

AntiqueWeek

THE WEEKLY ANTIQUE AUCTION & COLLECTING NEWSPAPER

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MAY 26, 2020



Above Left: A state as of Jan. 3, 1959, Alaska was the subject of many tablecloths. But residents of that state might have to travel beyond its borders to find a vintage souvenir bearing its name. **Above Middle:** California, here I come! The underlying theme of many mid-century souvenir tablecloths seems to be “Go west!” **Above Right:** Some people bought postcard books, while others remembered their travels with tablecloths bearing iconic graphics such as these.

Spread a souvenir across your table top

BY BARBARA MILLER BEEM

Purchased from kitschy gift shops, transported back home in the family station wagon, and then stashed away in Mom’s cedar chest: Mid-century souvenir tablecloths were colorful and cheery, affordable and widely available. Today, these charming examples of vintage Americana continue to inspire countless enthusiasts as they are once again displayed and used daily. Thanks to a robust online collectors’ club, one that affectionately diagnoses its members as suffering from “tactile textile disorder,” collecting these souvenir linens is not only contagious but also a welcome pursuit.

The earliest known examples of souvenir tablecloths date to the 1920s, according to Teresa Stone, an avid collector and secretary of the Vintage Tablecloth Lovers Club. A decade later, the California firm of Barth & Dreyfuss marketed two lines of table linens, “Cactus Cloth” and “Yucca,” both of which employed burlap-like fabric cut into near-squares

of 34 and 38 inches. It was not until the 1940s that things changed, when cotton and cotton blends (often including rayon) were employed in the manufacture of tablecloths which, at the same time, grew to 52 and 64 inches long, sized for kitchen tables and intended for everyday use. Although examples were made into the mid-1960s, collectors consider 1945 to 1955 to be the “golden age” of vintage souvenir tablecloths.

This timing is no accident, as the end of World War II marked a new era in the country, one marked by optimism thanks to a new prosperity, as well as a sense of freedom to move about the country. With gasoline inexpensive and plentiful, average people could afford cars, and, in turn, family vacations. To meet this demand, motels (as opposed to hotels), restaurants, and roadside attractions popped up along the nation’s highways. And more often than not, these destinations came to include a gift shop, selling pennants and postcard books,

SEE TABLECLOTHS ON PAGE 12

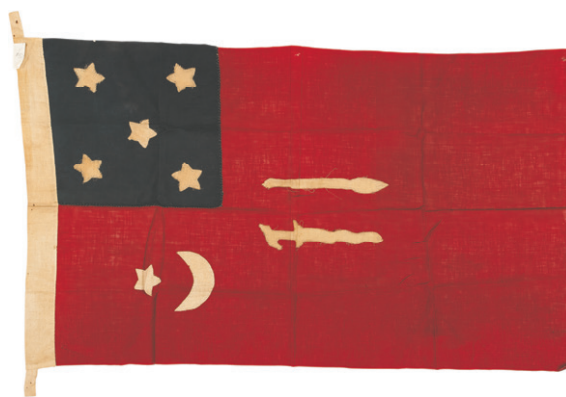
HISTORIC FLAGS OF WWII AND OTHER HISTORIC FLAGS

June 6, 2020 | Dallas | Live & Online

Featuring Part II of the landmark collection of Dr. Clarence Rungee: over 100 flags from the Civil War era up through the Cold War, most with significant associations.



Flag of the U.S.S. Nashville, the cruiser from which Gen. Douglas MacArthur disembarked when he made his famous return to the Philippines at Leyte



Well-documented Moro flag from the Philippine Insurrection, circa 1900



Japanese Silk “Triumphal Return” banner from Gen. MacArthur’s post-war headquarters in Japan

View all of these great flags and bid interactively at [HA.com/6226](https://ha.com/6226), or call 877-HERITAGE (437-4824) to order a glossy, full-color auction catalog.

DO YOU HAVE IMPORTANT HISTORICAL MATERIAL TO CONSIGN?
We are already hard at work on our next major Americana sale, slated for September 2020.

