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515 E Carefree Hwy, #1128 • Phoenix, AZ 85085 Email: antique@barlomedia.com **Cover Story**

Antique Plaza in Downtown Mesa To Celebrate It's 25th Anniversary

+ Mesa **+**

Mesa during the first weekend in October as the mall celebrates its 25th Anniversary of moving into the historic J. J. Newberry building. There will be refreshments, giveaways and-perhaps best of all-big sales in every booth. Owner Greg Farr says they are still finalizing plans for this special event and he assures that the weather will be gorgeous for coming out and enjoying some shopping.

Along with two partners, Greg originally bought Antique Plaza in April 1993 when it was in a different location. They quickly realized more space was needed so, in October 1994, they moved to 114 W. Main St. The two-story building was the J. J. Newberry department store from 1948 to the 1980s. Greg says, "You can still see remnants of the old soda fountain counter on the far east side of the store. Some of our favorite features of the building include an original freight elevator complete with a manual wooden gate and a rooftop area where we like to watch the Downtown Mesa fireworks on the 4th of July."

Greg's grandfather was an antique dealer in the south so you could say the business runs in his family. He began collecting coins at a young age, learning as much as possible. His interests and knowledge grew from there and now includes a range from mission and mid-century modern furniture to American Indian pottery and much more.

Filled with a broadly curated selection of antique wares, Antique Plaza is the oldest antique mall in Mesa and services the Valley with a truly unique selection of items. A sister store,

It's going to be Party Time at Antique Plaza in Downtown PAST Vintage, was started a few years ago at 120 W. Main. It is just two doors west and specializes in mid-century modern furniture and décor.

> Greg says, "Over the years we've collected more than 150 dealers and a robust, knowledgeable staff. We have jewelry

aficionados. paper addicts, collectible connoisseurs, art savants, furniture fanatics and clothing experts. It's the dealers 'love for the goods' and friendly service that keep people coming back for more."

He continued, "The dealers all have their own personal tastes and each brings his or her individual offering to the store. We carry fine antiques, LP records, glass, art, furniture, dishes, lighting, jewelry, vintage clothing, comic books, coins... and everything in between!"

At its core, Greg is proud to say, the heart of the business has always stayed the same. That said, the store has also adapted

to the times, keeping up with styles that come in and out of *Continued on page 4...*



vogue. Right now, the biggest change the mall faces is adapting



114 W. Main St. Downtown Mesa antiqueplazamesa.com | 480-833-4844

+ Mesa +



Antique Plaza, continued from page 3...

to the online marketplace. He believes in and understands the opportunities of selling online, which is literally opening up

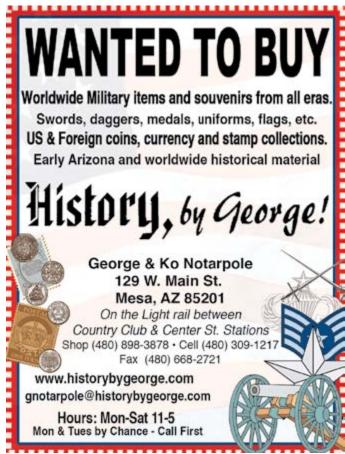


the entire world as potential customers. knows they He must evolve to remain relevant. Staving up-to-date on this changing digital landscape is a priority for Greg's antiques business. He and his dealers also know how

refreshing it is for their customers to still be able to spend a day shopping their way through the store because of the fun of never knowing what they will find so the selections and displays are kept fresh and appealing.

Greg, his dealers and staff have many goals and plans for the future! The key is finding the time to make it all happen. One of the two main goals is to stay in the city they love—Downtown Mesa. There has been a massive change in Downtown over the past few years and it is only gaining steam. They are proud of what is happening and, after 25 years, the hope for Antique Plaza and PAST it to be able to remain a part of the community.

Antique Plaza is located at 114 W. Main on the northwest corner of Main St. and McDonald and is a member of the Valley of the Sun Antique Dealers Association. Learn more at antiqueplazamesa.com, on Facebook at https://www.facebook.com/AntiquePlazaMesa/ or Instagram at https://www.instagram.com/antiqueplaza/. Email antiqueplaza@gmail.com or call 480-833-4844.





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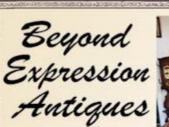
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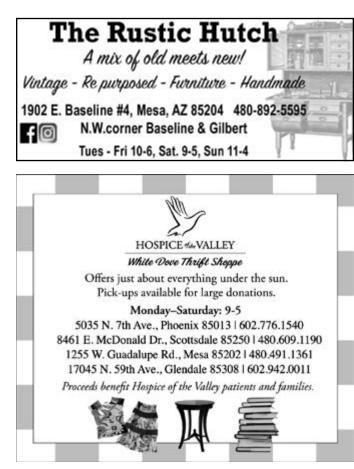
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Rinker On Collectibles The \$3.00 or Under

Collection Challenge

by Harry L. Rinker

Collectors love a challenge. Challenges appeal to collectors' strong sense of gamesmanship—the art of winning games by using various ploys and tactics to gain a psychological advantage.

[Author's Aside #1: In this age of political correctness, I hesitated briefly before using gamesmanship. Is gamespersonship the correct term for the 21st century? If so, I could find no dictionary definition for the word. Further, the definition of gamesmanship is not sexist if read correctly. Hence, gamesmanship it is and so be it.]

I offer a challenge to those collectors with a sense of adventure, humor and downright contrariness. Create a collection that includes objects worthy of being collected for which no more than \$3.00 is paid for any object in the collection.

