

Old Stuff

July | Aug | Sep 2020

Vol 43 | Ed 3

LIBERTY
ENLIGHTENING THE WORLD.



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BROOKLYN, LONG ISLAND CITY.

NEW YORK.

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Antiques, Collectibles, History and Nostalgia for the Pacific Northwest



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AMONG PANDEMIC, DAYDREAMS
ABOUT TOMORROW'S KEEPSAKES

By Ossie Bladine

If you're like me, you have been daydreaming a little more lately; taking details from tasks at hand as motivation to let my mind wander a bit. I started thinking about what the COVID-19 related vintage items and antiques of tomorrow will be. Antiques capture different moments in time – some happy, some sad, some weird – that live on in our curio cabinets and dusty shelves. What will my grandkids find in my house many years from now, inquire about, leading to a diatribe about the Great Pandemic?

The most obvious answer is masks. Locals volunteering their time to sew masks for others, so the most effective ones would be saved for front-line workers, was one of the early stories of the outbreak. I'm not sure I'll keep my mask, however. Depending upon how long I need to wear it, I may be sick of the sight of it and toss it in the trash bin first chance I get.

Periodicals I think will be a great keepsake. In fact, I've been encouraging my peers to collect and store what they can. It'll be interesting in 50 years to read back on the happy, the sad and the weird of these times.

I imagine that by the year 2040, no college dorm room will be complete without a "Social Distancing" poster.

Vintage hand sanitizer bottles? Maybe. Especially one-run batches made by distilleries.

I've also seen some COVID-19 trinkets being created, from ornamental glass coronavirus replicates, to virus-decorated Christmas ornaments 'tis the season.

It's hard to say just what will be the favored keepsakes of the day. Making your own guesses is part of the fun collecting game.

On the business side of things, the current state of the industry is facing an economic downturn unlike any flavor of such before. The COVID-19 pandemic shuttered shops for months. Events have been for the most part all canceled. Even where reopening occurs, many shoppers are venturing out for necessities only.

The stay-at-home orders have certainly created even more of a push to e-commerce. But, being a print publication funded by in-person experience shopping, online sales will not do us any good.

Former Old Stuff co-owner Donna Miller told us in the late spring -- through our quasi-panicky tone -- that the antique and second-hand industry historically has done very well in times of recession.

So here's to hoping that remains true once it's safe for everyone to venture out. When we again hit play on the "experience" button, there should be renewed interest and appreciation for this all things collectable and nostalgic.

ON THE COVER: The Great Bartholdi Statue, Liberty Enlightening the World, published by Currier & Ives. Original from the Library of Congress. Digitally enhanced by rawpixel. Free public domain CCO image.



LOOK FOR LIBERTY IN ALL OF HER MANY REPRESENTATIONS



Give me your tired, your poor, ... I lift my lamp beside the golden door." Almost every adult in America, upon hearing those lines, immediately thinks of our most well-known female, the Statue of Liberty. She is aging well, reaching the ripe age of 134 years in 2020.

Liberty was a gift to the American people by the French, and assembled in a studio in Paris. She arrived in America on June 17, 1886, and was officially installed on her base on Bedloe's Island in New York City's harbor on October 28 of that year.

That was not altogether her first visit to this country, however. The 225-ton statue was made in 300 separate sections. Before she arrived in her entirety, Miss Liberty's right arm, the one holding the torch, had been completed and sent to the United States for the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia in 1876. Following the Exposition, it was moved to Madison Square in New York City, where it was viewed by thousands until 1884. Then the arm was shipped back to France to be assembled with the rest of the statue.

The Statue of Liberty and earlier representations of a female figure depicting the same values have been portrayed in a wide variety of forms over the years. She was, and still is, a popular topic of American folk art paintings and sculpture.

Copper weathervanes featuring the Goddess of Liberty were being made by the 1860s. In many vanes, she held a flag, which was blowing one direction with her arm outstretched pointing in the opposite direction -- these features presumably necessary to make her function as a weathervane. Other old Liberty vanes have been found in cast zinc, hammered copper and gilded wood.

Wooden ship figureheads of the mid 1800s were also, frequently, of the Goddess of Liberty. She supposedly symbolized not only a free nation, but also that the sailing fleet of the United States believed in free trade and sailors' rights.

The same woodcarvers who made the ship figureheads often turned their attention to carving life-size figures that were placed in front of cigar stores. These carvings were painted with bright colors and then coated for protection against the elements, with a hole drilled in the head through which linseed oil could be added for preservation. A smaller size version of the cigar-store figures was made to set on a counter inside.

Another place where liberty could be found was attached to the top of a stove, acting as a radiator! In the mid-1890s, the rapid growth of the iron industry in the United States created innumerable objects for use in the home, yard, store and elsewhere. A cast-iron stove

figure, sometimes painted, could be attached to the top of a box-like stove. There she not only made the stove more attractive, but helped to radiate the heat it produced.

The cast-iron foundries produced another utilitarian object that was also made more attractive by the addition of Liberty at the front. Andirons for use in the fireplace became living room decorations in this way.

Many trade signs of the late 1800s featured Miss Liberty, also. What could be a better symbol of the integrity of the proprietor than to have this lady a part of his advertising?

Liberty also appeared in the kitchen. One of the earliest pieces known is a black walnut cake board from the 18th century. It has the earliest form of this national symbol, when she was still an Indian Princess, carved in its center. A tin cookie cutter from about 1900 has just the head of Liberty. Also from this time were ice cream molds made of pewter.

The Goddess of Liberty was also a popular motif in most kinds of needlework. By the mid-1900s, she was being woven into coverlets, copper-plate imprinted on fabric swatches of cotton and linen, and embroidered on muslin and linen.

In fact, there is almost no aspect of American life that has not used Miss Liberty as a motif.

She has been made into dolls; she has been impressed in glass bottles; she has been carved as scrimshaw; and she has decorated the side panels of fire engines. She perches on top of flagpoles, smiles down from stained glass windows, and smiles up from the tops of cigar boxes. In 1984, she was re-created in 229 pounds of chocolate.

A collection of items featuring Miss Liberty in any of her forms is a fascinating look at American life. An excellent pictorial reference with historical background is "Liberties with Liberty," by Nancy Jo Fox. It was published in 1986, in honor of the Statue of Liberty Centennial. Most of the items mentioned in this article can be found illustrated in this book.

In 2019, the Statue of Liberty Museum opened to the public, with interactive high-tech displays mixed with galleries of artifacts and archival records representing the cultural and natural histories of both Liberty and Ellis Island. The National Park System's collection includes approximately 390,000 individual items and over 1 million archival records. [OS](#)

SUCCESSFUL ANTIQUES COLLECTING

ARE ANTIQUES & COLLECTIBLES A GOOD INVESTMENT?

by Mark A. Roeder

Are antiques & collectibles a good investment? Several years ago, I answered this question with a resounding Yes! but today things are more uncertain. A decade or two ago, anyone with a little knowledge of antiques and some wise buying and selling tactics could make sound investments. I built up an impressive collection by doing so, even though my funds were quite limited. Antiques even helped pay for my home. The world of antiques has become unstable since then, however, and harder to predict.

Let me stop here and point out that I'm not predicting doom and gloom for collectors, not at all. Most antique purchases are still a wise investment. It's just no longer a sure thing that

values will increase. Too many have jumped on the antiques bandwagon purely for investment. These individuals often inflate values beyond their natural level and cause them to drop when they dump their investments on the market. Many true collectors have become wary of the shifting economic conditions and have less faith in antiques. This has created a "self-fulfilling prophecy" and has lowered the values of some pieces while leaving others untouched.

One part of the collecting world is as certain as ever—the enjoyment of antiques. Most collectors do not collect for the sake of monetary profit. We collect because we love antiques. Profit is secondary, if it is considered at all. This is as it should be. If the values of all my antiques were to plummet tomorrow, I wouldn't be overly grieved or concerned. When I purchase something, I know it may well be more valuable in the future, but I don't bank on it. I don't depend on the appreciation of values for my livelihood. I buy antiques because I love them, I enjoy them, and I often just can't help myself. I think this is true of most collectors. Enjoyment can never be taken away from us, unless we allow it.