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Paintings were the ‘Cat’s Meow’ at Garth’s auction

BY SUSAN EMERSON NUTTER

COLUMBUS, Ohio — There was a sense of normalcy logging in to www.garths.com on Saturday, March 28 and seeing Garth’s Auctioneers & Appraisers’ CEO and Principal Auctioneer, Jeff Jeffers at the auction block, gavel in hand confidently selling the lots offered during this Americana auction.

But there was nothing normal about it.

Jeffers was selling from the company’s Municipal Light Plant gallery. Oodles of great items were staged behind him at the podium. Bidding was brisk.

But no one was there.

Okay, a few people were there. The person making sure the live selling could be seen via garthslive.com link. People on the phones and with absentee bids were involved, but those few were spread far from each other; practicing social distancing, deemed needed to be safe. Online bidding was also provided via Invaluable and Auctionzip.

Welcome to new normal for auction houses across the globe. Auction houses, that is, choosing to continue to sell during the COVID-19 quarantine. Auction houses that are finding ways to make it so the material they’ve been hired to sell, do just that.

“It was a bit surreal, but we made it work,” Jeff Jeffers said. “And we will continue to make it work until we can have our clients back in-house. We look forward to that day.”

Numerous consignments made up this March 28, Americana auction but it was the material collected by two sisters from the Washington, D.C., area that was most intriguing.

“These sisters had a marvelous eye and a passion for quintessential folk art,” Jeffers said. “I think dealer/collector David Wheatcroft said it best – ‘True folk art is a true affair of the heart’, and what these two women acquired was a wonderful representation of this.”

Great examples drove the sisters collecting choices. “They weren’t afraid of condition,” Jeffers notes. “If it had great form, then condition was secondary. Showing some wear and tear meant the item was valued enough to be kept and cherished, and that actually was a bonus in their eyes. They understood the passion of the object; that these things weathered time in the hands of people who

revered them.”

An example of this would be the American, painted pine corn advertising sign wearing old green, yellow, brown, and black paint and lettered on both sides with “Member Farmers Roadside Market Association of N.J.” It was bid to \$1,680. “If I remember correctly, this sign hung in their kitchen,” Jeffers said. The sign measured 11 ½ inches high by 45 inches wide. Prices include a buyer’s premium.

Several handboxes were put up for bids with the two examples featuring beavers selling well. Done in block printed wallpaper in a rare beaver pattern on a yellow ground, this American handbox realized \$1,320. It was 9 ¼ inches high by 13 ½ inches long.

A nice selection of hooked rugs were presented for bids, as were a grouping of theorems. Several lots of late 19th century/early 20th century handmade pin cushions in all sizes and forms were a major draw. A group of eight cushions, mostly velvet apples, pears, strawberries and a carrot, as well as a silk covered apple having varying wear sold for \$344.

Memory pieces and tramp art items had a solid showing. A folksy tramp art frame housing a charming cat painting did well selling for \$1,000. Done on a tin pie pan, the black and white cat wore a yellow ribbon with a ball. The 10 inch in diameter wooden frame interlocked like a puzzle.

Another black and white cat painting also had its day. *The Black and White Cat Polperro* by Stuart Armfield (United Kingdom, 1916-2000) was bid to \$3,125. The tempera on wood panel image of a cat on a stone-wall was signed front and back, and was dated 1950. Framed, it measured 35 ¾ inches by 25 ¾ inches.

The top lot of the artwork genre was the Hudson River Valley scene by Edmund Coates (New York, 1816-1871) which made \$3,600. The oil on canvas was signed and dated 1856 at lower left and showed a farmstead with fishermen scene. The framed image measured 32 ½ inches by 41 ½ inches.