[Author's Aside #2: The challenge only requires that the purchaser pay less than \$3.00 for an object. There is no requirement that the object be worth \$3.00 or less. If the person accepting the challenge pays \$3.00 for an object worth considerably more, it is a valid purchase from the challenge perspective. The focus is squarely on the purchase price and not the fair secondary market retail value of the object.]

The challenge is not to create a collection where the average cost is \$3.00. The collection cannot contain one object bought for \$1.00 and another for \$5.00, hence creating an average purchase price of \$3.00. There is no price grace. Each object must cost \$3.00 or less.

When preparing this challenge, I gave careful consideration to the proposed value. At first, I was going to propose \$1.00 per object. This is possible. I have an extensive \$1.00 per object collection. But, I did not to make the challenge less difficult.

I considered \$5.00 but rejected this amount because it made the challenge too easy. I have never been a "let's split the difference" person. As a result, \$2.50 was out. I am a rounded number guy. After careful consideration, \$3.00 per object became the clear choice.

Forcing collectors outside their traditional comfort zone is one of the reasons why I developed this challenge. Those accepting the challenge will not be able to do it by buying objects at antiques malls, flea markets and antiques shows. Craigslist and eBay offer limited buying opportunities but only with the understanding that shipping and handling costs must be included in the \$3.00 per object cost.

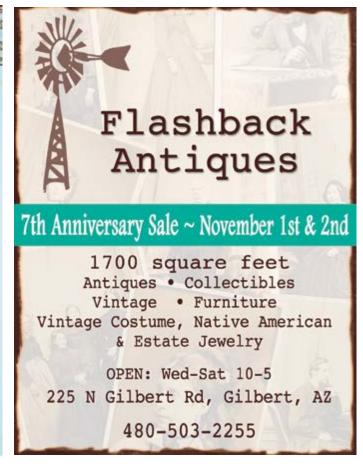
In a way, this challenge allows collectors and others to rediscover the root sources of so many of the things that eventually appear in the trade's traditional sale venues. The key is to purchase items as "they are coming out," that is to say making their first appearance in the secondary sale market.

The challenge also restores the love of the hunt—its expectations, joys, disappointments and successes. The more limits a challenger places on what the collection contains, the more difficult the hunt will become.

[Authors Aside #3: It is assumed most individuals taking up the gauntlet will not be content to assemble a hodgepodge collection consisting of a little of this or a little of that. The challenge is not about assembling the biggest pile. Others have done this. It is about creating a collection of objects that, when assembled, have a unifying theme in addition to the fact that each cost \$3.00 or less.] Sept-October 2019

+ Gilbert +





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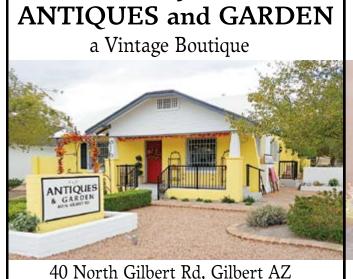


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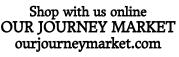
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Rinker, continued from page 8...

There are multiple buying opportunities. The first are charitable and community garage sales. Recently, my wife Linda and I attended a community garage sale conducted by the Wesley Methodist Church in Beaumont, Texas. The sale was held in a school building associated with the church. Each room housed a specific group of objects. Clothing, china, furniture, glass, jewelry and toys are a few examples.

The sale began at 8:30 a.m. Linda, our host Allen Lea (director of The McFaddin Ward House) and I arrived around 11:30 a.m. I do not believe all the best stuff is gone from a garage/rummage/ yard sale in the first 30 minutes. I enjoy arriving late. It gives me an opportunity to test my skills in discovering treasures that early bird buyers overlooked.

To the credit of the organizers of the Wesley Methodist Church sale, things were priced to sell. The organizing committee wanted a clean building at the end of the day. Judging from the shopping carts people where wheeling to the checkout line, there were plenty of bargains.

I spent a total of \$4.00. I paid \$2.00 for a 1950s Murano glass ashtray. When my Aunt Loretta Rupert lived in Cape Coral, Florida, in the 1970s and 1980s, she went to hundreds of garage sales. Her favorite find was another Murano glass ashtray to add to her collection. Her collection numbered in the hundreds. This funky collection was extremely tacky, which is what made it fun. Ever since, I always get a big smile on my face when I encounter a 1950s Murano glass ashtray. I could not pass up the opportunity to buy one for \$2.00.

In the well-picked-over toy room, I spotted a light turquoise vinyl carrying case titled "Ballet Box" that featured artwork work of young girls in pink tutus practicing ballet moves. It was manufactured and distributed by Travel Toy, a division of Prepac, Inc, New York City. I love pieces that speak decade. This one shouted 1950s. I could not resist buying it for \$2.00.

The Murano glass ashtray and the Ballet Box triggered the concept of a \$3.00 and under collection organized by decades. Starting with the 1880s, I plan to create a small collection of material associated with each decade through the 2010. I have a running start on the 1950s section. I was temped to title the collection "Junk Through the Decades" but do not want to imply a negative connotation. The Murano glass ashtray and ballet shoe carrying case are not junk.

Community garage sales are great places to find older items for little to no cost. People seeking items for reuse have no interest in them. Young adults have no idea what most of the older things are or why someone would want to save them. Again, I generally go to community sales in the waning hours of the day. Sellers usually are willing to take any amount offered. On more than one occasion, some have said, "Just take it; I want to be rid of it." It is hard to argue with this price.

Some local auctions still sell box lots. Although the days of the \$1.00 box lot are over, it is still possible to buy box lots between \$10.00 and \$20.00. When inspecting the box lots, look for lots that contain a minimum of five things you can add to your collection. This allows a bid of \$15.00. If successful, take what you want and leave the rest. Price out each piece at \$3.00.

