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SEPTEMBER 2018

ESTABLISHED IN 1972

Volume 46, Number 9



The Colorful 20s, More Than a Rainbow

By Tom Cotter

Cambridge, Diamond, Fenton, Tiffin
photos by Barb Garrison
Fostoria photo by Alex Kizewski,
Cambridge Rubina photos by Tom Cotter

The grand and glorious 1920s. The United States dominated the world in nearly every phase of life. Glass was a big part of that dominance; glass for automobiles, airplanes, trains, homes, radios, and on and on. 1920 marked the first census when urban population exceeded rural population. Product distribution included ever increasing shipments of finished products to wholesalers and retailers, mostly by a continuously expanding railway system with the States. Combined with the infusion of automobiles and mass human transportation along with great expansion of eight hour workdays, people found they could buy and furnish their homes. With more disposable income and time, more people were able to acquire attractive decorations and housewares. This often meant glass. Although alcoholic beverages were outlawed throughout the 1920s by Prohibition, demand for wine and liquor glasses and containers surged. Maybe for coffee (hot toddies), juice (wine), sodas (beer), and tea (whiskey)? Home refrigerators replaced true ice boxes in many homes. People began to use more glass containers in their refrigerators as well as for dry goods storage. While some of these items might have had plain functional appearances, the glass companies competed avidly to capture their "fair share" of the growing marketplace. Some may have followed Say's law: "Supply creates its own demand". Often this included experimenting with and marketing a great variety of glass colors, all designed to lure the unwary consumer.

The heart of the glass industry in the 1920s was the Ohio and Monongahela River Valleys, with extensive resources in silica sand, coal and natural gas power, clay for pots, iron and steel, and an abundance of labor, often very skilled. Within about 125 miles from and including Wheeling, WV, were the companies of Beaumont, Cambridge, Central, Cooperative Flint, Diamond, Duncan-Miller, Dunbar, Economy (later Morgantown), Fenton, Fostoria, H. C. Fry, Hazel-Atlas, A. H. Heisey, Hocking, Imperial, Jeanette, Lancaster, McKee, New Cumberland,

New Martinsville, H. Northwood, Paden City, L.E. Smith, Westmoreland, and the U.S. Glass headquarters in Pittsburgh, among others. Knowledge, employees, marketers, and supplies moved throughout this region to help the boom in the glass industry directed at citizens more than corporations.

For the generally less decorative container market, many companies updated to continuous tank glass production powered by glass furnaces. Women were "encouraged" to become savvier in their "daily chores" through Home Economics programs in schools and magazines such as Good Housekeeping directed at "homemakers". Companies like Corning (Pyrex) H.C. Fry, and McKee (GlasBake) offered pieces that combined cooking, serving, and storage. Less expensive tumblers, luncheon, dessert, and grill plates in addition to sugars, creamers and service pieces were readily available for daily use from companies such as Belmont, Federal, Hazel-Atlas, Hocking, Indiana, Jeanette, and U.S. Glass. Part of the appeal for a lot of kitchenware came from using glass formulas that made pastel pink, green, amber, and yellow pieces in a variety of pressed patterns by a number of companies. While "Depression Glass" became the common term for much of this continuous process, patterns like Indiana's Avocado and Pyramid, Jeanette's Iris, and Fenton's Lincoln Inn originated before the Great Depression. The Tea Room pattern by Indiana was designed specifically for the ice cream and soda fountain businesses, another fast-growing business in the 1920s that used a lot of glassware. Years of experimentation and development by English-born glass chemists like Frederick Carder of Steuben and Arthur J. Nash at Tiffany generated never-before seen colors in a very exclusive, wealth-based market. To com-

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Northwood Jade



Cambridge Opaques, Jade, Helio, Ivory, Pomona, Primrose, Azurite



Northwood Chinese Coral

"This article would not have been possible without the fabulous photos carefully arranged and taken by our great friend Barb Garrison, who will be a dealer at the Front Range Glass Show."

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Sale Coordinator

Contact: Lorella 303-988-8591

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About the 9th Annual Tri State Doll Sale 2018

Doll collectors and enthusiasts who are dedicated to the history and preservation of antique and collectible dolls will enjoy this Doll Sale. A very successful annual doll show for over 8 years.

Lorella Farmer, Show Coordinator, is a member of the National United Federation of Doll Clubs, Inc. She thanks everyone for their attendance in prior years and looks forward to seeing familiar as well as new faces this year.

