

Will the gum tree painting ever come back?

Weekly Times Column

By Warren Joel

There are many rural properties spread across Australia that still hold some wonderful art. On a recent trip to the Western District of Victoria I came across one of those collections. The classic grazier property with wide verandas, large formal rooms in the front of the house and as you walk through you get a real sense of the history that surrounds the property. And part of that history is the art and furniture that decorates the house. The classic dining room with the large table and chairs and the paintings of cattle and gum trees that hang on the walls. There are classic Australian artists like Scheltema and Heysen and the odd English painting of an oversize cow.

At this point in my valuation we start to discuss the value of the works of art and furniture and the shifting market in Australia. I point out that their collection is slowly dropping in value not going up; I would have got more for the cattle painting 20 years ago than what it will bring today. I am doing two valuations for the client - one for insurance and the other for estate planning. They are trying to divide all the furniture and paintings evenly amongst the children without having world war three.

The discussion quickly turns to fashion and what the next generation of collectors want. And it is not the cattle, the gum trees or the Australian "Brown" furniture. There are some wonderful art and antiques out in the market that are still worth collecting and they will cost you the same as 20 years ago. No, it may not be the best investment you have ever made but it will be the best looking investment you ever made.

Next week: *What is worth collecting now?*

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.

Warren Joel

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

www.byjoel.com.au