



ANTIQUES ROADSHOW INSIDER™

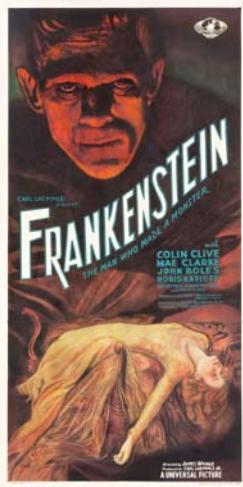
News, Trends, and Analysis from the World of Antiques and Collectibles

VOLUME 15
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ON THE LOOKOUT

FRANKEN-FIND

The only known 6-foot poster from the 1931 Universal horror film classic *Frankenstein* sold for \$358,000 at Heritage Auctions in



March. The rarity (known as a Style C three-sheet) had been discovered in the 1970s in a boarded-up projection booth in a long-closed Long Island theater. The poster—measuring 41 x 78½ inches—evidently was intended for the trash. Steve Wilkin, who discovered the poster, had worked at the theater as a kid.



BLAST FROM THE PAST

Remember when metal lunch boxes were so “square” they were cool? Today, collectors get into major bidding wars over vintage examples from the 1970s and earlier. It’s rare to find them in mint or near-mint (NM) condition, but it does happen. For instance, an unused 1966 Aladdin **Beatles lunch box and Thermos** with tags intact recently drew \$2,600 on eBay. Nice but lesser-condition examples (or NM ones missing the Thermos) usually sell for \$500–\$800. But this one is so clean you could, er, almost eat out of it.

ON THE INSIDE

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AS THE TRENDS TURN

Inside: 30 Antiques Roadshow appraisers weigh in on the hottest 21st-century trends.



Photo courtesy of Sotheby's

Over the years, we've called on *Antiques Roadshow*'s appraisers for some marketplace myth-busting, to describe must-see antiques from the road, and to impart buying and selling advice. In this issue, we put them back to work in the area of trend-spotting by posing this question: In your area of expertise, which sub-

Above: Andy Warhol's *Grace Kelly*. This signed 1984 screenprint in colors, numbered 25/225, sold for \$100,000 at Sotheby's in 2014.

category, type of item, or maker has shown the most impressive growth and continuous demand since the start of the 21st century? On p. 4, we get right into it. —Compiled by Larry Canale

THE FIRST WORD

Photo by Quinlyn Canale

ALL GOOD THINGS...

 The first magazine on which I appeared as editor was *Digital Audio*, launched in 1984 to cover the then-new world of compact disc players and CD music. One of our columnists, University of Miami music engineering professor Ken Pohlmann, speculated about what someone in my position did after completing Issue No. 1: *Maybe on the day the first issue is printed, the editor goes home early and lies down in a darkened room, severely questioning the sanity of it all.*

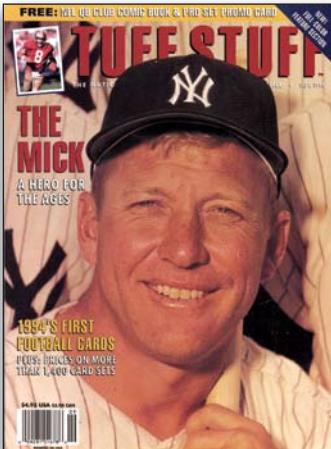
Thirty-one years later, I think I'll find that darkened room again after finishing this, the final issue of *Antiques Roadshow Insider*. We're closing up shop after 14 years, 167 issues, and 2,672 pages, all of it editorial content (no ads) created to help you explore antiques and collectibles. Most publications have a finite life span, and this one is no different.

A close friend asked me, "Will you miss it?" My answer: "More than you can imagine." Editing *Insider* has been a joy—one of those jobs where you can't wait to get at it every day, and when you think about it (in a good way) even in "off" hours. I can't tell you how sweet the experience has been.

FROM THE START

It was Feb. 1, 2001, when I signed on to launch *Insider*. Up to that point, I had spent eight years with the aforementioned *Digital Audio* (later retitled as *CD Review*) and six years with Tuff Stuff Publications, where I directed a group of magazines dedicated to sports and entertainment memorabilia.

There was one other stop before *Insider*: an



Earlier stops in your editor's career: *CD Review* and *Tuff Stuff*.

18-month gig launching and producing an online magazine covering, yes, antiques and collectibles. For me, the experience of digging into categories like folk art, furniture, pottery, glass, and vintage toys served as an important lead-in to this publication.

At the time of *Insider*'s launch, the earth-shaking events of 9/11 hadn't happened, and the economy was far better than what we'd experience in the decade that followed. (In this issue's cover story, a number of appraisers mention the recession of 2008.) Plus, collecting via the Internet was a fairly new practice back in 2001—and not without problems: slow Internet speed, unstable connections, transaction quirks.... Furthermore, the antiques and collectibles markets were in flux (aren't they always?). Trends like **Modern design**, **Asian art**, and **contemporary art** were on the rise. **Art glass**, **steam punk**, and **outsider art** were bubbling under.

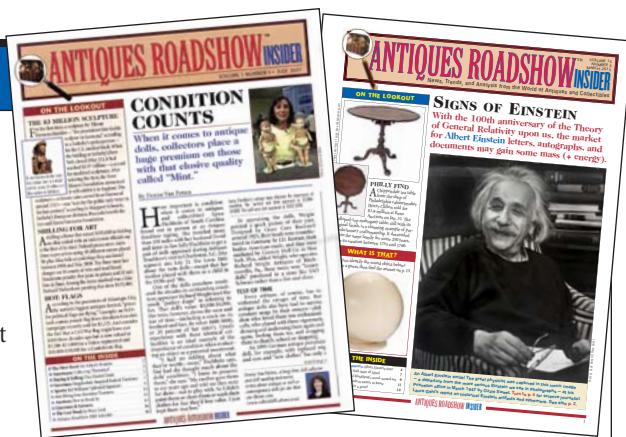
In the years since, it's been a blast watching those and other categories take off. That's why I wanted our final issue to focus on trends. Our cover story includes comments from 30 *Antiques Roadshow* appraisers touching on 12 popular categories. In a perfect world, we'd have had a "Part 2" in order to touch on other hot areas, including high-end sports memorabilia (although our cover story last month and a long feature in our March 2014 issue told that story).

TIPS TO TAKE WITH YOU

But, as athletes always say, "It is what it is." And in this case, it's a 14-year period with way more highlights than I could have expected.

The best part of the journey has been the chance to serve such a curious, passionate audience. Kudos to you, our readers, for caring about the objects you own, the "stuff" that surrounds you, the things you're interested in finding. You truly are curators, as appraisers like to say. And the key to being a good one is to keep learning. To that end, remember:

- **The Internet** offers unbelievable volumes of



Then and now: Our debut (July 2001) and a recent issue (March 2015).

information about anything you might want to collect. Some of you don't use computers (yes, I read all of your letters, whether e-mailed or handwritten). If that's you, find a way to get connected. At the very least, pop into your local library and get online. Make use of all the World Wide Web has to offer.

- **Reach out to experts you trust.** If you're in a fact-finding or selling mode, remember that contact information for *Antiques Roadshow*'s appraisers (more than 200 of them) is listed at pbs.org/antiques. And look into regional auction houses; many of them host free appraisal days.

- If you have an item that merits a **formal appraisal**, budget some money for the task. If you spend a couple hundred or even a few hundred dollars on an appraisal, you may be adding at least that much to the object's value. Provenance matters.

- **How to find an appraiser?** Besides the *Antiques Roadshow* network, keep the website addresses and phone numbers of the "Big Three" major appraisal organizations close by:

Appraisers Association of America

(AppraisersAssoc.org): 212 West 35th St., 11th Floor South, New York, NY 10001. Phone: 212-889-5404 ext. 10.

E-mail: referrals@appraisersassociation.org.

American Society of Appraisers

(Appraisers.org): 11107 Sunset Hills Road, Suite 310, Reston, VA 20190. Phone: 800-272-8258. E-mail: asainfo@appraisers.org.

International Society of Appraisers

(ISA-Appraisers.org): 225 West Wacker Dr., Suite 650, Chicago, IL 60606. Phone: 312-981-6778. E-mail: isa@isa-appraisers.org.

DEBTS THAT I OWE

My first entry in this space, back in 2001, was a "Welcome" message. As I close the door on our 14 years, there are way more folks I want to acknowledge than there is space. But I do need to tip my hat to some, starting with Jane Viator, our protean senior contributing editor. Viator has shared her vast antiques knowledge with you in every issue over the past 14 years. Jane, you've been a wonderful colleague, contributor, and, yes, teacher.

Pete Prunkl, too, has been a joy to work with and, like Jane, a fountain of great ideas.

SENTIMENTAL JOURNEY

A PERSONAL TOUCH

From time to time, my family has popped up in "The First Word." Example: In November 2001, I used a photo of my then-2-year-old daughter Quinlyn and wrote about how Barbies had me paying closer attention to the vintage doll market. (Tuff stuff, indeed!)

Nine years later, in our October 2010 issue, Quinlyn wrote a guest "First Word" column about her Barbie collection, which numbered nearly 300. By now, those dolls have been long packed away (and some dumped in a yard sale) and high-schooler Quinlyn is 15, getting ready to drive, and doing all kinds of creative writing, pottery, and photography.

