

AMERICA'S STONEWARE SEE PAGE 10

the mountain states Collector

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The Lure of Valentine Postcards

By Roy Nuhn

Of all the holidays Americans have celebrated over the last two centuries, none can compare to the special place that Valentine's Day holds in the hearts of lovers. During the height of the picture postcard mania, from 1904 to about 1917, thousands upon thousands of different lovely and beguiling Valentine's Day postcards were published. They were made in so many varieties that collectors specializing in them find it an impossible task to acquire every kind.

Charming, relatively low-priced, these colorful tokens of love are very popular nowadays with collectors.

Romantic valentine postcards are very reminiscent of ordinary valentines of the same era. Both styles have cupids, romantic couples, and illustrations of children in amusing or flirtatious situations. The most sought after have drawings done by Samuel L. Schmucker for the John Winsch Company, Frances Brundage for Gabriel & Sons, and Ellen Clapsaddle for International Art.

Mechanical types, such as the kinds where little boys or girls actually deposit valentines into mailboxes to each other, or faces of different lovers appear in a small box by turning a dial on the side of the card, are runaway favorites today.

Also very collectable are the novelties with soft plush hearts, real lace, and attached envelopes with love notes inserted. Most top quality valentine postcards are heavily embossed, often with simulated gold and silver.

Those with large, colorful kaleidoscopes of plush silk panels are especially desirable. As are cards embellished with honeycomb paper puffs that blossom into bumblebees, flowers, and hot-air balloons when untied; and mechanicals that come with a lever that, when operated, make magical things happen - like heads turning, wheels revolving, hands with bouquets of flowers moving up and down, birds fluttering their wings, and ships at sea rocking to and fro.

Sets of six, eight or twelve postcards por-



tray the adventures of Cupids. Lovely women, adorable children, and sweet-faced angles inhabit the illustrations of these cards, as well as birds, and all sorts of symbols of love and devotion.

But Cupid is far and away the most often seen inhabitant on Valentine's Day postcards. A mean-spirited deity in ancient times, Cupid evolved into a sort of patron Saint for lovers early in the Christian era. Down to our own time it has been his appointed task ever since to help love along whenever he could. For Valentine's Day postcards he was a natural.

Both foreign and domestic publishers delighted in producing postcards for the holiday with Cupid as the central character. International Art Publishing Company, located in New York City from the 1890s to the advent of World War I, was one of America's largest paper novelty and greeting card publishers. It specialized in holiday greetings and their Valentine cards frequently featured Cupid. The company's embossed, strikingly colored and well-designed offerings were among the best.

One series, for instance, shows the jolly little fellow making hearts on a blacksmith's forge; another marvelously depicts Cupid

Continued to page 15



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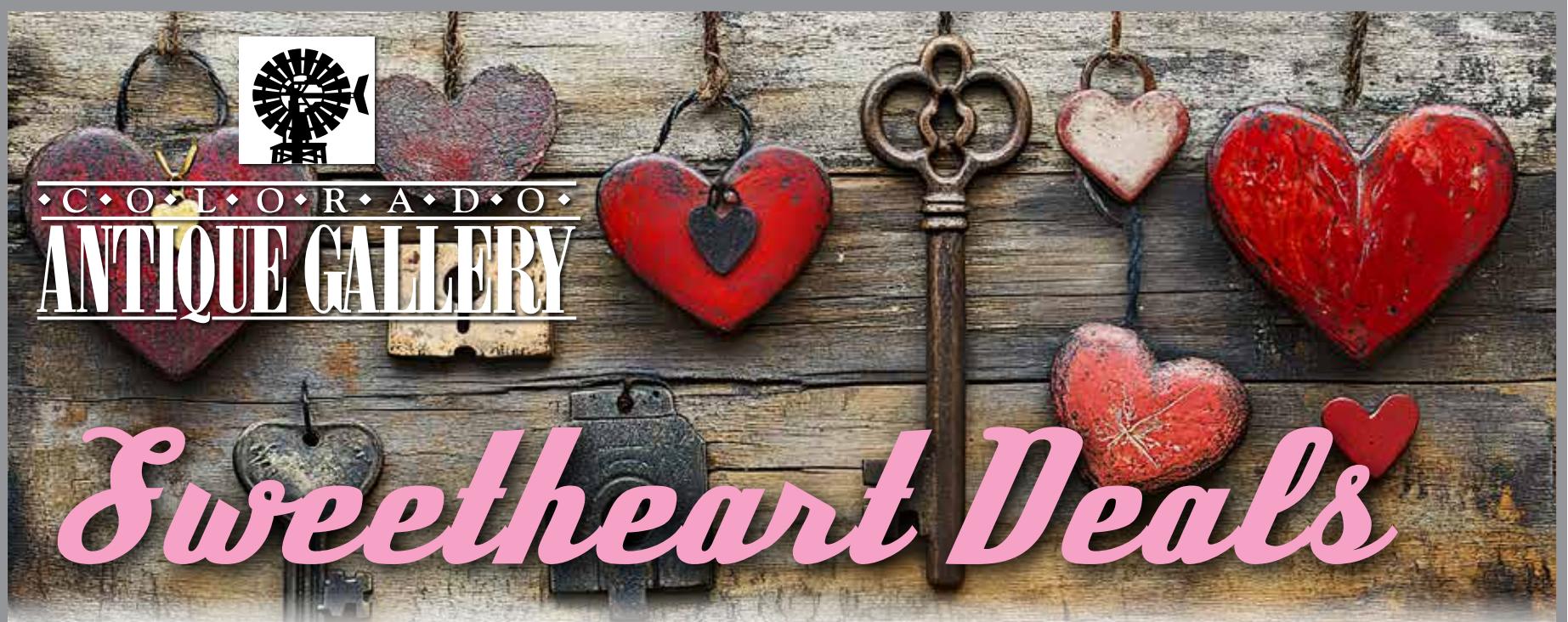
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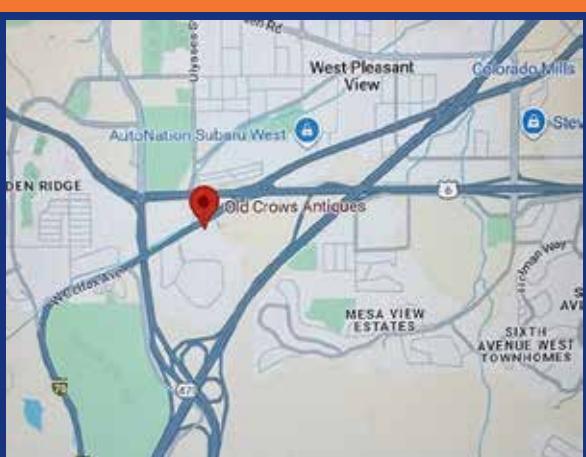
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FEB 14: TIMBER DAN TOY SHOW of Collectible & Vintage Toys, Presented by The Loveland Lions Club. Pedersen Toyota Center, North and South Halls at the The Ranch Events Complex 5280 Arena Circle, Loveland CO. OVER 95 DEALS FROM 7 STATES DISPLAYING 270+ TABLES. For more information contact Sherlyn Sampson at 970-663-9392 or visit the website at www.lovelandlionsclub.com