Do not buy box lots with high-ticket items in them. Watch what the buyer does with the items in the boxes. Chances are he/ she may also discard what he/she does not want.

[Author's Aide #4: Picking through the remains of an abandoned box lot is a form of dumpster diving. Dumpster diving is a skill set that lends itself to building a \$3.00 or less collection. There are dozens of pieces in my collections that I acquired this way.]

Make friends with estate sale managers and liquidators. Continued on page 14...



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Giveaway Winner from July - August Issue

We have one giveaway winner from our last issue. Daniel Metcalf from Gilbert will be sent a \$25 Gift Certificate to be spent at his favorite Antique Register advertiser, Superstition Grand Antique Mall in Mesa. (See ad on page 48)

Daniel wrote, "It is one of my favorite places to shop because of the large selection of historical items related to the wild west and the railroads."

In this issue, there is another \$20 Gift Certificate giveaway so be sure to enter and tell us where you pick up The Antique Register. Be sure to take a copy with you when you travel in and around Arizona during this fall!



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Rinker, continued from page 11...

When an estate sale ends, the manager usually calls in a liquidator to buy the remains. In most cases, the liquidator is paying pennies on the dollar. The per object cost is often less than one dollar. If an estate sale manager is willing, put together a pile of lower priced material and offer \$1.00 or \$2.00 per item. More often than not, the estate sale manager will accept the offer.

A local Michigan liquidator takes estate sale remains to a large warehouse, puts the objects on tables and sells most at "your choice for a \$1.00." A little knowledge on the part of the buyer goes a long way.

Paying less than \$3.00 for an object does not make a person a cheap buyer. It indicates that he/she is a smart, frugal buyer. The goal is not to buy objects for investment but display.

[Author's Aside #5: When Linda's and my grandchildren, Sofia and Marcel Goldberg-Hererra, lived in Reading, I used to take them to garage sales. I gave them \$10.00 each and challenged them to fill up the car trunk. The \$3.00 challenge is similar in nature. The only difference is the cost is a bit higher.]

Every collector should have a fun collection, one that is free from the normal collecting pressures. I have several "just for the fun of it" collections. If this article inspires you to start a \$3.00 or less object collection, I would love to know what you have



chosen to collect and how it is going. Share your collection and the adventures associated with it by emailing me at harrylrinker@ aol.com.

Harry L. Rinker welcomes questions from readers about collectibles, those mass-produced items from the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Selected letters will be answered in this column. Harry cannot provide personal answers. Photos and other material submitted cannot be returned. Send your questions to: Rinker on Collectibles, 5955 Mill Point Court SE, Kentwood, MI 49512. You also can e-mail your questions to harrylrinker@ aol.com. Only e-mails containing a full name and mailing address will be considered. Copyright © Harry L. Rinker, LLC 2019

Sept-October 2019

+ Special Events +

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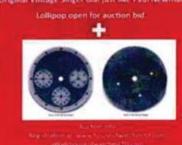
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Teddy Bear Day, 9/7 Bearly Bear's Epic Tale

by Valerie Burner

Every now and then we come across a family treasure that has an incredible history. An old Steiff bear currently on loan to the Arizona Doll & Toy Museum in Glendale has an epic story to share.

His name is Bearly and he is right around 100 years old. He's quite handsome with his original Steiff button in his left ear. As he will tell you, sometimes that button is quite itchy but for the most part it doesn't bother him.

Bearly originally went to live with a young boy in Austria and they were fast friends. As all boys and girls do, his boy grew up and then went to art schools while Bearly stayed home.

The young man became a professor and moved to Germany with his family where he also was a working artist. He married and had two children and Bearly was given to the youngest daughter as a companion. Bearly took his job seriously like bears do and he and his new little girl were the best of friends.

When WWII broke out, Bearly's boy-now-turned-man was sent to the Russian front to paint images of the war. Bearly stayed behind with the wife and children and they survived the bombings. As the war came to an end, the family of four was sent to an American concentration camp before being transferred to a Russian concentration camp as they were considered prisoners of war.

Bearly and his family lived with many others in this camp for some time before the Russians started marching them all to Siberia. As they continued the march, a Russian soldier took pity on this little family of four and loaded them up in his truck and took them to a village that had been destroyed during the war. This kind Russian soldier found them shelter in a basement and instructed them to start walking back to Germany when night fell. Bearly's family was helped along the way by many people, all tired by war and wanting to see this family return home.

There were many obstacles along the way and the scariest was traversing a minefield. The little family of four and Bearly held on tight to each other knowing that either they were all going to make it safely across the minefield or all die together. Luckily, this little family made it safely back to Germany and started a new life.

As it was just after the war, there was not much for Christmas. The mother made Bearly an outfit out of an old army blanket as a gift for her youngest daughter. The outfit is exceptionally made and has been lovingly cared for all these years.

Bearly lived with the family while the youngest daughter went off to school and followed in her father's footsteps and became an artist. Her sister married an American serviceman and, when she left Germany, she took Bearly with her. Never one to say no to a new adventure, Bearly was ready to come down from his shelf. They came to America and Bearly lived with them through all their days.

Bearly is a fine example of Steiff craftmanship and lives up to the company motto, 'Only the Best for Our Children.' At over 100 years old, he wears his handmade perfectly tailored suit quite well and is truly a treasured teddy. If Bearly could talk, I'm sure we would all be enthralled for hours. As it is, his history is documented and now Bearly is being shared with the *Continued on page 20...*



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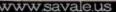
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Bearly Bear, continued from page 19...

world, thanks to the descendants of his Austrian boy.

Bearly is a king among teddy bears. He has comforted generations of youngsters, watched them grow up and then befriended their offspring. That's what teddy bears do best.