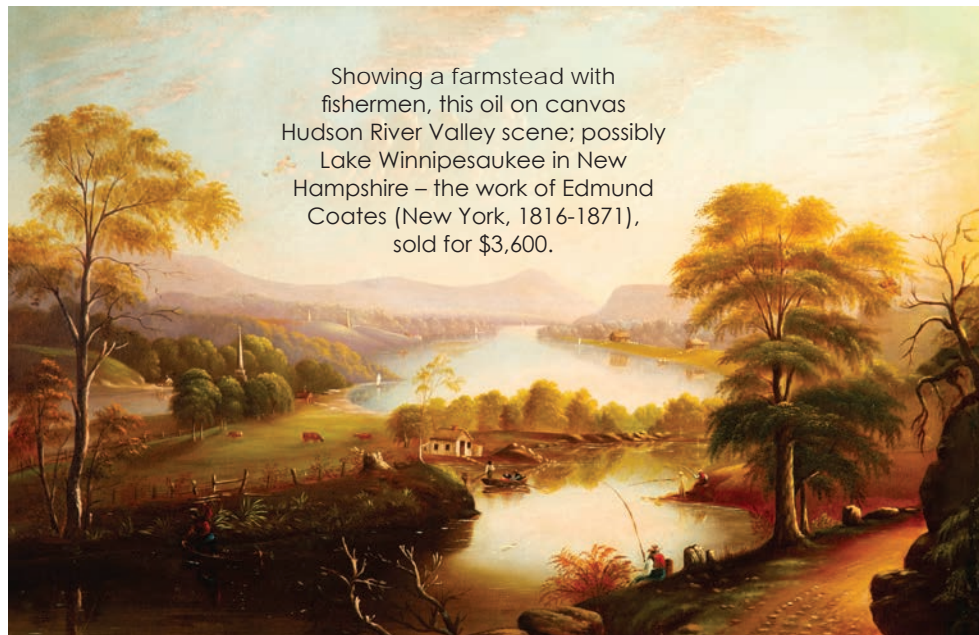
Other sale highlights included a fantastic American Federal mantel, possibly southern, as it was made of yellow pine. The mantel which wore some traces of green paint had a deep stepped cornice, pilasters, and carved rosettes. At 64 inches high and 86 ½ inches wide, this mantel realized \$1,750.

And a lovely American sackback Windsor armchair of mixed woods construction with turned legs, “H” stretcher, shaped seat, and knuckle arms sold for \$2,400. Wearing old black paint, this chair’s seat was 17 inches high with the chair being 36 inches overall.

In these uncertain times, one thing is for sure, Garth’s plans to continue offering online auctions as long as the stay-at-home mandate is in place.

Contact: (740) 362-4771
www.garths.com

Left: Depicting a cat on a stonewall, *The Black and White Cat Polperro* by Stuart Armfield (United Kingdom, 1916-2000) was bid to \$3,125.



Showing a farmstead with fishermen, this oil on canvas Hudson River Valley scene; possibly Lake Winnepesaukee in New Hampshire – the work of Edmund Coates (New York, 1816-1871), sold for \$3,600.



Above: Thought to be American, late 18th to early 19th century, these bronze molds to make pewter spoons sold together for \$540. One was a teaspoon mold; the other a tablespoon mold which was incised “PM” on the handle.



Above: Painted on a tin pie pan, this charming cat painting housed in an interlocking wooden puzzle tramp art frame sold for \$1,000. It was 10 inches in diameter.

Below: Having a yellow ground and rare beaver pattern, this block printed wallpaper American handbox was bid to \$1,320.



8 AUCTIONS BY A&M AUCTIONS!

View Website for Complete Ads, Terms, Directions, Online Bidding, Photographs & Additional Info. www.AMAuctions.com

ONLINE ONLY AUCTION - SALISBURY, MD!



A&M Auctions is honored to sell for the Living Estate of Don Cassell!
PERSONAL PROPERTY LOCATED AT: 28249 Riverside Drive, Salisbury, MD
 Auction Held Online Only w/Bidding ending: Wed. May 27th, 2020 • Starting at 5 PM!

Auction conducted online at www.AMAuctions.com.

500+ Clocks, 125+ Victrolas, Primitives, Collectibles, Victor, Edison, Ansonia, Gilbert, Ingraham, Seth Thomas

PREVIEW: Tuesday, May 26th, 2020 from 5-7 PM



WATERFOWL & SPORTING ART ONLINE ONLY AUCTION - DELMAR, MD!



