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VINTAGE VALENTINES

LI COLLECTORS AND SELLERS FALL IN LOVE WITH COLLECTIBLES MADE FOR THE HOLIDAY **B2**

PLUS A PROMISE RING COMEBACK **B4**

LOVE SOME SCARES? It's the last night of the 'Bayville Valentine Haunt' newsday.com/lifestyle



VIDEO

See Walter Dworkin's Valentine's-themed collection
[newsday.com/lifestyle](https://www.newsday.com/lifestyle)

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MORGAN CAMPBELL

ON THE COVER Walter Dworkin with his vintage Valentine's Day ceramic collection at his home in Westbury. "They're a walk down memory lane," he says.

Old-fashioned LOVE

LI spots that sell declarations of love, with history

BY ANNE BRATSKER
 Special to Newsday

In the best of cases, love is long lasting and to underscore the notion, some Long Islanders believe that tokens of endearment should at least have a little history behind them. This is certainly the case for avid

vintage ceramics collector Walter Dworkin, 77, of Westbury, who is the author of three books on collecting and has been amassing antique pieces celebrating all major holidays for some 45 years.

'A GOOD OMEN'

His substantial Valentine's Day assemblage includes about 100 figurines, music and trinket boxes, vases, candy dishes, salt and pepper shakers and even a bank that when a coin is placed inside, two coil figures collide and kiss. "They depict an era of days gone by," says Dworkin. "They're a walk down memory lane, and I think, as a gift, it's a very charming thing to give someone today — something that's a half a century old. They're often colorful and interesting and the figurines are meant to be given to a loved one. They're a good omen."

Dworkin's collection focuses on items made in Japan and, in some ways, are symbolic of better times in the United States, he explains. "In the 1950s and '60s, we were just coming off the

Korean War, real estate was expanding, especially in places like Levittown. Money had been tight and, suddenly, people had more of it in their pockets and a bright look to the future."

His pieces, especially from that era, "were made so intricately," he says, underscoring the appeal of the textural "spaghetti art" technique used then. "So many of them are beautiful gifts," he says. And they can be valuable, too, adds Dworkin, who generally doesn't sell his stuff but says similar goods can be found on online marketplaces for \$39 to \$250. He says, "They're very hot right now."

SHOPS AROUND LI

At Wit & Whim, an eclectic gift boutique in Port Washington, owners Krissy Harper and Jacquelyn Conte scour estate sales and antique shows for sometimes kitschy, sometimes romantic Valentine's Day gifts from decades ago.

"The symbol for Valentine's Day is love," says Harper. "So, a gift that's unique to someone you love, that



A 1970's confection tin from England for \$24 at Wit & Whim in Port Washington.



Postcards from the heart (from 1900-1930) go for \$2 to \$4 at Rosie's Vintage.

shows emotion or affection, has special meaning when it's from years gone by." Here, customers will discover funky trinket trays, tins featuring Victorian courting scenes, gold-edged porcelain plates with loving sentiments and even a darling Cupid brooch to celebrate the holiday.

There are plenty of last-minute Valentine's Day shoppers at Rosie's Vintage in Huntington, where owner Thea Morales says her customers can be very creative, as in the case of one gentleman who purchased a classic lady head vase from the '30s and filled it to the brim with flowers. There are little tokens of affection such as novelty

buttons from the '70s-'80s that bear cute phrases such as, "I'm Mad About U," and, "I Think You're Hot Stuff, Valentine!" and sell for \$2 to \$5.

There are lovely old confectionary tins, planters and loads of romantic Valentine's cards from the early 1900s (\$2 to \$4) that express sweet sentiments and can be mailed or attached to another gift. "A person who loves vintage or grew up during the time these things were popular would appreciate gifts like these. They're nostalgic and heartwarming," says Morales. "Somebody loved these things before.

What better way to show your love will last a lifetime with a gift from a lifetime ago?"



One of Walter Dworkin's ceramic trinket boxes.

MORGAN CAMPBELL

FACES OF LONG ISLAND



“ I would sometimes be on the ice, and I'd get the feeling of 'You don't belong out here,' and 'We're going to make you know you don't belong out here.' ”

MUTTONTOWN

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