



Renninger's CELEBRATING OUR 45TH YEAR ANTIQUÉ GUIDE

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WWW.RENNINGERS.NET

NOVEMBER - DECEMBER 2019

Fireplace Treasures

From Andirons to Folding Screens



Pair of brass and iron ball-top andirons, American, mid-19th century. Skinner Inc.

By Robert Reed

It would have been a picturesque scene in Colonial America. A bright fire in the fireplace, gleaming accessories within reach, and a fancy-etched fire screen sitting nearby.

Typically, the Colonial fireplace was large. Wood was certainly plentiful and the more intensely the fireplace logs burned the more heat that radiated into the surrounding room.

Heavy andirons or "fire dogs" made of hand-pounded iron held the logs in place. Immediately in front of the andirons were brass screens or "fenders" to keep sparks of fire from flying onto luxurious rugs. Elsewhere were matching brass tongs, bellows, and other necessary tools.

Throughout the 18th century the traditional open fireplace was the main source of heat for the living quarters, although larger homes might offer smaller fireplaces in other locations as well.

The fireplace equipment was important enough at the time to be listed in many an estate inventory. A 1700s listing might note "brass andirons, tongs, and fender" or perhaps only "brass knobbed andirons" in accounting for the dearly departed belongings.

Andirons were especially elegant in the fireplace.

Until the very late 17th century most all fireplace fittings, especially andirons, were made of iron. Gradually, in the early 18th century, blacksmiths tended to craft wrought iron andirons with flattened or twisted shafts. Typically, they terminated with solid ball



Pair of Federal brass and iron andirons, Philadelphia, 1790-1810

Skinner Inc.

feet or perhaps with ball and ring feet.

Experts suggest the earliest fireplace andirons had straight but flattened shafts and enlarged knobs on the top. Some had a slight turn or curve in the shank to more fully hold the logs in place. Early issues had an iron bolt welded to the long support directly under the uprights. Later, instead of a weld, they were simply fastened with a standard nut and bolt.

Andirons came in a variety of sizes and patterns. Gradually, the materials used in making them evolved from wrought iron to cast-iron and brass. Sometimes they were

Continued on page 2



This iron turkey doorstop was made by Bradley and Hubbard. It is the only painted example known. In 2015 it sold for \$1,700 at auction. The 12 1/2-inch-high bird is pictured in the Bertoia doorstop book.

Historic Holiday Dinner

By Terry and Kim Kovel

Thinking about Thanksgiving dinner? If you want to copy the menu used by the Pilgrims, you can't eat turkey. Historic letters written by the Pilgrims describe Thanksgiving in 1691, mentioning the guests, the foods and the activities. The Wampanoag Indian guests at the celebration brought venison to eat. The English Pilgrims say they brought fowl, which probably meant ducks or geese that were migrating during the fall. There also was mention of cider. Turkeys were not mentioned for the celebration, although they were eaten at other times. Also available and known to be part of the American Indians' food were cod, eels, corn, beans, onions, turnips and spinach. Later letters mention fish, lobster, clams, berries, pumpkins and squash. There was no sweetener for cranberries to make sauce, but boiled, baked or raw cranberries were eaten. In some countries today, pumpkin soup is made from a squash that is not the same as the pumpkin we decorate for Halloween. The word's meaning must have changed, and we are not sure what plant was used. The turkey was first promoted as the main part of a Thanksgiving dinner in about 1800 and didn't become part of most traditional dinners until 1857. And other more modern dishes, like pumpkin pie (in a 1796 cookbook) and green-bean casserole (1955, created by Campbell's), are now part of many Thanksgiving dinners.