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February A Month for Celebration

By Myrl Prather

February is a month chock full of days for us to celebrate, one way or another. There is Valentine's Day, which is a happy day for all. Lovers of all sorts, sweethearts, friends, etc., remember each other with flowers, candy and beautiful cards on this romantic occasion.

Then, there are days honoring Presidents Washington and Lincoln, those important people who helped shape the destiny of our country. The Boy Scouts of America, of the great organizations in our country, was founded on Feb. 8, 1910. Ash Wednesday, a special day for Christians, is generally celebrated sometime in the month.

The famous poet and a person worth honoring, Henry W. Longfellow, was born in February. And that day never to be forgotten, Feb. 20, 1962—the day Americans realized their dream of putting a man in orbit. And, of course, the day a little furry weather forecaster predicts our weather—Groundhog Day.

It's nice to have a reason to celebrate and join the rest of the nation in honoring important people in history, and remembering important events that happened to make our country and our lives great.



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MOUNTAIN STATES COLLECTOR

Old Cribbage Boards Get Big Play with Collectors

By Anne Gilbert

Cribbage has been a favorite game since it was invented in the 1600s by Sir John Suckling. For several decades Cribbage boards have found serious collectors. The game reached its peak of popularity in the 1970s. It was considered trendy to replace expensive chess sets with an even more expensive Cribbage board. Even those who didn't play the game became interested in the look of it. A new collecting category was born. It is referred to as "pegging."

It is their variety of design and materials that makes them so appealing. They may be made of everything from ivory and woods to paper and cast iron. Shapes are also varied, from a scrimshaw ivory tusk to a vintage automobile. Since there are few boards outside of museums, dating earlier than the late 19th century, the term "antique" for collectors can be stretched to

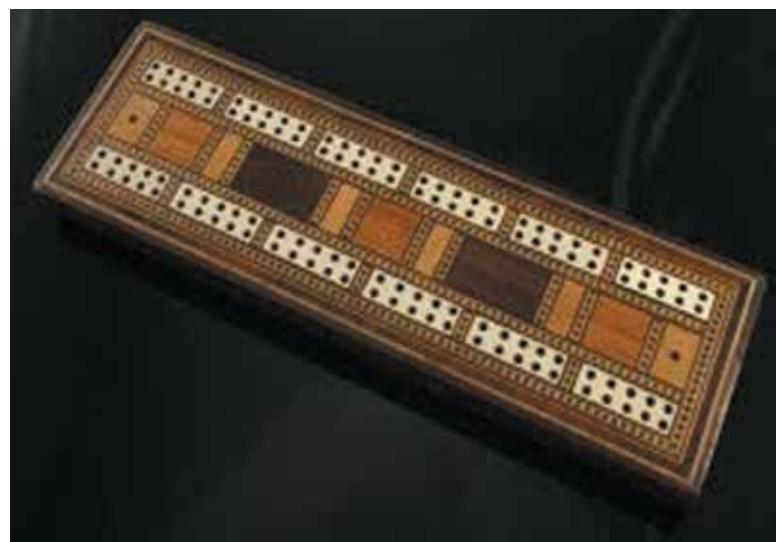


"vintage" and up to the 1960s. Categorized as "ordinary" boards, are the most interesting or rare boards from the 1940s thru the 1960s. After that they are considered contemporary. However, don't forget the beautiful boards made in the 1970s. They can be judged on their individual merit as "collectible."

Considered choice are inlaid English boards. Consisting of hundreds of tiny inlaid pieces they often form different types of scenes.

Collectors of advertising memorabilia compete with Cribbage board collectors for the various advertising motif boards; especially Coca Cola. They were made mostly before 1940.

Rare are the boards made as presentation pieces. I cherish the board presented to my late uncle, a Captain in the navy, by the New



York Yacht Club. It is made of two kinds of wood and has an inlaid silver plaque with his name and inscription. Silver bullets form the scoring pins.

If a famous person owned the board that adds to the value.

Another type of board from the early 20th century was the push-down and pull-up. They were used in tournaments and to possibly keep score for other games. They were different, in that, permanent pegs were attached to the board. There were several types that were made of wood and metal.

Commemorative boards, made for a specific historic event, such as the Chicago Worlds fair in the 1930s or the end of World War 1 or the first Olympic game, are eagerly sought by collectors.

CLUES: The most attractive boards aren't necessarily the most valuable. For instance, Bakelite and Celluloid. The Celluloid boards date to the mid 19th century. Interest in all things Bakelite, made in the 1920s, and Art Deco stylized designs, adds to the value.