Now that I've mentioned the real purpose of collecting, I'll say something about the "other" side—investing. Profit is a part of collecting antiques and there is nothing wrong with making money from your collection. For many collectors, it is this profit that makes it possible for them to have a collection. Profit is not the end goal, but it is a useful part of collecting antiques. Profit is no longer certain, but it's often still possible. If you are successful enough your collection can even support itself. You will no longer have to steal \$25 from your grocery budget to afford that piece you have had your eye on. This is still true today, even though things are more up in the air. I love auctions and often I have to buy items I don't want to get the piece I desire. This is a good thing rather than bad. After I've sold off the extra stuff, I'm often left with what I wanted at very little cost. Sometimes, I have less than nothing in a piece because that extra stuff sold for more than I paid for everything.

Profit isn't the goal for most collectors. It merely adds to the fun and gives us all an excuse to spend money on our collections. We can always rationalize our purchases by thinking, "It's likely a good investment after all." It's nice to know that if we tire of a piece, or a collection, we can sell it off and perhaps even make money on it. That profit will support whatever new collecting area we enter.

Times are harder now than they were. It is in times such as these that antiques can come to the rescue. What was once purchased with money taken from the grocery budget can be sold and the funds returned. Antiques are like a savings account, but they pay interest in enjoyment, as well as cash. I don't mind parting with antiques when I need the money, because I get to keep the enjoyment and the memories. The

antiques that surround me give me a sense of security. I know that if I really need the money, I can sell them. Even if I get somewhat less than I paid, that's okay, because being able to use antiques is worth the cost. Most often, I get back every penny I put in, and more.

The greatest profits of investing in antiques and collectibles concerns, not dollars and cents, but the enjoyment we all receive from collecting. Most often, the proceeds for the sale of antiques goes right back into collecting. Even when the funds must go to pay utilities or a doctor's bill, there's a certain satisfaction that comes from knowing that a beloved antique came to the rescue in a time of need.

The real goal of most collectors is not to make money, but to have fun collecting. One should never lose sight of this. So what if profits are no longer certain? Does it really matter in the end? No investment is certain and few are as enjoyable as antiques. Think of it this way; which would you rather have—a savings passbook, stocks worth \$500, or a nice blanket chest or mid-century chrome kitchen dining set to enjoy each and every day? When the time comes to sell you'll most likely receive the original purchase price back, and more. It is like getting paid to enjoy your collection. Even if no profit is made, the enjoyment is still there. There's no guarantee of profit even with a savings account or stocks. The pitiful interest paid today assures than inflation will decrease the value of money in a savings account. We've all heard about vast

sums of money lost in the stock market. Even though antiques are not a sure thing, they seem far more stable than most investments.

Is it possible to lose money on an antique investment? Of course it is. Values can and do decrease. There is no such thing as "a sure thing." Most of the time, however, antiques that decrease in value regain it. If the prices drop on what you collect don't worry. The only sure way to lose money is to panic and sell. Just hold onto your collection, the values will likely come back up. Rather than being a tragedy, lower values are an opportunity to purchase what one could not afford in the past. Always look for the silver lining.

Economic times have been uncertain before and antiques have always performed quite well. A little caution is a good thing when the situation is unstable, but this doesn't mean collectors should stop buying. How much something is worth shouldn't matter. So what if the circa 1880 cracker jar you paid \$100 for is only worth \$50? Is it any less beautiful or nostalgic? Is its power to bring up pleasant memories of a bygone age any less potent? What should it matter if it's only worth \$50 to others? The only thing that matters is what it's worth to you and such values are rarely figured in dollars and cents. There is no "sure thing," except perhaps when it comes to the enjoyment of antiques.





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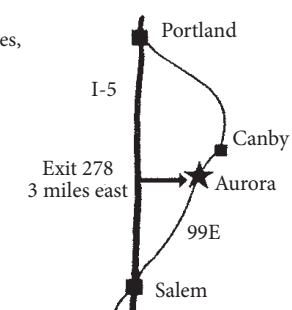
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ANTIQUE OR VINTAGE? WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

by The Associated Press

Is that an antique or is it vintage? Most people refer to items that are old as antiques, because they feel a certain "cache" goes with it.

Some believe antiques are items that are 25 years and older or 50 years and older. Technically, antiques are goods approaching the 100-year mark. Most other items fall under the term vintage.

Whether antique or vintage, these looks are a wonderful way to create a unique look in the home. Vintage or antique furniture does not have to make your house look like a gentleman's club or your grandmother Salvatrice's house; in many cases, it can be quite subtle.

However, vintage can be a bit trickier to incorporate. Designing a home around vintage furnishings must be carefully thought through. Mixing and matching pieces of furniture from totally different periods can create a hodge-podge look

so it is best to have a plan of what you want to achieve, before you start buying vintage pieces for your home.

However, sometimes the most extreme types of furnishings can complement each other, so don't be afraid to mix it up. A bit of moxie is needed to create an interesting mix and incorporate vintage pieces into the decor.

Vintage furniture does not need be more expensive than modern mass-produced furniture. One could end up with a wonderful, unique home that cost less to furnish than many homes with newly bought furniture with no style and heritage. The trick is to be an individual...choose a style of interior decoration that you like and create a style around that. Give the decor extra thought to ensure that it is workable and then slowly piece it all together.

Creating an individual style does not happen

overnight and cannot be achieved in a few shopping trips. You may find yourself looking through yard sales, furniture sales and antiques shops for a while before you find a piece that you think would add a special touch to a room. Patience is needed!

The key to incorporating vintage pieces is not to do an entire room in one style or a 50/50 mix. Instead, aim for a two-thirds to one-third mixture of styles or just use a few pieces as accents. For example, one or two pieces of Art Deco-style furniture and a Scandinavian sofa from the 1960s can create a dramatic point of interest in an otherwise modern or contemporary room.

Incorporating vintage pieces is also a great way to display family heirlooms in your interior design. Vintage pieces don't always have to be on permanent display -- they can emerge

from time to time and be shown off like a fine collectable, or even incorporated as table-scapes. Finally, incorporating vintage is very eco-friendly! Every time we can keep one piece of furniture or item from going to a landfill, our earth smiles, and we preserve a part of our culture and history. These vintage treasures become our old friends. OS