With the 15th Annual Teddy Bear Day Celebration in Glendale coming up on Saturday, September 7th, I thought this was the perfect time to share with you Bearly's story and invite you to visit him at The Arizona Doll and Toy Museum. You'll find so many other wonderful dolls, bears and toys and the exhibits change on a regular basis. This museum is a treat for boys and girls of all ages and is a must do when you visit Glendale.

Help the Trauma Teddy Program For West Valley First Responders



Teddy Bear Day is a day full of fun and warm fuzzies. There are lot of things to do, special berry menu items, make and takes, and the opportunity to purchase a bear for the Trauma Teddy Program for the Glendale Fire and Police Departments and other west valley first responders. Those teddy bears, like Bearly, take their jobs seriously and comfort children who find themselves in scary situations.

First responders use the

bears to make connections with the children. The results are immediate. Blood pressure rates decrease, conversations start, tears dry up, fears are calmed and hugs are plenty. The comfort a teddy bear provides a child in these scary situations helps the first responders assess the child's needs much quicker and that elevates the level of care provided on the scene. Of course, there are rules and regulations regarding the teddy bears that go to the Trauma teddy program, which is why we encourage everyone to purchase theirs on Teddy Bear day.

Bears & More works with one of their vendors, Aurora Gift, to provide quality teddy bears at an affordable price. The bears meet all the requirements and are just \$10. The biggest warm fuzzy about this program is that there are no profits made-it is 100% all about getting teddy bears to kids on what is probably the scariest day of their young lives.

You can find more information about The Arizona Doll & Toy Museum and Teddy Bear Day at www.VisitDowntownGlendale. com. The Museum is located at 5847 W. Myrtle Ave, Glendale.

Valerie Burner and her husband have owned Bears & More in the Historic Catlin Court district of Downtown Glendale for over 25 years.



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22

Some 'Things' Just Don't Matter!

by Julie Pirtle

One thing I know for sure — we are ALL collectors of "things." It could be items that inspire us or items that we have good intentions of putting to use. Some items are broken and are saved to repair someday. Other items just made us feel good when we acquired them and were then put aside for the next shiny penny that came along. Other things invoke memories of a special time in our lives.

The things grow. One or two pushed aside on the counter top soon becomes a pile. The pile of things then becomes a box of things that is packed away in the corner. The corner of boxes then becomes too much and is moved to a storage area to become forgotten and unimportant.

Your storage area could be your garage or attic. Worse yet (in my humble and professional opinion!) are the storage units that have become a standard for a lot of people. Seriously, folks. Let's take a moment here to address this situation. It is one thing to pay for a roof over your head. It is entirely another to rent a space to put a roof over the head of your "thing collection!"

Of course, there are times in our lives where a temporary situation (such as moving or a life transition) makes having a storage unit a necessity. But "temporary" is the key word here! If you are paying to store your boxes of things that have become forgotten and unimportant, you may want to rethink it!

One of my first clients was a gentleman who lived at home with his ill, elderly father. His father had a 10^ox10^o storage unit that needed to be gone through. The son had no idea what the unit contained and was overwhelmed even thinking about it. I started *Continued on page 24...*

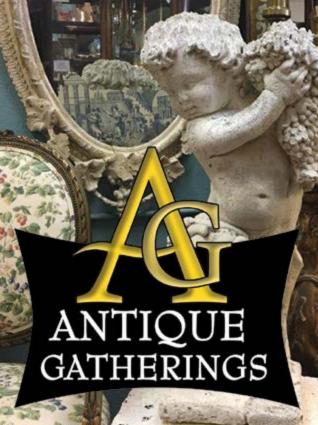


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Some 'Things', continued from page 22...

the process by speaking with his father and reassuring him that we would honor the items we found. We then had the unit emptied and unloaded into their garage. We sorted through box after box. Most of what we found were stacks of personal papers (billing statements, etc.) that in reality, did not need to be kept for all of those years. In other boxes were household items that were long forgotten and not needed.

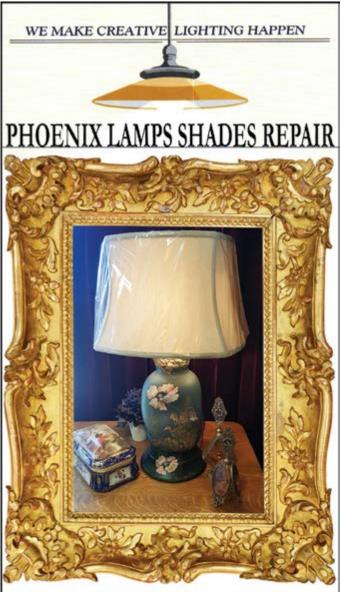
Every now and then, we found a treasure that we would take in and share with his father. We found a model that he had made as a child, a decades old letter from a favorite cousin and various other mementos. It was touching to see the joy in the elderly father's face as he touched each piece we brought to him. When all was said and done that day, there were only 8 moving boxes full of items that were kept. We sorted, labeled and stored them on some garage shelving. The rest was either donated or trashed.

There are two reasons that I share this story. The first is a financial one. This storage unit had been rented at \$100 per month for 8 years! If you do the math, that is \$9,600 that was paid to put a roof over "things." The reality was that the items that mattered could have been in his daily life, but they were mixed up with all of the "thing collections" and had become just as forgotten and unimportant as the items that really WERE unimportant!