Vendors at the show, (see ad to the left) will have diverse and exciting merchandise including antique bisque, china, and cloth dolls, modern dolls, collectible dolls, doll and doll house accessories, doll clothing, books, and miscellaneous doll and toy related items.

The show will appeal to everyone, from the most devoted collectors to new collectors with a developing interest in dolls. For more information, call Lorella at 303-988-8591.

SHOW CALENDAR

September Events

SEPT. 1: **A PARIS STREET MARKET**, an open-air, vintage, antique and artisan market, 7301 S. Santa Fe Dr., Littleton, CO 80120, 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. rain or shine. Future date: Oct. 6. Also, A PARIS STREET CHRISTMAS MARKET will be November 16 & 17, 10-5 at the Douglas County Events Center. More info, call 303-877-9457 or visit aparisstreetmarket.com

SEPT. 5: **THE LAST EMPEROR** Discussion led by C. Yves at 2:00 p.m. at Brass Armadillo, 11301 West I-70, Wheat Ridge, CO. More info, or if you would be interested in doing a presentation in your area of expertise, call Dixie or Charlotte at 303-403-1677.

SEPT. 17-22: **RDF SALE at LA CACHE**, sale items located at our annex at 404 Downing Street in Denver, Monday through Saturday, Rake up some autumn savings with our 50% off RDF prices, Call 303-871-9605 for more information.

SEPT. 19: **SEED PACKET ART** Discussion led by Suzanne Wingfield at 2:00 p.m. at Brass Armadillo, 11301 West I-70, Wheat Ridge, CO. More info, or if you would be interested in doing a presentation in your area of expertise, call Dixie or Charlotte at 303-403-1677.

SEPT. 20: **THIRD THURSDAYS EVENING EVENT First Day of Summer, FOUND ANTIQUE & ARTISAN MALL**. Enjoy some refreshments on us. Special Sales by Various Dealers, 6-9 p.m. This is a special shopping night featuring many discounts. Located at 4501 Wadsworth Blvd., Wheat Ridge, 303-463-7796.

SEPT. 21 & 22: **9TH ANNUAL TRI STATE DOLL SALE**, Fri., 12 to 6, Sat. 10-4, at the Jefferson County Fairgrounds, 15200 West 6th Avenue, Golden. The sale will feature antique and modern dolls, doll accessories, high-end collectibles, miniatures, bears and much more. Appraisals and doll stringing available. Contact Lorella at 303-988-8591 for more information.

SEPT. 28: **HOTEL de PARIS WINE TOUR**, Guests will explore the site in a quiet setting with a knowledgeable guide to see where culinary history was made. 409 6th St., Georgetown, CO 80444. Reservations in advance required, 303-569-2311.

SEPT. 29-30: **FRONT RANGE GLASS SHOW & SALE**, Sat., 10-5, Sun. 11-4, The Ranch Event Center Complex, McKee Building, 5280 Arena Circle, Loveland, CO, exit 259 off I-25, Crossroads Blvd. More information, 319-939-3837 or www.frontrangeglassshow.com

Upcoming Events

OCT. 3: **ELITCHES** Discussion led by Kathy Hertzke at 2:00 p.m. at Brass Armadillo, 11301 West I-70, Wheat Ridge, CO. More info, or if you would be interested in doing a presentation in your area of expertise, call Dixie or Charlotte at 303-403-1677.

OCT. 6: **OKTOBERFEST - MINI BEER GARDEN**, last Outdoor Show of the Season for **A PARIS STREET MARKET**, an open-air, vintage, antique and artisan market, 7301 S. Santa Fe Dr., Littleton, CO 80120, 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. rain or shine. Also, A PARIS STREET CHRISTMAS MARKET will be November 16 & 17, 10-5 at the Douglas County Events Center. More info, call 303-877-9457 or visit aparisstreetmarket.com

OCT. 6: **TIMBER DAN FALL ANTIQUE AND COLLECTIBLE TOY SHOW AND SALE**, Loveland, Colorado, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Larimer County Fairgrounds ("The Ranch"), First Na-