THE FIRST WORD

How did you get started in your favorite collecting pursuit? Let us know by writing AR Insider, P.O. Box 550, Clinton, MA 01510 (e-mail: ARI-Editor@comcast.net). Maybe "The First Word" will jog your memory.... This month, our on-the-road editor-in-chief turns over his space to daughter Quinlyn, an 11-year-old who describes her favorite hobby.

GETTING STARTED

love collecting Barbie dolls. My collection actually began before I was even born. My dad got me a University of Virginia cheerleader Barbie because we lived in Richmond at that time. When I was about 6 years old, my little sister Karsyn ripped her head off. Today, if my Virginia cheerleader Barbie were in Mint condition, still in her box and without her head having been ripped off, she would be worth \$25 or \$30. Oh well.

I love collecting Barbies not only because it's fun and can sell for thousands of dollars, but because it's interesting. When my dad takes me to antiques shops, I keep my eyes peeled for all different kinds of Barbies. For example, I have collected Los Angeles Lakers, Chicago Bulls, Orlando Magic, and Phoenix Suns NBA Barbies from a long time ago (the 1980s). They can sell for \$30-\$50 if they're in their boxes. My favorite time for learning about Barbies is when we go to New York State to visit my grandparents. Always at the end of the trip, my



Here's a recent photo of my little sister and me at the Strong Toy Museum in Rochester, NY, with a cardboard cutout of the first Barbie. The picture below shows us at the same place when we



Photo by Karsyn Canale

That's why you've seen his byline in just about every issue for the past 11 years.

Doug Kelly, Don Fluckinger, Laura Gehl, Keith Gentili, and Jerry Shaver also have been steady, reliable, and rock-solid semi-regular contributors over the years. Thank you all!

I'm also grateful to the *Antiques Roadshow* production team. Peter Cook, the program's former executive producer, was a major supporter of *Insider* from the get-go. And in 2003, his successor, Marsha Bemko, picked up where he left off; she has always seen value in our coverage and given us incredible access during *Antiques Roadshow* events, which is why you've always seen a healthy dose of *Insider*-exclusive reports.

Bemko also has headed a crew of reviewers who read *Insider* before printing. Among them: supervising producer Sam Farrell, always a tremendous source of information and ideas; producer Sarah Elliott, who also has authored some top-shelf features in these pages; and WGBH Deputy General Counsel Jeff Garmel, one of the most eagle-eyed proofers I've ever met. You've all made *Insider* a better product.

So many others at *Antiques Roadshow* pitched in to help when needed, among them producer Adam Monahan, production coordinator Christina Midura; and, from WGBH Enterprises, Mary Cahill Farella.

I also owe a great debt to longtime *Antiques Roadshow* photographer Jeff Dunn, who gave me a steady stream of tips over the years; security chief Sean Quinn, who you've seen on our "Just for Fun" page a number of times; and consulting producer Dan Farrell, who in the 1990s bought the American format rights to *Antiques Roadshow* from the BBC and

Below: covers from two of Belvoir Media Group's 30-plus publications.

partnered with WGBH to get the series started.

And, of course, thanks to host Mark L. Walberg, who's got even more charisma in person than what you see on TV.

Again, there just isn't space to cite all of the *Antiques Roadshow* production and website friends who have made a difference. You know who you are, and you're appreciated.

Then there's *Antiques Roadshow*'s appraiser community. I'd need an entire issue to thank all of the experts who have written for us and supplied quotes and images. As a group, your insight has added incalculable value to our pages.

Finally, I'm grateful to the team at Belvoir Media Group. Special thanks to Tim Cole, who entrusted me with *Insider* back in 2001 and now, with our Chairman/CEO Robert Englander, COO Phil Penny, and Marketing Director Greg King, extends a chance to tackle a new challenge. I'll be working with Belvoir on some exciting online and digital-content projects involving the company's wide range of publications in several areas, including health, nutrition, pets, sailing, and aviation. I look forward to focusing on these topics.

Best wishes to all of you. Thanks again for reading, and as I said earlier, keep hunting, discovering, and learning.

Onward and upward!

Larry Canale

—Larry Canale, Editor-in-Chief

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ANTIQUES ROADSHOW

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TRENDS

Cont'd. from p. 1

FURNITURE

• DAVID RAGO

*Rago Auctions,
Lambertville, N.J.*



The clearest trend here is the softening of the market for Arts & Crafts furniture as the collecting demographic has aged. Younger collectors are looking for something else, and they seem to have found it in **Modern design**.

Even those interested in furniture with more of a crafts feel have chosen work by George Nakashima or Wharton Esherick, which bears the influence, and possibly the banner, of the Arts & Crafts Movement but is propelled by the modernity of post-war designers. People will always need chairs, but what they choose to sit in changes from generation to generation.



• PETER LOUGHREY

Los Angeles Modern Auctions

Danish Modern furniture has had much stronger growth than most other design groups. I'm not talking about average mid-century teak, but works at the high end by designers like Hans Wegner, Poul Kjaerholm, and Finn Juhl. Factors behind collector

interest include high-quality construction, comfortable proportions, and the ability to work with nearly any interior design scheme. As these designs work their way into higher price points, they're actually attracting more buyers, especially among wealthier collectors.

• ANDREW HOLTER

Christie's, New York



The American furniture and folk art markets have had a tumultuous ride for the past 15 years. We saw market highs and lows that partially mirrored the world's economic markets.

I would say the most important trend we're seeing across stylistic periods and categories is **condition, condition, condition**. In real estate you hear about location, location, location; when buying antiques in 2015, it's all about condition and surface. Whether you're buying a Queen Anne chair, a Chippendale tall case clock, a pair of Federal brass andirons, or a folky portrait, the condition of an object is driving prices in the market and dictating value. In fact, objects from the Queen Anne and Chippendale periods tend to hold their value above other periods.

Remember the keys to collecting: First, buy what you like. Second, buy the best you can afford, even if you have to save all year for an object. You're better off spend-



This Hans Wegner Papa Bear chair, designed 1951–53, sold for \$11,250 at Los Angeles Modern Auctions in March 2015.

ing your collecting budget on one fantastic object in superb condition than 10 good objects that have condition issues.

PAINTINGS/FINE ART

• ROBIN STARR

*Skinner Inc.,
Marlborough, Mass.*



Post-World War II art is in. Everything pre-World War II is out. The collectors of a "certain age" are aging out of the market. These are the people who rabidly bought works from the turn of the 20th century. Their kids are becoming the collectors

TIME TO BUY

BROWN FURNITURE: COULD A BOOM BE AHEAD?

Three appraisers at Massachusetts-based Skinner Inc.—CEO Karen Keane, specialist LaGina Austin, and generalist Kerry Shives—are on the same page when it comes to one "time to buy" area.



• **LAGINA AUSTIN:** Dare I say this, but... I think American and European furniture—the dreaded "brown" furniture—will make a comeback. Two reasons: First of all, given the trend of the past few years of eclectic decorating (mixing styles and periods), folks are comfortable with hanging their modern painting over a Federal mahogany bureau, flanked by two French chairs. Plus, right now, you can purchase an antique bureau at far less expensive prices than a new one. Second, antique furniture is much better made than the new stuff. It will probably last another hundred years, making it a better choice for the environment than today's mass-produced, affordable furniture. Eventually, I believe, consumers will come to recognize this and not mind paying a little more for quality. For now, brown furniture is a bargain.

• **KERRY SHIVES:** Furniture from the 18th through the early 20th century is undervalued. You would be hard-pressed to find the wood, workmanship, and design at a better price than with antique bureaus, desks, tables, and chairs. With a growing consciousness about reducing our eco-footprint, buying old is smart and should lead to a resurgence of value through interest and decorating trends.



• **KAREN KEANE:** Now is a great time to step into the 18th- and 19th-century American furniture market. The pieces are handmade and expertly crafted. They exhibit an unpretentious quality that complements our 21st-century casual life style. And this furniture is made of good woods! Old-growth native walnut, cherry, maple, and birch woods and old-growth mahogany are materials that do not exist today for furniture manufactory. But they can be found in antique American furniture.



The Chippendale carved mahogany side chair pictured here brought \$28,290, well above the pre-sale estimate of \$4,000–\$6,000. It was made in Boston, carved possibly by John Welch (1711–1780).

Photo courtesy of Skinner Inc.



Left: Harvey Littleton's *Curvilinear Sectioned White Ovoid*, a cased glass sculpture measuring 11 inches tall. Littleton (1922–2013) produced it in 1981. At a Rago Auctions sale in 2015, it brought \$11,250.

interest in/purchase of **contemporary Chinese art**, including works by Zhang Xiaogang, Zeng Fanzhi, Cui Ruzhuo, and Yue Minjun. The factors underlying this growth are directly tied to China's booming economy this century and the resultant surge in personal wealth.

It's fair to say that for many Chinese collectors, fine art has become commoditized. The country's strong penchant for contemporary works by Chinese artists rather than better-known Western "blue chip" artists has also been a source of national pride and patriotism.

now, and they don't want what their parents collected. They want their own identities, and that identity is Modern and Contemporary.