The second reason is an emotional one. About two weeks after we sorted through the boxes and shared the man's treasures with him, he passed away. His son called me and shared how grateful he was that his father had been able to enjoy the items we found that day. In addition, the son now knew the stories behind the items that meant something to his father. Now those items were there for the son to treasure. He would never have known had we *Continued on page 27...*



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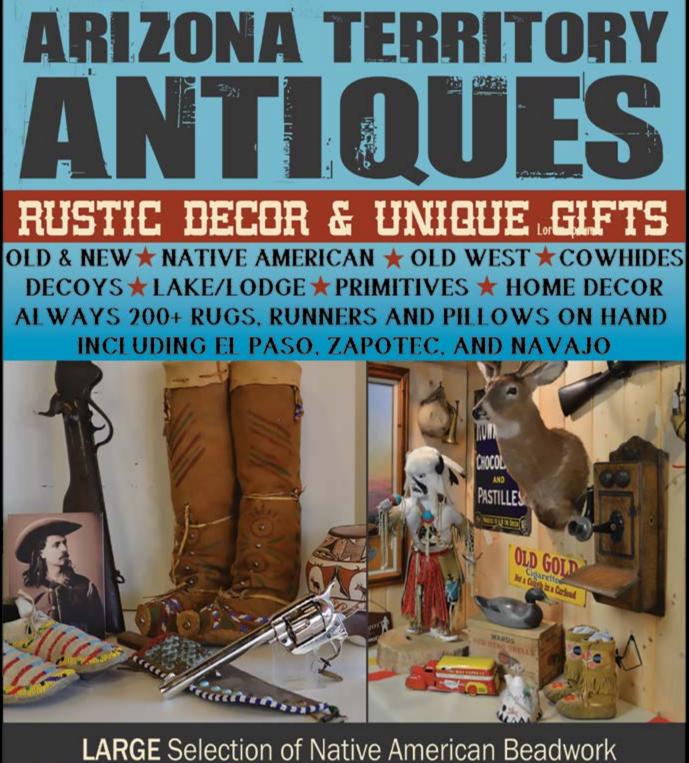
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Some 'Things', continued from page 24...

not been able to share them once again with his father. It is one of the most touching memories I have had to date when working with a client.

Perhaps you are reading this and thinking to yourself, "Well, I don't have a storage unit." That may be true, but you more than likely have an attic, spare bedroom, basement or garage that is full of your "thing collection." You may not be spending money to store it but it is still costing you space! Worse yet, just like in the story above, the items that really ARE important are mixed up with the "thing collection!"

Case in point was another client I had. Her husband had passed away a few years before and we were cleaning out their garage. Back in a dark corner, I found a long cardboard tube. She had no idea what it could be. Imagine our surprise when we pulled out a large Pilot's map of Europe from WWII. All of the missions that he had been a part of were marked on it. An old and faded black and white photo of his flight crew had been attached to the corner, as well as a color photo of the men (in the same formation) that had been taken at a reunion decades later.

It was so moving to be part of this moment with my client. She decided that it needed to be professionally framed and then gave it to his granddaughter who followed her grandfather's passion and became a pilot herself. It is now a treasured family heirloom and no longer is lost in a dingy garage.

Take a moment to think about the "thing collections" in your life. Give honor and respect to the items that are important and let the rest go. If it is important enough to keep, then it is important enough to be in your daily space. Go on now...you've got this! Just remember that "un" Clutter Happens, one space at a time!

Julie Pirtle is a Professional Organizer and Owner/Operator of Clutter Happens in Mesa, AZ

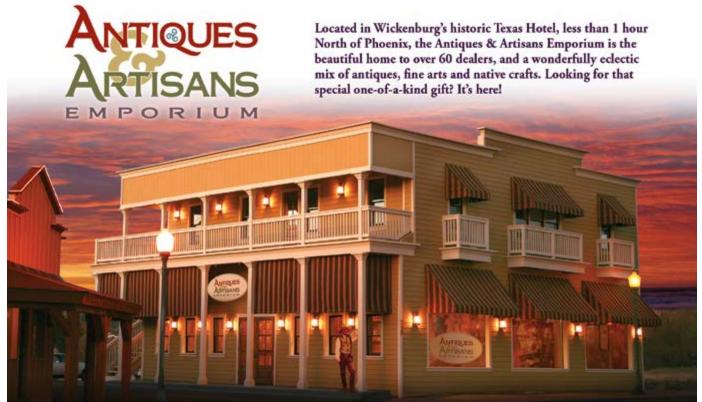
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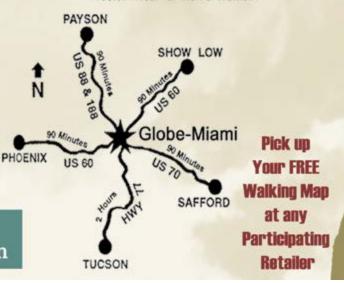
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Collectors Corner **The Basics**

by Jim Olson

Buy what appeals to you. Buy what you like. Buy what speaks to your heart. If you are collecting with the hope that eventually it is also an investment, get educated and buy the best you can!

"Collectible" means different things to different people. There are many "collectors" out there but, at the end of the day, most of their collections would not sell for much if they really needed to sell or passed on. And that is fine—if you are collecting for the sake of collecting. It is kind of like the guy who collected leaves; he really thought he was raking it in!



They say the difference between a collector and a hoarder is discrimination. There is a lot of truth in that! Advanced collectors will only buy the best they can. But we all have to start somewhere.

In the early stages of building a collection, we tend to focus on volume. This is not necessarily a bad thing. It can be a good way to get an education. Speaking of education, it is a good suggestion to learn all you can about the items you are collecting. Talk to reputable dealers and other collectors and join clubs if possible. Read books—it is probably better to spend \$100 on books about what you are collecting (and actually study them) than it is to go out and buy a \$100 item. When you are ready to start making purchases, always buy the best you can with whatever funds you feel comfortable spending.