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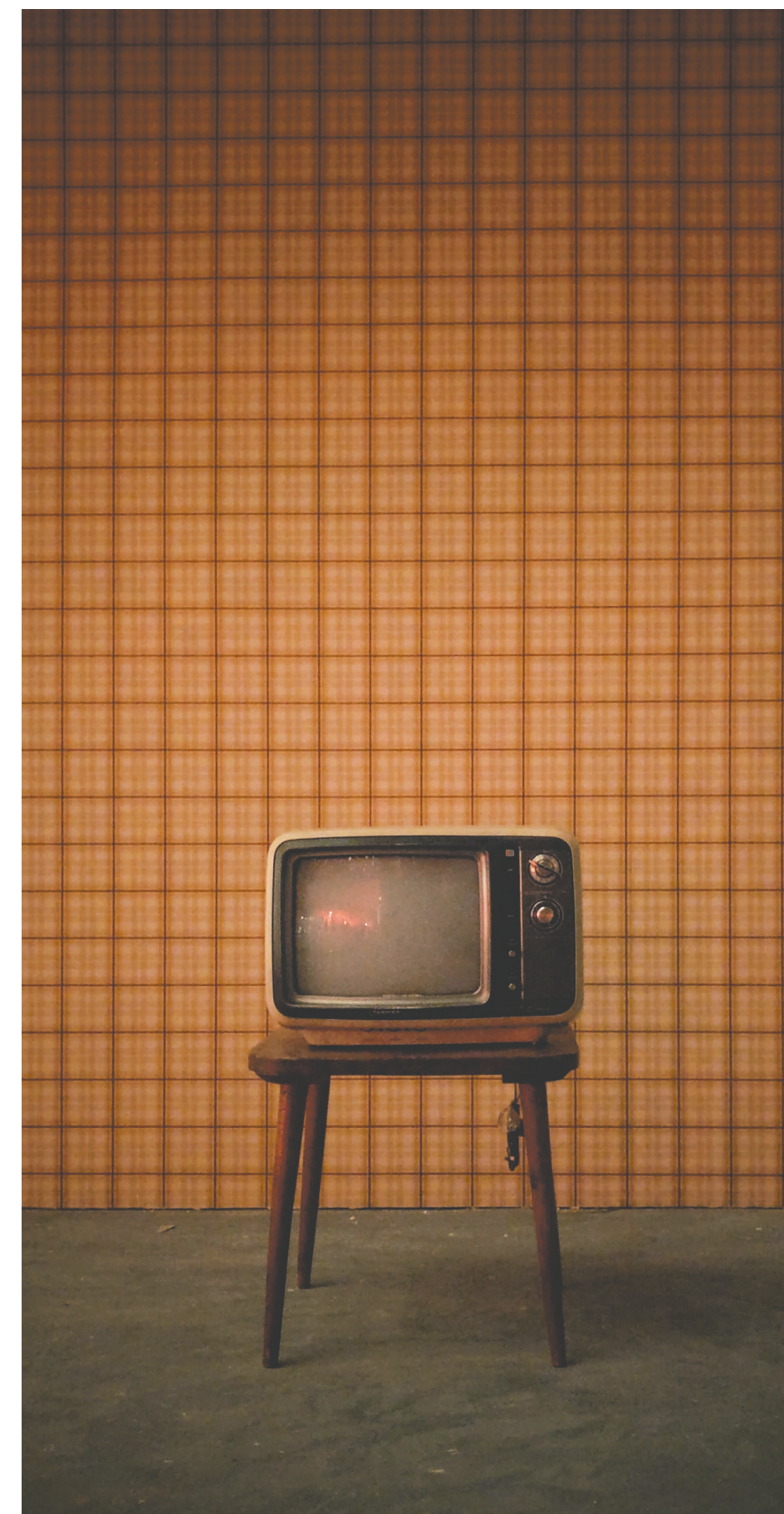
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There couldn't be a better time to research antiques. Never mind that the market for 18th and 19th century antiques is currently down. Rarities will come back up, even in your lifetime. I am going to take various categories and offer historical facts to help you to identify family heirlooms or find bargains on the internet marketplace.

When you think of early American silver the name "Paul Revere" comes to mind. You might have a piece he created. In 1783 he opened a jewelry store. He sold buckles, medals, spoons and jewelry. A single spoon could be worth thousands of dollars. Silver items by Paul Revere Jr. still come to market. A single spoon has fetched \$11,000 at auction. However, get acquainted with other American silversmiths of the era. Their items can also be worth thousands of dollars. You might have a small item stuffed in a jewelry box or drawer awaiting discovery.

Historically, the first Colonial silver was made in Boston and New England from 1650 to 1775. It was crafted in New York or New Amsterdam a decade later. Early Pennsylvania silver was made from 1690. Because of their agricultural economy, the southern colonies of Maryland, Virginia and the Carolinas didn't begin silver smithing till the 18th century.

Because of its wealth and culture it was Boston that attracted the finest silversmiths. The names of many are listed on line and in many books. Some names to look for are John Coney, Jeremiah Dummer, John Hull and of course the Revere family. Less familiar is John Chalmers

of Annapolis, Maryland. He is best known as the maker of the state's first coinage, issuing shillings, sixpence and threepence silver coins in 1783.

CLUES: Early silverware was made from rolled and hammered ingots. As a result it has a softer sheen than the harder polish of later silver made in factories from thinner, mechanical, rolled sheets.

Don't get carried away if you discover a piece of silver marked "Revere" or "PR" until you check the proper marks in a book of marks or the internet marks section, or a museum curator. Fakes abound.

Proof that even experts can be fooled was a teapot with a forged Revere signature at a Christies auction years ago. When recognized as a fake it sold for a modest \$1,000.

Tiny antique silver items are often overlooked and undervalued. Small boxes are a good possibility and many were made by Colonial American silversmiths. They were made for snuff, nutmeg, sugar and tobacco. Shoe and knee-breeches buckles as well as buttons can turn up at church rummage boxes. Other possibilities are whistles, hairpins and small bells.

Would you recognize a "kovsh" or a "Quaich" if you saw one? These are just two of the dozens of strange names for mostly now obsolete silver pieces. For starters a "Quaich" is a shallow, two-handled drinking bowl. It was popular in Scotland where it was sometimes used as a communion cup. It is sometimes spelled

RECOGNIZING ODD NAMED SILVER

"quaigh". The "kovsh" is a boat-shaped drinking vessel or ladle with one handle. It was made strictly in Russia and still shows up at auctions.

Beakers, in use in the 18th and early 19th centuries are small, silver drinking vessels that flare out at the top. They were used for church communion wine. "Mazarines" and "wax jacks" can be confusing. Mazarines were in fashion as fish servers in the 18th century. They are oval, pierced plates that fit into dishes. The artistry of the silversmith was displayed in the various pierced patterns. The name comes from the word "mazar" - deep dish. "Wax jacks" are small, open stands with a reel and crank used to put wax seals on letters and melt the wax.

Even though many of these novel silver objects were once made in great quantities, these days they are expensive rarities that periodically show up at auctions and estate sales.

CLUES: Consider a ewer and basin (a washbowl set). When they show up at mall shows most people mistake them for a water pitcher for dining and the basin as a planter of some sort. They were mostly made in ironstone or china.

The creation of silver for every possible use began in the 18th century. Silver items that were in the rococo style and hammered with French "rocaille" forms were new to France around 1740. The Huguenot craftsmen fleeing from France to England introduced the style there. By 1785 it was out of fashion when Neo-classical forms were influenced by the newly discovered Pompeii excavations.

By the late 18th century new forms were being

created for such everyday items as cake baskets. They were referred to as "sweetmeat" baskets.

The "Argyle", named after the Dukes of Argyll was in the shape of a teapot or vase. Its purpose was to keep gravy warm at the table.

A "plateau" is a long tray with a gallery used to hold everything from silver sculptures to dining pieces, usually on a dining table.

One of the most unique, obsolete items is a "wine trolley." It consisted of a pair of small containers to hold wine bottles, on wheels that could be pulled from person to person. These were usually heavily decorated with various figural motifs.

There are fakes and reproductions of many of these pieces. Reproduced hallmarks can be fuzzy. OS