Selling from the Estate of Alfred F. King III of the King Gallery at Sportsman's Edge New York City!

BIDDING ENDS: Wednesday, June 3rd, 2020 Starting @ 5 PM

Online Only Timed Bidding will be available at www.amauctions.com via PROXIBID!

Items located @ 30503 E. Line Rd., Delmar, MD 21875

(Artwork located in the Building formerly known as the Barn)

EXQUISITE SELECTION OF SPORTING AND WILDFOWL ARTWORK

Ogden Pleissner, A. Lassel Ripley, Frank Benson, Roland Clark, T.H. Archer, Harry Spencer, Robert Abbett, Bob Kuhn, L. Norton, David Maass, Ron Louque, James Hautman, Sandy Scott, L. Frisino, Artist and Art-Related Books & more than 2,500 pcs. of Artwork!!

PREVIEW: Monday, June 1st, 2020 from 5 PM – 7 PM



ONLINE ONLY AUCTION - PRINCESS ANNE, MD!



A&M Auctions is honored to sell for the Estate of Dr. Frances Baker-Miles!
PERSONAL PROPERTY LOCATED AT: 32113 Perry Hawkin Road, Princess Anne, MD
 Auction Held Online Only w/Bidding ending: Thursday June 4th, 2020 Starting at 5 PM!

Auction conducted online at www.AMAuctions.com.

2008 Nissan Frontier SE, 2008 Honda Element, Trailer, Primitives, Collectibles, Tools, Decoys, Jewelry and more!

PERSONAL PROPERTY PREVIEW: Tuesday, June 2nd, 2020 from 5-7 PM



ONLINE ONLY AUCTION - LINKWOOD, MD!

A&M Auctions is honored to sell for the Estate of Phillip "Smitty" Rue!
PERSONAL PROPERTY LOCATED AT: 5253 Beaver Neck Rd, Linkwood, MD

Auction Held Online Only w/Bidding ending: Wednesday, June 10, 2020, Starting at 5 PM!

Auction conducted online at www.AMAuctions.com.

Golf Cart, 12x24 Shed, Decoys, Primitives, Local Books, Local Advertising, Antique & Modern Furniture and more!

PERSONAL PROPERTY PREVIEW: Monday, June 8th, 2020 from 5-7 PM

ONLINE ONLY AUCTION - ONANCOCK, VA!

Personal Property located at: 24412 Swan Lane, Onancock, VA
 Auction Held Online Only w/Bidding ending: Wed. June 17th, 2020 Starting at 5 PM!

Auction conducted online at www.AMAuctions.com.

Exquisite Selection of Furniture, Decoys, Primitives, Glass, Antique and Modern Furniture, Collectibles and more!

PERSONAL PROPERTY PREVIEW: Monday, June 15th, 2020 from 5-7 PM

SPRING SPORTSMAN & WATERFOWL ARTS LIVE AUCTION SALE

THURSDAY, June 25th, 2020 Starting @ 5 PM

Live Auction with Online Bidding will be available at www.amauctions.com via PROXIBID!

Auction conducted at the Allen & Marshall Facility, 8000 Esham Road, Parsonsburg, MD 21849

Decoys by Ward Brothers, Cigar Daisey, Miles Hancock, Madison Mitchell, Charlie Joiner, George Strunk, Scott Jackson, Wally Algard, Edmond HardCastle, Hunting Items, Bronzes, Oyster Cans, Primitives, Rare Sporting Art Books, Exquisite selection of Original Sporting Art & more!

PREVIEW: Tuesday, June 23rd from 5-7pm & Thursday June 25th from 3-5 PM

WATERFOWL & SPORTING ART ONLINE ONLY AUCTION - DELMAR, MD!

Bidding Ends Wednesday August 5th, 2020 Starting @ 5 PM
 Items located @ 30503 E. Line Rd., Delmar, MD 21875.

Exquisite Selection of Sporting and Wildfowl Artwork

Auction conducted online at www.AMAuctions.com.