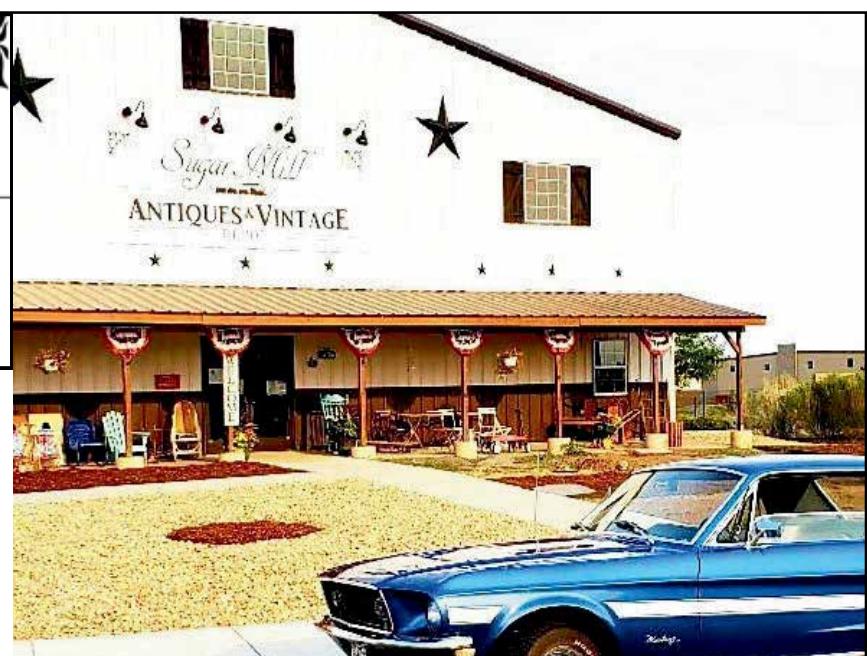
In the case of boards made during the 40s and 50s, the Modernism look is what determines the value.

There is so much to be learned and discoveries yet to be made. For more information contact The Cribbage Board Collectors Society, on the internet. It was founded by collector Betty Bemis in 1991. She has also authored a book "Cribbage Boards" published by Shiffer in 1998.

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The Appraiser's Diary: The Collecting Instinct

By Rachel Hoffman

In the depth of the subconscious mind, everyone wants to collect and preserve something. Collecting objects is one of the oldest forms of human activity. A normal child is born with a collecting "instinct." Every boy's box of stamps, coins, and toy cars confirms this notion -- as does every girl's jewelry box or shelf of dolls and figurines. You can see proof of this notion in every photo album and scrap book. The need to collect is in-born and becomes a motivating force for advancement, especially if the behavior is encouraged by parents and society.

Collecting antiques is one of the most popular forms of collecting objects. Antiques connect us intellectually and emotionally to our ancestors and our heritage. They seem alive or at least to have retained some element of their original life. It is fascinating to see how people do it and to speculate what motivates each of them.

Collecting often refines one's sense of beauty -- what is beautiful to a person varies from each individual and as they wander in their collections, they seem to find out more about what they find beautiful. Man's instinct

for collecting has given rise to a love for all sorts of collections. Do you have a favorite collection that you have seen and remember? A car collection or fabulous art exhibit at your local museum? Or your Mother's collection of hand painted tea cups? We thrill at the sight of a group of interesting artifacts. Collecting reflects our desire for longevity because collecting involves the preservation of objects.

Collecting transcends national boundaries and unites us to every culture. We enjoy seeing ethnic artifacts and are fascinated by comparisons that demonstrate our common humanity. We are especially fortunate today with the advances in technology that allow us to shop and exchange knowledge worldwide. Today, the whole world benefits from the individual who takes collecting seriously. The collector's resources grow every year, and the value of

fine collections increases in time to unprecedented sums, as auctioneers and art dealers realize.

Collecting is no frivolous pastime. When we collect and preserve things special to us, we are amply rewarded in many personal, social, and economic ways. It's important to collect what interests and excites you and keep growing in your knowledge of your collec-



tion. Collect what you love and enjoy it. Don't indulge in the popular notion to 'downsizing' If you love it, GO for it. I want to hear about your collection! If you have something interesting, please tell me about it. Part of the fun of collecting is sharing it with others.

To learn more about Rachel Hoffman and her appraisal practice, please visit www.rachelhoffmanappraisal.com



Keeping Cupid Busy

By Michael Remas

The Holiday of Love, that ancient custom that keeps Cupid busy linking the world's lovers, is upon us again - Valentine's Day.

Men buy greeting cards, flowers and chocolates for their sweethearts, the gals select ties for their fellows, and kids send valentines to their "secret pals," favorite teachers and parents in a custom that will find millions of cards flowing through the mails.

Although the origin is cloudy, tradition tells us it all began in pagan Rome about 250 A.D., when a priest named Valentinus, bishop of Spoleto, was put to death on Feb. 14 by Emperor Claudius II for refusing to renounce Christianity. Valentinus, later named a saint, had preached that love was a fine basis for marriage and sent a farewell to his friend, the jailer's blind daughter, who had befriended him, signing it "From your Valentine." Thus, the first "valentine" was born.

In 496, Pope Gelasius established Feb. 14 as St. Valentine's Day to be a festive Christian occasion for young, unwed persons. During the 14th and 15th centuries folks believed birds mated on Feb. 14. Eventually, Valentine's Day and Mating Day, the one for the birds, became one.

It was about 1400 that the first written valentine appeared. Charles, Duke of Orleans,



reportedly sent one to his love while he was a prisoner in the Tower of London. Exchange of love poems, sweet sayings and gifts seemed to grow quickly after that, as did the oddness surrounding the event. Young men in Elizabethan England threw an apple or orange with valentine attached through the window of any eligible women they adored. Women ate the whites of hard-boiled eggs on Valentine's Eve and fastened bay leaves to their pillows in hopes of dreaming of future husbands. Frenchmen sent sweethearts huge, homemade lace-edged val-

entines.

