

Book Collecting

Rare book collecting has been a hobby of mine for several years now. So allow me to impart some knowledge which many collectors and book dealers keep a well kept secret. Collecting books is not rocket science and is open to anyone no matter what their budget. Anyone with half a brain and a computer can become a book seller and start earning an income from what I believe to be the most rewarding hobby on the planet.

My start point was in 2000, when one of my brothers came to visit, I had two bags of what I classed as junk ready to go to the charity shops. My brother who was making a living from selling antiques via ebay, and specialist markets, told me I was wasting money as a lot of the items destined for the charity shop would sell on ebay. Although I was aware of ebay and had looked at the site several years earlier I had not actually sold anything on it. A few weeks later having the time and the motivation I decided to take my brothers advice, I duly photographed and listed the junk on ebay and hey presto, ten days later, most of the items had sold and I was £150.00 the richer. I rather liked the fact of being able to make money from what I perceived as items not worth keeping. So the natural progression was to find more items to sell at little expense. The next couple of months saw me scouring the car boot sales and charity shops for those bargains to make a quick profit from. However, I soon became fed up with the vast array of bric'a'brac lying around the house and the constant packaging challenges, trips to the post office, etc. I had a stop and pause about what I was trying to achieve. It was at this juncture that I met a colleague from work who had been buying and selling old books, Capt WE Johns "Biggles" to be precise! He explained the basics of spotting first editions and post this discussion I decided it was not good being a jack of all trades and master of none. Why books, well I have always loved reading and unbeknown to me my Grandfather was an avid collector, so I guess it was not only an obvious choice but in my genes as well. Having made the decision to restrict myself to books I started to investigate the terms book collecting, rare books, antique books and modern first editions. The expertise to be able to recognize a first edition took me one afternoon several cups of coffee and sore eyes from reading at the computer, yes it was that easy. The web is fantastic in this respect, there are hundreds of articles out there that instantly teach you the art of recognizing first editions, which then enables you to spot rare and antique books as well. I guess what I am saying is that it becomes a natural progression, once you have the basics. So I hit the charity shops, car boot sales and small book dealers to see what was out there. The experiment was to see how much money I could make over a six month period just selling books via ebay. The turn over was very healthy, however, the fees charged by ebay and paypal really ate into the profit, which really got my goat! I continued to sell books through ebay for another three years or so, when out of frustration with the fees I decided to go it alone so to speak!

I believed I could make more money if I could sell my books direct, missing out the middle man called ebay, so I taught myself web design and purchased an auction software package and in Sep 2005 I launched the site bid4abook.co.uk. It has not been plain sailing and yes I made more mistakes than correct ones, but I now have a site that pays for itself through advertising and allows me and anyone else out there to sell used books for free. I have written several articles on the topic of book collecting which are listed within my site and will teach anyone out there who would like to learn how to sell used books for profit. I will finish by saying if you want to be a millionaire then book collecting is probably not the way to go, but if you want a fun hobby that can also make you money then it is worth trying out.

About the Author

John Harvey has been an avid collector of rare and antique books for several years. In 2005 he started up his own antique and rare book auction site bid4abook.co.uk. The site is free for buyers and sellers of books. In addition he runs a book search service at buythebook.eu.

Source: <http://www.articletrader.com>