

The Changing Face Of My Desk

Weekly Times Column

By Warren Joel

As I sat at my desk typing this column it occurred to me that the value of the desk has changed dramatically in recent years. The simple reason for this is not the desk but how we choose to work today.

In days gone by we sat at our desks with our pen and paper, paid bills by cheque and sent letters on paper. There were many fine desks that fitted this lifestyle and period perfectly. The Cutler desk with its timber shutter front was perfect in your father's office and the lovely leather top pedestal writing desk worked well in the study.

But very few of us work that way now. Grandpa's Cutler desk has no space for the screen and keyboard and the pedestal writing desk is just too small for the technology today.

This is a classic case of where lifestyle has forced a major change in the value of furniture. The American Cutler desk would have bought \$6,000 - \$8,000 fifteen years ago but now will struggle to bring \$1,500. The pedestal desk has not suffered quite as badly because we can squeeze some of the technology on the desk.

The 19th and early 20th century lady's writing desk has suffered a similar fate to the gentleman's desk. You ladies are not sitting down and sending hand written letters and post cards now.

I am not suggesting that there is not a place for this furniture in modern society, just that our collectors of today do not want it and are not prepared to pay any sort of premium to own it.

Next week: Costume Jewellery.

Free Valuation for Weekly Times readers.

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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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