"I believe that everyone collects. I think collecting is in our blood as humans," says Lynda Resnick, entrepreneur.

Remember, there is more to collecting than just buying items. There is the education aspect as mentioned above, the thrill of the hunt, the warm feeling of satisfaction, the camaraderie with other collectors and, if you have collected well, the monetary reward at the end of the day—if you ever need or want to sell.

A few basis things to remember when collecting:

• Start small and collect what you like. As you progress, your tastes and knowledge will evolve and refine.

• Quality is important.

• Things made to be collectible—rarely are. This includes pretty much all kinds of commemorative and mass produced items.

• If your "collectible" says "Made in China" or "Made in Taiwan" on it — it's not a collectible. It is a decor item, or even a cheap knock-off.

• There is a difference between collectibles and decor. Decor is rarely collectible but collectibles can sometimes make great decor.

• Things that have survived a long period of time and remain in good condition are generally sought after.

• Condition is usually a big factor of value. Restoration is generally not desirable in most cases.

• Rarity (or uniqueness) is also a big factor of value. Those few things that have survived the test of time or items that stand apart are generally sought after.

• Things do not have to be old to be collectible. Contemporary art by well-known artists are examples. Beware of fads, however.

• Always deal with knowledgeable and reputable sellers who will stand behind what they sell—at least until you become expert enough to know more about what you are doing and are willing to take a chance if it turns out to be a bad deal.

Continued on page 31...





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The Basics, continued from page 29...

"The collector attempts always to acquire the best, and his knowledge of what is best is always widening. His is the task of judging between degrees of perfection," Arthur Davison Ficke (1883–1945), American poet and collector.

Remember, it is not always about the money.

I recently dealt with an elderly man who had a large collection of statues he had collected over a period of many years. He was at the point where he needed to sell them so he sent them to auction. At the end of the day, his check was for less than he had spent on them over all those years. He was down on himself for "making a bad investment."

I asked him what he would have done with that money over the years if he had not bought all those statues. He admitted he probably would have just spent it and would not have anything to show for it now. I asked if he had enjoyed decorating his home with his collection all those years. He affirmed he had. I asked him if he had gone down to the home decor store and bought generic decorations for his home (likely mass produced in some foreign country), if he thought they would have had any value at auction when he got ready to downsize. He said no, they probably would have just been thrown away or sold for a few bucks at a yard sale.

He then looked at it differently and felt there was definitely value in the enjoyment he had gotten from the collecting all those years. The fact that he had gotten most of his money back was an added bonus he would not have realized had he just bought home decor instead.

On the other hand, there are many folks who purchased items and enjoyed them throughout the years and now, the items have increased greatly in value. Inflation is often our friend in such cases. There are many who have enjoyed collecting over the course of a lifetime and been able to cash in nicely towards the end when they really could use the money. To some, it is appealing that they get to stare at their "savings" right there in their home every day rather than have it locked away in a bank somewhere.

But you should always collect for the enjoyment of collecting. In the end, the best thing you get to collect is the memories. They are priceless.

Jim Olson is a published author, historian and co-owner of Western Trading Post, a historic Trading Post in Casa Grande that traces its roots back to 1877! Learn more at WesternTradingPost.com. © 2019





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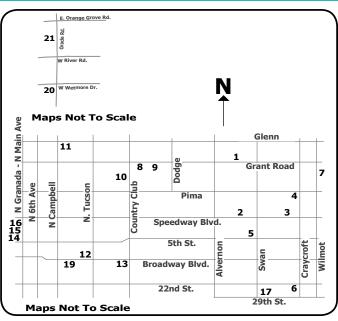
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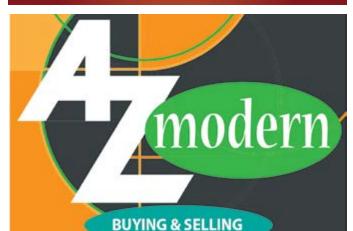
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Those Were The Days!

Saving Private Neon – Keeping the Glow Alive

by Jay Mark

"Liquid fire" was a brilliant description given to the light's dazzling reddish-orange glow. Until it was introduced to the public in France in 1910, people had never before witnessed such hypnotic luminosity.

The dawn of the 20th century came with a new luminescence. Georges Claude, a French inventor, chemist and engineer is credited with being the first to introduce electricity into a sealed glass tube filled with a recently discovered gas called Neon.

Just four years before Georges created "light without heat," two British chemists, Sir William Ramsey and Morris W. Travers, were seeking to identify an unknown Noble gas they believed existed. In 1898, the pair was able to isolate a new inert

gas that Ramsey's son suggested be called Neon after neos, the Greek word for "something new."

After eight years of experimentation and refinement, Georges finally developed a reliable form of neon light that he used to stun visitors treated to



This Coca Cola Drug Store sign was recently offered on eBay for \$8500

40 foot glowing tubes outlining the building of the 1910 Paris Motor Show. Two years later, the world's first neon advertising sign was installed for a barbershop on Boulevard Montmartre in Paris.

Claude George's invention would not reach the United States until 1923. Although under some dispute, it is believed the first neon signs were delivered to a Los Angeles auto dealership at a sky-high cost of \$24,000 for two giant "Packard" signs affixed to a building.

It is ironic that, from the very beginning, neon was connected to the automobile. Just two years after the Packard signs lit up Los Angeles, the Federal Aid Highway Act of 1925 was adopted. It provided for a standardized system of highway numbering helping to lead, a couple of years later, to the first U.S. coast-tocoast highway.

Neon, the automobile, and highways were an ideal marriage. The car allowed for a new personal mobility not previously experienced in America. Because of its brilliance even in daylight and its reliability, neon became the medium of choice for roadside advertising.

