

Antique or Junque: Toaster produces a valuable piece of bread

by Anne_McCollam

Q: I inherited this single-piece electric toaster from my parents. Decorated with a gazelle on the side, the still-working toaster has a shiny chrome metal finish and its original cord. There is a plate with the words: "Edison Toaster by General Electric Appliance Co. â€” Patent No. 1551338." My parents had it when I was born in 1931. I have a 1994 magazine article that featured a photo of the same toaster, which was referred to as a "Hotpoint" brand.

An Art Deco toaster, created by the General Electric Co., should be insured for \$500. Red Wing Potteries Inc. produced dinnerware items such as dish sets. The company was located in Red Wing, Minn., from 1935 to 1967. I would appreciate learning more about this family appliance, particularly a realistic insurance valuation.

A: Hotpoint was owned by Edison General Electric. Designed by Raymond E. Patten, your Art Deco toaster with the graceful leaping gazelle was patented in 1925. Patten was an industrial designer and engineer from the late 1920s through the 1940s for the Chicago-based General Electric Co.

Your "Gazelle" toaster should be insured for \$500.

Q: I would like to know more about my service for eight set of dishes. Enclosed is the mark seen on the bottom of each piece. Against a white background, the dishes are decorated with blue flowers on pieces of brown driftwood.

What can you tell me about the manufacturer, the vintage and the value of my set?

A: Red Wing Potteries Inc., located in Red Wing, Minn., made your dinnerware. They produced kitchenware, dinnerware and art pottery from 1935 to 1967. "Driftwood" is the name of the pattern that was introduced in 1953.

Your service for eight would probably be worth \$300 to \$500.

Q: I have a small round tin of "Madam C. J. Walker's Wonderful Temple Salve." On the lid are the words: "Indianapolis, Ind. â€” Price 35 Cents."

Anything you can tell me about its history and value will be appreciated.

A: Sarah Breedlove Walker created hair care products designed for African-American women in the early 1900s. Her products were marketed under the name Madame C.J. Walker. An entrepreneur who educated her agents how to use and sell her products, one of her goals was to give her agents the opportunity to become financially independent.

In 1908, she established the Lelia College of Beauty Culture in Indianapolis. A year later, she set up her headquarters and factory in Indianapolis. Tins of the hair care preparation were often included in Mme. C. J. Walker's authorized agent kits, which were distributed to students at their graduations.

Your collectible tin is an example of Black Americana. It would probably be worth \$250 to \$300. FYI: A complete agent kit in excellent condition would be worth at least \$2,600.

Address your questions to Anne McCollam, P.O. Box 247, Notre Dame, IN 46556. Items of a general interest will be answered in this column. Due to the volume of inquiries, she cannot answer individual letters.

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