

What do you collect?

By Pippa Deeley

Surely everyone has, at some point in their lives collected something? There are the obvious choices of course such as stamps, coins, postcards and autographs. Not so obvious are things most of us would deem rubbish including beer cans, crisp packets and old Ikea catalogues, but people do collect them! Even if you consider yourself to be a clutter free sort of person I bet you've collected something along the way, maybe without even realising it.

Whether it's to complete the set, for investment or for the fun of the search it's in our nature to make groups of things, place like with like and then often to seek out other items to compliment what we already have. It may be shoes, music or books, none of us are immune, and how easy it is nowadays to find these desired items. The Internet provides us with images and information at our fingertips, auctions that are online, retail websites dedicated to specific niches and tastes and search engines to find it all. But can you ever really beat the thrill of finding something you weren't even looking for at maybe a jumble sale, boot fair or charity shop?

At a valuation day once I met a couple who brought in a large jug that they had purchased from a boot fair for a few pence many years before, because the colours of it matched their living room. When they then changed the colour of their living room they painted the jug the same colour as they said they'd gone right off its original design. They asked me to look at it because they'd seen something similar on the TV and they'd been thinking of throwing it away and just wanted to make sure it wasn't valuable. Over a few days I soaked the purple paint off the item and then asked them

to come and see the result. Their Clarice Cliff jug was a rare example and worth around £1,000. As it turned out they decided that they didn't mind the original pattern that much after all and it triggered the beginning of their collection of one of our most celebrated potters. It's funny how tastes can change when someone tells you what it's worth isn't it!

And as for me, well I'd love to say diamonds or sports cars but in fact I collect old saucepans! – Each to their own!



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