Neon has become the generic name for the more than forty colors available for signage. Different gases produce different colors. And several tube powder coatings add to the broad palette.

By the Great Depression, neon was adding much needed color to an otherwise bleak era. Think Times Square or Las Vegas as examples.

Not long after, neon began lining city streetscapes and highway roadsides. Its bright glow soon showed up as advertising in building interiors. Auto dealers and gas stations, cafes, grocery stores and countless other businesses discovered that small-scale interior neon could attract as much attention as the large outdoor signs. Beer companies and cigarette makers *Continued on page 36...* Sept-October 2019

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email: darlene@darlenemorrisantiques.com Saving Private Neon, continued from page 34...

were prime employers of the medium.

But, by the mid-1960s, neon had contributed to a proliferation of a roadside cacophony of color and clutter. When Lady Bird Johnson inaugurated her clean-up campaign that resulted in the Beautification Act of 1965, it worked to rid highways of junkyards and billboards—including neon. Local jurisdictions enacted ordinances to ban neon—leading to decades of its decline.

Following the start of the 21st century, interest in mid-



century and earlier neon has risen to unprecedented levels. Public displays of signs that would otherwise be lost have sprung up across the country.

In Arizona, the popularity of neon has increased dramatically. For nearly a decade, Tucson has exhibited restored orphaned signs. In 2018 in the Old Pueblo, Ignite, a privately owned sign art museum, opened with more than 200 examples. You can learn more at www.ignitemuseum. com.

A neon outlined Kellogg's Cereal box promoted the product in grocery stores in the 1930s. Photo: Jay Mark

stores in the 1930s. Photo: Jay Mark In April of this year Casa Grande debuted a neon park with ten historic signs that would have otherwise been lost. And now the city of Mesa, with more than a half-dozen signs already saved, is preparing for a colorful "neon alley."

Collecting outdoor neon is not practical for a neon lover. The scale is just too large. The iconic Diving Lady sign restored in Mesa in 2015, for example, features animated figures nearly 15 feet in length. Fortunately, small-scale neon signs are available to the collector. But restored signs do not come cheap. Depending on graphics, prices can vary from the low \$100s to several thousand dollars. But beware, the growing popularity of vintage neon, reproductions abound. Always get a written guarantee of authenticity.

Continued on page 38...



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The Antique Register



Saving Private Neon, continued from page 36...

Technology has advanced by leaps and bounds in the century or so following the introduction of neon signage. But one thing has remained unchanged—fabricating a neon sign still remains a highly skilled art.

When one considers how many disciplines are required, it is surprising that technology has not advanced in the manufacture of signage. An abbreviated list first includes a graphic artist designing the sign. For outdoor signage, a structural engineer is needed to work out the engineering details. After all, the signs are often gigantic. Think Las Vegas or New York.

An ironworker has to construct a frame for the sign. Then a sheet metal artisan must fabricate the skin for the sign. That is followed by an artist who can paint it. An electrical engineer is required to calculate the power needs of the sign. Then a skilled glass blower must bend and shape the delicate tubing into often intricate patterns. Finally, someone with the knowledge of chemistry must determine the appropriate gas and tube powder coating to produce the desired color. After all that, installing signs often requires acrobatic skills.

There is no doubt about it. Traditional neon sign making remains a labor-intensive co-operative effort. That is why LED's have been giving this beautiful art form a run for the money particularly in exterior applications.

But for diehard fans, the efforts for "Saving Private Neon" and the struggle to keep its glow alive will continue.

Virtually an antique himself, Jay Mark, a 47-year antiques business veteran and historian owns Those Were The Days!, now an online specialty bookstore. He also teaches, lectures and writes regularly about antiques and history. Reach him at jaymark@twtdbooks.com. © 2019



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Arizona Travels **Exploring Prescott**

by Barb Stillman, Publisher Prescott has so much to offer and so many shops to visit that I had to make two trips to get it all in. Up the hill I headed on a Saturday afternoon with my husband Larry to explore Downtown Prescott.

Bayberry's Antique Dolls

I stopped at Bayberry's Antique Dolls to visit with owner Diane Vigne and her beautiful dolls. Last time I visited this shop, it was on Granite Street where Diane shared space with her husband Dave and his antiques. After the Granite Street building was sold, Diane relocated south of the Courthouse Plaza on Montezuma Street. I enjoyed seeing the new shop-it's a perfect spot for her beautiful dolls especially with the large display windows that invite you in to see more!

Bayberry's specializes in antique, vintage and collectible dolls and

accessories as well as bears and toys. Most of the dolls were made before the 1960s and Diane said that the fashion dolls and Barbies are popular with collectors.

Diane has been collecting, buying and selling dolls for more than 35 years and opened her first doll shop in Prescott nine years ago. In addition to her shop, she sells dolls online from her website, www.rubylane.com, and participates in a few doll Continued on page 43...



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shows. She will have a booth at the upcoming Valley of the Sun Doll & Bear Show at North Phoenix Baptist Church on October 12 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. (see ad on page 13).

Bayberry's is located at 442 S. Montezuma Street and is open Tuesday to Saturday from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Learn more on Facebook at Bayberry Antique Dolls, or https://www.rubylane. com/shop/bayberrysantiquedolls. Email bayberrys@hotmail. com or call 928-445-8559.

The next shops I went to check out were on Cortez Street south of Courthouse Plaza, all within two blocks-an easy walking distance from each other.

Merchandise Mart Antique Mall



My first stop on Cortez Street Merchandise was Mart Antique Mall. Established in 1986, this is Northern Arizona's largest antique mall at 15,000 square feet. Jeanne Antonius has been the multi-dealer mall's owner for 17 years and manager for 26 years. Jeanne told me some of the 70 dealers have been with her for many years and all are very knowledgeable and helpful.