Quaich-two handled, Sterling Silver drinking bowl

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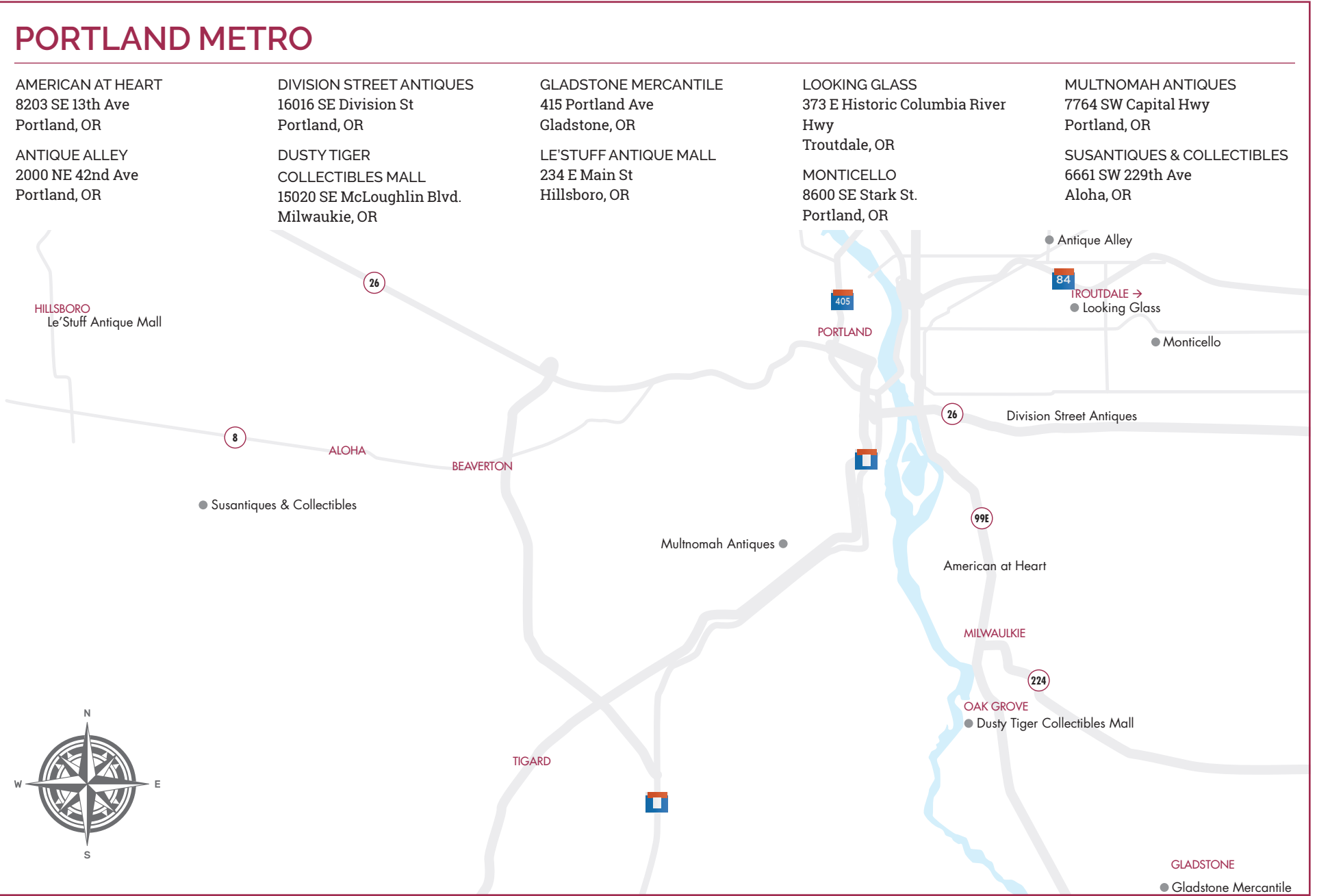


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FRISBEE COLLECTIBLES STILL FLYING HIGH

by Anne Gilbert

There are Frisbee golf courses all over the world and all over Oregon. There are serious collectors of related items, willing to pay big bucks for vintage and rare examples.

Little did I know when my husband and I bought a Christmas tree farm, on top of a North Carolina mountain in 1994, that it was also an international Frisbee golf course. What were all of those concrete slabs that dotted our mountain? They were of course “tees” for Disc Golf. We weren’t even familiar with what “Frisbees” were and that it was a serious sport, formalized in 1970. It is still an international sport and discs made in the 1970s are a serious collectible. These days it is known as “Disc Golf” and there are disc golf courses in every state in America and around the world.

We learned that as a working Christmas tree farm, previously owned by Bill and Sue Boylan, the first rounds were played in fields of waist-high hay and knee-high Christmas trees. Each year the Boylans improved the course adding permanent baskets and concrete pads, but the original course design stayed the same.

Historically, discus throwing is an ancient sport dating to the first Olympic Games in 776 B.C. in Greece. They were made of unwrought bronze and iron. Their standard size and shape was similar to the 4 lb. 6.5 oz discs used in today’s Olympic Games. Over the centuries a variety of

games, using a discus were popular.

Fast forward to 1871 when William Russell Frisbie opened the doors of the Frisbie Pie Company in Bridgeport, CT. The earliest 4-inch pies were sold in unmarked tins. The only tins marked “Frisbie” are the standard 9 ½” to 9 ¾” grocery store variety and the original restaurant size of 10 ¾”. Since the Company was in business for 90 years there are many variations.

What is amazing is that any have survived along with the original pie safes.

Disc golf evolved beyond just casually tossing pie tins and became popular in 1939. It really took off when the first plastic “flying discs” were created by two former World War 11 army Air Force pilots Warren Franscioni and Walter(Fred) Morrison in 1946. Made of rock hard plastic they weighed nearly 6 oz. By 1953 they were marketing a softer, polyether plastic disc. Called “Frizby”. International championships became a serious happening at Dartmouth College in 1954. The first plastic “flying discs” were created by two former World War 11 army Air Force pilots Warren Franscioni and Walter(Fred) Morrison in 1946. Made of rock hard plastic they weighed nearly 6 oz. By 1953 they were marketing a softer, polyether plastic disc. They were first mass produced in 1957 under the name Wham-O, when Morrison joined with the Wham-O Mfg. of San Gabriel, CA. Since then millions of Frisbees have been sold and several thousand types have been created by many Companies.

I interviewed Victor A. Malafronte, the original World Frisbee champion in 1998. He is still winning at tournaments and has been collecting Frisbees and Frisbee memorabilia since 1968. He’s narrowed his collection from over 2,000 to around 600 items. He is the 1981 Master World Champion, and a charter member of the Frisbee

Hall of Fame.

Since he wrote his book, “The Complete Book of Frisbee “in 1998 he has seen a growing collector interest. “This isn’t your. Father’s Frisbee anymore. It’s gone from a toy to an international, full medal sport. “As he pointed out “the spelling of the name isn’t even the same. It’s gone from Frisbie to Frisbee.” Since then over 300million Frisbees have been sold and several thousand different types have been created and sold by almost 100 companies. Malafronte recalled that when he was a member of the “Berkley Frisbee Group(fellow students) that Frisbee trading was a big thing in 1968. One of his first “big finds” at the flea market was a Pluto Platter. It was engraved with the names of all of the planets of the Solar system and the Company name “Wham-o” appeared on the disc three times. The price was a quarter. As the first period of seven Pluto Platters it could sell for \$ 900.00, in mint condition.

Collecting Frisbees requires plenty of research Malafronte said. especially when there are nearly 25,000 variations of collectible Frisbees, twenty classifications of disc types, specialties, plus related items.

Since there are 20 classifications, collectors could specialize in one or more.

SOME OF THE EXAMPLES ARE:

1.Antiques . They must be at least 25 years old. The material can be of metal, wood, plastic, paper, foam or fabric. Since they represent and chronicle the early history of Frisbee sports they are the rarest and most expensive.

2. Frisbie pie pans . Among the 40 different types are variations of lettering, vent hole size, patterns, etc.

3. Glow in the dark made with a phosphorescent material. Many still work. Most are a dull or pale green or yellow.

4. Golf Discs. Made since 1976 . Many classifications.

5. In the novelty category are personalities such as Michael Jordan and Superman and Disney characters.

Probably the ultimate Frisbee collectible is the original

Frisbie pie safe filled with 1w27 Frisbie pie pans; one for each year since the bakery began in 1871.