GLASS/POTTERY/PORCELAIN



• **SUZANNE PERRAULT**
*Rago Auctions,
Lambertville, N.J.*

Mid-range **George Ohr pottery**, which has been fairly soft for the past few years, has been picking up lately. Smaller items that were barely bringing \$800–\$1,200 are now in the \$1,500–\$2,000 range. Some areas of contemporary glass are also picking up. We're doing very well with the works of **Lino Tagliapietra**, **Yoichi Ohira**, and **Dale Chihuly**—even Portland Press editions.

(Ed. note: In 2012, *Portland Press*, a company dedicated to publishing books about Chihuly's art, became Chihuly Workshop. It collaborates with Chihuly on a wide range of projects from books, films, and stationery to Studio Editions and prints.)

The work of **Harvey Littleton**, who died in 2013, is extremely collectible. His pottery often brings more on the secondary market than what it was selling for at gallery shows 20 to 25 years ago. And **Picasso/Madoura pottery** continues to be on fire. Large pieces do better, and larger vessels do best.

• **DAVID WEISS**
*Freeman's Auctions,
Philadelphia*

The most important trend of the first 15 years of the 21st century is arguably the surge of



• **KATHY BAILEY**
*Antique Appraisal &
Estate Sale Service, Seattle*

As a certified appraiser of antiques and fine art since 1982, I work in many categories. My favorite spot on *Antiques Roadshow*, though, is the Glass table. I simply love glass! Within this market, the century started off well, but economic conditions around 2008 caused a slump that lasted until around 2014. If you bought the best in glass by any manufacturer, the economic downturn likely didn't affect your collection, and you actually may have seen new highs for rare and important glass items. Glass items that aren't among the rare and important, however, were devalued.

I believe that part of the market is rebounding. As of January 2015, we've been seeing some good movement in middle-market glass. **Tiffany**, **Daum**, and **Moser** pieces come to mind as most stable. And even during the downturn, they were getting strong and record prices.

• **DAVID LACKEY**
David Lackey Antiques & Art, Houston

Serious collectors are interested only in the rarest, most unusual, most desirable examples in the best condition. However, most of the [ceramics/glass] market these days is made up of more casual collectors. They don't usually collect in quantity; they're much more interested in **function and decorative appeal**. In terms of decorative appeal, size does matter: **Large-scale items** seem to be much more in demand than very small objects.



ON THE LOOKOUT

TRENDWATCH: FINE ART

Pictured here are two images, one from an already-hot area and the other from an on-the-rise category. Within the world of Modern and Contemporary art, we've seen a "major upswing in **Andy Warhol** print prices," during these first 15 years of the 21st century, says Anne Henry of Freeman's in Philadelphia.



Photo courtesy of Sotheby's

This 60 x 60-inch 1983 acrylic and silkscreen ink on canvas of Warhol's *Endangered Species: Bald Eagle* drew \$1.248 million at Sotheby's in 2006.

And as New York-based appraiser Nan Chisholm once wrote in *Insider*: "Warhol's images are accessible and visually coherent to everyone. Strong prices for his works are not limited to one particular period of his career or type of work. He appeals to established collectors as well as new ones."

James Callahan of James D. Julia Auctioneers in Woburn, Mass., meanwhile, gives us this forecast: "One of the big trends shaping up for the future is **Indian art**, starting with modern Indian painters." Names to know include painters **Tyeb Mehta** (1925–2009), **Syed Haider Raza** (b. 1922), and **M.F. Husain** (1915–2011), dubbed by *Forbes* magazine as "the Picasso of India."

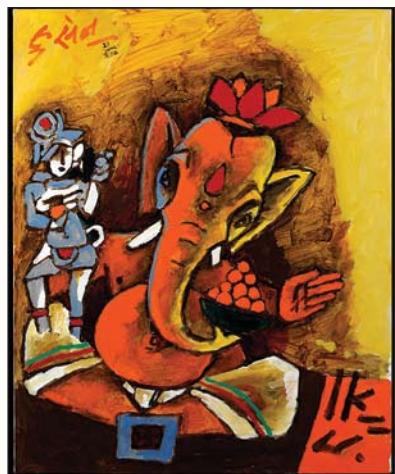


Photo courtesy of Victoria & Albert Museum, London

M.F. Husain's colorful *Ganesha* was part of an exhibit at the Victoria & Albert Museum in London.

TRENDS

Cont'd. from p. 1

ASIAN ARTS

• **JAMES CALLAHAN**
*James D. Julia Auctioneers,
Woburn, Mass.*



For the first few years of this century, the buying in pretty much all of Chinese art was very indiscriminate. Collectors were buying good, bad, and indifferent things. But they have started to focus more on up-market items, buying better and better things and paying astronomical amounts of money for those things. The area they're most interested in: **jade**, because of the inherent value of the material itself. Quality carving is quality carving. If the jade and carving are good, collectors don't care about age.

• **LARK MASON**

iGavel Auctions, New York

The most important trend of the 21st century has been the economic growth of China and the domination of the Chinese art market by buyers in mainland China. Chinese taste for **Imperial works of the Ming and Qing dynasties** has been resulting in new auction records, and more will be reached as



the century matures and the economic power of China continues to grow.

DECORATIVE ARTS

• **KERRY SHRIVES**
*Skinner Inc.,
Marlborough, Mass.*



Authentic items in the area of **Judaica**, or Jewish ceremonial art, are increasingly scarce while reproductions and replicas abound. Do your research carefully and buy based on quality. Silver articles from the 18th and 19th century are particularly strong, and ephemeral items of American Judaica can surprise with their value.



• **SARAH SHINN PRATT**
*LeBaron Antiques Trading,
Woodbury, Conn.*

As lifestyles have gone more tech and people seem to have less time for leisure and entertaining formally at home, demand for the fancier implements of hospitality has waned significantly. For example, tea and coffee sets, hot water kettles, candelabra, and large centerpieces seem anachronistic now. On the other hand, **attractive wine coolers, coasters, and bar implements** always make welcome gifts.

As for styles, despite the popularity of *Downton Abbey* or perhaps mirroring its



This Chinese jade cup stand, a 20th-century piece, drew \$225,000 at iGavel Auctions in 2014. Pre-sale estimate: \$10,000–\$15,000.

characters' progression, people want **less fussy designs**. That means sleek lines, as in Art Deco or Mid-Century Modern or contemporary abstraction by emerging artists.

ARMS & MILITARIA

• **GARY PIATTONI**
*Independent appraiser,
Evanston, Ill.*



In military collectibles, we've seen a steady if not frenzied growth in **U.S. cloth patches**. The interest is primarily in patches from WWI and WWII, but there's strong interest in Vietnam material as well. One of the reasons is the great variety that exists. You

ART

LOOKING IN ON OUTSIDER ART

An antiques insider assesses an art category poised to prosper.
By Andrew Holter, Christie's, New York



Looking at the markets, I would say there is a buying opportunity for the category commonly referred to as **outsider art** (or self-taught art). There are a number of known artists such as Thornton Dial, Justin McCarthy, Mary Proctor, Sister Gertrude Morgan, Howard Finster, and Mose Tolliver, among many others, whose work is selling at auction for reasonable prices—low hundreds to low thousands of dollars. Stylistically, outsider art has a contemporary feel and works well in today's clean, modern environments.

The category is currently undervalued, but there seems to be some market momentum. Recently, several articles in a variety of publications have covered outsider art. Additionally, the Metropolitan Museum of Art just acquired a large group of outsider art from the Soul's Grown Deep foundation; a large private collection has been gifted to the Philadelphia Museum of Art; and the High Museum of Art in Atlanta has just established a new curatorial position for this type of art. Plus, other institutions in places like Chicago and Houston are investing heavily in the area.

Outsider art is often a wonderful expression of American culture, history, and beliefs. It's also a reflection of what was happening in the lives of the people who created these works. Some outsider art actually inspired our more well-known post-war and contemporary artists, including Basquiat and Joseph Cornell. If you like what you see and you can afford to buy it, hop on board the outsider/self-taught art train before it pulls away from the station.



Henry Darger (1892–1973), one of the top names in the outsider art genre, is known to have illustrated a 15,000-page manuscript with hundreds of drawings and watercolor paintings. Pictured here is a work he called *Are Seized by Pursuing [sic] Glandelinians*.

Photo courtesy of Carl Hammer Gallery, Chicago



Above: a selection of WWII cloth insignia, including U.S. and theater-made examples.

have officially manufactured items from the U.S. and countless theater-made variations [produced for films] from such nations as India, Great Britain, Italy, and Australia, as well as post-war items made in Germany. There are many good books on the subject, too, and that always helps bring in new collectors.

The use of UV light (or blacklight), for better or worse, gives many collectors confidence when looking at pre-WWII patches. The theory is that specific whiteners were not in widespread use until after the war, so an item that “glows” under blacklight is generally looked at with suspicion if a seller is claiming it’s from WWII.

Prices for military patches can go from a few dollars to \$2,000–\$3,000 for one patch. In fact, it’s worth noting that this is an area where you see young collectors, as a lot of material is reasonably priced.

MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

• JIM BAGGETT
Mass Street Music,
Lawrence, Kan.