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	<p>2019 Nov 7-10 Dec 12-15</p>	<p>2020 Jan 9-12 Feb 6-9 Mar 12-15</p>		<p>2019 Nov 30-Dec 1 Dec 21-22</p>	<p>2020 Jan 25-26 Feb 22-23 Mar 28-29</p>

EXTRAVAGANZA DATES

MOUNT DORA, FL **Nov. 15-17, 2019 • Jan. 17-19 • Feb. 14-16, 2020**
KUTZTOWN, PA 2020 • April 24-25 • June 26-27 • Sept. 25-26

COMING UP

NOVEMBER

- 15-17** Renninger's Extravaganza, Mt. Dora, FL
15-17 Lakewood 400, Cumming, GA
16Penns Landing Caterers, Phila., PA
16-17 Fire Halls, Kimberton, PA
22-23 Expo Center, Carlisle, PA
30 - Dec.1 Expo Center, Columbus, OH

DECEMBER

- 1**Memorial Hall, Expo Center, York, PA....
 Toy
1Bethlehem Catholic H.S., Bethlehem,
 PA....Bottle
7-8Fire Hall, Mauricetown, NJ
12 -15Expo Centers, Atlanta, GA
15Penns Landing Caterers, Phila., PA
21-22 Expo Center, Columbus, OH

JANUARY

- 4-5**Dulles Expo Center, Chantilly, VA
9-12 ..Expo Centers, Atlanta, GA
11Penns Landing Caterers, Phila., PA
11-12 XL Center, Hartford, CT....Papermania
11-12 Stark County Fairgrounds, Canton, OH
17-19 .Renningers Extravaganza, Mt. Dora, FL
18Penns Landing Caterers, Phila., PA
25-26 Expo Center, Columbus, OH
25-27 Wheaton Cultural Center, Millville, NJ

CURRENT PRICES

Current prices are recorded from antiques shows, flea markets, sales and auctions throughout the United States. Prices vary in different locations because of local economic conditions.

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

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

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

Fraktur picture, house blessing inside heart, flowers & vines, watercolor details, grain

Painted frame, 1800s, 7 x 6 inches, \$370.

Butter print, maple, round, carved, 6 leaves, 2 hearts, lollipop handle, signed & dated, WR 1846, Pennsylvania, 8 x 4 inches, \$470.

Crab inkwell, bronze, figurative, articulated front claws, carapace as lid, glass pot, Continental, 1 3/8 x 6 1/2 x 7 inches, \$490.

Tavern table, cherry, pine, red paint, rear drop leaf, slide supports, drawer, square legs, Massachusetts, c.1890, 28 x 42 inches, \$540.

Rookwood vase, crocuses, Iris Glaze, pale green shaded to dark blue ground, cylindrical, flared rim, Sara Sax, 1906, 9 3/4 x 4 inches \$1,500.

Pair of andirons, owl, figurative

Continued on page 3

Fireplace Treasures

Continued from page 1
 combinations of metals with bright brass heads and dull-finished wrought iron below. Later the better andirons were almost entirely of brass over a cast-iron base.

By the middle of the 18th century the style of andirons was more in keeping with Colonial American taste. Previously they had been heavily imported from England and reflected the styles of distinguished designers such as Thomas Chippendale and Robert Adams. Now such andirons might extend to include crudely fashioned dogs, owls, eagles or even human figures. One historian, Katherine McClinton, noted the era also saw cast-iron examples of Adam and Eve, and busts of unidentified women. By the 1780s some of the most creatively fashioned andirons were decorated with images of soldiers, smokers, ships, houses, and even George Washington.

By the 1800s the better andirons were made almost entirely of brass. Claw and ball feet were in fashion. The andirons were seldom signed by the maker at the time, but there were exceptions. Paul Revere and Son, for example, did sometimes apply a mark and one such set is now part of the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Immediately next to the Colonial fireplace

was the fire screen.

The fire screen was a practical device mainly used to protect the face of residents from the heat of the heavily logged roaring fire. Beyond that however it often became a show place for fine needlework or elegant embroidery.

It was said that Chippendale in particular saw the potential for artistry in the fire screen. In turn Chippendale's designs were said to have directly added to the popularity of such devices as a centerpiece of fashion.

