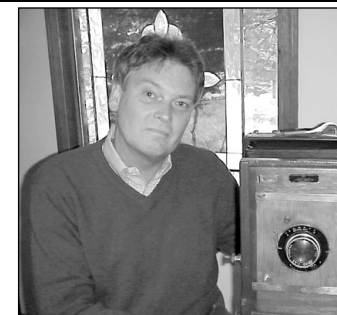


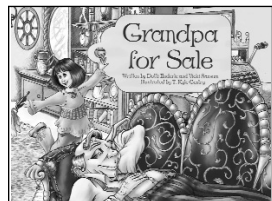
KEN'S KORNER

News and Views from the World of Antiquing and Collecting



By Ken Hall

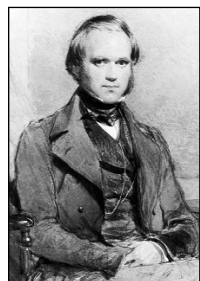
New children's book has an antiques slant



A new children's book titled *Grandpa For Sale* (Flashlight Press, \$15.95), is a funny tale about the value of family and friendship over money that takes place in an antiques shop. The book, written by

Dotti Enderle and Vicki Sansum and illustrated by T. Kyle Gentry, was released into bookstores in April. It just might be the only children's picture book ever written with an antiquing theme. In any event, it's a fun way to introduce kids to antiques and collecting. The book is geared toward children ages 4-8 and has 32 fully illustrated pages.

Darwin's letters now on view at online site



Charles Darwin was one of the most important figures in the history of science. He forever changed our understanding of life on Earth. Now, nearly 5,000 letters to and from the scientist, held in a database at the University of Cambridge in England, are available to the public online, in an effort called the Darwin Correspondence Project. There's a lot to look through; Darwin was a prolific letter writer, exchanging correspondence with nearly 2,000 people during his lifetime (1809-1882). He is best known for his book on evolution titled "On the Origin of Species."

The letters date back to Darwin's childhood (at age 12, he writes to his sister, Caroline, "I only wash my feet once a month at school, which I confess is nasty, but I can't help it. We have nothing to do with it"). In another, he recounts that his legendary five-year voyage aboard the *Beagle* was a "magnificent scheme" that allowed him to spend time "larking around the world." Many of the letters were to and from pigeon fanciers. Darwin was able to study pigeons in great detail, as breeding was so widespread at the time it linked him with a large network of people.

Studio makes 40,000 Silver Surfer quarters



In a publicity stunt designed to generate interest in the film "Fantastic Four: Rise of the Silver Surfer," which opened in theaters June 15, 20th Century Fox emblazoned 40,000 quarters with an image of the lead character, Silver Surfer. The

coins were released into circulation on Memorial Day. Anyone finding one was invited to visit the movie's website and register to win a trip to the London premiere, or other prizes. The first four people to report finding a coin were promised a private screening of the film. The rest will probably end up on eBay.

Getty may return Aphrodite to Italy



The J. Paul Getty Museum in California appears close to returning one of its most prized artifacts to Italy – a 2,400-year-old statue of the goddess Aphrodite (shown), acquired by the Getty in 1988 for \$18 million. Italy has been pushing for the statue's return, arguing it was illegally excavated, in either southern Italy or Sicily. The museum concedes Italy is probably right. The statue's precise provenance (like that of many antiquities) is unknown. But the Italian government says its country has been looted in recent decades. A ban on antiquity exports was issued in 1939.

Italy and Greece (and many archaeologists) have been arguing for years that museums like the Getty actually encourage looters to ransack ancient sites because of the institutions' willingness to pay huge prices for their collections. The Getty has been at the epicenter of the dispute for the last ten years. Marion True, its former antiquities curator, remains on trial in Italy, answering to charges that she conspired to acquire looted objects for the museum. Meanwhile, in a goodwill gesture, the Getty unilaterally said it will return 26 of 51 other disputed artifacts to Italy.