Additional information to be listed soon!

14TH ANNUAL DECOY & WILDFOWL ARTS - 2-DAY AUCTION -

Auction @ A&M Auction Facility located @ 8000 Esham Rd, Parsonsburg, MD

Day #1 – Online Only Bidding – Thurs. Sept. 10th, 2019 @ 6:03 PM (150 Lots)

Day #2 – Live Auction/Live Webcast Bidding – Fri. Sept. 11th @ 5:03 PM (400 Lots)

Live Auction with Online Bidding will be available at www.amauctions.com via PROXIBID!

550+ Lots in 2 Days including over 400 Decoys, Original Artwork, Primitives, Selection of Carved Fish Decoys
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CARVERS TO INCLUDE: Ward Brothers, Cigar Daisey, Ron Rue, Miles Hancock, Ira Hudson, Madison Mitchell, Paul Gibson & many others!

PREVIEW: Monday 9/7 5 PM – 7 PM & Friday Sept. 11th 3 PM – 5 PM!



A&M Auctioneers & Appraisers, LLC

View Website for Additional Information, Terms, Directions, Online Bidding & Pictures!

Auctioneer - Dave Allen
410-835-0384 or 302-545-1903
www.AMAuctions.com

Despite snowstorm and pandemic auction set a record

BY CAROLE DEUTSCH

GREAT FALLS, Mont. – The 33rd Annual March in Montana auction was like none other that had gone before it. “News of the mandatory restrictions concerning Covid-19 had just begun to surface and the parameters kept changing,” said Ron Nicklas, managing partner of Coeur d’Alene Galleries. “First we were allowed a gathering of 50 and then it went down to 10. Trucks that were already packed and on the road showed up and could not unload.” The annual Western Art Week, which has been a mecca for Western art enthusiasts for more than 50 years, had been canceled. The event is held every year on the week of March 19th in celebration of the birthday of the noted Western artist Charles Marion Russell (1864 – 1926) who made his home in Great Falls. The weeklong visual arts festival always culminated with the March in Montana auction that is held at the historic Charlie Russell Elks Lodge and is considered the highlight of the festival.

“We called our consignors and only one pulled some minor items out of the sale,” Nicklas said. “So we held the auction onsite with our auctioneer and 10 staff members who represented online and phone bidders across the nation and we realized \$1.8 million, the second most successful sale in the history of the auction, and we also set a world record for a painting by William Standing. We had everything going against us, the vi-



rus, the stock market crash, and the threat of a major blizzard, but in spite of the gloom the American spirit stepped up and bidders stayed in the game.”

The March in Montana auction is hosted by Coeur d’Alene Galleries, in partnership with the Coeur d’Alene Art Auction, and their online presentation was impressive. The 244 page electronic virtual catalog was excellent and the sale was presented on three online venues. The 750 lots of Western, sporting, and wildlife art and sculpture by historic and contemporary masters, furnishings, mounts, and collectibles were offered over two days, March 20 and 21.

The top lot was an oil on canvas, titled *The Last Chase*, by William Standing (1904-1951). The 38 inch high by 69 inch wide painting, mounted on drywall, portrayed a high action scene of three Native American Indian hunters riding on horseback at full gallop to a clustered herd of buffalo.

Standing, also known as Fire Bear, was a painter and illustrator from the Assiniboiné tribe whose work centered on Native American Indian life in the Northwestern United States. The painting, which was considered to

be Standing’s masterpiece, was signed and dated 1925 and soared past the estimate of \$25,000 to \$35,000 to command \$118,000, shattering the artist’s previous record.

Moonlight Ambush, an oil on canvas by Andy Thomas (1957 -), was an intense scene set in the dark of night and depicted three cowboys on horseback in defensive mode, drawing guns and firing as the horses reared in surprise. The dramatic 26 inch by 38 inch painting was titled, signed, and dated 2-2010, and sold for \$41,300.

The sum of \$38,350 was paid for an oil on canvas, titled *The Race*, by Philip Goodwin (1881-1935). The 30 inch by 20 inch painting was signed and dated 1904. It portrayed a winter setting with a man vigorously racing on ice skates, looking back at a pack of angry wolves behind him.