Continued on page 10

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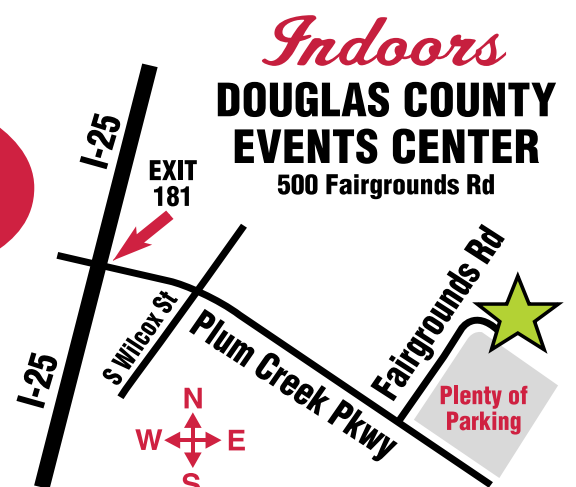
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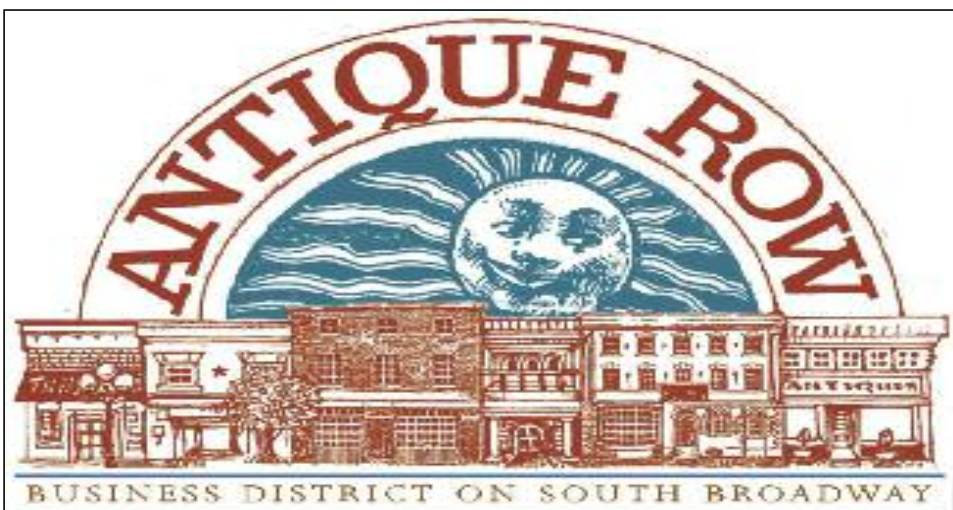
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COLLECTIBLES

The Beautiful Brooch

By Robert Reed

The beautiful brooch traditionally had been one of the most enduring types of jewelry as well as one of the most varied.

Women have affixed these large and decorative ornamental pins on their clothing for centuries. Some brooches could be fashioned from cardboard or human hair and be fairly plain, or they could be adorned with gold and diamonds and be nearly priceless.

By the early 19th century the brooch had become a true fashion statement of the rich and famous. Initially only the wealthiest woman could afford the assembly of precious stones and fine metals required for a proper brooch. The more lavish and dazzling the better.

Gradually however the trend of a clever brooch began to extend to a wider variety of social classes and tastes.

"The brooch was probably the most popular and widely produced form of jewelry" in the entire 19th century according to Stephen Giles author of Miller's Jewelry Antiques Checklist. Accordingly, "examples offered a wide range of styles, materials and levels of quality."

Certainly the brooch selection of that historic century was vast.

The turquoise and diamond brooch was popular early in the 19th century, but other choices could be of solid gold with matching earrings, or a mixture of rubies, sapphires, and emeralds.

Ultimately there was a world of other fashionable materials too including cameo, coral, enamel, mosaic, painted porcelain, and pearls. The image of the brooch would vary widely as well extending from a mere cluster of jewels to the specific shape of a bird, flowerpot, Greek cross, butterfly, Egyptian beetle, or eagle. Then too there were widely differing designs of pinwheels, starbursts, loops, bows, and scrolled frames.

By the middle of the 19th century the fashion world was awash with diverging brooches in seemingly endless styles.

In 1861 a leading women's magazine offered information to readers to "wishing hair made into pins." The magazine assured a large number of orders had already been recently filled and ladies were delighted with the results. They added, "hair



Gold and enamel brooch, rose-cut diamond pansy against blue background. (Skinner Inc.)

is at one the most delicate and lasting of our materials and survives us like love."

At the other end of the brooch 'rainbow' might be a bejeweled item with a domed center and an assortment of diamonds, opals and corals. Some middle and latter 19th century brooches were large enough to include equally attractive pendant attachments in the design. In some cases the pendants were removable or could even be converted into smaller brooches themselves.

At one point the prestigious Johnston and Company at Union Square in New York City offered brooch selections such as the circle of swallows, the diamond bow-knot, the Roman wreath, the Dragon and pearl, and the six-diamond loop. All were advertised in the 1890s as "effective and tasteful ornaments," and further "all of these may be worn as pendants."