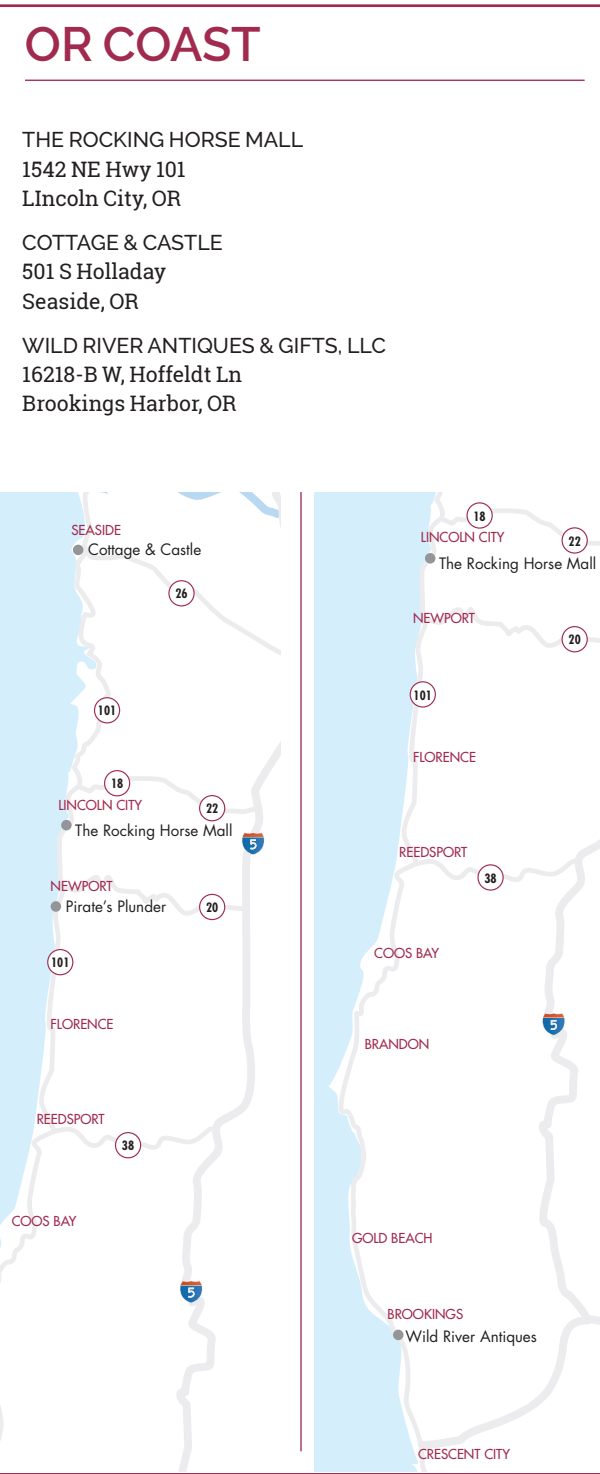
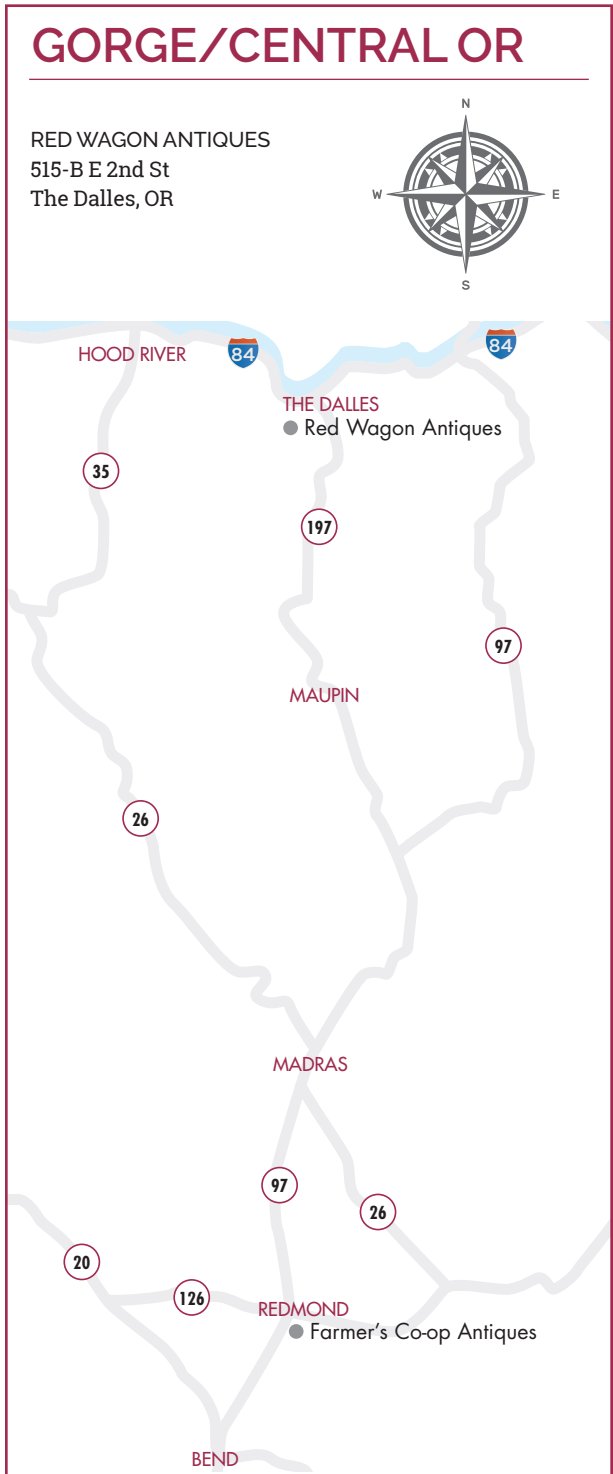
How should a collection of Frisbees be displayed and cared for?

Its easy for the glow-in-the-dark collector. One wall lights up. A word of warning, don’t store batteries inside electronic and illuminating discs. Keep them out of direct sunlight.

It’s a no-no to stack discs one on top of the other. This will cause them to warp and scratch, especially if they have any kind of decoration.

“Store each disc in a plastic bag, “advises Malafronte. “ If a disc needs cleaning a mild detergent and soft cloth or sponge will do and wash around any labels.”

Today there are Frisbee golf tournaments and courses all over the U.S. and the World. Malafronte’s book and price guide has been updated and is the only book on the subject. OS



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THIS & THAT: ANTIQUES & COLLECTING

By Terry and Kim Kovel

WHIRLIGIGS



Whirligigs scare the birds for a while, then birds seem to realize the moving parts are not dangerous, and they will eat birdseed on the ground nearby. But they do scare wild rabbits.

What is a whirligig? Some move on a windy day like pinwheels. Some are moving toys, for example a man chopping wood. Many are moving garden pieces such as people chopping wood or waving a flag. The experts say there four types of whirligigs.

The first were made as early as 500 B.C. by American Indians. These were made from a bone and a strip of leather. A modern version of the whirligig has a button that spins with string. A large button with holes can be made to

dragon butterfly that was made in China by 400 B.C. These are pictured in some early tapestries.

The most often seen whirligig is the wind-driven pinwheel. Folk-art collectors like the homemade whirligigs that show a hen pecking, a soldier fighting or a woman waving her arms. Or the ones with two men sawing wood. These became very popular in the 1880s to 1900, and they are still being made. They are one of the newest types of folk art to become popular with collectors, and prices have been rising. Some sold for over \$1,000, even though they were very crude.

A 26-inch-high primitive carved and painted wood and iron whirligig with a blond woman waving both arms while standing next to a red, white and blue ball sold for \$308 at a Skinner auction. The paint was worn, the arms and legs were stiff, and there was little motion, but it did look like it was homemade.

Q I have a 22-piece chocolate set in excellent condition. It's marked with an "R," "Bavaria, Germany" and "warranted 18 carat gold." Each plate has a 1-inch border of gold, the cups are gold and the pitcher with lid is gold. Does the gold trim make it very valuable?

A The gold trim does not mean it's very valuable. The words "18 carat gold" indicate the alloy used for the gold trim is 75 percent gold, but there is very little gold used on the porcelain. A chocolate set should have a pot, creamer, sugar, six small plates, and six cups and saucers. It would sell for less than \$50.

CURRENT PRICES

Gibson Girl vase, purple dress, feather hat, Royal Bayreuth, gold brocaded border, green ground, 5 1/2 inches, \$35.

Tea Leaf Ironstone vegetable dish, lid, rectangular, copper luster, molded handles, c. 1885, 10 x 7 inches, \$135.

Shirvan rug, directional, repetitive flowers, beige ground, brown border, guard borders, 4 feet, 1 inch x 3 feet, 2 inches, \$215.

Pencil sharpener, Jupiter Pencil Pointer, rotary cutter disc, Guhl & Harbeck Co., 1897, 5 x 13 inches, \$355.

TIP

Don't try to restore, repaint, clean or touch up colored metal bookends. It will lower the value to remove any of the paint or to cover it with new paint.