But all was not sweet and smooth. In the 16th century, St. Francis de Sales, leader of the church in England, criticized valentines as immoral and forbade their use. As church opposition relented, commercial valentines began to appear in the 1800s to relieve the task of composing and making such greetings. They became the custom in the United States about 1850, with lacy hearts and flowers types, although the verse was cautious and even shy, a far cry from later racy writings. Reports are that in 1857 about 3 million valentines were delivered for Feb. 14.

The oldest known valentines in this nation, however, date to the early 1700s and were small cards with German script. World Book Encyclopedia said they might have been made by monks and nuns.

One of the first large markers of valentines was Esther Rowland of Worcester, Mass., who reportedly controlled the market in the mid-1800s. Ironically, she died a spinster in 1904, never finding her own valentine.

Although comic cards still exist, the insulting "vinegar" valentines of the late 1800s and early 1900s have all but been replaced by sophisticated and sentimental verse, new art forms and finishing, fine paper, elaborate patterns, pop-up designs and -- senders may hope -- heart-winning appearance.

Collectible Insulators Once Throw Away

By Anne Gilbert

You may never have heard of insulators much less thought about them as a serious collectible. However for their 2000 serious collectors they are not only important historically as carriers of early railroad signals, but for their varied shapes and vibrant colors. There was a time when looking up while walking along the railroad tracks, you could see examples.

Manufactured in the 19th century when the first telegraph and telephone circuits were put in place, they were needed to keep the telegraph signals from draining into the earth wherever the wire touched a solid object. They were made in many sizes for a variety of uses, such as telephone and telegraph circuits as well as electrical high voltage power lines. When wires were put underground in the early 20th century, insulators were trashed. They emerged as a "hot" collectible in the 1960s.



These days rarities can sell for over \$20,000 or for as little as \$10.00. Many are waiting to be discovered.

Insulator manufacturers did a lot of experimenting with techniques. These experimental examples are now collectible rarities.

Railroad insulators come in a wide range of brilliant colors. The most common color is aqua. Some of the most interesting colors, such as cranberry, were made by glasshouses who made many types of glassware. When some of their pieces were leftover they were

recycled into insulators. The same holds true for glasshouses that made liquor bottles.

Many materials were used. The earliest were made from glass and porcelain, as well as wood and glass.

Collectors look for the most unusual designs. A good example was called a "bureau knob" since it looked like a bureau drawer knob. It was used on the Morris telegraph line. The Hemingray Glass Company was (1848-1972), the biggest maker of the most styles of insulators. A few are still in use at railroad crossings.

By the 1920s insulators were made by the millions by many manufacturers.

CLUES: Not only are there many designs to collect but spinoffs. Among them are miniature salesman samples, miniature Hemingrays. Reproductions abound of salesman samples, as well as fake Carnival Glass Hemingrays.

To learn more there is the N.I.A(National Insulators Association). Once you have done your research "Poletop Auctions" can open the buying opportunities and prices. Contact: ray@poletop.com.

PHOTO CAPTIONS: (1) Unusual wired insulator.

PHOTO CREDIT: (1) Magicmistsams@yahoo.com

PHOTO CAPTION: (2) Cobalt blue, Hemingray insulator.

PHOTO CREDIT: (2) Private collector.

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ANTIQUE ATTIC

Federal Furniture Pride of American Cabinetmakers

By Anne Gilbert

In the post American Revolution years up to the early 19th century 1780-1820s) Americas finest craftsmen created what has come to be known as "American Federal" furniture. It was adapted freely from English designs by Chippendale, Sheraton and Hepplewhite. For the growing wealthy classes quality and fine design was important.

While the finest examples are in museums, many important pieces still fetch top dollar when maker's names are attached. However, great examples may still be awaiting discovery if you know what to look for, far from their origins.

Consider that during those decades Philadelphia became the center of culture, attracting the great thinkers of the day, as well as the finest artists and craftsmen. The finest pieces of furniture were custom-made from native American woods, along with inlaid stringing, banding and decorations. Veneers of satinwood, tulip wood and various fruit



woods were used on what is known as "high style" furniture. Among the woods used for inlays were satinwood, boxwood and ebony.

Today's furniture experts are often able to identify not only the market but the region where Federal furniture was made by the type of woods used, style of carving and the patterns of inlays, stringing and banding.

CLUES: Unfortunately reproductions and fakes abound. Reproductions were made during the 1876 American Centennial. They are being collected and are affordable. During the 1920s, 30s, there was a great revival of collector interest in Federal period furniture. Often repros were sold as authentic with faked labels.

Feel underneath tables and the backs of cabinet pieces, they should be rough and unfinished. Look at saw marks on dovetails and other exposed areas. They should be cross hatched from the use of the pit saws. Circular and other saw marks would indicate the piece was made after 1830, after the Federal period. Don't get carried away by the sight of an eagle inlay. They can be ordered from woodcraft catalogues and added to new pieces, upping the price.

Research can lead to discoveries.

PHOTO CAPTION: AMERICAN CHIPPENDALE PEMBROKE TABLE

PHOTO CREDIT: SOTHEBYS AUCTIONS

The History of Groundhog Day

On February 2, Punxsutawney Phil, Pennsylvania's groundhog extraordinaire, will again stick his head out of his den. The nation awaits his verdict.

Groundhog Day is said to have its origins in ancient weather lore where the prognosticator was often a badger or a sacred bear. In the United States, its origin is said to come from a Pennsylvania German custom.

If Phil, peeking from his burrow, fails to see his shadow, winter will soon be over. If the sun happens to be shining and Phil sees his shadow, winter will continue for six more weeks.

The first trek to meet with Phil began in 1887. He has been emerging from his burrow in Pennsylvania ever since, always eager to greet his public.