Basically, there were two fire screens available to the



Brass & wirework serpentine fire fender with andirons & tools from the 18th and 19th century.

Skinner Inc.

tasteful American home of the 18th century, the pole screen and the horse or cheval screen.

The pole screen generally stood four to five feet in height and was held in place by a tripod stand complete with a screen which could slide up and down the pole. Reportedly it was designer Sheraton who refined the fire screen to the point where it could be adjusted by moving the screen up and down through a series of grooves in the stand.

Meanwhile the so-called horse screen often involved two uprights supporting a good-sized rectangular panel, which could vary from a basic wood plainness to intricate handiwork.

"The variation and interest in both types of screen come, of course, from the difference in workmanship and in the needlework," wrote Sarah Lockwood some decades ago in the book *Antiques*. "Most of them were exceedingly graceful and delicate. Those used in this country were for the most part imported. They were distinctly an English bit."

Not only could the handiwork be attractive, but the design itself could be appealing as well. Typically, the pole screen stood on arched and curving cabriole legs with expanding and elongated "snake" feet. Most ended with a pad foot or a ball-and-claw foot. Eventually, they were finished at the top with an urn-shaped finial which was a very typical Federal symbol of the time.

Any fancy fireplace also had the need for accessory tools too.

"When the fireplace was the center of activity in homes and taverns, sets of fire tools were necessary to accomplish various hearthside housekeeping functions," noted Dan Dimperio in the volume, *The Country Antiques Companion*. "A complete set generally consisted of a toolbox, tongs, brush, shovel, poker and

irons."

The fire tongs and shovels were sometimes made to match during the early 1700s. However, the poker was generally not available for most homes until the 1750s when the use of coal either supplemented or in some cases surpassed the exclusive use of wooden logs.

Another striking accessory was the fire fender which was usually a combination of polished brass and painted black wire set upon polished brass balls. The wire mesh, of course, served to prevent fireplace sparks from flying out into the richly decorated room. Initially, like andirons, they were largely imported from England until crafting of metal work began to flourish around the 1750s.

Further, there were fire shovels used to transfer coals or ashes, and ember carriers which either opened or closed lids. For the most part brass elements were preferred in the main room where guests were entertained, and basic iron tools were acceptable for use in the kitchen areas.

There was even a special brass tankard for igniting the formal fireplace. Sometimes known as the Cap Code lighter, the device contained an oil-soaked stone on a handle with varying degrees of polished metal. There were bellows as well for improving the fire. By the early 1800s they were styled from various woods and fitted with leather sides and brass ends. Even Paul Revere was among the many makers of both standardized Common Bellows and more fancy Chamber Bellows.

Gradually, the grand fireplaces and their accessories were replaced later in the 18th century and early in the 19th with the more functional iron stove.

Today andirons, fire fenders and fire screens are prized by collectors and are seen from time to time in antique shops, shows and markets.



Mahogany pole fireplace screen, New York City, 1795. New York State Museum



Fireplace featured in this oil on canvas painting attributed to Philip Hussey, Ireland ca. 1750

Colonial Williamsburg

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Britannia Figures

By Terry and Kim Kovel

Queen Elizabeth II was born on April 21, 1926, but she celebrates her birthday on several different days. The English monarch's birthday had been celebrated on the actual date of his or her birth since 1788. But in 1936, after King George V died, the date was changed to the second Monday in June to commemorate his death and to get better weather for the "Trooping the Color," a British regimental parade. The date was changed again in 1959 to the second Saturday in June. To add to the confusion, some places, including Canada, Australia and New Zealand, chose a different day. In 2019, it was celebrated in Britain on June 8. A Roman goddess was the inspiration for Britannia, the personification of Britain, by 1797. She always wears a Corinthian helmet, carries a trident or spear and has a lion lying at her feet. This Staffordshire figure of Britannia was made about 1820. It was sold at a Thomaston auction for \$586.