BLACKBALL BOX



A blackball box and marbles used in Ohio in the early 1900s was auctioned at Garth's for \$500. The box had machine-made dovetailing and was decorated with decoupage prints in painted frames.

As early as the 17th century in America, members of fraternal clubs often voted at their meetings without paper ballots. Decisions often required a simple majority, but sometimes had to be unanimous: Just one "no" vote could scuttle a project. So, they used a blackball box instead of paper ballots. Each person was given a random number of black and white marbles. To vote no, a black marble was dropped in the box. The box had a board that covered the voter's hand and marble so that no one could see the vote. Each marble made a noise when it was dropped, so only one marble could be used. When the box was opened, it was easy for everyone to see the number of black marbles and if the project, motion or request for membership had passed or failed. It was impossible to tell who had used a black marble.

The term "blackballed" is still in use, and the box was saved as part of history. The rules are still in "Robert's Rules of Order," a guide to parliamentary procedure, but there are few times when only one vote, not a majority, is needed. An old blackball box used by the Odd Fellows fraternal order was sold at a Garth's auction recently for \$500.

Q: I have a light bulb that I have identified as an 1885 Heisler-Bernstein incandescent lamp. Does it have any value? And if so, where would I find a buyer for such a bulb?

A: Antique and vintage light bulbs are classified as "early technology," an area of collecting that includes electrical apparatus, astronomical devices and medical instruments. Artificial lighting is significant, since its beginning in the 1880s marked the lengthening of the workday and other changes in everyday life.

Yes, there are collectors who hunt for early incandescent light bulbs, especially early carbon filament ones from the 1880s to early 1900s with intact filaments, like yours. Some early bulbs bring high prices; a few have sold for over \$5,000. Charles Heisler and Alexander Bernstein both owned businesses in the 1880s

BLACKBALL BOX

continued

and early 1900s that developed bulbs and lamps, and their work was influential in making electric lighting practical and popular. Look for an auction house that specializes in early technology or scientific instruments. The website www.bulbcollector.com also has information.

CURRENT PRICES

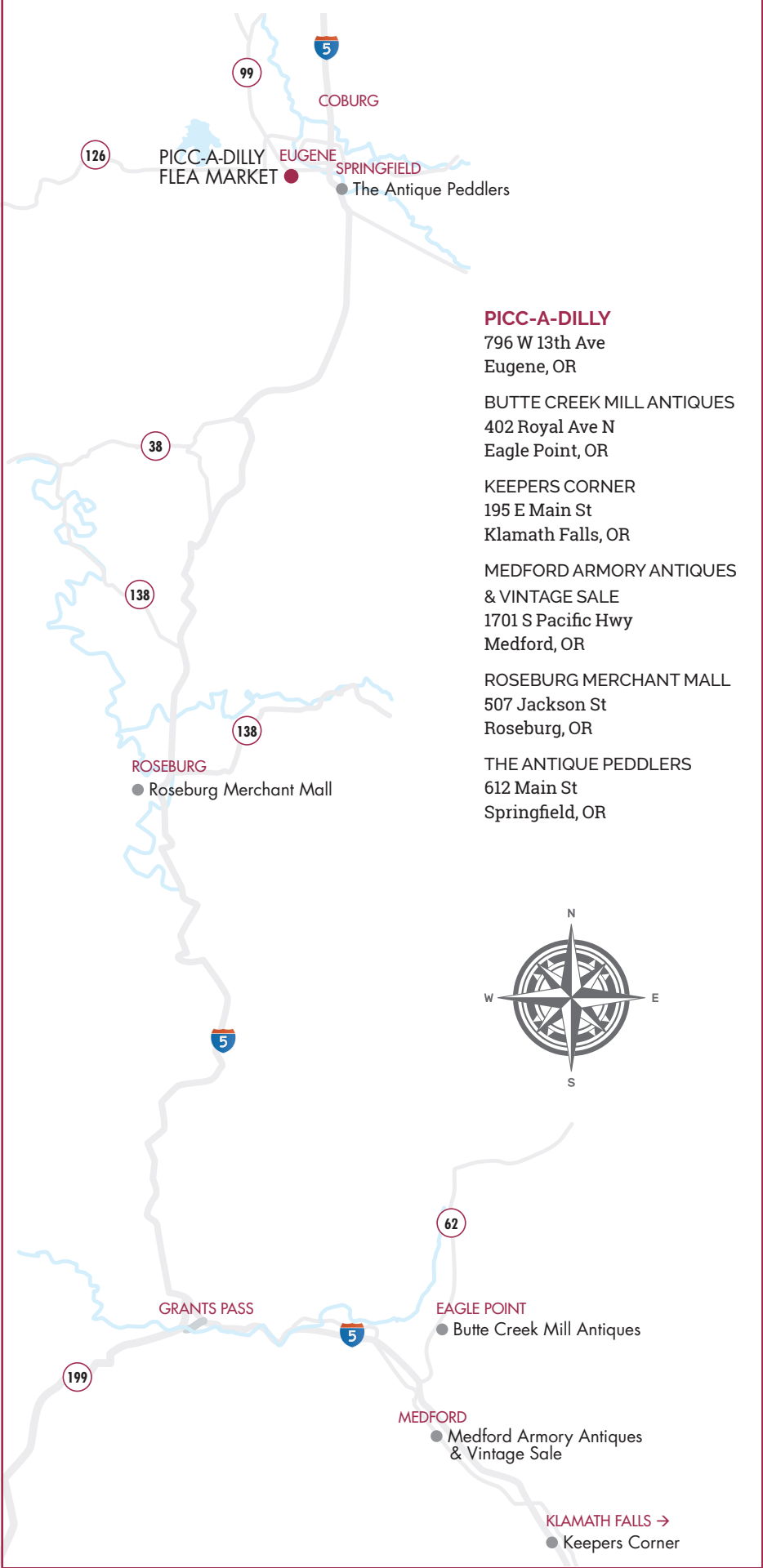
Stoneware rolling pin, salt glazed, cobalt blue stenciled wildflowers, turned wood shaft & handles, 16 inches, \$60.

Hooked rug, cat resting on striped cushion, flower & leaf border, American, 1860-1930, 30 x 52 inches, \$150.

Sewing stand, walnut, oval lift top, silk pleated work compartment, removable fitted tray, England, 28 x 15 x 12 inches, \$290.

Tiffany & Co. sterling silver bowl, flared & flattened rim, openwork stylized flower & leaf handles, c. 1910, 2 5/8 x 11 inches, \$370.

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THIS & THAT

By Terry and Kim Kovel

HEART & CROWN CHAIR



This \$9,000 Heart and Crown chair has a carved crest with the correct heart-shaped hole and a curved, crown-like top. The style, popular for only about 30 years, is prized by collectors of 18th-century American furniture.

Several rare “Heart and Crown” side chairs were sold at a Skinner auction in Massachusetts. The high-back chair featuring molded bannisters, turned legs and a rush seat is part of an old tradition. Furniture makers in Connecticut created this style and used it from about 1740 to 1770. It was an interpretation of the expensive Philadelphia and Boston chairs made at the time. Instead of the curved crest of the formal city chairs, the top of the back was made with a cut-out heart and a crown-shaped crest. Almost all of the Heart and Crown chairs were painted black or dark brown, and

all had the rush seat. An auctioned chair, 44 3/4 inches high and attributed to Andrew Durand of Milford, Connecticut, is painted black and has the characteristic banisters and turnings. It auctioned several years ago for \$9,000, which was three times the estimate.

Q: I have a two-bladed pocket knife I think is quite old. It's marked “Solingen, Germany” on one side of the blade and “Arnex, stainless” on the other side. Both side panels are embossed with three heads of racehorses, horseshoes and riding crops. My late wife worked for a horse farm owner who gave it to her for me. Is it worth keeping?