Coming Through the Rye, one of Frederic Remington’s (1861-1909) most celebrated bronze sculptures, depicts four rowdy pistol-waving cowboys riding their horses at a full stride gallop, likely in a drunken spree. The scene was initially published as a drawing and Remington used his illustration to create the bronze that is noted for the fact that only a few of the horses

SEE MARCH IN MONTANA ON PAGE 6



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- Monthly Newsletter. Award-winning quarterly glossy print publication and eight e-newsletters per year with hundreds of color photos, informative articles, and the latest news about the hobby
- The Annual Convention scheduled for July 8-11 has been cancelled, due to Coronavirus concerns. A “Virtual Convention” FREE to AAAA members will occur July 11-12. Contact plefkov@gmail.com for information.
- Membership Directory with hundreds of listings, indexed by location and areas of collecting interest
- Buy, sell, trade with other collectors
- Learn more about vintage advertising
- Make new friends who share your collecting passion
- Go to www.pastimes.org to become a member
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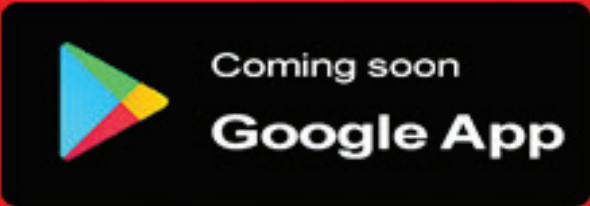
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March in Montana

FROM PAGE 4

hooves touch the ground, which is easy to do in a drawing but requires remarkable skill to recreate in a bronze statue. *Coming Through the Rye* has been reproduced many times. The work that sold at March in Montana was inscribed Frederic Remington, measured 27 inches by 31 inches by 26 inches, and came from a private Dallas, Texas, collection. It was estimated at \$2,000 to \$3,000 but galloped to a rousing \$23,600.

A handsome pair of straight-legged club chairs, circa 1945, made by Thomas Molesworth (1890-1977), surpassed the estimate, selling for \$64,900. The wood frame chairs both had a leather seat and a pillow back that was upholstered with

Coming Through the Rye, a bronze by Frederic Remington (1861-1909), was estimated at \$2,000 to 3,000, but galloped to an impressive \$23,600.



a central Indian motif. They were in excellent condition and sold with a letter of authenticity. Molesworth, who is known for establishing the Western cowboy furniture market, operated his Shoshone Furniture Company in Wyoming from 1931 to 1961.

Cowboy collectibles featured an Edward Bohlin silver parade saddle with a 14 inch seat. The silver mounted saddle was elaborately engraved with intricate floral patterns. It had the trademark Bohlin-made raised silver buffalo head on the horn cap and included a matching martingale, headstall with Bohlin marked bit, and tapaderos with silver horse and star embellishments. The circa 1945 saddle was engraved, "J.P.J., John Paul Jones, Garden City, Kansas," on the cantle, as well as "Made for E.C. Roden" on a Bohlin shield on the seat, and sold for \$38,350.

An Edward Bohlin silver parade saddle with a 14 inch seat realized \$38,350.



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Looking for a way to decorate: consider purses or plates

I'm guessing that as you're reading this, you're home, staring at four walls. And chances are, you're thinking, "I'm bored." But take a look around, and you'll realize that, at times like this, collectors of old things are at a real advantage when locked down with their treasures. Not only do we have the time (boy, do we have the time!) to spruce up our environs, but we already have the raw materials needed for a visual boost. That said, what better time than now to purposefully decorate a blank (or underutilized or, even, mis-utilized) wall. Need some inspiration?

Late last spring, I was en route to Gettysburg, Pa., not to tromp around the battlefields (I've done that), but in search of some retail therapy. As it happens, the "scenic route" takes me through Littlestown and past "The Edge of Town," one of those places that you drive by dozens of times and think, "Next time, I'm going to stop in and see what's what."