Many figures of Britannia were made with a bright-yellow dress as well as the helmet, spear and lion. She represents unity, liberty and national pride. This figure, 11 inches high by 8 inches wide, sold at auction for \$586.

CURRENT PRICES

Continued from page 2

al, cast iron, glass eyes, branch base, Aesthetic Period, c.1885, 21 x 11 x 20 inches, pair, \$3,050.

Chair, Gondola, American Classical, mahogany, rounded & pierced crest rail, scroll arms, padded back & seat, c. 1825, 38 inches, \$5,000.

Amberina castor jar, coin spot, enamel bird, flowers, branches, dog finial, Webster silver-plated frame, 9 1/4 inches, \$370.

Rockingham figurine, sheep, recumbent, base, c. 1825, 4 x 5 1/4 inches, \$405.

Capo-Di-Monte ewer, Nep-
Continued on page 5

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Directions

3 miles East of Atlanta Airport, I-285 at Exit 55 (3650 & 3850 Jonesboro Rd SE)

RENNINGER'S ANTIQUE GUIDE

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Special Thanksgiving Display at Grist Mill Antiques Center

The Grist Mill Antiques Center is feeling thankful this month for all the customers, family and friends who came out to celebrate their 25th Anniversary! Continuing on the theme of gratitude this month's Special Display is all about the Thanksgiving Holiday! A selection of antique samplers with heartfelt quotes is the backdrop for collections of everything to make your holiday meal complete! Vintage turkey platters, pottery pie birds, elaborate tureens and the humble gravy boat are surrounded by carving sets and table décor. Are you ready for Thanksgiving dinner with family and friends? Stop in and make sure your table setting is complete and don't forget a special gift for your host or hostess!



Just In! The Grist Mill is always buying and stocking the shelves with wonderful new finds! Just in... hand blown Christmas ornaments and lights, hand painted boxes and tole ware trays, a dozen new side tables have found their way to the second floor and a collection of tidbit trays, cake stands and serving pieces have been added to the holiday serving display.

Sales & Events! In addition to a shop discount, each week the Grist Mill has a 25% off sale on a selected theme. A Scavenger Hunt is held on the last Wednesday of every month from 5 PM to 8 PM. Refreshments are served and the winner receives a \$25 gift certificate good at the Grist Mill or

sister shop Haddon Heights Antiques Center. Follow them on Facebook and Instagram or sign up for a weekly newsletter to receive updates on events and weekly sales. Send your request to: theplace@gristmillantiques.com.

Shop Discount: All merchandise priced \$6 or more is 20% off every day! Each week they feature a themed 25% off sale. To learn more about sales or subscribe to the weekly email please check out their website or contact them!

Online Shopping: Shop on eBay where they have over 700 exclusive items listed including sterling silver jewelry and collectibles, railroad china, American pottery, jewelry, French and German porcelain, original works of art, uranium glass, majolica, antique Christmas ornaments, etc. In addition, they are happy to ship Worldwide! www.ebaystores.com/gristmillantiquescenter.

New Dealers! In the month of November they are welcoming two new dealers. The Grist Mill continues to renovate and design new spaces. Interested in becoming a Grist Mill Dealer? They have spaces small and large available! Contact Barbara Lind at 609-726-1588 or theplace@gristmillantiques.com.

The Grist Mill is a multi-dealer shop featuring 2 floors of over 10,000 SF of antiques and vintage, furniture, china, collectibles, pottery and more. Sets of fine china, MCM dishes, art pottery, glassware, collectible dolls, lamps from every era, Pyrex and retro kitchen items abound!

Grist Mill Antique Center is located at 127 Haver Street (Route 616) in Pemberton, NJ 08068. Open 7 days a week, 10 to 5, Wednesdays until 8. For more information visit their website at www.gristmillantiques.com.

Wishing Everyone A Happy & Healthy Thanksgiving Holiday! Black Friday Holiday Sale - Friday, Nov., 29th through Monday, Dec., 2nd



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Old Time General Store, full of vintage merchandise for sale...from Barber Shop, Ice Cream Parlor, Hardware Store, Drug Store Memorabilia and much more.

