



EXCLUSIVELY CONTENTS

W E P A C K Y O U R S T U F F

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RESTORING VALUABLES One piece at a time

TOTAL LOSS — OR — A LITTLE GLUE?

Provided By Your Contents Restoration Partner



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W E P A C K Y O U R S T U F F

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SAVING A FORTUNE

ONE PIECE AT A TIME

Have you ever had a case in which a single item in a home was valued at more than the entire house itself?

When a British couple cleaned out an inherited house, they came across an old Chinese vase. They dusted it off and Sotheby's received a bid of close to \$65,000,000 for it.

A rare Ming Dynasty vase that had been used as a doorstep in a Long Island home sold for \$1.3 million at Sotheby's New York.

Another fellow paid \$35 for one of those blue and white Chinese bowls, at a yard sale – it later sold for \$721,800 at auction by Sotheby's.

But spotting an antique is not the contents pros' specialty – restoring value is.

Let's say that you have a 40-piece estate set of crystal valued at over \$1100.

A firefighter accidentally broke a single wine glass.

Collectors know that a complete estate set can be worth more than \$1000, but now (because of the seemingly insignificant breakage) it is worth less – considerably less (imagine buying silverware and discovering a fork missing from the set), and it is likely

the carrier will have to make up the loss.

Fortunately, the contents specialists have resources from which they can often replace a single glass, plate, cup, fork or knife in the exact same pattern as the one that was lost... not just one that looks similar or has the same colors – but one from the same manufacturer and with the same materials.

And they do it for very reasonable prices. As an example, one site lists a discontinued Lenox estate 40 piece set for \$1195 – but we found a single wine glass from that set for \$49.95.

Glass broken? Crisis averted.

It is just one more way we save significant sums on virtually every job.

By the way, our team members may not be able to spot a vase worth millions of dollars, but we pack, clean and restore each piece as if it is fragile and of great value. That is why insurance companies, hospitals, military bases, government officials, restaurants, theaters, small businesses and many others seek us out and make sure we are right there with them on the front lines as often as possible.

“CHEAP” ITEM WORTH \$800,000



Often, we have seen those blue and white bowls, cups and teapots at yard sales for a dollar or two, and just as often we have seen them in the cupboards of insureds at fire, smoke and water-damage assignments.

We always treat them as if they were remarkably valuable no matter how the owner might feel about them.

Not long ago, an old teapot with a broken handle and a missing lid was sold online for \$20.

Soon after, the new owner re-sold it for \$800,000 to a museum. As it turns out, it was made by America's first porcelain artist, prior to the Boston Tea Party.



RESTORING DOLLS

You might be expecting us to talk about those fabulously expensive Barbie dolls that come with platinum and diamonds like the one that was created in Australia and sold at auction for over \$300,000. But we allow the doll experts to handle those.

We are more interested in which dolls cannot be cleaned with water and those that will actually melt when some solvents touch the vintage substances with which they were made.

We have “doll clinics” in our directory of craftspeople, but it is rare that we are permitted to call upon them for their

expertise (they are so good that some clients don’t recognize their restored treasures when they get them back – but these artists are often a little pricey for the average insurance policy).

We perform such restoration techniques as are required to remove smoke odors and mold. We also clean and dry the toys and collectors’ items -- but the experts are more experienced with replacing and repairing broken pieces, missing parts, patchy paint and wigs.

Each such job often starts and ends with us, but we always have top professionals to back us up for specialty assignments.

TOTAL LOSS OR A LITTLE GLUE?

Nick Flynn was visiting a museum and tripped on his own shoelace, which caused him to fall onto three, large, 17th century Chinese porcelain vases, shattering them into many pieces.

Now, you might think that it was a total loss, but a conservator gathered the 113 pieces of one and glued them back together. She tells us she could have glazed over the tiny cracks as well, but the museum opted to leave them in plain sight for authenticity’s sake.

In fact, she added that the job itself was relatively simple for her (even though it took 3 months to complete).

Last time we checked, she was restoring the other two.

Sometimes what appears to be a total loss can still be restored – not as good as new, but as good as old.

The contents pros don’t restore antiques, but our “million-dollar database” knows who does.



Preserving VS. Restoring

Sometimes owners don’t want their treasures cleaned up or altered in any way – even though they appear to be in need. We’ve written about the loss in value that occurs when tarnished silver or pewter is polished to look like new.

And we have published articles that discussed why we use methods that can be “undone” when working with old wood furniture (thus leaving a way to “un-restore” if the need arises).

Thus, in some cases an item or collection is “preserved” by only removing contaminants and/or soot, rather than “restored.”

We do this when an owner instructs us as to the best way to maintain an article’s highest value.





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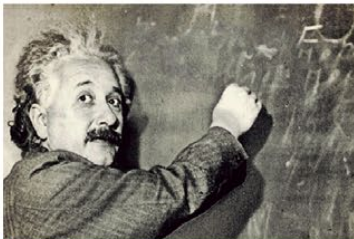
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