Smart shops in the center of New York City seemed to do a thriving business in the sale of striking brooches near the end of the 19th century. Prices, at the time, ranged from \$15 to \$150 depending mostly on the use of diamonds instead of pearls.

Not that the popularity of the brooch needed a boost, but the age of Art Nouveau did indeed push the jewelry item to new heights. The flowing lines and floral forms of the French inspired 'new art' were perfect for the brooch.

Indeed the Art Nouveau movement, "had a dramatic effect on the styles and materials used

Continued on page 13

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CALENDAR

Upcoming Events Continued

Continued from page 5

tional Bank Exhibition Bldg., North Hall. Take I-25 Exit 259 east to Fairgrounds Ave., then north 1/2 mile. More than 180 tables with thousands of antique and collectible toys on display and for sale. Admission \$4. Sponsored by the Loveland Lions Club. For more info, contact Doug Larson, 970-214-1035 or email douglas@comcast.net or visit website at <http://www.lovelandlionsclubs.org/sites/ToyShow.htm>.

OCT. 13 & 14: **PUMPKIN PIE DAYS VINTAGE & ANTIQUE MARKET**, Sat. 10-5 & Sun. 11-4, Boulder County Fairgrounds, Exhibit Building, 9595 Nelson Rd., Longmont, CO, Admission \$5. (Children under 12 free). Sponsored by St. Vrain Historical Society. Call 303-776-1870 or go to www.stvrainhistoricalsociety.com.

OCT. 17: **MEXICAN RETABLOS** Discussion led by Jackie Jacobson at 2:00 p.m. at Brass Armadillo, 11301 West I-70, Wheat Ridge, CO. More info, or if you would be interested in doing a presentation in your area of expertise, call Dixie or Charlotte at 303-403-1677.

OCT. 19-21: **WORLD WIDE ANTIQUE and VINTAGE SHOW**, Denver Mart - Expo Building - I-25 & 58th Ave., Fri.-Sat.. 10am-6pm, Sunday 11-4pm. Get tickets at FindYourAntique.com.

NOV. 2-11: **CORKSCREW AUCTION**, this is a twice yearly on-line auction by volunteer collectors worldwide, Over 800 plus quantity of corkscrews with total sales of over 10,000. Also, this is an excellent method for obtaining a value estimate of most corkscrews in a personal collection. New buyers and sellers may register at time to participate in the upcoming November auction. Between auction sales, there is always a good range of lower cost corkscrews available for immediate purchase in the BUY NOW section of www.CollectorCorkscrews.com.

NOV. 14: **HISTORY OF SCRAPBOOKING** Discussion led by Cheryl Miller at 2:00 p.m. at Brass Armadillo, 11301 West I-70, Wheat Ridge, CO. More info, or if you would be interested in doing a presentation in your area of expertise, call Dixie or Charlotte at 303-403-1677.

NOV. 17 & 18: **ANTIQUES AT WINGS**, at the Wings Over the Rockies Air & Space Museum, Sat. 10-6, Sunday, 10-5, Free Parking, 7711 E. Academy Blvd., Denver. A fixture on the Denver scene since 2003, returning with traditional Antiques, Art, Furniture, Jewelry & Collectibles. Also includes two additional shows Books at Wings and Vintage at the Hangar. More info, go to www.AntiquesAtWings.com.

Auctions

SEPT. 15 & 16: **FALL ANTIQUE ESTATE AUCTION**, Allenspark, Colorado. Exhibition Friday Sept. 14. Vintage cars, tractors, 6 windmills, old water tank from the Stanley Hotel, old farm engines, 1950s snow cats, petroliana and antique furniture — over 5000 pieces to choose from — all on site of this truly unique and exciting auction. Call 303-744-6505 or email Tom at Bruhn-sauction@aol.com.



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The Colorful 20s, *More Than a Rainbow*

Continued from page 1

pete, within their growing market niche, less expensive glass makers known as “Elegant” companies (those with hand processing of some sort) created so many named colors that it is impossible to list all in one short article. This is the “More Than a Rainbow” aspect in our title. Remember the rainbow by ‘Roy G. Biv’, or Red, Orange, Yellow, Green, Blue, Indigo, and Violet? In addition to similar pastels in the tank glass companies, “Elegant” makers made nearly all shades of those 7 Rainbow Colors, and many between and outside the rainbow. Although “Carnival”, especially on Pattern glass, was becoming passé before the 20s, companies found a replacement in “Stretch” glass, with sprayed metallic salts applied to hot glass, reheated and re-shaped by hand to produce showy finishes. Often called Luster or Lustre, “Stretch” finishes were generally applied to transparent or opaque decorative and serving items. This technique created an array of colors, sometimes differing significantly from the base color of the piece.