Phil is private in many ways, but a few ru-

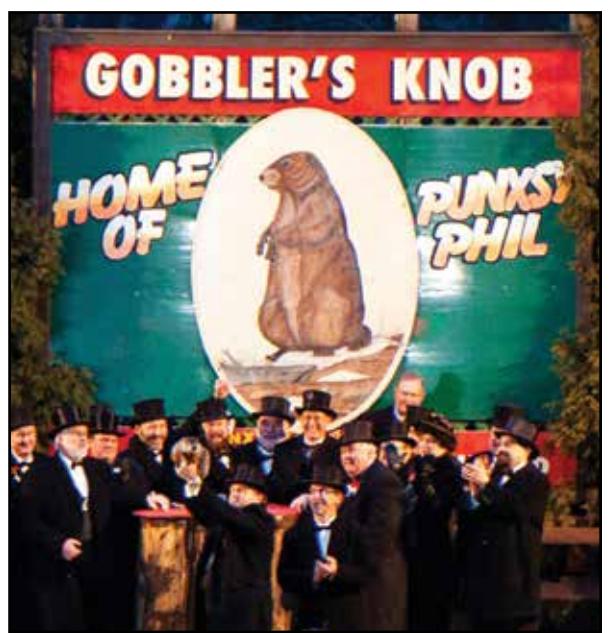
mors have circulated about him.

*He gets his longevity from drinking the "elixir of life" of which he takes one sip every summer during the Groundhog Picnic. This gives him seven more years of life.

*It is said he is named after King Philip, a famous Native American leader. In his more plebeian days, he was called br'er Groundhog.

*He speaks only in Groundhogese, which luckily is a language understood by the President of the Inner Circle. The Inner Circle provides for Phil during the year, rather like a court provides for its king.

The city of Punxsutawney offers several days of celebration for those who gather from around the world to hear Phil's proclamation. The city offers food, music, carriage rides, magicians, crafts and games.



BECOMING AMERICAN NOW AVAILABLE

A gripping, multi-generational saga of defiance, courage, and revolution. In 1661, Alice Lake is hanged as a witch in the Puritan colony of Massachusetts—a tragic death that sparks a centuries-long fight for justice and freedom. In the early 1800s, Alice's descendants, the Knowles family, relocate to Ohio during the War of 1812, where they become deeply involved in the abolitionist movement. Braving danger and defying the law, they aid runaway slaves on the Underground Railroad. As the years pass, the Knowles women rise to the forefront of the suffrage movement, determined to secure a future of equality for all. From Alice's execution to their battles for freedom and civil rights, *Becoming American* is a powerful, multi-generational tale of survival, courage, and the unyielding pursuit of justice. Through the Knowles family's eyes, we witness the heart of America's struggle to live up to its ideals. This biographical historical fiction novel explores how one family's fight for justice shaped the nation's destiny—and how the past continues to echo in our pursuit of a better future.

Margaret (Peggy) and Jon DeStefano have been in the publishing field since 1972. They produced over 20 publications each month for various local, state and national organizations. They have published many articles, short stories and poetry during this time. They publish and own the *Mountain States Collector*, a monthly tabloid devoted to antiques, collectibles and American history. Peggy belongs to several historical societies (Colonial Dames, D.A.R. and Daughters of 1812 to name a few). She and her family have been researching their history for over 80 years. *Becoming American* is Jon and Peggy's first book collaboration. They live in the mountains in Colorado. They have four children and 13 grandchildren.

BECOMING AMERICAN

ONE FAMILY'S JOURNEY THROUGH FOUR CENTURIES OF BECOMING AMERICAN

BECOMING AMERICAN

MARGARET ROSE DESTEFANO AND JON EAGER DESTEFANO

Becoming American
Is Now Available
For Purchase

Peg and Jon DeStefano have recently completed their first book collaboration. *Becoming American* has been a labor of love for the couple as they wanted their children to know their ancestors. This book covers four centuries of the Knowles' family experience in America which began in the early 1600s. This side of the family stems from Peggy's maternal grandmother's side.

The book is based on the genealogical research that Peggy's sister Mary Sikora spent a lifetime recording. All the ancestors are real people. Their place in history helps bring to life America's path up to this time. The book is an historical novel that captures history in a three-dimensional way that old-time history books never could capture.

It is now available through Kindle as a paper back. The electronic version is now available.

America's Romance –

By Robert Reed

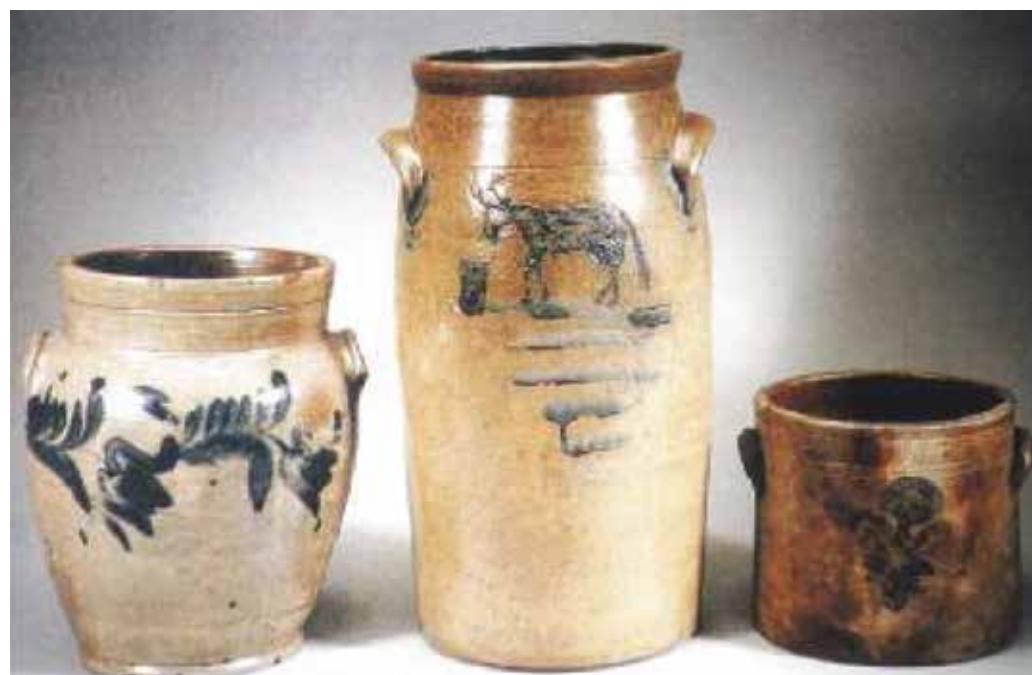
What began as a courtship of stoneware in early days of America became a full-fledged romance during the growing years of the country.