That particular day, I decided that there was no time like the present, and so I zoomed into the parking area of the old red barn, went inside, and discovered that it houses a conglomeration of smaller shops. And in my wanderings, I came upon another "Barbara," Barbara Jenkins, proprietor of "Handcrafted for You," who specializes in alterations and hair accessories. Just saying, these days, she's also making facemasks.

What stands out in my mind about her shop is the eye-catching display wall that she has created with a few of her favorite things, centered around dozens of pocketbooks, most of them dating from the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s. Bespangled or covered with buttons (Barbara's favorites, in



light of the fact that she's a button collector), pocketbooks made of Lucite or tapestry, clutches and purses with little beaded handles: They run the gamut. And, as it turns out, those on display are just a small sampling of her collection. Each and every one of them is darling, and I'm betting that if those purses could talk, they would have stories to tell.

I asked Barbara how her collection began, and I learned that she is not the one who does the hunting and gathering. Instead, a really good friend, addicted to antiquing, regularly drops by Barbara's shop with her latest "find." On display, randomly scattered according to the seamstress' whim, is but a fraction of her "stash." In the past 10 years, Barbara's friend has gifted her with well over 100 purses; customers have caught on and are beginning to add to the collection as well. She agreed that hanging pocketbooks on a wall is not just a great conversation starter (and, yes, she has been known to carry them), but also the perfect way to enjoy the little works of art on a daily basis.

But my story doesn't stop there. It continues a few months later, as summer was ending. I attended the Baltimore Art, Antique & Jewelry Show, and, lo and behold, there I finally met – in person – Julie

SEE VINTAGE STYLE ON PAGE 9



Above: You never know where you'll find inspiration. On the walls of "Handcrafted for You" in Littlestown, Pennsylvania, for all to see, admire, and enjoy, is a sampling of Barbara Jenkins' vintage pocketbook collection.

Below: Oh, if these handbags could talk!





Remington-Style Bronze Rider & Horse Sculpture
54" tall x 61" long x 30" wide



4-Tier "Fiske" Cast-Iron Fountain,
78" T x 72" D (Bottom Pan)



Vintage Painted Iron "Fiske" Garden Urn
43.5" tall x 46" diameter

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Arched American Gothic Doorway, Circa 1856
118" (9'-10") T x 84" W x 12" D



Rouge & White Marble Mantel with Arched Opening,
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Vintage Style

FROM PAGE 7

Robbins, longtime friend of Vintage Style and product specialist at Replacements, Ltd. The centerpiece of their booth was a beautiful plate wall, courtesy of Julie.

I picked Julie’s brain to learn how to artistically fill a wall with ceramics. Taking a different approach than the “other Barbara,” Julie does a detailed lay-out before pounding a nail into the wall. She confessed that she does use plate hangers – the ones that antiquers abhor – but adds a little spongy something-or-other to cushion the contact points. The proper fit is important as well, she added.

Most importantly, she recommends selecting a work space that provides a soft landing for the plates, just in case. Select pieces with a theme, be it a unified color scheme (hers was blue and white), or maybe souvenir plates, or even examples made by a favorite pottery.

Meanwhile, I have pleasant memories of my preteen bedroom, where I managed to convince Mom and Dad to let me hang fashion dolls on the wall over my vanity table. Off the wall? Not hardly.

Below: A professional seamstress, Barbara Jenkins is also a button collector, so naturally, purses like this one are among her favorites. Pocketbook images courtesy of Barbara Jenkins.



Above: When it comes to dinnerware, blue and white is the number one preference of collectors. But these pieces need not be on a table to be admired and enjoyed, as evidenced by this artistic plate wall.



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Tablecloths

FROM PAGE 1

souvenir plates and, of course, souvenir tablecloths.

Retailing for a dollar or more (usually less than \$5), souvenir tablecloths were also sold at train stations and newsstands. Themes included states, groups of states (the Southwest, New England and the Pacific Northwest, for instance), and cities. The majority of these tablecloths featured a map, surrounded by great graphics depicting local industries, natural and manmade features, as well as state birds and state flowers. By way of example, Stone pointed out that anything “Florida” was apt to include images of beaches, bathers, and palm trees.