From the visible spectrum, reds came in opaque and transparent versions; Fenton alone made Ruby, Mandarin Red Opaque, Ruby Carnival, Spanish Red, and Red Stretch. Other companies applied their own names, such as Sunset and some Amberinas. Somewhat related to red was a vast array of pink glassware, with names like Velva Rose, Peach-blo, Rose, Peach, Peach Melba, and sometimes just pink. Orange showed up in Coral Red, Tangerine, Chinese Coral, Sunset, and Amberina. Amber was common, but varied; most companies simply called it amber, but finishes created names of Russet, Gold, Cameo Opalescent, and others. Yellow transparent colors came in Topaz, Grecian Gold, Gold Krystol, etc., but opaque colors Chinese Yellow, Mandarin Yellow, Primrose, and on appeared. In the green segments were Emeralds or



Cambridge Azurite

green, while opaque might be called Jade. Blues ranged from a barely discernable Willow Blue through Aquamarine, Azure, Celeste, Electric, and Bluebell to deep Royal Blue, with a variety of transparent and opaque versions. Purples and violets might be pale Orchid through deep Amethyst, with opaque represented by Cambridge Helio, but not much else. At the opposite ends of the rainbow were white (Milk, Carrara, Ivory, Fer-Lux, etc.) and black (Ebony). One of the more intriguing lines of the 20s was Cambridge Rubina, a reheated ruby-based formula that varied from deep red to green to exquisite blue within a single piece. This is one of my favorites.

A good source of information on the 1920s glass companies is a two-volume set titled Great American Glass of the Roaring 20s & Depression Era by James Measell and Berry Wiggins. Although out of print, it is available at the

Rocky Mountain Depression Glass Club library (members only), as well as several online sources. I am continually grateful that the DeStefanos continue to promote collecting within our region via *the Mountain States Collector*. They have been a joy to work with over the last few years and are a beacon for all types of collecting hobbies. With Jodi and Mark Uthe sponsoring the Front Range Glass Show, this year September 29 and 30 at the Ranch Events Complex near Loveland, we are fortunate to have such a show in our region devoted exclusively to antique and vintage glass, china, and pottery. Jodi and Mark have gathered a great lineup of dealers from across the country again this year. Information for the show is on the RMDGS website about the club and show (www.RMDGS.com & SHOWS). This also links to <http://www.frontrange-glassshow.com/>, which has more specifics about the show. Please continue to support malls, shops, and shows throughout Colorado and adjoining states. Colorize your days with beautiful glass, china and pottery. There’s more than a rainbow out there for the finding.


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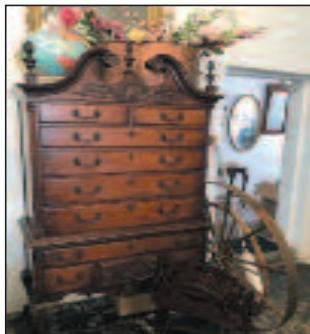
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COLLECTIBLES

The Beautiful Brooch

Continued from page 9

for brooches," comments author Giles. "Metal-work designs were flowing and vegetal, with graceful intertwined shapes featuring floral and abstract motifs."

The discreet shopper might find an enameled dragonfly with sapphire body, a diamond-encrusted spider, or a peacock with a body of rubies and pluses of sapphires and garnets. A sprig of flowers could 'bloom' with a mixture of gold, pearl, and emerald. A bird of gold and turquoise could brandish eyes made of diamonds.

Much of the Art Nouveau influence came from the work of French glassmaker and jeweler Rene Lalique. Now the lovely brooch was part of a movement toward nontraditional images of not only the dragonfly and spider but the bat and the serpent as well as clover and wildflowers.

Louis Tiffany's very own Tiffany and Company launched a department of "artistic jewelry" just to keep up with the creative demand.

Accordingly there were a multitude of brooch makers from the mighty to the meager. A brooch decorated with owls and frogs could come from Italy's renowned Ernesto Pierret, or something equally unusual from France's Giacinto Melillo. Eventually the list of those marking eloquent brooches became vast and worldwide from Cartier to Gorham, Marcus and Company, Unger, Vever, and Wiener. Other memorable maker's marks included Edward Oaks, Reed and Barton, Margaret Rogers, Schlumberger, James Muirhead & Sons, and Watherston & Son of London.