Moving from booth to booth, I found the wide aisles

easy to maneuver even on a busy Saturday afternoon and the entire store is wheelchair accessible. It is a very large store and just when I thought I had come to the end of a section, another one was waiting around the corner. It was fun to move through the booths, checking everything out.

Merchandise Mart has a wide selection of antiques, vintage, collectibles and some new or gently used items. Antique and vintage furniture, books, kitchen ware, home décor, tools and yard art, jewelry, clothing and accessories and much, much more. There's something for everyone. They also carry Dixie Belle paint that Jeanne says is very affordable and easy to use.

Jeanne told me that customers comment on the variety of merchandise and the great pricing and she and the dealers work to keep it that way. Not only is it a delightful place to visit, Jeanne says, "It is a fun, fun place to work! I wake up everyday and love to come to work. When I wake up and don't love it, it'll be time to guit."

Merchandise Mart Antique Mall is located at 205 N, Cortez Street and is open Monday to Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. For more information call 928-776-1728.

Avalon Antiques and Mid-Century Madness

Across the street and about half a block down Cortez are Avalon Antiques and Mid-Century Madness. These two shops are owned by Barbara Hire and share storefront the same but each has its own uniqueness.

Avalon Antiques is



a wonderful boutique with fun displays of vintage and antique clothing and accessories along with home décor, vintage kitchen ware, jewelry, art and fun collectible items, just to name a few. I



meet everyone's style. On the wall was a lovely picture framed display of teacups.

Barbara has been in the antique business for many years and owned the first antique shop on Cortez Street back in the 1980s. She has watched as other shops have moved into the area and made this a favorite shopping destination spot for local residents as well as visitors.

Specializing in 1950s and 1960s retro furnishing and collectibles, Mid-Century Madness offers furniture, lamps, rugs and more to enhance your home's décor. I was impressed Continued on page 44...



sponsored by the Pine-Strawberry Business Community (PSBC) www.psbcaz.com coolpc680@hotmail.com



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September 14

Fire on the Rim Mountain Bike Race & Silent Auction continues www.fireontherim.com

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Exploring Prescott, continued from page 43...

with the beautiful pieces on display. Barbara introduced me to Culver Ltd glassware and gave me a little history lesson on this stunning decorative glassware etched in 22-karat gold. I love the history that I learn about on each of my stops and this shop is full of history!

As I walked around this store, Barbara was the perfect guide explaining many of the items and some of the history around that era. I am old enough to remember this era but what makes it special is that this era is being embraced once again by a new generation. Mid-Century modern furniture and home décor is popular in many homes and **Mid-Century Madness** has a great selection of authentic pieces.

Avalon Antiques and Mid-Century Madness are located at 140 and 140 ½ N. Cortez Street and are open Monday to Sunday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. For more information call 928-778-0481.

Antiques Off the Square

Antiques Off the Square just across Cortez is owned by



Steve Stazenski and his father George. The Stazenskis have a rich history with four generation born in Prescott and five generations living there. Owned by the family, the shop's building has housed several different businesses over the years. In 1989, Steve and George decided to open **Antiques Off the Square** when the space became empty.

The shop has antiques, collectibles and toys, toys, toys! This shop is a sports collectors' paradise with memorabilia from trading cards to marbles and displays of items signed by some of our favorite sports' heroes. Antiques Off the Square

also specializes in antique toys from cast iron to pressed steal and more. There are many action figures in their original box from popular hero movies, comic books and posters. Be sure to look up because there are some great posters and displays on the upper shelves and suspended from the ceiling.

This shop also has games, tools, western and household collectibles. If you are looking for something unusual, you will find it in this shop. The fun mix of sports, antiques and vintage *Continued on next page...*



Exploring Prescott, continued from previous page... offers something for everyone.

I spent some time looking through the trading cards for one of my favorite teams and found several to take home with me. I was never a trading card collector but decided it's never too late to start! Steve and George are very knowledgeable and are always helpful with any questions their customers may have. You will also find items on eBay with their handle – lostinsports.

Antiques Off the Square is located at 140 N Cortez and is open Friday and Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday from Noon to 5 p.m. For more information call 928-778-1040.

The Marketplace on Cortez

A few doors down is The Marketplace on Cortez, a large mall whose owners work in the store on a daily basis. I met several and discovered a lively, fun group. They bought the store four years ago and also own Cortez Street Emporium next door.

The mall has more than twenty well-known consignors with all genres of professionally curated items. The décor is extremely eclectic-from new to vintage clothing and home décor to Mid-Industrial, Antique, Century, European Imports and Repurposed furniture.

The Marketplace carries Annie Sloan Chalk Paint, brushes and more and offers weekly paint classes.



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Exploring Prescott, continued from page 45...

As I walked the aisles it felt very open and appealing with booths beautifully staged to showcase each item all with a wonderful blend of new, repurposed or antique furniture and new, antique and vintage décor items. The large furniture pieces in the center of the store are stunning and ready to enhance any home. There were many displays - professional photographers, farm décor, jewelry, kitchenware and décor, plants and garden art, beach décor and Prescott themed clothing, pillows and art, and the list goes on.

The Marketplace on Cortez is located at 117 N Cortez, Prescott and is open daily, Sunday to Thursday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Friday and Saturday from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Learn more at www.prescottmarketplace.com or on Facebook and Instagram or call 928-445-1460.

Prescott is a favorite destination and the shop owners, staff people and dealers are always so friendly! There are many activities to enjoy and lots of wonderful restaurants in addition to checking out the shops. I encourage you to visit and spend some time exploring. Please tell our shop owners that *The Antique Register* sent you!



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