The Cackleberry Farm Antique Mall will be hosting their Annual Black Friday Weekend Holiday Sale from Friday, Nov. 29 – Dec. 2. You do not want to miss this incredible savings event! Cackleberry Farm Mall is located at 3371 Lincoln Highway East, Paradise, PA, on Route 30 – four miles west of Route 41 and only six miles east of Rockville Square Outlet Mall. They are only minutes away from everywhere and everything Lancaster County has to offer. It's not just an Antique Mall – it's your destination!

During this special weekend they will be offering huge savings store wide on almost everything in their over five million dollars of inventory. Their huge 26,000 sq. ft. fa-

ility houses a wide variety of antiques and collectibles, displayed by over 125 dealers featuring fine items including: furniture, glassware, railroad memorabilia, mining equipment, sterling silver, clocks, advertising, gas station memorabilia, jewelry, fine china, toys, books, postcards, trains, Christmas, pottery, linens, primitives, kitchenware and much more! It's impossible to list everything they have to offer.

In addition, housed inside the antique mall is an Old Time General Store, which will take you back in time to the Mom and Pop stores of years ago. They also offer convenient parking for over 100 vehicles, with a spacious area for campers, trailers, and tour buses. It's a great plea-

sure shopping in this clean, climate-controlled, brightly lit and carpeted mall – absolutely one of the best shopping experiences in Lancaster County! Open year round from Monday – Saturday 9:30 am to 5 pm, Sunday 10 am to 5 pm, closed on Tuesdays. Visa/MasterCard/Discover/Debit Cards accepted – plus gift certificates, layaway and shipping available. Also, while visiting the Antique Mall, visit the stores out in front!

For more information call: 717-442-8805 during business hours or visit: www.CackleberryFarmAntiqueMall.com. Please note: they will be closed Thanksgiving Day, Thursday, Nov. 28. Open Black Friday, Nov. 29 at 9:30 am.

Holidays Featured at Haddon Heights Antiques Center



Here come the holidays, and the Haddon Heights Antiques Center is ready with a November special display that features lots of fall colors, ideas for setting a unique Thanksgiving table – and turkeys.

For many, a large Thanksgiving feast is traditional. And it's nice to serve the mouth-watering main course dishes as well as the desserts on traditional, vintage china. It's also nice to decorate the center of the table or perhaps the sideboard with unique vintage finds like autumn-hued glass, a turkey planter that can hold real or silk flowers, and perhaps some Pilgrim salt and pepper shakers.

Perhaps you need some different recipe ideas to wow friends and family all through the holidays. What better place to look than in a vintage cookbook?

Wonderful ideas await in the special display and all around this two-story, multi-dealer shop. November is a great time to start shopping for the collectors on your Christmas list and to start finding vintage holiday decorations for yourself as well.

Remember, Small Business Saturday falls on November 30 this year and it's the tenth anniversary of this worthy endeavor, so come out and support small businesses like the Haddon Heights Antiques Center. The shop is conveniently located off major Camden County highways like I-295 and the White Horse Pike. It's open seven days a week from 10 to 5 with extended hours on Fridays. Call 856-546-0555 for directions or more information.

CURRENT PRICES

Continued from page 3
tune, mermaids, tropical fish, schooling fish, seaweed, dolphin, 16 1/2 inches, \$510.

Letter opener, dragon, belt hook, jade, engraved silver blade, 8 1/4 inches, \$1,000.

Mettlach stein, pottery, soldier, students, violin player, outside pub, pewter lid, 1/2 li-

ter, \$170.

Child's highchair, Windsor, 6 spindles, black & red paint, plank seat, splayed bamboo turned legs, 30 x 16 inches, \$180.

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

Linen press, chestnut, 2 arched panel doors, shelves, 2 over 3 drawers, wooden knobs, French bun feet, Canada, 1800s, 83 x 51 inches, \$430.