A: Solingen, Germany, is known as the “City of Blades.” It has been the center of knife-making in Germany since the Middle Ages and home to several manufacturers of knives, swords and cutlery. Arnex was in business in Solingen from about 1920 to 1940. Some pocket knives made by Arnex have handles decorated with animals, sports, trains, zeppelins and other themes. The value of your pocket knife is under \$25.

Q: I have a tall, white pitcher with daisies painted on it and gold trim. It's marked “Bel-Terr China, U.S.A., 22 Kt. Gold.” I'd like to sell it. What is it worth?

A: Bel-Terr China was founded in 1961 by Belden and Terry Ham in East Palestine, Ohio. The company is no longer in business. Bel-Terr pitchers, about 8 inches tall, sell for under \$20.

CURRENT PRICES

Egg beater, tin and steel, wood handle, side gear drive, teeth and crimp, Holt's, 1899, 10 3/4 x 3 inches, \$75.

Lunchbox and thermos, Chitty Chitty Bang Bang, metal, top handle and latch, flying car and characters image, 1960s, \$125.

Bronze dog statue, whippet, ready to run, oval black & orange marble base, after P.J. Mene, 4 x 5 x 3 inches, \$365.

Dress, beaded sequin, black, flapper, art deco-style pattern, sleeveless, scoopneck, 1920s, size medium, 35-inch waist, \$535.

TIP

Civil War re-enactors have been warned that some old medical instruments could still carry germs or viruses that are infectious. Be very careful when handling any old medical items. They should be carefully disinfected.

SEED TAPE BOX



Advertising collectibles are very popular today despite decreased interest in displaying old signs in family restaurants, a popular decorating idea in the 1980s. This seed tape box is in great condition with original small boxes of seed tape filling each compartment. It sold for \$1,033.

It's spring and time to plant the seeds that grow into vegetables and flowers that often are tasty salads for deer, rabbits, squirrels and other local wildlife. In 1790, a Shaker religious community started to sell packets filled with seeds saved from the previous year. It was a new idea. Seeds for farmers had only sold in bulk quantities. At first the packets held only vegetable seeds, but by the mid-1800s, flower seeds also were sold. Sometime before 1918, Shaker seed tape was invented and sold.

SEED TAPE BOX

continued

Today, gardeners can buy seed tape for hundreds of plants or make their own. Just unroll some toilet paper and press one or two seeds into the paper at spaced intervals. Then roll up the paper until it's time to plant. The seed tape (toilet paper) can be stretched into a shallow line in the dirt, then covered with more dirt, watered and kept free of weeds. Rows of plants will come up in a few days.

The American Seed Tape Company of Newark, New Jersey, had a seed tape brand called Pakro that advertised in farm publications from 1918 to at least the 1920s. Recently, a Wm Morford advertising auction offered an early cardboard Pakro seed tape display box that held 60 different types of seed tapes in original small boxes with color pictures like those on the packets. The 15- by 18-inch display sold for \$1,033.

Q: I have a vintage hammered aluminum chafing dish with original glass bowl, but I believe the aluminum “cup” placed in the space for the heating element isn't original. The space is the perfect size for a tea light candle, but I hesitate to put a direct flame under the glass. What was used originally, and what would be safe to use now? Would Sterno be acceptable?

A: Don't use canned heat (Sterno) if the glass dish is directly over the heat. A tea candle will help keep the food warm if the food is hot when it's put in the dish. Canned heat can be used if the chafing dish is the kind that has a metal outer dish that holds water, which heats the glass dish. A chafing dish that uses a water bath to keep the food warm has the French name “bain-marie.”

CURRENT PRICES

Fireplace fender, rectangular panel, cherubs, scrolls, ball finials, c. 1880, 10 1/2 x 41 in. \$390.

Doorstop, organ grinder and monkey, red jackets, double sided cast iron, 1920, 10 in. \$480.

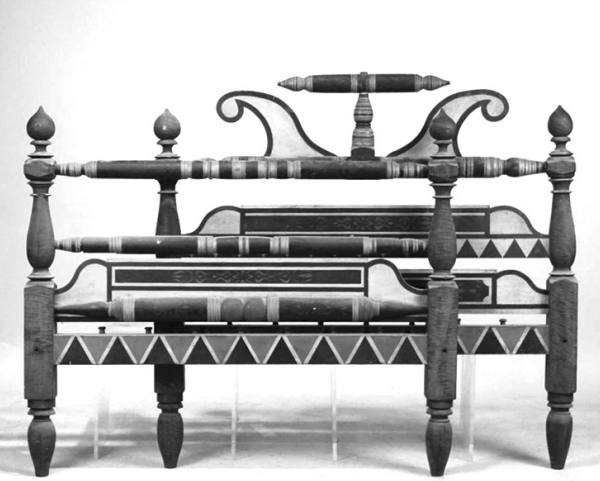
Plate, yellow hand, figure, holding urn, green, blue, Viola Frey, c. 1986, France, 6 1/2 in. \$550.

Baby Grand Piano, Steinway & Sons, high gloss black, E grade, bench, c. 1999, 60 x 57 in. \$2,400.

TIP

Recycle your unused ashtrays as drip-catching candleholders, trays for change on your bedroom dresser or as a dish for imitation sweeteners. They can be repurposed as both a conversation piece and an item to be reused for a long time to come.

ANTIQUE BED



Paddy and the Pig is a caricature found in political cartoons during Victorian times. A toy based on the caricature sold recently for \$1,320.

Can an antique bed be used in a modern home without difficulties? Yes and no. The beds used before about 1900 are shorter and narrower than the standard sizes used today. That means that to use the beds, the fitted sheets, blankets, box springs and mattresses may have to be custom made. It might be possible to use toppers or foam rubber instead of springs. But then the top of the bed will be lower than normal.

Until the late 1800s, the mattress was held in the bed frame with wooden slats or rope. An old rope bed will have holes in the side rails to “rope the bed.” Some old beds have pegs in the side rails. These hold a mattress with “sacking,” a piece of sailcloth with eyelets that match the positions of the pegs. It is strung into place in the center of the frame to hold the mattress. Ask a local antique dealer, historical house curator or search online for “roping a bed” for instructions.

An antique bed is shorter than a new one. Sometimes it is best to use just the head- and footboards and buy a modern metal frame. A colorfully painted antique Empire bed made in New England was auctioned by Nye & Co. recently for \$12,500.

Q: I'd like to know a reasonable value of an old portable record player, a Califone Model 1430K. I'd like to buy one and this model reminds me of the one I used in school when I was younger. Can you help?

A: The Califone Model 1430K phonograph was made in the 1970s and '80s and popular with schools, libraries and churches. It was a solid-state phonograph with a built-in speaker and a 4-speed turntable that played 45, 33, 16 and 78 RPM records. It had some useful features,

including a built-in 45 adaptor and an on/off knob with a Pause position. Older models were blue or gray and had a metal turntable platter. Newer ones were made in gray with a plastic platter. But while considered “portable” in a case with a removable lid, it weighs almost 20 pounds. A working Califone Model 1430K sells for \$50 to \$75.

CURRENT PRICES

Oil lamp, glass, emerald green font, beaded heart pattern, clear tapered base, 11 inches, \$70.

Advertising poster, Drink Orange Crush, woman floating on lake in inner tube, paper, frame, 19 1/2 x 15 1/2 inches, \$150.

Folk art cane, Eagle's head handle, black paint remnants, shaft with carved feathers, metal ferrule, American, 1800s, 35 1/2 inches, \$210.

Fraktur picture, house blessing inside heart, flowers & vines, watercolor details, grain painted frame, 1800s, 7 x 6 inches, \$370.

TIP

Felt-tip markers in shades of brown and black can be used to camouflage a small nick in furniture. You can use several markers and blend the color.

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THIS & THAT

By Terry and Kim Kovel

PENNY TOYS



The toy schoolboy sold at auction was admiring a picture on the desktop that was hiding candy. Discovering and eating the candy made the toy great fun. Today it is a collector's treasure costing \$840. The excellent condition of the original paint adds to the price.



