France, since the 1870s. Allied troops used the camp as a rear base during World War I. A series of postcards was made picturing American troops at the camp and most sell online for under \$5. To find out more, go to a postcard show or antiques show and talk to a postcard dealer.

Q: I have heard that some antiques and vintage items are dangerous to own. Is this true? I am afraid to use my orange Fiesta dishes because friends say they were made with uranium and are radioactive.

A: Yes, some antique medicines, cosmetics and other objects can be dangerous or even fatal. Most vintage or antique things you buy at shops or shows have been cleaned or checked for dangerous things. Some are mercury (barometers), flammable materials (stove polish that explodes when heated), arsenic (cleanser for complexion), opium (medicine to relieve



pain), morphine (to sooth teething babies), alcohol (a high percentage in bitters, medicines, etc.) and, of course, anything in a bumpy poison bottle or a bottle labeled poison.

Uranium was used in the clay or glaze of some items before the strict food and drug laws were passed in the U.S., but some countries still use glazes that are not safe. Your orange dishes are safe to use. If you find forgotten drugstore stock, clean it carefully in a well-ventilated area. Empty all medicine bottles; children may try to drink something.

Q: I have a small soft-sided Coca-Cola cooler that has two zippered compartments. The top compartment holds six 16-ounce glasses. The glasses are decorated with umbrella tables and chairs and are marked with an anchor on the bottom. What is this worth?

A: The anchor mark was used by Anchor Hocking of Lancaster, Ohio. The cooler with six glasses sells online for about \$10-\$15.

THE ANTIQUE DETECTIVE

By ANNE GILBERT

Cigarette cases from Las Vegas to Fabergé

Cigarette cases have been popular collectibles for decades. However, there are some interesting facts that aren't commonly known.

When you think of objects made by Fabergé, aside from his Easter Eggs made for Russian royalty, and his cigarette cases lavished with precious gems, would you believe he also made gun metal cigarette cases? If you could find one today the price would be in the thousands of dollars.

Historically, in World War I, Empress Alexandra hired Fabergé to create gun metal cigarette cases to be given personally, by her, to wounded soldiers on Easter, 1916. They were stamped with the Russian double-headed eagle and incised "War 1914, Fabergé". A current dealer price from Chicago dealer, "Romanov Russia" is \$7,500.

A totally different cigarette case story came from my late friend, Rexine Becker. She led a colorful life while editing the Sands Hotel magazine in Las Vegas, ending her days in Fort Lauderdale. Performing celebrities and guests gifted her with monogrammed cigarette cases. Among them were Frank Sinatra and Elizabeth Taylor. They were of various types of metal. There days collectors would gladly pay several hundred dollars.

Long before cigarette cases made a fashion statement in the early 20th century they had a strictly practical purpose. Cigarettes were fragile and needed a way to keep from being crushed when carried in a pocket.

By the late 19th century when women became serious cigarette smokers, cigarette cases became not only a status symbol, but an important fashion accessory.

Some of the most expensive and lavish cases were made in Russia by the late 19th century in St. Petersburg and Moscow. In America Companies made them in a variety of metals and even leather.

If you watch any of the old black and white movies it seemed like everybody was smoking a cigarette. Naturally the public caught on and cigarette cases were made in every type of material from sterling silver to plastic. Considered choice these days are those with stylized designs from Art Nouveau and Art Deco to Mid century Modern.

CLUES: To start a collection you can spend a little or a lot. Afterall a variety of designs and materials were made by Sears Roebuck. By the 20th century every country in the world was making cigarette cases. There are fake Nazi cigarette cigarette cases. Art Deco cases were



Art Deco cigarette case / Kellys Magnets

made in great quantity. For the most part prices range from \$20 to \$75. Prices depend on the material and if they have interesting art work.

The Russian cases often have detailed engraving on silver and quality enameling. They are rightly considered the masters of cigarette cases and continue the craft even with cigarette smoking on a downer. Many are attributed to Fabergé. Know your dealer before spending too much.

These days some come with additional features such as built-in lighters or ash trays.

If you go to Las Vegas check out the museum gift stores for the "celebrity" cases.

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