Christmas ornament, kugel, cluster of grapes, olive green glass, baroque cap, Germany, 5 1/2 inches, \$445.

39th Annual Christmas Antique Show



Mauricetown Fire Hall

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Early Baskets



By Terry and Kim Kovel

Nantucket baskets have been popular purses and collectibles since the 1940s. The first baskets on Nantucket Island were made by the Wampanoag Indians, but they were not like the later Nantucket baskets. A lightship is a substitute for a lighthouse in waters that can't hold a lighthouse because of the depth or the rough water. The Nantucket Lightship Station was at Nantucket in 1854 and had a crew of six. They worked 30 days at a time with little to do. So, some started making baskets. The first basket was made by Capt. Charles Ray. The wooden parts were made on land, carried to the ships and used to make the woven baskets. The government made them stop basket making while on duty in 1900, but baskets were still made on the island. Purses were made by 1900, and in the 1940s, friendship baskets were made. New ones today sell for \$500 to thousands of dollars. One very rare type is the lollipop basket. The top rim has round pieces that look like little lollipops. They have had auction estimates at \$40,000 to \$60,000. They are very difficult to make.

This double lollipop basket was made in the early 20th century. It is 4 1/2 inches high, 9 inches long and 8 1/4 inches wide with a swing handle. It was estimated at \$40,000 to \$60,000.



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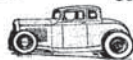
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QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

By Terry and Kim Kovel

Q: I have a deep-blue Biskra vase made by R. Lalique. It's about 11 1/2 inches high. Someone wants to buy it. I've done research but am hoping to get some advice about the price someone would expect to pay for it. It's been in storage for some time, so the inside grooves of the fern leaves need cleaning, but there are no chips.

A: Biskra vases were made by Lalique about 1932. They were made in several different colors, including blue, pale green, red, yellow amber and opalescent. The vases have sold at auction for several thousand dollars. A large blue vase like yours sold for over \$8,000 recently. Unless your buyer is ready to pay that much, you should contact an auction house to sell your vase. Ask what shipping, commission and other costs will be before consigning it.

Q: I have most of a set of Burleigh Ware Willow dishes. Are they of any value?

A: Burleigh Ware was made by Burgess & Leigh (Ltd.), a pottery in Burslem, Staffordshire, England. It operated as Burgess & Leigh beginning in 1877. The company was sold in 1999. It has been part of Denby Holdings since 2010 and is now called Burleigh. The "Willow" pattern originally was a Chinese pattern. It was copied by many manufacturers. Burgess & Leigh began making Willow pattern dishes in the early 1920s. The blue-and-white Willow pattern still is popular today. You might be able to sell the dishes to a matching service, but then you have to pack them, pay charges and ship them. You can try to sell them locally to an antiques dealer or donate

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QUESTIONS & ANSWERS *By Terry and Kim Kovel*

Continued from page 6

them to a charity and take the tax deduction. Partial sets of dishes are not selling well online or in shops.

Q: My 12-inch mercury glass cake pedestal is developing "mold" spots. It's stored in a china cabinet. The mold is on the top and bottom sides only. How should I clean it and keep it from getting spots?

A: Mercury glass, or silvered glass, doesn't have mercury or silver in it. It was first made in the 1850s by blowing the glass into a mold. Antique mercury glass has double walls and was coated between the walls with a silver nitrate solution before sealing the hole on the bottom with a plug. Dirt and air get inside between the walls if the plug has deteriorated. A light dusting usually is enough to keep the outside of the glass clean. If more is needed, it can be cleaned by using a Q-tip or soft toothbrush and a good glass cleaner. If your cake pedestal was washed, moisture may have gotten in between the walls. If mold is inside the walls of your glass cake pedestal, it's probably impossible to restore.

Q: I've been trying to research the value of Jim Beam car decanters. Do you have any idea where I might obtain the information?