Over the past 15 years, the ups and downs of the market and the aging of baby boomers became big factors in separating the great collectible items from the lesser pieces. With acoustic guitars—and especially older Martin and Gibson instruments from the 1930-40 era—the market has stayed steady, especially for pieces in very good to excellent condition. They’re collectible instruments, but the fact that they’re played and preferred by those in the know is a key to this stable market.

On the other hand, electric guitars from Fender and from Gibson’s golden

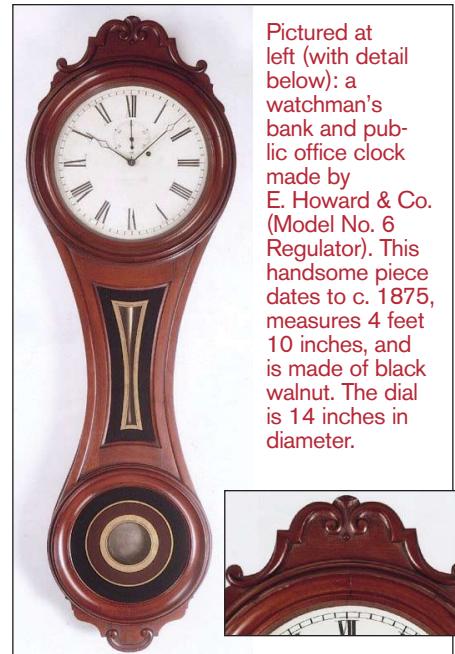
period of 1953 to about 1965 dipped in value significantly, more so than acoustic instruments. A certain appeal of these instruments is in the names of boomer-era rock stars who played a certain year and model. I don’t really expect them to recover as well as the acoustics.

CLOCKS

• SEAN DELANEY (top photo) and
JOHN DELANEY
Delaney Antiques,
West Townsend, Mass.

Clocks that have shown the most impressive growth during these first 15 years of the 21st century have been those made by Edward Howard (1813–1904) of Boston and Roxbury, Mass.—specifically, his floor standing and wall-mounted high precision regulators. They’re incredibly well made and from an exciting time period in the tracking of time. (Many of these are searchable in Howard’s own production log books.) A fair number of them exist and are now available through the National Association of Watch & Clock Collectors (NAWCC.org).

Howard clocks in general have always been well respected by the buying public. Even the clocks that are considered inexpensive for this maker are of excellent quality. Many of them feature a contemporary look, even though they



were made in the last half of the 19th century. As a result, they look great today in both newer and older homes.

Most Howard clocks are pictured in original catalogs with descriptions and dimensions. These catalogs have been reprinted many times and are readily available, giving newer collectors a certain comfort about buying.

JEWELRY

• SARAH CHURGIN
Rago Auctions,
Lambertville, N.J.



Twentieth-century design has eclipsed the Victorian aesthetic in terms of popularity. Jewelry by studio artists from the second half of the 20th century has been growing in popularity, keeping pace with the market for furniture, fine art, and decorative arts. The timeline will continue to move forward as the next half-generation reaches peak buying age. We are seeing strength particularly in the market of juried craft and art from the 1980s.

This c. 1960 carved rose coral brooch drew \$9,300 at Rago Auctions. Materials include jade leaves with diamond veins and an emerald and gold fly with diamond eyes.



• ROSIE SAYYAH
Rhinestone Rosie,
Seattle

The market for costume jewelry has definitely attracted more interest over the past 15 years. Because many baby boomers are moving to smaller homes or retirement facilities, they’re wanting a reduction in their belongings. As a result, we have been inundated with “estate” purchases of costume and estate jewelry.

Plus, there’s a growing interest among people in the younger generation to have something from the past, something authentic. Brides, especially, are embracing the vintage.

TRENDS

Cont'd. from p. 1

JEWELRY (CONTINUED)



• **VIRGINIA SALEM**
*Freeman's Auctioneers,
Philadelphia*

Over the past 15 years, we've seen a strong leaning toward brand recognition.

Signed pieces from the likes of **Van Cleef & Arpels**, **Cartier**, and **Tiffany & Co.** are tried and true second-hand best-sellers. Vintage and luxury items made by **Hermes** are definitely building strength as well. I believe an appreciation of well-made pieces is showing strong now.



A bidder at Freeman's spent \$206,500 in 2014 for this **Tiffany & Co.** 18-karat gold and platinum ring bearing a pear-cut Colombian emerald (3.40 carats) and pear-cut diamond (3.85 carats).

TRIBAL ARTS

JOHN BUXTON

ArtTrak.com, Dallas

Repatriation, authenticity, and legal issues have made an impact on the tribal art market over the past decade. As a consequence, some markets have declined while others have gained interest. While anything of great quality will sell, American Indian and Oceanic items have attracted more interest recently in the middle markets. It is not a coincidence that at *Antiques Roadshow*, we have three appraisers out of four on the Ethnographic table with expertise in Indian art. Specifically in the Oceanic category, art from New Guinea has gained interest among collectors.



PHOTOGRAPHS

• DAILE KAPLAN

*Swann Auction
Galleries, New York*

One subcategory that once operated under the radar but is becoming red-hot is vernacular photography, which is something of a catch-all term covering anonymous family snapshots, press photographs,



commercial photography by lesser-known photographers, and 3-D objects highlighted with photographic images. Although the genre may be unfamiliar to the general public, ask any museum curator or private collector and they'll know exactly what it is.

Vernacular images tend to attract interdisciplinary buyers (folk art, decorative art, Americana, science, and contemporary art), which is part of their appeal. At Swann, we've sold a crime album containing hundreds of mugshots from the 1890s for around \$30,000; a photo-booth "selfie" of Marilyn Monroe as a teenager (c. 1940) for \$19,000; and an archive of more than 600 photographs of Texaco gas stations (from the late 1930s through the 1950s) for \$25,000. Single images with strong aesthetic appeal sell competitively too. Who knows? Some of the pictures in your own family albums might have resale value today.

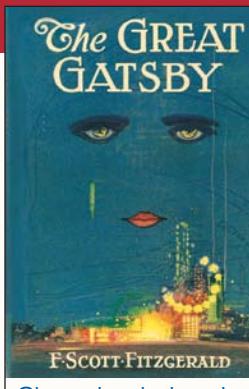
BOOKS & DOCUMENTS

• KEN SANDERS

Ken Sanders Rare Books, Salt Lake City, Utah



Letters, documents, manuscripts, and original writings are of high interest to both collectors and institutions these days. Collectible documents are one-of-a-kind; each unique piece is original, not printed history, so you're holding a living piece of history in your hand. Whatever the price point, you have the only one. Top collectors already have the high spots of authors' books in their respective fields. Original manuscripts, letters, and documents allow one to keep collecting long after acquiring, say, all of the Hemingway first editions.



Clean, dust-jacketed first editions of Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* can draw huge sums; one brought \$377,000 in 2014.



• **FRANCIS WALGREN**
Christie's, New York

An important trend in the first 15 years of the 21st century is a noticeable interest—reflected in soaring prices—in the **discoveries of iconic manuscripts and books of the mid-20th century** (the post-war period). Perhaps this heightened interest is the result of the boomer generation coming of age as collectors of the significant developments in their own lifetimes.

Whether it's Bob Dylan's original lyr-

A CLOSER LOOK

TURNING THE PAGE

Our book-smart contributor surveys the market.

By Ken Gloss, Brattle Book Shop, Boston



The used and rare book market's biggest trend during the past 15 years has been the influence of the Internet. Consider:

1. **Some books that were once categorized as "rare" can now be found through various book-search services.** As a result, the playing field has been leveled and prices have dropped.

2. **Reference-book libraries have become almost obsolete.**

Much of the information once housed in dictionaries and encyclopedias is now just a click away.

3. **With the availability of many books at a glance**, collectors no longer have to jump at the first one they're offered.

4. **The market is such:** The high end is high; the low end is low; there is no middle. Truly rare and collectible books are still sought after and are still at a premium. The plethora of available used books has created a buyer's market; there are a lot of cheap books out there. The mid-range suffers because there's always a cheaper copy. We've found that the best way to sell online is to have the best copy, the cheapest copy, or the only copy of a book.

Looking to the future, I believe books on **space travel and exploration** will gain in value but are reasonably priced and available right now. Anything on technology that has influenced society is a great area to collect.

TREND TIPS

ics for "Like a Rolling Stone" (which sold recently for \$2 million), an important letter from Francis Crick to his son outlining the discovery of the structure of DNA (which sold in April 2014 for nearly \$6 million, setting a new record for any letter at auction), or a work on early computing by Alan Turing, the mid-20th century creators of those things that have affected our lives in the most relevant ways are establishing new records in the marketplace.

The collecting timeline has shifted forward, and this is quite encouraging for new collectors who may see current potential life-changing discoveries and developments being made now that might pay off in the future.



• STEPHEN MASSEY
*Bloomsbury Auctions,
New York*

Marked by the auctions of The Haskell F. Norman Library of Science & Medicine at Christie's in 1998 and The Medical Library of Dr. Meyer Friedman at Sotheby's in 2001, there has been a leap in interest and, commensurately, in prices paid for **important works of science**. Those sales reflect what has been exceptional growth in monetary value in this subcategory.

Another factor: works included in the 1960s exhibition *Printing and the Mind of Man* (PMM). The exhibition and its accompanying catalog showed mankind's achievements in a variety of areas since the spread of printing, which began in 1455. The titles listed in PMM appeal to a broader, less specialized sort of collector.