Stoneware, which had its origins in 16th century, became a very practical and attractive earthenware in England by the 17th century.

Being highly-fired and treated with common salt in the kiln process, the resulting stoneware was the next closest thing to porcelain. The amazing pottery was strong enough to be crafted in much thinner surfaces and yet was water-tight.

Typically these utilitarian pieces were simply decorated with a pointed tool which incised the pottery in a classical manner. The 'indentions' were then filled with cobalt blue for accent. In some cases however the piece was not incised and the accompanying blue was simply dabbed on the surface.

As life in 18th century America evolved stoneware containers became very useful and popular. Eventually during the latter part of that century, "every rural household was sup-



plied with a variety of stoneware crocks, jugs, jars, milk pans and churns," notes William Ketchum, Jr. author of All-American Folk Arts and Crafts.

And while only the basic blue was available, "the folk potter painted on these vessels as though he were working on the finest artist's canvas. He brightened the kitchen and pantry with crocks, the surfaces of which were covered with flowers, birds," and even fancier designs.

Stoneware crafting was done on a relatively limited basis in the United States until the American Revolution. In Philadelphia, Antho-

ny Duche claimed in 1730 to have been making stoneware "for several Years past." In Boston, Thomas Symmes advertised in 1745 his inventory of "blue and white store ware of forty different kinds."

In 1779 raiding British soldiers apparently destroyed the stoneware pottery works owned and operated by General James Morgan along the Cheesquake Creek in New Jersey. Morgan eventually filed a claim for most of the loss, also mentioning, "1 kiln of Stoneware not burnt".

Regions of New Jersey were among the best in the country at the time to find the right clay for forming stoneware. With the right elements the operation itself became fairly basic.

"The early potter's dry clay, if washing was not necessary, was coarsely crushed with a sledge hammer or in some sort of simple mill," observes Georgeanna Greet in the reference American Stonewares, Art and craft of Utilitarian Potters. "It was then mixed with water to make it the proper consistency for throwing on the wheel. It was in a slightly soft state about the consistency of bread dough."

The simplicity of it all combined with the growing demand for it all early in the 19th

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With Stoneware

century, was a boon for American potters.

The Congress of the United States passed a series of laws in the early 1800s, including the Embargo Act of 1807, to strictly limit trade with England. As a result imports dropped to a fraction of what they had previously been, and American potters were treated to a growing domestic market nearly free of foreign imports.

During this enlightened period some potters were known of have signed their stoneware works. Among them Xeres Price who stamped XP on his jars, and Peter Cross who simply wrote P. Cross. Accounts say Paul Cushman was crafting both redware and stoneware on a hill described as "a half mile west of Albany Gaol" in New York about the time of the War of 1812. Meanwhile, the diary of Hiram Harwood pointed out Captain John Norton was making "ware of both kinds, stone and clay" in 1815.

Interestingly enough stoneware potters could be found as far west as Ohio in the 1820s, and within the next 20 years at least 50 such craftsmen were said be operating in that region of the country. Clays from the basin of the Ohio River were reported to be even richer and in better supply than earlier sites in New Jersey and other eastern areas.

By the middle of the 19th century there were entire factories producing fine and enduring stoneware.

Americans used jugs for everything from

cider to vinegar. They also adopted stoneware crocks for dairy products, pots and bowls for mixing and cooking, and even as water coolers. Colors for the stoneware generally remained in the range of gray-white to medium brown, but there were some variations. Sizes, like uses, also varied greatly. Frequently they ranged for a mere half-gallon container to those holding 20 gallons. Larger sizes were typically more common to the marketplace.

There was a gradual increase in the use of decoratives such as birds and animals, and flowers. Borders including beading, as wells as leaves and fruit. More and more potters added names or identifying numbers. Sometimes the location of production was stamped on the stoneware, and in some cases the name of the dealer (instead of the maker) was stamped on an individual item.

Stenciled designs were particularly prevalent during the second half of the 19th century. Eagles were especially popular with Midwestern potters.

However it was the craftsman own personal mark which may have added the most in the long term. Sometimes the entire name and factory address was used. Today, "the inscription not only adds to the attractiveness of the piece," offers Katharine McClinton in *Antique Collecting for Everyone*, "but it also helps locate Potteries and thus gives the piece historic value."

Production and marketing of stoneware pieces remained widespread in United States during the 1880s and 1890s.

In 1895 the Montgomery Ward and Company offered a selection of stoneware that included churns ranging in capacity from two to eight gallons. The largest size retailed at \$1.75 cents. The



catalog also listed stoneware pots "for cooking cereals of any kind, such as oatmeal or cracked wheat. It has no equal for boiling bread and milk..". Also offered were light brown stoneware butter jars, and stoneware water coolers with cover and wooden faucet.

Production of stoneware continued into the 20th century with one government report for 1900 putting commercial yield of such wares at near \$2 million dollars. A turn-of-the-century figure that was nearly four times the market level of redware.

Today collectors look for pieces in excellent condition with appealing bird and flower decorations. Authentic stoneware with other decorative images such as animals and ships is considered rare.

Besides decorations, coloring, shape, and proportions can add to the collectibility of stoneware items. Perfectly preserved pieces with the mark of early potters are highly desired and bring top prices at leading auction galleries.

Recommended reading:

American Stonewares, Art and Craft of Utilitarian Potters by Georgenna Greer (Schiffer Publishing).



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AMERICAN HISTORY

February Anniversaries

February 1

National Freedom Day
Black History Month

February 2

Groundhog Day

February 4

George Washington elected the first President of the United States of America (1789)
Founding of the USO (1941)

February 5

1971 – Astronauts land on the moon in the Apollo 14 (insignia pictured) mission.