The J.H. Johnston Company offered what they called the Roman Gold brooch during the 1890s and charged extra for a diamond center. The Empire Wreath brooch was also a big item. "The wreath," noted one firm's advertisement during that decade, "appealed to seekers after ornamental beauty long before the time of the Emperor. In now using it to ornament our smaller silver articles, we feel that its grace and simplicity gives them a lasting charm."

Art Nouveau in worldly style and in brooch design was closely followed by the era of Art Deco. While the Art Deco vogue was largely attributed to the Paris Exposition of 1925, it had actually been fully developed much earlier in the 20 century. The Art Deco brooch stressed geometric figures and symmetrical forms and often made lavish use of brass, chrome and enamel in dazzling combinations.

The Paris event itself featured over 400



Etruscan Revival gold and intaglio brooch, Hallmark of Ernesto Pierret, Italy. (Skinner Inc.)

jewelry firms worldwide and a vast assembly of beautiful brooches. The Cartier is said to have dominated the exposition with a display of more than 150 breath-taking items.

"The case of the brooch demonstrates the survival of 19th century historicism in the 1920s," notes author Hans Nadelhoffer in the book, *Cartier: Jewelers Extraordinary*. "In addition to Persian, Chinese and Egyptian influences, the Cartier brooch during the Art Deco period in the form of fibula (dress clasp), was also to be enriched by 7th century Merovingian forms."

Nadelhoffer pointed out that Cartier's brooch designs were based in part on the study of designs in museums. Moreover as early as 1907 it was fashionable to secure a kimono or kaftan with a fibula brooch clasp. According to Nadelhoffer such an item had been featured as one of the wedding presents for the Queen of Spain.

The brooch in the Art Deco tradition sometimes included molded glass with gilt and silver overlay set in brass. Amber-colored glass was a popular setting along with the pale-Colored mineral cut of marcasite mounted on silver or white metal.

In France both Cartier and Van Cleef & Arpels further developed in the Art Deco period of the 1920s and 1930s a double clip design which could be separated on either side of the neckline, or joined together as a single brooch.

Today both Art Nouveau and Art Deco designs in a striking brooch are very popular with collectors. Typically those brooches signed or identified by leading maker are considerably more valuable than unmarked varieties.

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Letter Openers Became Popular in 19th Century

By Barry Krause

Letter openers have been known since the 18th century, but became a popular tool after envelopes were mass produced starting in the mid-19th century when postage rates were reduced for letters mailed inside envelopes.

Before that time, almost all letters were simply folded to leave a blank portion where the address was written and postmarks applied, and the paper's edges sealed with melted wax. The invention of practical envelopes coincided with the worldwide reduction in postage fees for mailing letters enclosed in envelopes, increasing demand for letter openers by business firms, government offices and private citizens.

The first successful machine for making envelopes was patented in 1849 by Jesse Park and Cornelius Watson of New York City. In 1853, Dr. Russell Hawes of Worcester, Mass. patented an improved version of an envelope folding machine that enabled three girl employees to make 25,000 finished envelopes in a ten hour work day, according to "An Early History of the Envelope" by the u.s. Envelope Company.

If you only received an occasional letter envelope in the mail, a letter opener may have been an unnecessary luxury. But, with postage rates dropping in most countries from the mid to late-19th century, plus with increasing incomes of the working classes of people, the letter openers were useful to almost everyone, and many people collected more letter openers than they needed.

"These knife-like collectibles are also handy little desk accessories. Constructed of almost any type of material, early manufacturers found them to be wonderful tools for advertising," explains the 4th edition of "Warman's Flea Market Price Guide."

The wealthy consumers in the 19th century could afford custom-made letter openers of ivory or silver, while the less rich made do with base metal openers, but often with interesting figural handles nevertheless. "In the late 19th century, the letter opener was popular as an advertising giveaway and many were made of metal or celluloid," says the latest edition of "Kovels' Antiques & Collectibles Price List."

While common "dime store" letter openers of a 100 years ago or so can still be bought today for modest prices, other scarce examples can bring astonishing prices in the current collectibles market.

A Faberge letter opener of 9 3/4 inches long, with a jade blade and gold handle, ruby insets, is worth \$1,950 today, and an 1897 Sterling silver letter opener issued to honor the 200th anniversary of the original "Sleepy Hollow Bridge" is now valued at a remarkable \$2,450, according to Kovels.

Hand-made, one-of-a-kind letter openers have much charm and come in all price ranges to suit any collector's budget. Fold art letter openers of the "Arts and crafts" movement are especially nice, but we must separate sentimental appeal from cash value.