There is also, more than ever before, a focus on **high-spot titles of an author's oeuvre**. In the early 1980s, a fine copy of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* would sell for under \$50,000 while her *Valperga* might have been valued at under \$10,000. Nowadays *Valperga* might bring \$20,000 while *Frankenstein* is nearer \$200,000.

If the reported sales totals of the auction houses are a guide, it is evident that the art market is awash with money. Much of this has trickled down to the decorative arts, works on paper, and collectibles fields. The continuing popularity of *Antiques Roadshow* is also a witness to this. *

All auction prices cited include a buyer's premium, which usually ranges from 12–25 percent of hammer price.

GETTING A FIX

What's happening in folk art? Two longtime Antiques Roadshow experts have answers.



• KAREN KEANE
*Skinner Inc.,
Marlborough, Mass.*

At Skinner, we've seen a strong and continued interest in American folk art. For example, we set a record in 2011 with the sale of the 1786 portrait of Abigail Rose of North Branford, Conn., for \$1.271 million. Collectors continue to support artifacts that evoke America's history during what they perceive to be a more innocent time.

In terms of the Abigail Rose painting, she embodied youth, culture, and prosperity as she was surrounded by her books, sheet music, and imported Battersea box. Her vibrant, colorful portrait channels an image we have of ourselves.



• ALLAN KATZ, *Allan Katz Americana, Woodbridge, Conn.*

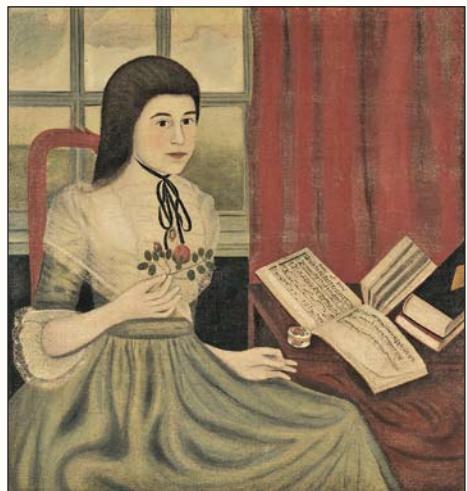
The past 15 years in the American folk art market encompasses the end of a strong period (1995–2007) of demand and price inflation in many sub-categories and, then, the beginning and continuation of a decline in price and demand that accompanied the post-2008 crisis in U.S. financial markets.

The market has been very divided. Five years ago—which would have been two years after the recession—I would have said that market prices were split between the "best" and the "rest." Now, five years later, I'd say the market is split between the "very best" and "the rest." Decorative styles have clearly changed. "The rest" was supported by people using Americana for decoration. This segment is most challenged.

What I do see is real value for your money. Things like weathervanes, portraits, and painted furniture as well as any item (in all categories) that has had restoration are judged more critically in today's market valuations, and prices have come down enough that young people see an entry price that is affordable and comfortable for their budgets. This development will help to establish a price floor on many of the sub-categories that have been sliding. And it's a very positive trend, as prices simply became too overheated and needed to retreat.

The "very best," meanwhile, is still strong, but so many pieces pass through the market that can be called "very best" that it can distort viewpoints when various publications report sales results.

The one subcategory that has remained strong is American decorated stoneware, with many auction records being set within the past three years. It has to do mostly with great pieces coming to market that would qualify as the "very best." *



Record-breaking portrait of Abigail Rose.

Photo courtesy of Skinner Inc.



This 1876 Harley & Carll (Akron, Ohio) stoneware jug celebrated the U.S. centennial.

CROSS-CATEGORY ADVICE



DAVID McCARRON, *Independent Appraiser, Easthampton, Mass.*

A key component in every collecting area: knowledge. "Learn about what you love, and keep learning," says Springfield, Mass.-based appraiser David McCarron, "and then use it. Develop an eye for your thing, for whatever it is that you're collecting."

It helps to plunge in: "Work with people you know; deal with people you trust," McCarron says. "Whatever you collect, you should build relationships with people in that market—dealers, auctioneers, other collectors. Start by being cynical; have questions ready when you're going into an auction or thinking about making a big purchase at retail. And realize that at estate sales, the sellers won't necessarily know a lot about every item. That makes it even more important to know your stuff."

**POINTS TO PONDER:****• WHAT MAKES VALUE?**

The most often-heard words in any field of collecting are "Condition, condition, condition." Most of what the majority collect isn't one-of-a-kind. Usually, the difference between a \$10 flea-market example and one that sets a record price is perfect condition: all original, no modifications or replacements, no damage or missing parts.

The careful collector keeps his/her treasures in top shape, too, with **careful handling, storage, and display**. Basic tips: With just about every type of collectible or antique, avoid direct sunlight and extremes of temperature and humidity.

• WHO STARTS TRENDS?

Look to popular culture for clues as to what the next collecting boom will be. Movies and television have enormous powers of suggestion. The series *Mad Men*, for example, has given a boost to vintage office collectibles such as manual typewriters. The recent bumper crop of science and technology movies is likely to pique interest in science and computer-related machines and gadgets. But... remember recent manias like Beanie Babies? The nature of fads is that they often end as quickly as they started.



The popular AMC television series *Mad Men* added fuel to the hot trends of Modern design, art, furniture, and fashion.

• WHERE ARE THE BARGAINS?

The quick answer to that question: "Wherever you can find them." If you know enough about a collecting niche to recognize an unusual item, even if it's hiding in plain sight in a pile of similar discards, there are treasures to be found. A good place to start is where people are making life changes: estate sales, flea markets, neighborhood swap meets. Sellers can't research the value of every single thing they want to sell by 5 o'clock on Sunday—but an alert buyer can spot the hidden treasure.

—J.V.

TRENDS: WHAT ARE WE TO MAKE OF THEM?

Insider has covered a wide range of topics in the world of antiques and collectibles over the past 14 years. Time for a look at the big picture.

By Jane Viator



"Think Charles Eames and Harry Bertoia, not Duncan Phyfe or John Henry Belter," our author says of 21st-century furniture trends. Los Angeles Modern Auctions got \$11,500 for this red Eames lounge chair in 2012.

The world of collecting and collectors is ever-changing. What's old is (sometimes) new. What's hot is (sometimes very quickly) not. The desire to own beautiful objects or historically important items or interesting "stuff" is universal. The types of things that attract our attention, that draw us in, often connect to us in a personal way.

In the 14 years that have passed since *Insider*'s Vol. 1, No. 1 in July 2001 (were you there?), our publication has witnessed changes in taste and technology that have transformed the hobby, art, and business of collecting. One thing is certain: there are more changes to come.

Insider's first issues covered the same types of topics we feature today: furniture, fine art, ceramics, decorative arts, jewelry, folk art, textiles. But the range of ages, origins, and styles within those broad categories, as we've discussed over the years, is much more eclectic—just like the homes today that happily combine old and new, formal and funky. That's because—as we often hear—people collect what their grandparents owned, not what their parents treasured.

There's a fair amount of truth in that observation, especially as it relates to today's younger collectors. They're more interested, as trends have been showing us, in Mid-Century Modern furniture and decorative arts than in Federal or Victorian styles. Think Charles Eames and Harry Bertoia, not Duncan Phyfe or John Henry Belter.

STYLE AND LIFESTYLE

Antiques Roadshow appraiser and auctioneer Lark Mason of iGavel Auctions summed up the state of today's collector tastes in a recent online article: "Odds and ends jammed into cabinets, spread

Jane Viator, a decorative arts consultant based in Walnut Creek, Calif., wrote about pure gold in decorative arts in our February 2015 issue, undervalued Mid-Century Modern designers in our March issue, and violins in our April issue.





Italian glass has great appeal to today's collecting public. Pictured: a Fulvio Bianconi pezzato vase that sold for \$3,690 at Skinner Inc. in 2014.

across tabletops, and filling drawers are about as out as out can be," he says. "No one has enough time or energy to fool with this material."

Parents of baby boomers are dwindling in number; those who remain are downsizing. And their boomer kids are downsizing too. Collections created in the prosperous 1950s and '60s are being broken up, sold at auction, or distributed among friends and family (when there are friends and family willing to take on the responsibilities of ownership).

Mid-20th century colors still stand out, as this beautifully preserved Arne Jacobsen Egg Chair (with stool) illustrates. It sold for \$9,375 at Los Angeles Modern Auctions.



Once upon a time not very long ago, "entertaining" meant, for many people, cocktails and canapés in the living room followed by a sit-down four-course dinner in the dining room. The linen-covered table twinkled with silver, fine china, and lead-crystal glassware.

Today's busy multi-taskers don't have the time to polish silver and iron tablecloths, and often lack the space to store such items. Their socializing is more spontaneous, their lifestyle more informal. "High-maintenance" anything just won't do.

Another important influence on what and how younger people collect is the increasing mobility of today's society.

Terry Kovel is a long-time observer of and publisher in the world of antiques. She points out that young people establish

households at a later age than their parents did, and they expect to move more often because of a fast-changing and uncertain job market.

And, she adds, "If they're buying a house, that's a very big expense.... And you need only one bedroom set per bedroom, and one dining room set."

WHAT'S UP AND COMING?

