

Take a close look at those rusty old oil tins that have been shoved at the back of your shed for the last thirty years. As Wayne Atkins writes, there might be someone out there prepared to pay top dollar for your 'trash'...

Not sure what might be collectable? You'd be surprised. Apart from the more usual enamel signs, collections of oil bottles etc., there are also ACCA club members who specialise in, for example, oil company letterheads. Or radiator grilles, Or road maps (some of them are quite lavishly illustrated). Or tin oil pourers. And if you're lucky enough to uncover an old petrol pump languishing unloved in your backyard, you could easily make a good was of cash from your discovery...



Saving a collectable item from being discarded is the common goal of any collector, followed only by acquiring and lovingly caring for it before it moves to another collector to enjoy. Many collectable items such as jewellery, china and stamps are well-known to the public, commonly beckoning the thought, 'I won't throw this out, it may be worth something to someone.' But the old one-gallon tin that contained grandpa's two-stroke motor mower fuel often presents more of a challenge. Enter the Automobilia Collector's Club of Australia. Founded in 1992, the club is for those interested in collecting automobile-related items such as advertising signs, literature, radiator badges, body badges, identification plates, motoring club badges, mascots, motor meters, hub caps, spark plugs, number plates, manuals, vulcanising clamps and tyre/tube repair outfits,

Mobil, Golden Fleece, Ampol and BP seriously competed for the motorists' trade, and naturally advertised and promoted their products heavily. Every service station pre-1970s held a treasure trove of items (most collectors desire items pre-1960s). These were practical items that we all regularly saw, used and purchased in the maintenance of our vehicles, holding little regard for the promotion attached or packaging of the contents. Little wonder that they are not instantly recognised as being of collectable value!

On occasions the value can be significant, although most items fall into the hundreds, versus the thousands of dollars, which may also contribute to the apathy. On the other hand, a great collection can be grown over time for a relatively small outlay; many items are only at the \$10-\$100 mark, but provide immense pleasure to their new owners. The relatively inexpensive nature of this collecting category has seen its popularity rise in the past ten years, as 'oily' items often cost less than other collectable categories.

Common channels exist to ACCA members to purchase their desired objects, such as on-line auctions, antique and collector specific auctions, antique and collector specific auctions and swap meets. Markets and garage sales occasionally offer items, but as a group we suspect there are many, many items still in private garages and in raising awareness of such items, we hope to save these pieces from landfill and destruction. With

the recent skyrocketing price of steel, many scrap metal dealers acquired items containing significant amounts of steel – such as petrol pumps- and simply handed them. Containing significant amounts of steel – such as petrol pumps – and simply handled them as 'worth in weight' to send to the smelter. Pieces of history were tragically lost forever in rural and country areas across Australia. The fall in value of scrap metal has at least slowed this alarming loss for the moment.

The Automobilia Collectors Club of Australia provides a membership Register of fellow collectors and lists what they collect, thereby kindling friendships with people of similar collecting interest. The well-researched and highly informative quarterly magazine educates members on this exciting hobby. Membership is of further value by the provision of an annual index of Magazine Articles and annual gatherings are held in each State. We welcome new members and enquires from the public, especially on items for sale. So the next time you're in your shed or garage, take a look around at the old garagenalia, automobilia, petroliana and oily collectables, and rescue an item that will be cherished in a member's display!

# GARAGE GARBAGE

## OR IS IT?

Garage tools and equipment, motoring accessories and pedal cars. In addition, our members are passionate about collecting the vast range of oil industry-related items such as petrol pumps, oil bottles and their tops and racks, oil and grease tins, signs, road maps, ephemera, advertising and associated pieces.

The category of collectables is possible as vague as the items we collect, ranging in description from garagenalia and automobilia to petroliana and a term we collectors often use, 'oily collectables', insinuating that they are dirty and oily, which could not be further from the truth. Items are meticulously cleaned and displayed!

The problem is that the things about which we are so passionate often end their lives as unrecognised junk and regularly end up as landfill. Stories are recounted on visits to garage sales where every example of household goods are on offer, but nothing to satisfy our ACCA club member. Upon asking the question whether the seller has any oil bottles or tins, an item emerges from the garage to the perplexed look of the seller, thinking 'You really want this?'

The lack of public awareness of desired items is possibly due to the enormous numbers of items manufactured. Companies such as Shell, Caltex,



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