Italy and Greece (and many archaeologists) have been arguing for years that museums like the Getty actually encourage looters to ransack ancient sites because of the institutions' willingness to pay huge prices for their collections. The Getty has been at the epicenter of the dispute for the last ten years. Marion True, its former antiquities curator, remains on trial in Italy, answering to charges that she conspired to acquire looted objects for the museum. Meanwhile, in a goodwill gesture, the Getty unilaterally said it will return 26 of 51 other disputed artifacts to Italy.

Sunken treasure may be richest in history



The Tampa-based firm Odyssey Marine Exploration recently chartered a cargo jet to haul into the U.S. hundreds of plastic containers packed

with 500,000 Colonial-era gold and silver coins it discovered in a shipwreck somewhere in the Atlantic Ocean. The whereabouts of the wreck are unknown; Odyssey, which has dubbed the project "Black Swan," will not yet disclose the precise location of the find, nor the coins' condition or even country of origin. What is known is that the coins may be worth up to \$500 million to collectors and investors.

That figure is based on an educated guess that the coins – most of which are silver and in uncirculated condition, according to Odyssey – will fetch an average of \$1,000 each, although their value will ultimately be determined by rarity, condition and the legend behind them. Court documents revealed that the booty may have come from the wreck of a 17th-century merchant vessel that sank with valuable cargo aboard, about 40 miles off the southwestern tip of England. If the coins do fetch \$500 million, it will be a new record for sunken treasure.

The humble Frisbee sails into its 50th year

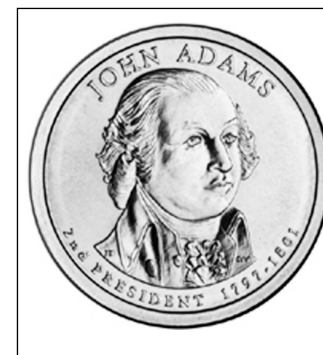


Frisbees the simple flying discs, so-named (according to legend) because students at Yale University in the 1930s would throw pie tins from the Frisbee Pie Company and yell out, "Frisbee!" – turned 50 this year. The universally recognized inventor of the Frisbee

as we now know it was Fred Morrison, a former pilot who came up with a plastic disc that could be tossed. That was in 1948. Mr. Morrison (who is still alive) said he was inspired by the popcorn tin lids he'd toss at family get-togethers. He called his invention the Pluto Platter.

In 1957, Morrison sold his invention to Wham-O, the same novelty company that sold the Hula-Hoop. Six months later, Wham-O changed the name from Pluto Platter to Frisbee (as a nod to the Yalies). In 1964, Wham-O added ridges to the top of the Frisbee, dramatically improving the disc's flight stability. Four years later, some New Jersey high school students invented the game Ultimate Frisbee, a version of football using a Frisbee. In 1978, the Frisbee Hall of Fame opened in Houghton, Michigan. The farthest Frisbee toss on record is 820 feet.

Mint introduces a John Adams coin



Are you collecting the gold-colored presidential dollar coins? George Washington was introduced at the beginning of the year (and some were released as mistakes, with no lettering along the edges). The coins are being issued

sequentially, in order as the presidents took office. The John Adams dollar coin has been introduced as the second one in the series. Much less is known about Adams than Washington, but he was an intriguing fellow, the only president whose son (John Quincy Adams) also became president. Adams was Washington's vice president.

More fun facts about our second prez: he was born at 133 Franklin Street in Quincy, Massachusetts. (the oldest surviving presidential birthplace). After earning a law degree from Harvard, he became a key figure in the fight for independence and the creation of the Declaration of Independence. He was elected president in 1797 by a margin of just three electoral votes. He was the first president to live in the White House (his wife, Abigail, used the unfinished East Room to do the laundry!). John Adams died on July 4, 1826, the same day Thomas Jefferson died.