The market for traditional antiques may have dwindled, but it hasn't gone away [see our cover story]. There will always be collecting interest in the fine and fragile, the old and rare. For people who share these enthusiasms, now is the time to acquire brown furniture, high-style oriental rugs, and elaborate Victorian silver. These are just a few examples of niches that have seen downturns recently.

No matter what you collect, focused collecting is more satisfying, and ultimately more likely to yield value, than impulse purchases of lots of unrelated "fun stuff," or acquiring one example of everything related to a certain field.

Instead, people talk increasingly about being curators of their possessions. The root of that word means "to take care." And that means being careful to acquire the best examples affordable, and getting rid of the also-rans. More isn't always better.

Another aspect of taking care is thoughtful acquisition: buying items that are useful and usable. A mass-produced 1950s chest of drawers from a good manufacturer that hired top designers will serve its purpose and hold its value for years to come.

Fashions and fads, however, evolve. And make no mistake: Collecting is very much a matter of fashions and fads. The basic advice that's appeared so many times in these pages is worth repeating:

- **Don't look at a collection as a financial investment.**
- **Buy what you love.**
- **Love what you buy.**

With a little luck, and with some good decisions, what you collect will hold, and perhaps even increase, in value. Along the way, you'll have learned a lot, had some fun, and met some interesting people.

Just as important, you'll have allowed yourself the chance to "live with" stuff that, in some way, makes you happy. *

ANTIQUES ROADSHOW INSIDER

A CLOSER LOOK

HI-TECH COLLECTING

In 1995, California-based computer programmer Pierre Omyidar started auctioning used items on Auctionweb, a small portion of his personal website. (At the time, few people even knew what a website was.) One of the first things to sell was a broken laser pointer; the winning bid was \$14.83.

That quirky sale was the beginning of online auctions, which quickly grew into a global multi-billion-dollar business that has revolutionized the world of antiques and collectibles. And Omyidar's small AuctionWeb site, of course, would spawn eBay.

Today, experienced dealers, auctioneers, and collectors would make this consistent observation: that the Internet marketplace has changed the definition and perception of what is truly rare, and thus has had a huge influence on prices.

Many antiques and collectibles that were once hard to find are available from many sources at easily compared prices. What used to be a seller's market has, in many cases, become a buyer's. The name of the new game is access—to the objects themselves and to knowledge about them.

As collectors have become comfortable with the idea of shopping online, more and more sellers are offering their wares, and at ever-higher price points. It's still essential to buy from trusted sellers, and few people are comfortable spending large sums sight unseen. But the online marketplace is a splendid hunting ground, keeping in mind that it's largely unregulated. (This caution applies to individual sellers rather than to online sales conducted by established auction houses.)

Perhaps the greatest advantage that the Internet offers to collectors is information. It's possible to do in-depth research that would otherwise require visits to specialized libraries, museums, and other institutions. It's easy to connect with other enthusiasts who are more than willing to share their experiences.

No "virtual" experience can replace the excitement of the real thing: handling antiques and collectibles up close and personal. But today's technology makes the process of buying and selling the object of desire, whatever that object may be, a more informed and more rewarding process. —J.V.



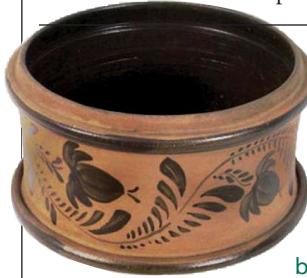
Pictured: a JFK button for the campaign that never happened: "Jack once more in '64." Heritage Auctions sold this rarity via the Internet for \$3,125.



GLORIOUS ALBANY MUD

Albany slip clay is a natural brown, high-alkali, high-iron clay that forms an impenetrable glaze when mixed with water and heated. It was first found in the early 19th century in and around Albany, N.Y.

"Slip" (slip clay mixed with water) typically was applied to a pot's interior and exterior, but only to the interior for tanware. Albany slip clay was mined and exported to potters across North America for more than 200 years. Because of its low plasticity or workability, Albany slip clay isn't usually made into jugs or pitchers; it cracks, breaks, and tears too easily. The last stockpile of Albany slip clay was depleted in 1987.



In the late 19th century, people would store fruitcakes and butter in squat stoneware vessels they called cake crocks or butter crocks.

Most had lids. This tanware version without a lid sold for \$3,700 at Constantine & Pletcher Auctions in 2011.

IS TANWARE STONEWARE?

Stoneware typically has a shiny alkaline or salt glaze exterior. That is not true of tanware. So is it stoneware? "It most certainly is," said Phil Schaltenbrand, founder of Westerwald Pottery. The clay determines whether the resulting pottery is stoneware or not. "Old-timers called the clay used for tanware 'fire clay' because it could be fired at a high temperature. Today it is called stoneware clay."

WHO MADE IT?

New Geneva, Pa., tanware makers included R.T. Williams & Co., John P. Eberhart & Co., and L.B. Dilliner & Co. And in Greensboro, Pa., Williams & Reppert and possibly T.F. Reppert produced tanware.

In a few instances, individual names, not commercial potteries, appear on the bottom: Loyal O'Neil, Robert (R.H.) Rumble, Noah Higgs, and Dan Mercer. Further research may reveal others.

The most notable 19th-century Greensboro, Pa., pottery was Hamilton & Jones. Collectors, however, aren't certain whether the potters at H&J participated in the tanware craze. "We think they made tanware," said Mike Pell, who assumes that one of his finds, a piece incised "H&J," was theirs.

Pell also has "a damaged flower pot," he says, "that I was excited to get because it's stenciled 'C.L. Williams, New Geneva, Pa.'"
—P.P.

TANWARE: FUTURE TREND?

It's world famous—at least in south-western Pennsylvania. Just the same, pottery lovers should keep an eye peeled for the unmistakable works known as tanware.

By Pete Prunkl

Located 60 miles south of Pittsburgh is the pottery-centric community of New Geneva. Beginning in 1850 and continuing until 1916, when the glass Mason jar ruined the pottery trade, New Geneva and neighboring town Greensboro produced stoneware pottery for tourists and locals. For an even briefer period, from the 1880s to the early 1900s, a few town potters participated in crafting tanware, a fad that—a century later—made its way to *Antiques Roadshow's* Charleston, W.V., event.

Mike Pell, a devoted tanware collector, spoke with appraiser Allan Katz of Woodbridge, Conn.-based Allan Katz Americana. Katz referred Pell to *AR Insider* so we could tell the story of his unique collection. "These are over-the-top pieces," Katz said of Pell's tanware examples.

READ ALL ABOUT IT

Tanware is an unmistakable folk art pottery type. See it once and its look and style are fixed in your memory. That uniqueness made it an ideal turn-of-the-20th-century souvenir for tourists on a weekend river excursion to Greensboro's famed Monongahela House Hotel. For entrepreneurs seeking a gift for their best customers, tanware may have been the late-19th-century equivalent of our coffee mug with a company logo.

"Since no one has found tanware listed on an order form or pricing sheet, it is assumed that it was made for souvenirs or gifts," Pell told us. In fact, a small tanware pitcher in Pell's collection has the word "Souvenir" hand-printed below the rim.

The most desirable tanware objects are, true to its name, tan colored. "That's the color of the native clay," Pell said.

Depending on the hue of the native local clay, some tanware looks more orange, chocolate brown, reddish brown,



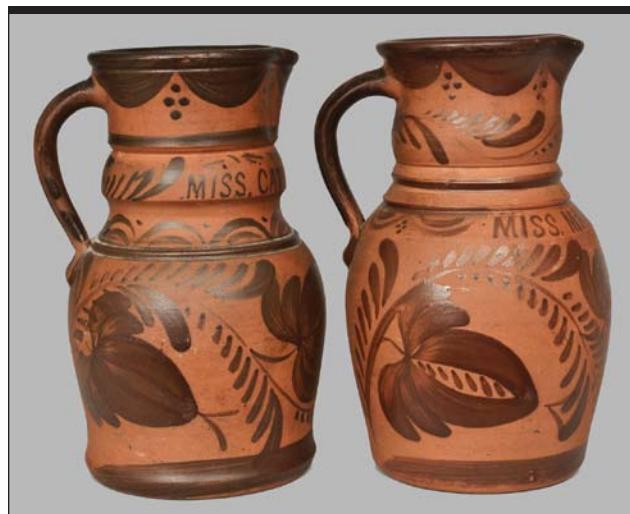
You can't miss the year 1888 on this 8½-inch tanware creamer that collector Mike Pell brought to *Antiques Roadshow*.

or gray-brown. To seal the interior, potters would coat it with traditional Albany slip glaze (see "Glorious Albany Mud" sidebar at left), but its exterior was left unglazed. The raw surface was hand-decorated with dark brown Albany-slip glaze in the form of leaves, vines, tulips, dots, dashes, and swags. Businesses, dates, and personal names were also added.

The result was slip-decorated stoneware with a matte finish. (See "Is Tanware Stoneware?" sidebar.)

In recent issues of AR Insider, North Carolina-based Pete Prunkl wrote features on furniture designer Warren McArthur (January 2015), shirred rugs and Lalique (February), wood turning artist Ed Moulthrop (March), and artist Frances Gearhardt (April).





