

COLLECTABLES

Throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth century, no dining table was complete without a large oval plate on which meat could be carved.

Often used just once a week for the Sunday roast, these plates were often stored in between times on dressers or other plate racks, and therefore had a very decorative purpose too.

From around 1800 right through until the 1930s, birds such as grouse, pheasants, partridges, chickens and turkeys were all depicted as part of the pattern on these large plates, and some lesser known species of bird appeared as well.

Most of the designs were lithographed, taken from the original artwork of noted painters

than being used at the dining table.

While the type of bird depicted – and how well it is recreated – will add to its visual appeal and thus its value, these plates are normally valued not by the artists' work, but by the manufacturer of the plate.

Many of them are anonymous, with no maker's mark on the back, and they'll typically be twenty or thirty pounds in price at the antiques fairs, shops, and auctions. Older examples with rarer designs can fetch more, but plates by noted makers – perhaps Minton, Spode, Wedgwood, for example, will all attract premium prices and some of the better examples can be worth two or three hundred pounds.

From the 1930s onwards there was also a trend towards miniature



The maker's name is crucial, not the bird

oval plates, actually made to be used not as a carving surface, but to be eaten from.

Normally measuring about 12 inches at the widest point, these plates can often turn up in sets of six or even 12, and usually end up on the dresser, rather than the dining table.

Values will vary from just two or three pounds. A plate with matching sets fetches a little more.

Game plates are works of art A wonderful combination of skills on display

While many of these large oval meat plates had blue and white patterns, and could feature rural scenes, mythical castles, and country cottages, one of the most popular forms of decoration was to depict some of the game birds that might well end up being served from the plate itself!

of the period. The best known was J.J. Audubon, and his work and that of others was used by noted etchers such as Charles Turner, Robert Havell, William Lizars and John Gould.

Today, these oval plates are collected, mostly for decorative purposes, and are still hung on the wall or placed on the dresser, rather

Carol Markham and her pink tractor

Carol Markham is taking her pink tractor on a tour of many events around the County this summer fundraising for the Helen Rollason Cancer Charity. Carol was first diagnosed with breast cancer two years ago, and during this difficult time found the staff at the Helen Rollason Cancer Support Centre at Broomfield Hospital very friendly and helpful - especially during the initial shock of her diagnosis.

Carol decided that she wanted to support the charity by doing something a little different for fundraising, and it was when her son (who is a member of a local tractor club) took her to numerous tractor fairs to get her out and about, that she decided to marry the two together. So the tractor was found, and sprayed pink by Gary Brewster, Director of Brewster Motors in Chelmsford.



Pot Luck Quiz

- 1 Which author, broadcaster and campaigner against miscarriages of justice died, aged 89?
- 2 The BBC Trust ruled that which satire show breached guidelines for comments about swimmer Rebecca Adlington in a broadcast made in August 2008 ...?
- 3 ... And which panellist made the comments?
- 4 BAA agreed to sell Gatwick airport, to which Investment fund which already owns a 75 per cent stake in London City Airport, for a fee of £1.51bn?
- 5 Passengers bound for Newcastle Airport were delayed in Murcia, Spain while their plane was partially dismantled when what fell into an air vent?
- 6 Who confidently kicked off the BBC's Electric Proms at the Roundhouse, his first full gig for three years, overcoming stage fright after an unsteady appearance on X Factor?
- 7 Which actor, who played villain Dr No in the first James Bond film, died aged 91?
- 8 Who denied writing a foreword to a book by Republic of Congo's President Denis Sassou-Nguesso, which praises Mr Sassou-Nguesso as one of our great African leaders?
- 9 Researchers warned that too much what can damage the teeth by eroding the enamel?
- 10 A government ad warning about what, featuring a father telling his daughter a bedtime story about a very very strange world with horrible consequences for children, is to be investigated by watchdogs over claims it is misleading and too scary?

For solutions see pages 28 & 29

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