A: Jacob Beam began selling Old Jake Beam whiskey in 1795. The company was renamed Jim Beam in 1933. Beam began selling Christmas season whiskey in glass cocktail shaker decanters in 1953. The decanters were so popular that Beam began selling liquor in ceramic decanters made by Regal China in 1955. Hundreds of special shapes were made. Decanters shaped like cars were made as part of several Beam series from 1972 to 1992. Jim Beam stopped making decanters for the commercial trade in 1992. The company is now owned by Suntory, a Japanese company. The Beam decanters lost favor by 1992, and prices plummeted. The Volkswagen decanter that was \$65-\$70 in 2000 sells for as low as \$20. The Chevrolet Bel Air went from \$75 to \$20-\$35.

Q: I have an antique buffet that I bought 30 years ago at an antiques shop in Florida. It has two long drawers and two cupboards with interior shelves. There is a paper label that says "Fulton Street at Hoyt, Abraham & Straus, Brooklyn" and "No. 445-1" is burned into the wood. I'd like to know more about the buffet and its value.

A: Abraham & Straus started in 1865 as Wechsler & Straus. The name became Abraham & Straus in 1893 after the Straus family bought out Wechsler. It became part of Federated Department Stores in 1900. The name Abraham and Straus continued to be used until 1995. The number is probably the model number. Your buffet was made in the first half of the 20th century. Many reproductions of earlier styles of furniture were made before 1960. A buffet would sell for about \$750-\$1,000 depending on style and condition.

Q: Is there any value to an old box of phonograph needles? I have an unopened tin that contains 200 needles. It says "Columbia medium tone needles" on the lid. It says "Brilliant" above that and "Use each needle once only" below. It's yellow with brown and white and has music notes on either side of the writing.

A: Tin phonograph needle cases appeal to people who collect phonographs, music memorabilia or advertising items. The tins are very small, about 2 inches across, and often have attractive graphic designs lithographed on the top and sides. Your tin is from the 1920s and sells online for about \$15. The unused needles are also wanted by those who play their old records.

Q: I have an L.G. Wright ruby glass Panel Grape punch set comprised of a bowl, underplate and 12 cups. It is not marked. Did they ever not mark their items? The set is gorgeous, but I don't know if it's a repro. Can I ask close to the price you have it listed for in your 2008 price guide? I don't want to take advantage of any customer with the wrong pricing.

A: "Si" Wright founded L.G. Wright Glass Co. in New Martinsville, West Virginia, in 1937. He bought glassware and molds from other Ohio and West Virginia glass factories. He also had molds made in some of his own designs and had the pieces made at other glassworks. Most of the glass was unmarked. That makes L.G. Wright items hard to identify. Savvy collectors can tell the difference

between original Victorian pieces and repros because of the colors and differences in production techniques. The L.G. Wright factory closed in 1999, and the molds were sold. Some firms that bought them are currently making reproductions whose colors and weight are not the same as the originals. Pattern glass is less popular now than it used to be. A Panel Grape ruby punch set sold for \$650 in 2007. Asking prices today are from \$225 to \$300 but selling for less.

Q: I inherited several pieces of Overbeck pottery from my late mother and grandfather. They were both from Cambridge City. I lived there as a young girl, and you could see the Overbeck home from our garden. The pieces I have are mostly figurines, but I also have one painting. I am interested in selling them. Can you help?

A: The six Overbeck sisters, Ida (1861-1946), Margaret (1863-1911), Hannah (1870-1931), Harriet (1872-1951), Elizabeth (1875-1936) and Mary Frances (1878-1955), lived and worked in Cambridge City, Indiana. They grew up in a farm family -- their mother knitted and made quilts and rugs, the sisters studied and taught art. In 1911, four of the sisters started a pottery studio in their home. It operated until 1955. Most of their work was painted porcelain and redware. They made matte glazes and bright colors, like robin's egg blue, from their own secret formulas. They made teapots, tea sets, pitchers and vases influenced by Arts and Crafts and Art Deco styles. They are best known for their figurines -- quirky townspeople, animals,

historical figures and whimsical "grotesques." Prices today start at about \$150 for figurines; tiles sell in the hundreds, and vases can sell into the thousands. Take your pieces to an auction house or antique shop that specializes in art pottery. Overbeck pottery sells quickly.