Left: These exceptional 9½-inch presentation pitchers were made for Catherine Donnery and Mamie Donnery, a mother and daughter from Pittsburgh. The pitchers sold at Crocker Farm in July 2013 for \$4,600 each. Right: Note the flared rim and base and earring handles on this small (5½-inches tall) tanware flower pot, another piece from Mike Pell's collection.



Most tanware was utilitarian and no bigger than a 2-quart jug. "The most common forms by far are pitchers," Pell said. "Flower pots were also common. Rarer examples are banks, lidded pieces, and door stops in the shape of a dog."

Because salt glazed stoneware pottery was the bread-and-butter product for New Geneva and Greensboro potters, tanware had to be fired separately or protected from salt vapors. Salt firing produced a shiny gray exterior, the opposite of tanware.

VALUE ISSUES

Perhaps tanware's most distinguishing characteristic is its scarcity. "Tanware was always rare," Mike Pell said. "My mother, who grew up in New Geneva, does not remember ever seeing it. But my grandmother remembers her par-

ents selling a small tanware pitcher to a local antique collector for 50 cents when she was young. Even today many stoneware collectors do not collect tanware [because it's] hard to find."

Because tanware "has been my focus," Pell continued, "I've been fortunate to find many incredible examples. Prices for common pieces of tanware are usually \$500 to \$1,000. Exceptional and unique pieces can command prices into the thousands."

Pell's sources include other collectors, antiques dealers, and antiques shows. "It also turns up from time to time on eBay," he said.

eBay sellers, he added, are often from

outside southwestern Pennsylvania: "As the population of collectors migrated west and south, they moved their cherished possessions with them."

One migration was particularly early. "Dan Mercer, a potter who worked in Greensboro, moved to Parkersburg, W. Va., in the early 1900s," Pell says. "A tanware presentation bank he made was recently found there, and collectors were asking, 'If it wasn't made in New Geneva or Greensboro, can you still call it tanware?'"

That's a matter of debate. Those who wish to join in the discussion might find that collecting tanware is a fascinating pastime—and a hobby that's still evolving. ☀



A masterpiece by late-19th-century tanware potter Dan Mercer for his love, S.C. Uhl. The elaborate tanware bank is a scant 9 inches tall. Decorated with hands, flowers, vines, and what may be called square earrings on the two handles, it sold on eBay in 2012 for \$12,500.

SOURCES & RESOURCES

Here's a sampling of sources where you'll find out more about tanware.

AUCTIONS

- **Crocker Farm** (CrockerFarm.com): 15900 York Road, Sparks, MD 21152. Phone: 410-472-2016.
- **Garth's Auctions** (Garths.com): 2690 Stratford Rd., Delaware, OH 43015. Phone: 740-362-4771.

BOOKS

- **Made in Pennsylvania: A Folk Art Tradition**, by R. David Brocklebank (Westmoreland Museum of American Art, 2007)
- **Big Ware Turners: The History and Manufacture of Pennsylvania Stoneware**, by Phil Schaltenbrand (Westerwald Press, 2002)
- **Stoneware of Southwestern Pennsylvania**, by Phil Schaltenbrand (University of Pittsburgh Press, 1995)
- **Old Pots: Salt-Glazed Stoneware of the Greensboro New Geneva Region**, by Phil Schaltenbrand (Everybody Press, 1977)



Despite chips around its pedestal base, this 10½-inch c. 1890 tanware spaniel with freehand Albany slip decoration sold for \$2,800 at Crocker Farm in a 2013 sale.

MUSEUMS

- **The Greene County Historical Society** (GreeneCountyHistory.com): 918 Rolling Meadows Road, Waynesburg, PA 15370. Phone: 724-627-3204.
- **Paul R. Stewart Museum** (Waynesburg.edu): Waynesburg University, 51 West College St., Waynesburg, PA 15370. Phone: 724-852-3214.
- **Westmoreland Museum of American Art** (WMuseumaa.org): 221 North Main Street, Greensburg, PA 15601. Phone: 724-837-1500.

RETAIL

- **Z&K Antiques** (ZandKAntiques.com): Champaign/Urbana, IL 61802. Phone: 217-714-5016.



THE HANGER-UNTANGLER

Our editor reaches into his store of memories in explaining how the oddest of odd jobs helped inspire a collection.

By Larry Canale

Let's go back in time to a place you've never been: a dimly lit stockroom in the recesses of a W.T. Grant store in Oswego, N.Y., late 1960s.

Before Amazon and eBay, before Target and WalMart, before dollar stores and any number of short-lived department stores, there was W.T. Grant, one of the kings of American family-friendly mass-market retailers. Baby boomers will remember shopping at Grants, but unless you or a family member worked there, you likely never saw a Grants stockroom.

It was as you'd expect: rows and rows of ceiling-high shelves full of merchandise waiting to be carted to the selling floor, unpacked, and tagged; the smell of coffee (fresh in the morning, burnt by day's end); the innocuous sound of Muzak playing over the sound system.

And, on occasional summer afternoons and weekends in that Oswego Grants stockroom (and later in Johnstown and Penn Hills, Pa.), there was a stockboy hard at work. Yep, that would have been me.

My dad, also Larry Canale (go ahead, call me Junior), got into retailing after college and military stints, wound up in Grants' management trainee program, and became a go-to guy for openings and makeovers, at one point managing the chain's biggest store, near Pittsburgh. Early in his journey, he met the woman he'd marry: my (awesome) mom, a Buffalo-



area Grants employee in the 1950s.

Over 25 years, my dad would work in 17 Grants stores in three states. (My five siblings and I were, as I like to say, retailing brats.)

Back to those stockboy duties: When school and Little League schedules permitted, I'd tag along with my dad to earn some spending money. I'd handle the basics (sweeping and mopping), but I'd also cram cardboard into an incinerator (fun), toss

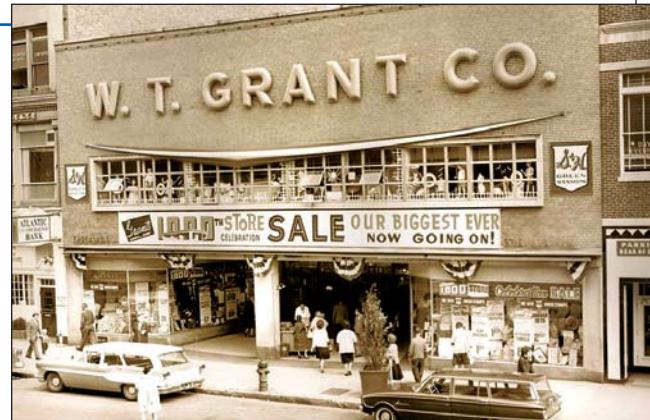
fluorescent light tubes into dumpsters (more fun), and clean bathrooms (not so fun).

And... I'd do odd jobs as needed. To wit: Grants sold a lot of clothes, and with each purchase, the cashier would remove garment from hanger, toss hanger into box, and fill box after box. Sporadically, those boxes would get carted to the stockroom, where they'd pile up; *no one* liked untangling, sorting, and re-hanging hangers. So every once in a while, I'd come to the rescue. I was a hired-gun hanger-untangler.

It was as unglamorous as it sounds. In fact, it could be maddening. Pull a single hanger out of a box and dozens more would come with it, all clinging for dear life

to one another. I don't know if that chore—wrestling with hundreds of hangers in a dark stockroom—made me more patient or less patient. But just thinking about it has me sweating a little.

Yet those years provided great memories. I took pride in whatever work my dad threw at me. And the money I made? Pure gold. It covered my baseball card addiction.



This 1950s photo from Lawrence, Mass., reflects a company-wide celebration of the opening of the 1,000th Grants store.

THE CHAIN

Company founder William Thomas Grant (1876–1972) was a hard-working type who grew up in a retail environment. As a kid, he was impressed by his dad's tea store; after it closed, he made it a mission to start his own retail business. He got experience doing all kinds of work during his teen years, from peddling flowers to running errands to selling shoes.

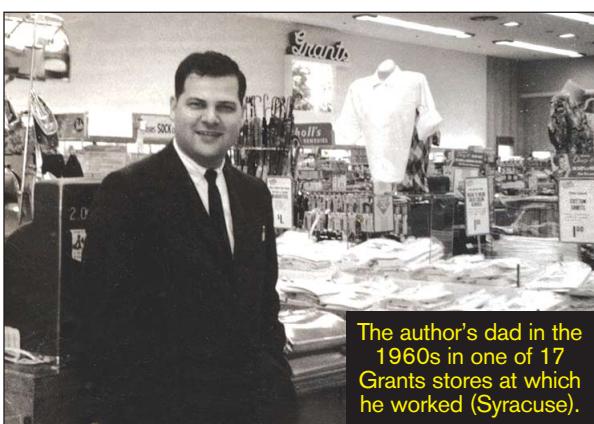
In his 20s, Grant began devising his dream: a retail store that featured friendly prices and sold goods in high volume.



William Thomas Grant in an early-1950s portrait.

"Turnover [of merchandise] was the magic that made more money," he wrote, "and turnover was made possible by featuring low-priced fast-selling items, well chosen, well displayed."