February 7

1962 – The United States bans all Cuban imports and exports.

February 9

251st Anniversary: The Parliament of Great Britain declared the Province of Massachusetts Bay to be in a state of rebellion (1775)

February 16

Presidents' Day

February 17

1933 – The Blaine Act ends Prohibition in the United States.

February 20

1872 – The Metropolitan Museum of Art opens in New York City.

February 22

George Washington's Birthday

February 27

A patriot army defeats a force of loyalists at the Battle of Moore's Creek Bridge, a setback that would largely quiet loyalist activity in the Carolinas for three years (1776)

**February 12**

Abraham Lincoln's birthday

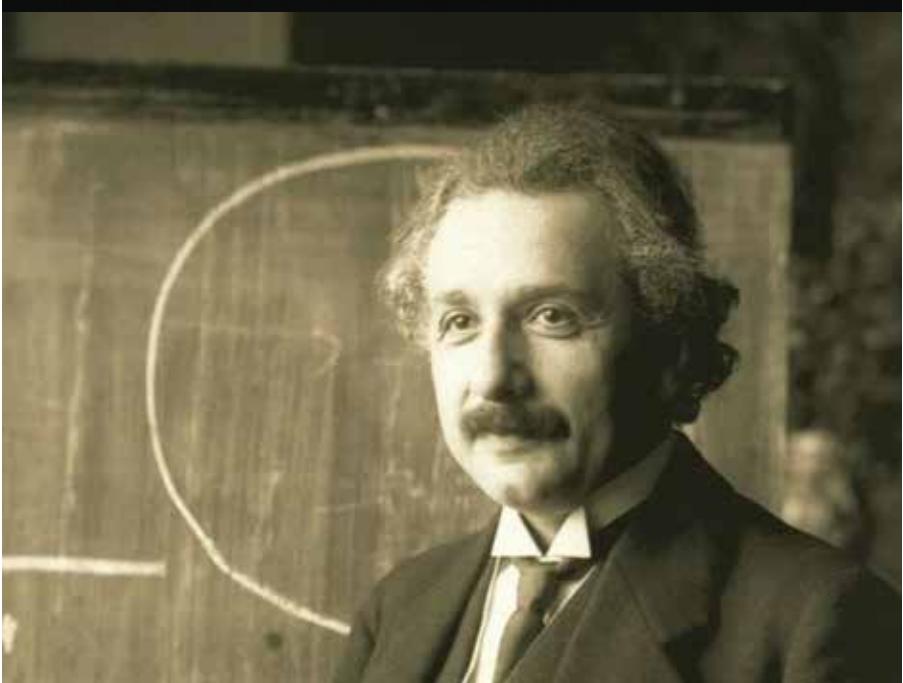
February 14

Valentine's Day

February's Quote of Month

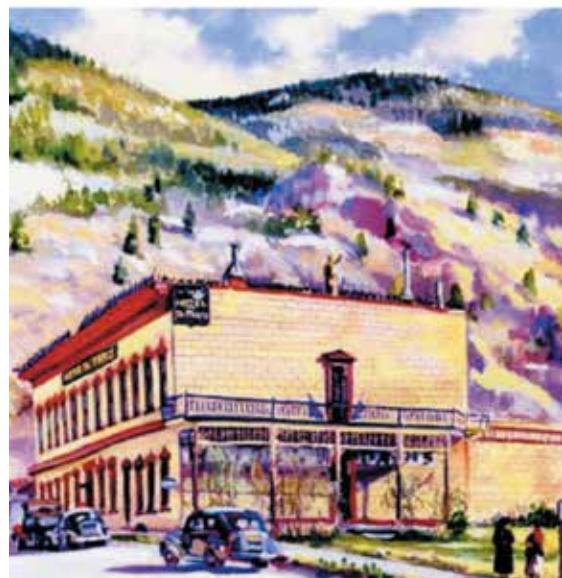
Gravitation cannot be held responsible for people falling in love. How on earth can you explain in terms of chemistry and physics so important a biological phenomenon as first love? Put your hand on a stove for a minute and it seems like an hour. Sit with that special girl for an hour and it seems like a minute. That's relativity.

— Albert Einstein —



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The Mountain States Collector, a tabloid newspaper dedicated to promoting the enjoyment of antiquing and collecting in the Rocky Mountain region, is distributed the first weekend of every month through shops, auctions, flea markets and antique shows, and is mailed to subscribers.

(Opinions of the writers contained herein are not necessarily the opinions of the publishers.)

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Printing

Sporting Prints Once a Hot Collectible

By Anne Gilbert

During the 1920s and thirties English sporting prints were a status symbol and cost several hundred dollars. If you had the original oil prices were in the thousands. Hundreds of prints and restrikes were made. These days they are still being made and prices can range from \$20 to \$100 depending on the quality and the subject.

It all began in England during the 18th and 19th centuries when portraits of the family horse or dog were considered almost as important as an ancestral portrait. This evolved into sporting art not only of racing but fox hunting and more violent sports. Among them cock fighting, dog fighting, bull-baiting and bare-knuckle fighting. Both the English and the French portrayed them in oils and water colors. By the 19th century they were reproduced as prints. The English gentry and squires began collecting the hunting and racing prints.

The art form crossed to America in the early



FOX HUNTING: "THE FIRST OVER"
From an Original Drawing
By Henry Alken

20th century with famous American race horses and their jockeys as popular subjects. By the 1940s they were out of fashion, till the 1970s when Ralph Lauren brought back the country look in furnishings and fashion. By the 1980s they were out of fashion once again.

Racing prints by the most popular English artists such as Henry Alken, Sir Alfred J. Mun-

nings and George Stubbs are more expensive than hunting subjects by the same artists.

CLUES: Early prints were hand-painted. However, the 1970's restrikes were done with improved technical methods and can be difficult to detect. However their borders are too white, unless artificially aged. Sizes will be different than the originals.