My dad made a letter opener by hand from a piece of airplane window glass when he was a soldier in World War II, as a gift to my mom who later married him. This letter opener is a true specimen of World War II "trench art," of moderate value to a stranger, but priceless to my family because it is an irreplaceable personal keepsake.

The 20th century's advertising letter openers are for sale in just about every antique mall that I visit. A nice plastic letter opener with the "Fuller Brush Man" design is worth \$8.00, and a late 1930s "Indianapolis Motor Speedway" themed letter opener, 6 1/4 inches long, with copper luster over white metal, but with a medallion near the top with a race car image, is \$40, according to current retail prices in Warman's.

Bronze and brass were common metals for letter openers commercially manufactured. Resist the temptation to polish them to make them "shine like new." Serious collectors appreciate the naturally aged patina on untouched old bronze and brassware.

Some collectors specialize in letter openers from their favorite tourist site, such as Niagara Falls, Washington, D.C. or National Parks. Modern versions can still be bought in tourist gift shops, a cheap way to begin a collection of them at low cost.

A bronze letter opener from Miami Beach, with an alligator handle, sold to tourists there in the 1930s, is valued at only \$15, and



This eight-inch letter opener is made of gold-tone base metal, with black enamel to highlight the decorations on its handle. It has pleasant proportions, comfortable to grip, and balances perfectly at the point where its handle meets the blade. Recently acquired by the author as a gift, but with more sentimental value than cash worth, but still useful to open letters! Shown with a quarter dollar coin to indicate dimensions.

a brass letter opener from Butte, Montana, 9 1/4 inches long, with an embossed mining scene, can be had for \$30 today, according to Kovels.

Letter openers are a collectible field that is neglected by many collectors. That means there are great buys waiting to be discovered by those who know what to look for.

"Local" business advertising openers are most expensive in antique shops in the towns where the businesses were located, and least expensive in antique shops in faraway states, as a general rule from my experience in browsing in shops all over the country.

Some exceptions would be "World's Fair" letter openers which can bring top dollar wherever they are offered for sale due to the widespread collecting of World's Fair memorabilia.

Original Art Nouveau and Art Deco letter openers can be worth hundreds of dollars each if of fine workmanship in such materials as celluloid, tortoiseshell, platinum, ivory, silver or gold. Watch out for modern replicas worth only their precious metal value if any.

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Pricey Wooton Desks Old and New Still Attract Buyers

By Anne Gilbert

To a generation used to sterile cubby hole office spaces for them and their computers, the Wooton desks may seem an oddity. Strangely enough they are finding their way into many home offices. There is room for that lap top and spaces for all kinds of office supplies. They were a popular and useful antique collectible in the late 20th century and expensive. Even today's reproductions are expensive.

In late 19th century America new businesses were opening daily. To meet their needs new types of furniture made strictly for offices were created. The desk became the most important piece of furniture. It also became a status symbol for the wealthy.

Of all the office furniture designed during the late 19th century it was the Wooton patent desk, made by William S. Wooton of Indianapolis, Indiana, that was the most unique. It offered a miracle of storage in one compact place. It was expensive but that didn't stop it being purchased by millionaires

such as John D. Rockefeller and Joseph Pulitzer. However, it came in four price grades: extra superior, superior, ordinary and standard.

Originally it was designed for railway offices and business that required varied storage, writing and filing in a small space.

What made it unique were its swing-out, compartmented and fitted bombe doors. Above and below the fall-fronted writing surface were still more compartmented storage spaces.

The most elegant Wootons were made of mahogany and rosewood with incised carving. They often combined oak and burl oak with ornate brass hardware. The less expensive versions were of walnut or cherry.

Parts were machine made during the 1870s in the popular Renaissance Revival style. By the 1880s furniture fashions changed and the simple, straight lines of Eastlake defined the fashionable Wooton.

Popularity bred copies that included smaller, simpler versions that were patented. A Chicago company, T.E. Gor-



19TH CENTURY Wooton "Extra Superior" desk. PHOTO CREDIT: EBay

don & Son, made vertical cylinder desks. The rounded tops and base opened out, offering pigeonholes, similar to the Wooton version.

There were even miniature Wootons made for children.

CLUES: By the early 20th century roll top desks had replaced the Wooton. And like the Wooton they were mass produced and reproduced. Original 19th century Wootons still turn up at auctions. Prices range from \$25,000 to \$250,000. If you like the concept check auctions and eBay.

