

Newsletter332

Keith's Corner/McGill News

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Antique's Magic Quality

Antiques, are things leftover from previous generations, that we revere. That is fine, but then I feel sorry for the first generation of cave folks. They didn't have any antiques. Their kids might revere their father's club to hunt for food or their mother's, bowl shaped rock to grind grain for bread.

We are lucky that we have many generations of leftovers to revere.

Antiques always fascinated me. They have a magical ability to make our minds time travel back into the past. I see this in other people, like the ones that are visiting the McGill Drugstore Museum. They see things that take them back to their younger years.

They make comments like, "I remember that when I visited my grandparents", or "my parents used that when I was a kid".

That happened to me the other day while looking around Marlene's World Famous, McGill Antiques store here in McGill. She had acquired an old 'IDEAL' double compartment tub setup for rinsing soap laden clothes, from an old Maytag type washing machine. The sight of it quickly took me back to my childhood days, watching Mom do the week's laundry. Back in those days, Mom's had certain days to do things around the house, like bake day, wash day, iron day etc. The reason for this is that fact that it took all day to accomplish the

different tasks. Take wash day for instance. Mom would have to add coal to the kitchen stove to heat water to wash the clothes. Then, she would wheel the Maytag washer from the back porch to the kitchen sink and using either a bucket or a short hose, fill the washer. The kitchen faucets back then had a garden hose thread for this purpose. Mom pushed the washer back to the porch and plugged it into an electrical socket, load the clothes, add shaved soap, (usually Naptha), as there were no soap powders for washers.

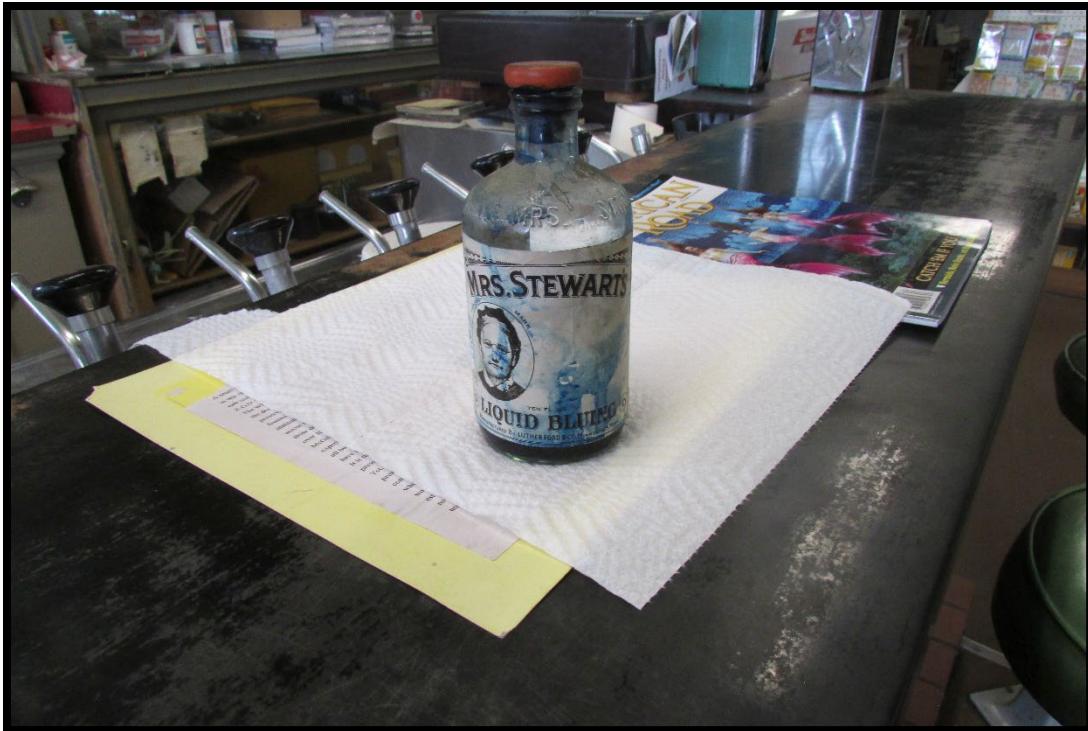
While the washer was running, Mom wheeled the “Ideal” tubs into the kitchen, filled them and put them back on the porch. When the washing cycle was over, she moved the Maytag next to the tubs, swung the big wringer out over the left tub and ran the clothes thru the ringer into the rinse water. Then she swung the ringer between the two tubs and ran the rinsed clothes into the second tub that she had put in some Mrs. Stewart’s bluing liquid to brighten the clothes. It also was used to whiten sheets etc. Next, she ran the clothes thru the wringer again and into a clothes basket. She carried the basket of clothes outside to the clothesline and hung them on the line using wooden clothespins. When all the clothes were on the one, she had to hook a hose to the bottom outlet of the washer and the tubs and drain them out the back door. All this took a whole day and that is why they had a Wash Day and this is an example of the Magic of Antiques. Try it sometime.

Here are some photos of the IDEAL tubs at the McGill Antique store.



An "IDEAL", dual laundry tub in perfect condition. Notice how Marlene used her talent to display the tubs with other older laundry items. The tubs came with a cover to place on top and provide shelf space. The bucket on the right could be used to fill the tubs from a sink. The washboard and the washtub plunger were used before washing machines. The large white pot was used to hold clothes that had been dampened for ironing.





Mrs. Stewart's bluing liquid.

Today 'laundry day 'is anyutime you have a few minutes to load a washing machin, add a cube of soap, push a button. The clothes are washed, rinsed and spun dry and are ready to putin the dryer. No more loading the washer, ringing clothes several times, hanging them outside on a clothesline. The only drawback is that sheets hung on an outside clothesline in the sunshine have a much better smell than from an automatic dryer. Few young people can relate to that.