With the help of three partners, he opened that Lynn, Mass., store on Dec. 6, 1906 with storefront signage that read, in large letters, "25¢ DEPARTMENT STORE," with "W.T. Grant" in smaller letters. (Later, the store's main billing was "W.T. Grant" or simply "Grants" in distinctive orange lettering.)



The author's dad in the 1960s in one of 17 Grants stores at which he worked (Syracuse).

Larry Canale has been editor-in-chief of Antiques Roadshow Insider since Issue 1 (July 2001). He has authored several baseball books, including Mickey Mantle: Memories and Memorabilia (Krause Books, 2011).





An eBay bidder paid \$375 for this Miss Suzette doll made for Grants. The presence of the original display package added heft to the selling price.

From the beginning, W.T. Grant tried to stock everything average people used, wore, and enjoyed. He had enough success that he opened a second store (Waterbury, Conn.) in October 1908, and a third (Bridgeport, Conn.) shortly thereafter. And then it was off to the races: Grants stores popped up all over the Northeast and spread into the Midwest and beyond, even during the cold Depression years.

By 1936, annual Grants sales were approaching \$100 million. (That year marked the launch of the William T. Grant Foundation, which continues to invest in important social research today.)

In 1953, Grants opened its 500th store (Levittown, Pa.) and in 1962 its 1,000th (Provo, Utah). By 1970, there were some 1,200 Grants stores in America.

Yet the company was hitting serious bumps in the road, not the least of which was William Thomas Grant's retirement in 1966 at age 90. After he died in 1972, the chain didn't last long. A flawed credit program was a major problem; it created massive debts. In 1975, the company filed for bankruptcy and never found its way out. The last Grants stores closed their doors in 1976. At the time, it was the second-largest bankruptcy in U.S. history.

Today, there are countless reminders of Grants for those who look for them, which brings us back to "the hanger untangler." I've been nosing around for Grants items for years and have uncovered a surprising number of treasures at low prices: typically sub-\$25, with occasional finds like toys in original boxes selling into the hundreds.

I tend to pick up items that appeal to me or that may appeal to my parents; without Grants, remember, they wouldn't have met. "A Closer Look" (right) describes some examples I've spotted. As any collector in any category knows, the fun is in the chase—and this chase may never end. *



ON THE HUNT

The market for W.T. Grant Co. memorabilia can be sliced and diced into these types of subcategories.

• **Store-used items.** The most appealing area here would be Bradford House restaurant items. Early Grants stores included coffee-and-lunch counters. Later stores had diners. By the 1960s, larger Grants stores were featuring

Bradford House restaurants with full breakfast, lunch, and dinner menus.

Bradford House dinnerware is distinctive for its quality milk glass and blue-and-white "Bradford House" logo. Today, you can find everything from coffee cups, mugs, saucers, and soup bowls to plates and platters. Single items often sell for \$5–\$25, sometimes more. You'll occasionally see sets of, say, four or six mugs or bowls priced at around \$40 or \$50. Bradford House silverware can be pricier (\$10–\$20 for a single utensil).

• **Items branded by the store**, marked "W.T. Grant" or, for example, "Grantmaid," "Grantogs," or "Grantcrest." Products include Melmac (distinctly Modern dinnerware); a Barbie-like doll named Uneeda Suzette; audio equipment (Bradford); and even a record label, Diva, launched by Columbia for Grants.



• **Items sold at the store.** Collectors also look for items that weren't made for Grants, but that were sold in its stores and still bear Grants price tags. We've seen everything from shirts, sneakers, and electronics to jewelry boxes, tools, and toys. Prices are all over the map, because such items appeal to a much wider audience than just W.T. Grant collectors.

A CLOSER LOOK



Bradford House wares can transport you back decades into a corner booth at W.T. Grant in-store restaurant.



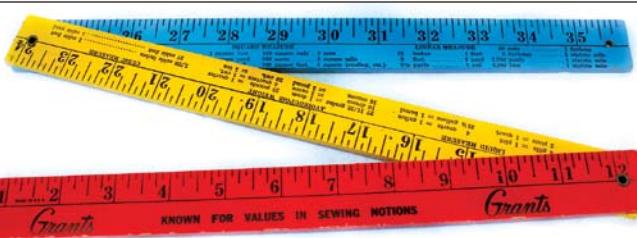
These types of promo items (Bing Crosby-endorsed vinyl record cleaner at left, tape measure below) can be had for \$15–\$35 – if you can find them.



• **Promotional items.** Rulers are an inexpensive link to W.T. Grant stores; yardsticks can be had for \$10 or so. Harder to find: Grants' bright red, blue, and yellow folding yardstick (see below). Grants also made tape measures that sell for \$10–\$50, depending on condition. Bradford House promo items include "Bucky Bradford" squeeze toys (\$25–\$50; see photo at left), ashtrays, and matchbooks (\$5–\$10).

• **Postcards and photographs.** We've seen dozens and dozens of different postcards showing W.T. Grant structures in cities all across the U.S. They sell for as little as a few dollars up to \$15 or \$20, depending on condition and rarity. And they span the early part of the 20th century all the way to the 1970s. Archival and press photos showing scenes from outside a store or inside turn up in the \$10–\$50 range.

• **Ephemera.** One of the prizes in this category: William Thomas Grant's autograph. The Topps company actually issued a trading card that included his signature as cut from a letter; the one-of-a-kind item popped up on eBay months ago with a \$350 asking price (it still hasn't sold). On the other hand, one bidder snagged a cut signature for \$25. Another worthy find is a book written by the chain's founder; it's a tough find: *The Story of W.T. Grant and the Early Days of the Business He Founded*.



THE LAST WORD

On our way out, we'll reference two favorite (and collector-worthy) pop songs:

- **The Beatles'** classic "Hello Goodbye," because *Insider*'s 14-year run seemed *that* quick. Time flies when you're having fun.
- **Eric Carmen's** *Great Gatsby*-inspired "Boats Against the Current" for the line "Tomorrow we'll run a little bit faster/Tomorrow we're gonna find what we're after at last...." Here's hoping all of you find what you're after. ☀



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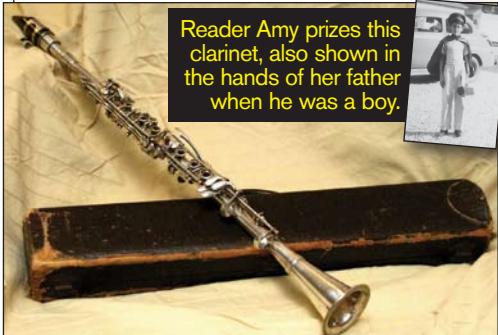
MAILBOX

PRIZED POSSESSIONS

Two more reader treasures and... it's a wrap.

THE BOY WITH A PONY

A silver-toned clarinet I own is special to our whole family. My father, Paul Dunn, used his pony as a kid to cultivate a neighbor's strawberry patch from the late 1930s through



Reader Amy prizes this clarinet, also shown in the hands of her father when he was a boy.

My father passed away last year, and the clarinet shown here came back to me. I plan to make a lamp of it where I can see it daily and remember "the boy with a pony."

—Amy Dunn (state not provided)

POWDER MUSIC

My prized possession: a 1940s musical powder-puff box. It has no monetary value, particularly because it has some damage and is missing the tray for the "puff." But it has a story that makes it valuable to me.

My grandmother, Phoebe Anderson, asked me more than 30 years ago which items of hers I wanted in order to remember her. That was easy: a picture from when she was young and a music box that evokes sound memories from when I would visit her in Prescott, Ariz. The music box sat on her dresser, which had Chippendale-styled pulls that rattled when you opened the drawers.

My grandmother's old-fashioned hairpins made a little "ding" sound when she dropped them in the top of the powder-puff tin. I would wind up the box and listen to the music it played. At night my twin sister and I would sleep in her big bed, which was so tall off the floor that we had to climb into it.

I lost my grandmother last Mother's Day week; she died peacefully in her sleep at 100—the best grandma ever. —Carol Lyon, Utah



One reader's treasures: keepsakes from her grandmother.

JUST FOR FUN: CAPTIONS



"I'm the star of this segment, and don't you forget it."
—Joe Schuch, Richboro, Pa.



THE HORSE WHISPERER: When *Antiques Roadshow* producer Sarah K. Elliott sent us her feature on host Mark L. Walberg for last month's issue, she shared some photographs she took during the taping of a segment on parade saddles. We lassoed one of Elliott's photos, of course, for "Just for Fun." Naturally, you came through. Here's what you have Mark saying:

☒ "Let's make a deal. If you won't buck me off, I promise to give you a bucket of oats."

—Ben Partin, Tullahoma, Tenn.

☒ "Psst.... Now that we've become friends, how 'bout giving me a tip on the 5th at Belmont?"
—Georgia Dupuis, Townville, S.C.

☒ "It's a Roadshow, Bessie, not a 'Rodeshow'"
—Jane Lupton, Chattanooga, Tenn.

☒ [Horse to Mark] "You can lead a horse to water, but you can't make us drink. Well... maybe if you had a fine Waterford Crystal trough."
—Nancy Girard, city not provided

And from caption MVP Dick Simon of Houston:

☒ [Horse to Mark] "Am I up for a ride? How about if I get on your back for a while...?"

☒ [Mark to horse] "You would have appraised higher at *Antiques Roadshow*, but... you've been reshod."

Photo by Sarah K. Elliott