A large folio of Henry Alken's works, published in 1821, in the "National Sports of Great Britain" contained fifty large color plates engraved by T. Clarke, "after Alken." It was from this folio that hundreds of re-strokes were made, flooding the market in the 1920s.

If you can still find it, "Old Sporting Art", a book originally published in 1908 by Ralph Neville was reprinted in 1970. It details the rise in popularity and auction prices in 1908, and correct sizes.

PHOTO CAPTION: 1908 Print by Henry Alken. "The First Over."

PHOTO CREDIT: worldglobe@georgeglazer.com

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July 4th: the Raucous Wet Dry parade down Main Street starting at 10 a.m.

September 19th: Pioneer Day. A parade and craft fair with lots of great food. Down Main Street and in Pioneer Park.

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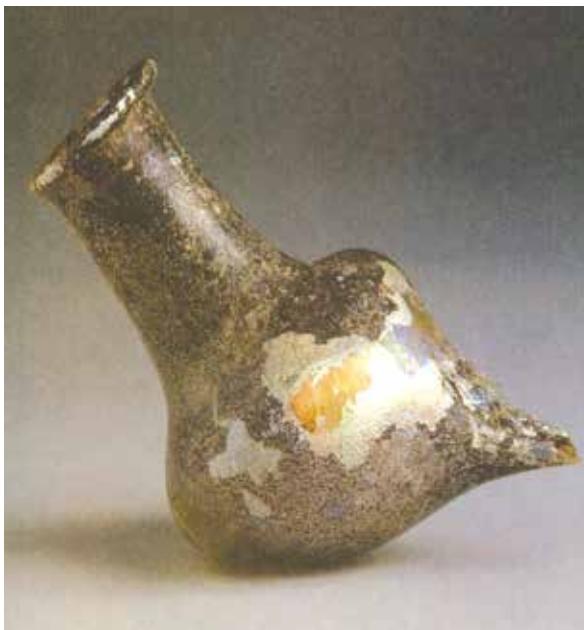


January's What Is It?

We had one correct answer to our January What Is It. Dottie Unruh of Lakewood, Colorado said, "It is a feeding device for feeding liquids to infants or to the ill." Dottie has won a year's subscription to the Mountain States Collector. Congratulations!

Pictured to the right is an early Roman glass nursing bottle. It is extremely rare. After the fall of Rome, glass was rarely used to make nurses until the 19th Century. French scientist Louis Pasteur demonstrated that bacteria in nursing equipment could cause fatal infections in infants. Rubber nipples

and sterilization eliminated the bacteria, enabling nursing bottles to become the safe equipment they are today.



February's What Is It?



Send your answers to the What Is It contest, postmarked by February 20, to the Mountain States Collector, P.O. Box 1003, Bailey, CO 80421. At least three winners will be drawn. Winners will receive a one year electronic subscription to the Mountain States Collector. Be sure to include your email address to your guess.

The Lure of Valentine Postcards Continued . . .

Continued from page 1

traveling via different modes of transportation. Even Ellen Clapsaddle, the firm's most important artist, drew Cupids into her postcards.

Another popular artist, Ethel Dewees, contributed to the Cupid Valentine's Day lore with illustrations for the publishing house of AMP. There were also some lovely cupid designs to be found amongst the various cards done by the German firm of Paul Finkenrath, which exported huge amounts of postcards into the United States in the early years of the century. Cupid is also well represented on many of the Valentine's Day postcards by Nash, one of the most prolific of holiday theme publishers.

Artist Charles Twelvetrees' Series Number 75, "National Cupid," for Ullman Manufacturing Co. (New York City), consisted of 12 cards showing Cupids in national costumes (United States, Canada, China, etc.). Twelvetrees' Cupids are also seen in his many magazine illustrations done between 1908 and the late 1930s.

Many other cards portrayed Cupid flying above lovers with his bow and arrow at the ready, and playing all sorts of mischievous games. Though the Ullman set of "National Cupid" remains among the most wanted of all, many other desirable sets were also made.

About 50 publishers in the United States, and a smaller number in England, Austria, France and Germany, provided Americans with all the Valentine's Day postcards they needed, but about a dozen companies dominated the industry.

The firm of Raphael Tuck & Sons, headquartered in London but with branches all around the world, imported dozens of different valentine sets to us through their New York City office. All were part of Tuck's "Valentines" line and included such diverse subjects as comic strip heroes Little Nemo and Buster Brown. Tuck was one of the leaders in producing huge amounts of valentine postcards for everyone to exchange, not just lovers.

Their illustrations were exquisite, and among the loveliest or most interesting to be found. Today they are considered to be some of the very best ever printed for the holiday. At the peak of their popularity there were probably more Tuck Valentine's Day postcards on sale in this country than those made by any other company.

Other important foreign publishers of picture postcards for the American Valentine's Day market were Paul Finkenrath of Berlin; Ernest Nister, also German, whose valentines and other paper goods were handled in this

country by the large New York City firm of E. Dutton; and Valentine & Sons, from Great Britain.

Notable U.S. printers, besides International Art and E. Nash, included the venerable Whitney Company of Worcester, Massachusetts, which had been so instrumental in introducing hand and machine-made valentines to the American public in the 19th century; and Birn Brothers, creator of patriotic-theme valentine postcards.

The vast majority of the better quality valentine postcards and almost all holidays were printed by chromolithography. Retail prices varied. The Tuck cards ranged from a penny each up to 15¢ for the novelties. These included large embossed silk flowers, embossed silk pansies, heads of women in medallions surrounded by embossed silken blossoms, feather fans and inlaid frames for photographs.

Today quality valentine postcards command prices from 25¢ to \$25 each; more for certain extraordinary items. These prices are reasonable, though, when compared to those of old Victorian and Edwardian valentines. Comparatively low prices, startling beauty, and good availability are what make yesterday's valentine postcards so attractive and popular with today's collectors.

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Krysti Jomei of Birdy magazine couldn't resist visiting the dinosaurs at the Brass Armadillo. Photo by Sean Forrester.