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Children have always wanted to imitate the activities of people they see. So, toys have been made for centuries that are dressed to look like friends and, if possible, let them pretend to cook, play or work like grown-ups. In Germany, toy factories made small colorful tin toys from about 1880 to 1914 that could move and imitate a mother cooking or a boy roller skating. The price of the small toy was a penny, so they were named “penny toys” by today’s collectors.

About 175 antique penny toys were sold in an important Bertoia auction recently, and prices were much higher than a penny. The lowest price was \$180. The highest price was \$11,400 for a walking camel with a well-dressed Arab rider. The top of the rider’s turban could be turned to make the clockwork toy move. There were several toys showing a boy or a girl at school sitting at the traditional bench attached to a desk. The child’s arm moved and opened the top of the desk to show candy hidden inside. This schoolboy penny toy sold for \$840. Toys today are much more complicated with electric motors or digital instructions, but kids still play school.

Q: Is there an easy way to date an unused post-card? I know the amount of the postage stamp has often changed and there are lists of the prices and dates. But when were photographs rather than color pictures used? When was it called a “postal card”?

A: Postcard collectors know and have listed the table of postage and postcard changes online, and they are in our book “Kovels’ Know Your Collectibles.” A postal card is an early card called “pioneer” with no picture used from 1893 to 1898. A government-printed card had printed postage, a privately printed card required a stamp, and a divided-back card was used from 1907 to 1914.

Photochrome cards were used after 1939. Collectors call them photographs, although many are lithographs with a shiny finish. Real photo cards were used since 1900. If you want to sound like an expert, refer to them as RPPC. Used cards can be dated by the amount of the postage stamp; the postmark; a two-digit postal code, used after 1943; and a five-digit ZIP code, used after 1963.

CURRENT PRICES

Clock, Petal style, green, blue, orange, composite, enamel, metal, style of George Nelson, 17 1/2 in. \$75.

Delft Charger, pedestal, fern fronds, flowers, blue, white, 14 in. \$280.

Elephant Match Safe, silver plate, cream tusks, trunk down, c. 1900, 2 1/4 x 1 1/2 in. \$430.

Lustres, cranberry, bohemian glass, scalloped edge bowls, cut glass prisms, enamel & gilt flowers, 14 in. pair. \$680.

TIP

Be sure that any restorer, refinisher or upholsterer working on your antique is insured.

RARE BIRD



This rare bird, a ceramic parrot, conceals the working parts of a radio loudspeaker made in 1927. It substituted for the large horn used to amplify the sound of the radio and sold for about \$900.

Collectibles were sometimes made to fool people. A tiny teddy bear could hide a perfume bottle. Pincushions hide beneath the fabric skirts of half-dolls, ceramic figures stitched to the skirt. Some collectible canes hid thin flasks that held forbidden whiskey to drink secretly while on a walk. And bronze statues sometimes could open to reveal a naughty scene. In the early days of television, a ceramic black panther was really a lamp lighting the room and the TV set.

But almost forgotten are the loudspeakers made for early radios that looked like statues of birds or kings, instead of the large horns usually used. Most famous were the Andia loudspeakers, their radio parts inside a metal base with a glazed pottery top. One that was auctioned recently looked like a bright red, blue and yellow 14-inch-tall parrot. It was made by Royal Doulton & Co. of England for Artandia Ltd. in 1927. Other designs include Miss Muffet, a Persian king, a Chinese scribe and other figures that would attract buyers. It sold at Auction Team Breker, a German auction of radios, music machines and other technical collectibles, for \$906.

Q: My mother gave me the metal dentist chair from my father’s office. It is not like today’s dentist chairs; it’s more like a lightweight skeleton chair with a round enameled metal seat, rectangular slotted metal back and spindles for the headrest, legs and mechanical parts. There are no arms. It looks small and very uncomfortable. Is it worth anything? How was it used? How old is it?

A: The 17th-century dentist held the patient on the floor to pull a tooth. By the early 18th century, a Windsor chair with a piece of wood added as a head rest was used. Then inventors made improvements to metal, mechanical and upholstered chairs. Your chair was made in about 1910, a time when enameled metal furniture was very popular due to worries about bacteria. Large, padded dentist chairs are bought today for a family room or home bar as a conversation piece. They are hard to sell. A collector of dental antiques might pay a few hundred dollars, or a dental museum might give you a tax deduction if you donate it.

RARE BIRD

continued

CURRENT PRICES

Blown glass flask, amethyst, swirled pattern, spiral ribs, Stiegel type, sheared mouth, 5 inches, \$190.

Sterling silver stuffing spoon, Hester Bateman, Elk monogram, England, 11 3/4 inches, \$355.

Wooden box, pine, sliding lid, painted stylized tulips on all sides, 3 1/2 x 4 1/2 x 7 inches, \$585.

Coffee mill, Landers, Frary & Clark, No. 20, Crown, double wheel, cast iron, black paint, hinged lid, wooden handle, 12 1/4 inches, \$1,045. OS

TIP

When packing a piece of pottery for shipping, look at the shape. If it has a hollow space larger than 1 inch across, fill the space with sponge, foam or bubble wrap.



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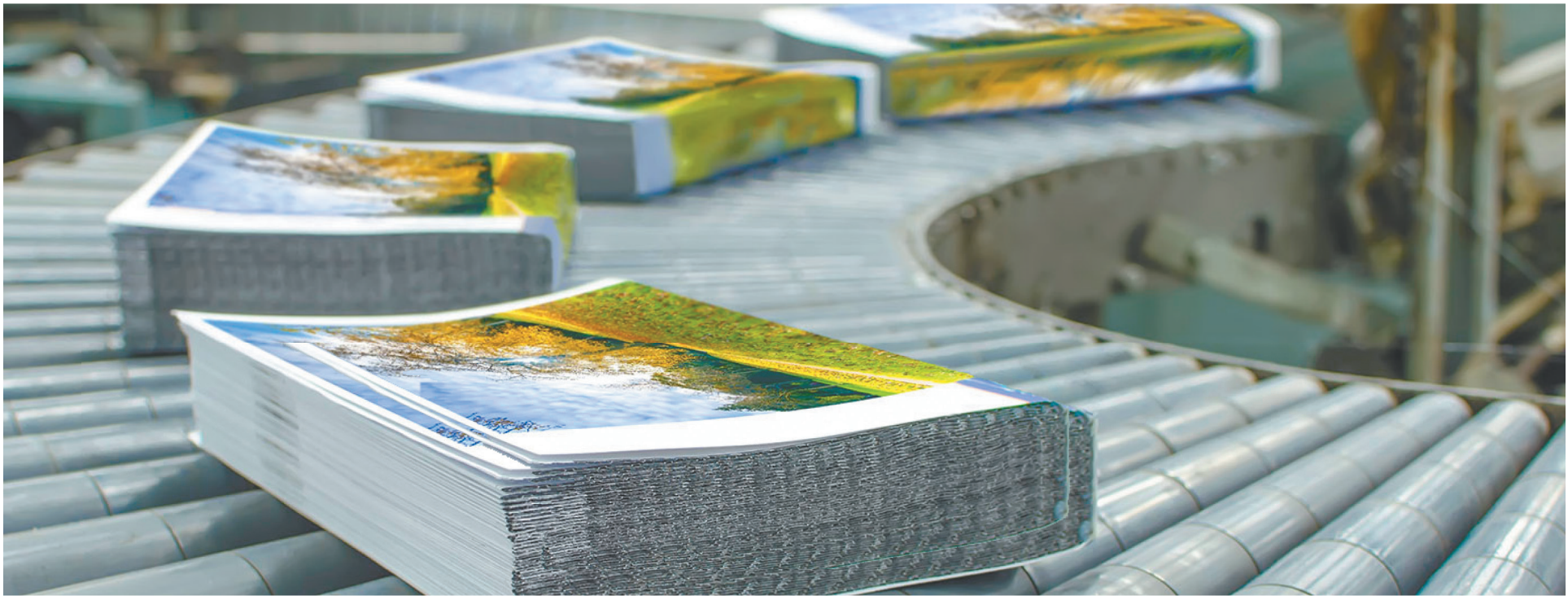
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