

Kerosene Lamps
Weekly Times Column
By Warren Joel

Once a necessary part of life, the humble light has come a long way, and is now a collector's item. Kerosene lamps come in a wide range of styles and designs. The simplest and most basic form are the cheap pressed metal or simple moulded glass lamps. These functional relics from the past had a simple wick, chimney and plain glass shade.

As we move to the more collectable lamps the amount of detail increased and more expensive materials were used in the construction. Near the top of the collectors' list is Sterling Silver for the body of the lamp and beautifully etched decoration for the oil bowl and the storm shade. There were more specialised American lamp makers like Tiffany and Miller's that are highly collectable and worth thousands of dollars.

Most of the great porcelain factories of the 19th Century had at one stage made kerosene lamps. Factories like Worcester, Moore, Derby and many others produced outstanding lamps many with hand painted decoration.

The size and shape of these lamps is as wide and as diverse as there are makers. From a simple moulded clear glass body and no shade that would have been used in the bedroom to the other end of the scale of large multi burner banquet lamps used to light large areas.

The value of these collectable lamps is divided into two main groups, the body of the lamp and the glass storm shade. To have a good collector's item you need to have both elements original and in good condition. So many times I see good old lamps that have had a reproduction shade added to the lamp.

Next week: Moorcroft Pottery

Free Valuation for Weekly Times readers.

Byjoel will do a free valuation of your collectables via email. If you send a photo and description of your item to hwtvaluations@byjoel.com.au I will access the item and respond.

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Warren is a third generation auctioneer and valuer specialising in Art, Antiques and Collectables, accredited by the Commonwealth in 2002 different areas of collectables.

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