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PERSPECTIVE

Editor's Note

by David Moore . Q-Notes staff

Things I've picked up along the way

In this issue of *Q-Notes* our Q-Living section includes a collection of articles focusing on vintage and antique collecting — a pastime enjoyed by many in the LGBT community. That statement may be somewhat of a cliché — something akin to a gay hairstylist or a lesbian mechanic — but it is an obvious observance: just check out how many gay and lesbian couples you see operating booths or shopping at flea markets and antique malls. Ever wonder why?

"There are a number of reasons behind that phenomenon," says Rich Montgomery, an antique collector from Norwood, N.C. "As gays and lesbians, a lot of us live outside the mainstream, so it's not unreasonable that we would develop a taste for things that are unique or perhaps a bit eclectic."

"I also think we have an inherent appreciation for history — our community certainly has a rich one — and filling our lives with things that reflect our interests."

Then there's another school of thought: antiques are a connection to the past — and that's terribly romantic and mysterious. Who could resist?

I have to admit I've always had a penchant for vintage collectibles and antiques. And not always the most conventional kind, either.

For as long as I can remember, I've always loved vintage autos. I've owned quite a few in my lifetime. My current vintage rider — which I've mentioned here before — is a 1962 Ford Falcon.

It's not just the car itself that's interesting — but the journey it took to get to where it is and the things that happened in the world along the way. It was originally rescued after having been abandoned in a Georgia corn field for several years. Whenever I drive it — I think about the places it might have gone or the people that might have taken a ride. I feel like I'm driving a piece of history every time I get behind the wheel.

Beyond the car, things from the past have eeked their way into many facets of my life.

Vintage commercial art

Ads for long defunct products like Ipana Toothpaste or Phillip Morris cigarettes often feature cutting-edge (for the time) commercial art style and sometimes celebrity endorsements, too. Rita Hayworth pushing Lustre Creme Shampoo or Joan Crawford endorsing RC Cola make great decorative prints for your bathroom or kitchen and they add a bit of history without too much effort.

Classic and camp retro movie posters

Another personal favorite. You can pick them up at flea markets, antique malls and online. Artwork on the posters prior to the 1980s is generally a bit more interesting, but also a bit harder to come by — unless you opt for reproductions. Not worth much more than the price you pay — somewhere around \$15-\$25. Searching for the originals though, can be more than half the fun. Pick a favorite film: in this case I chose an old sci-fi camp classic called "Green Slime." There aren't any vintage poster shops in the Charlotte area — so I simply went to Google and typed in the name of the film



and found an original for sale in excellent condition on ebay. \$80 and two weeks later it was hanging on my office wall.

Matchbook covers

I don't really go in for these so much anymore, but as a kid I collected them like crazy. The best thing — they were free. I would pick them up when my family would take vacation trips and friends and relatives from all over would pick them up and send them to me via post. About a year ago I was in a thrift store here in Charlotte and came across eight scrapbooks that were filled with matchbook covers from around the world, mostly dating from the '40s and '50s. At eight bucks a pop I couldn't pass them up. They make great coffee table conversational pieces.

Old radios

Vintage and classic radios can be like a beautiful piece of art. Earlier ones are often constructed from rich oak and pine. By the '40s and '50s bakelite came into fashion. Brightly lit dials in blue and green with chrome and gold trim can be a visual pop feast. In working condition you can expect

to pay anywhere from \$50 - \$300. For a non-working case that still makes a great counter piece, they'll come as low as \$5-\$25.

Obscure music formats: 78s and Eight-Tracks

There's something fun and funny about 78 speed 10" records and eight track tapes. Listening to the pop, crackle, hiss of a steel needle on an acetate pressed disc as Billie Holiday sings "Strange Fruit," you're hearing it the same way they did

over 60 years ago. Eight track tapes belong to a different generation: the '60s and '70s. There's nothing like Shirley Bassey trilling "I Capricorn," only to be interrupted by that *ka-thunk* sound of one track changing to the next. Listen carefully — it's the sound of history.

Vintage furniture

This is a no-brainer here. Fun and easy to pick up at flea markets and antique stores, the best deals come from yard sales and estate sales. Even on a budget you can find rare and unique pieces. My personal favorite is a brown leather 1940s bomber chair I was going to buy from Goodwill for \$40. When the salesperson helped move it to the car, he inadvertently broke the right rear leg. I was about to turn it back over to them but the price suddenly dropped to \$5. A little bit of wood glue fixed it right up.

Retro pop knick knacks

A Shoney's Big Boy bank, an old Charles Chip can from the '60s and mustard and ketchup squeeze bottles from the '50s. The artwork on these babies gets a chuckle every time and they're great nouveau art objects for the kitchen.

Old documents

Vintage magazines and newspapers give you a hands-on look at what was happening in the

see editor's on 5



Vintage movie posters make great frameable art that can add a touch of history to any room.