Q: I almost bought a strange piece of gold jewelry that had a picture of an eye and no other decoration in the frame. The antique 18th-century pin was gold with a border of pearls and blue enamel, and it was in an auction estimated at over \$2,000. Why just an eye?

A: This type of pin is known as a "Lover's Eyes." They were exchanged by lovers and for other types of remembrance, including those lovers who had died. According to legend, or perhaps to history, it started in 1784 when the Prince of Wales fell in love at first sight with Maria Fitzherbert, a twice widowed commoner. The prince needed permission from his father to wed, so he proposed to Maria in a letter that mentioned he was sending an eye. It was a miniature of his eye painted by a famous miniaturist. She accepted the proposal. They were secretly married, and Maria later sent the prince an eye miniature for his birthday. It became a trend and similar eye jewelry was made into the 19th century. The pin was worn in a secret, unseen place, like under a coat lapel. The pins were always miniatures in watercolor on ivory, vellum or gouaches. They were covered with glass. A few were made as pendants or rings. One expert says less than

1,000 still exist. Watch out for fakes made years ago.

Q: I have about 50 pieces of wooden dollhouse furniture that my mother had when she was a little girl. I believe it was made by Strombecker and is from about 1940. What is the value?

A: J.F. Strombecker started making tool handles and other items from discarded wood scraps in Moline, Illinois, in 1911. R.D. Becker began working with him that same year, and in 1913 the company became Strombecker-Becker Mfg. Co. The company began making wooden toys in 1922. Dollhouse furniture was first made in 1931, and the brand name for the dollhouse furniture line was Strombecker. Furniture was sold in sets for various rooms in the dollhouse. Not all pieces of furniture were marked with the brand name, but it may be possible to identify the furniture you have by comparing it to pieces in boxed sets shown online. Five boxed sets, including living room, dining room, kitchen, bedroom and bathroom, sold at auction for \$250 recently. Individual pieces sell online for a few dollars. A three-piece bathroom set sold for \$25, a bed for \$10. The Strombecker line of toys was sold to Dowst in 1961.

Q: I acquired an antique lamp sculpted by Auguste Moreau in the late 1800s. It's the figure of a draped woman reaching for a flower and leaves on a round base. The lamp's metal is dull but it's in excellent shape. It needs to be rewired. It is signed by Moreau. Is it worth getting it restored? I am a novice collector who just enjoys a

unique and interesting item.

A: Auguste Moreau (1834-1917) was a French sculptor, and the son, father and uncle of other Moreau family members, who were also artists. His works usually are made of bronze, with examples in many museums. Moreau is known for his statues of women in the Art Nouveau style and his original work sells for high prices. Spelter copies of Moreau sculptures are worth much less. While your lamp is marked Moreau, it is not an original sculpture, but it could have been cast at the Moreau foundry. It is made of spelter, a zinc alloy that resembles bronze but is lighter and softer. It was used for figurines, candlesticks and lamp bases, like yours, and given a bronze or painted finish. If you like the lamp, have it repaired. Fixed and rewired, your lamp is worth \$250 to \$400.

Q: I have an old black and white portrait of a woman done by Federico Andreotti. Unfortunately, it has some water stains I am afraid to touch. Would you know anyone to contact about cleaning this?

A: Federico Andreotti (1847-1930) was an Italian painter known for his colorful paintings of people in 16th and 17th century settings, done in oil on canvas. Your black and white portrait on paper may be a print or copy of one of his paintings and not of great value. Removing a water stain from paper is difficult. Sites online list some methods you can try, but if the stain covers any part of the portrait, it will probably be impossible to remove the stain without spoiling the picture.

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