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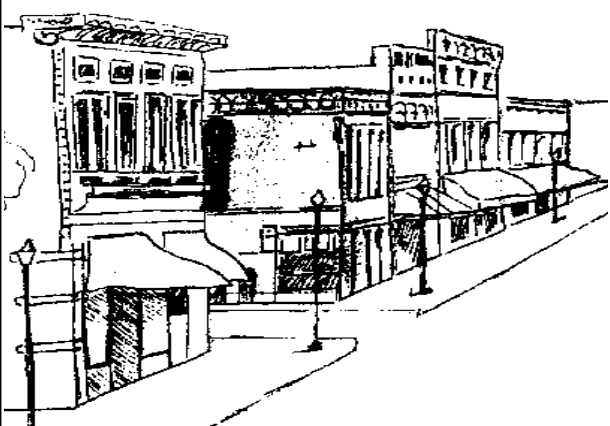
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Holy Smokes, Folks...

By Sandy Dale

I can't believe September is here already. With it comes a passel of great things to do. I'll start the list with our own Tour de Florence, or to be more correct, a bicycle tour sponsored by the Florence Pioneer Museum called Tour de Coal Camps, Sept. 8. For more info check the museum website. Get a good workout, great history lessons, and lunch in Pioneer park.



Next, Sept. 14 thru 16, come celebrate the 91st Annual Florence Pioneer Days themed "Our Pioneer Stories." Events begin with the Crowning of 2018 Royalty, Friday evening. Saturday, starting at 10 a.m., is the Parade winding its way through historic downtown. Then lunch in Pioneer Park with vendors, music, and games.



Add to this, a Ghost Walk downtown, open house at the Pioneer Museum, a tractor pull at Pathfinder Park, and a dance at the Elks Lodge to top things off. On Sunday, more tractor pull in the a.m. and a concert at the Rialto theatre at 1 p.m.

On Sept. 21, Heartland Classics Antiques and Spark will present The Death of Doctor Pepper, a mystery dinner theatre in the Gumaer home and a tour of this historic bungalow featuring young storytellers from Florence Middle School. Info and reservations (required) for dinner theatre at 719/784-0777 or 303/520-6201.

By popular demand, Junk-tique Show and Flea Market has been greatly expanded and moved to Sept. 28 and 29. Formerly part of Pioneer Days, this fun event outgrew its one block of booths on a side street off Main and will now be set up on a couple of blocks right down the middle of Main Street. Vendors offer antiques, collectibles, rusty old stuff, hand-made items, and treasures you didn't know you needed till you saw 'em. And yes, there are a few spaces left. For info, go to www.junk-tiqueshowandmarket.com.

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CONTEST

August's What Is It?

Our August What Is It fooled a lot of people. So many thought it was a glass caster which was put under a furniture leg to protect the floor. It is actually a salt dish.

Time was when the salt cellar or salt dish honored the table on which it sat, and also honored the person who sat before it.

Centuries ago salt was considered a very valued item. It was costly, but considered a choice seasoning for meals. Typically the salt sat in a single dish at the head of the table. The honor of sitting at the head of the table above the salt was then given to the most distinguished person or persons at the dining table.



Much later Victorians would provide individual salt cellars in the quest for elegant dining. Some the finest examples may be made of silver, but most were fashioned from a variety of glass. Today some salt cellars are prized by collectors and can even be found offered at major auction houses.

September's What Is It?

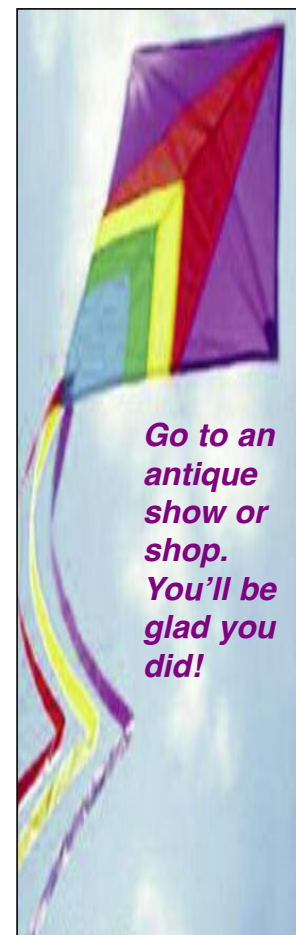


Send your answers to the What Is It contest, postmarked by August 20, to *the Mountain States Collector*, P.O. Box 1003, Bailey, CO 80421. Three winners will be drawn. Winners will receive a year's subscription to *the Mountain States Collector*.

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