Additionally, souvenir tablecloths were made to celebrate a wide range of destinations, including national parks, major hotels, World’s Fairs, famous highways (think Route 66), and centennial commemorations. One of the more unlikely subjects, she suggested, was the Louisiana Purchase. All in all, “Go west!” seems to be the underlying theme, she added with a chuckle. Matching napkins, tea towels, and aprons were introduced in the 1950s.

Many of the cloths purchased were never used but rather cherished as a keepsake, which is a good thing in light of the fact that, unbeknownst to their original owners, many of these souvenirs were manufactured using thin fabric and colored with dyes of inferior quality. “They often lose their bright colors with the first washing,” according to Stone.

If nothing else, though, there was a great variety of tablecloths made and sold during this time. Stone noted that the club’s database includes some 135 examples of individual vintage souvenir tablecloth designs, made by approximately 35 different manufacturers, most (but not all) of which were located in the United States.

Some collectors focus on souvenir cloths with state themes. Among the ones fairly easy to find are New York, California, Alaska, Florida, and Arizona. Those from the Midwest are less common, as are souvenirs from Georgia, North and South Carolina, Alabama, Mississippi, and Tennessee. Michigan and Minnesota are especially rare. Stone said she knows of at least one club member whose goal is to have one tablecloth from each state. Some collec-

tors concentrate on those rarer state cloths with graphics that do not include a map.

Collectors use subtle clues to help date their finds. For example, any California cloth featuring Disneyland as an attraction was marketed after 1955. Similarly, the dates of Nevada cloths can be determined by the inclusion of either “Boulder Dam” or “Hoover Dam.” Because the names of airports have often changed over the years, this might provide a clue. As for tablecloths from cities, Chicago, New York City, Las Vegas, and Los Angeles are particularly easy to find.

Although every collector has a favorite, Stone (and others) generally agree that the “Holy Grail” of vintage souvenir tablecloths is a square example entitled “American Wonderland,” on which a map of the entire United States is emblazoned; expect to pay more than \$200 for one of these. A resident of Washington, Stone pointed out that souvenir cloths of a specific state are not likely to be found in shops in that state, but rather, in shops situated where the visiting shopper lived. Reproductions can be a problem, but when informed collectors see a cloth with no selvage, or hems wider than a quarter of an inch, they are suspicious. The word “retro” in online sale descriptions is another “red flag.”

Condition is always a factor in determining the value of a cloth. Those in mint condition might sell for as little as \$70 dollars and up. But because those rated “mint” should probably be preserved, many collectors regularly enjoy those that were previously used (but with no tears or fading); examples that are used but in good shape might be found for \$40.

Stone recommends *The Collectors’ Guide to Vintage Souvenir Tablecloths and Linens* by Pamela Glasell to those wishing to learn more. And membership in the Vintage Tablecloth Lovers Club is a source of information and friendship. Completely online since its inception in 2002, the club has neither conventions nor regional meetings. Instead, the more than 100 active members participate in social events (including Secret Santas) while maintaining a user-friendly forum that stores easily recovered information. “Our website is our clubhouse,” Stone explained.

These days, members particularly enjoy connecting with each other. Stone added that some people “are back on the forum who haven’t been there for a while.” Collectors, she said, continue to enjoy the tactile experience of re-organizing their holdings (they call it “petting” their tablecloths). And many share online images of not only their favorite cloths, but also their creative table settings. “Now is the time to put a pretty tablecloth on your table,” she concluded. “It brings you joy.”

Go to vintagetableclothloversclub.com



Above: Close-up view of a colorful tablecloth bedecked with iconic images of the Nation’s Capital, including the Washington Monument.



Right: When not on their tables, tablecloths are displayed in attractive fashions such as this. Smaller cloths are often framed and hung on the wall.

Below: Many souvenir tablecloths were bought as mementos and not used. This Alaska tablecloth is obviously not one such example, as evidenced by its faded colors.



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