

Garage Sale Gal **THE ARIZONA REPUBLIC**



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Car boot sales quite pukka (smashing, super)

Lynda Hammond

Sandra Conarton grew up flogging goods at car boot sales. This is British lingo. Sure Brits speak the English language just like us but also like us they have their own slang. So, here's the translation: Sandra was *selling* things from the *trunk of her car* in a field.

I was at a garage sale the other day where I bought a really cute bunny dish for just \$2. The women holding the sale were having a jolly good time and as I was eavesdropping I detected an accent. "Do I hear a British accent?" "Yes you do," Sandra told me.

As I began talking with Sandra about garage sales in her hometown--Birmingham in the West Midlands Region of England—I realized we could have *waffled* (talked on and on) all day. Sandra moved here three years ago to be closer to her daughter who lives in Scottsdale.

It was interesting discovering facts about England's way of clearing the clutter. There are no garage sales there. The Brits sell things similar to how a flea market works here. Vehicles are loaded up—usually the family car-- and folks set up shop in a field. But you better be full of beans (have loads of energy) because the fields are huge and there are cars for "as far as you can see". It's about \$20 to rent a space for the day. But chances are you'll make that back fairly easily. "Depending what you have to sell—especially if it is something desirable-- you can make a couple hundred pounds (about \$400)." The atmosphere is fair-like, where car booters can buy snacks and coffee or tea, home baked goods, new or used items and or pick up a tea set from a professional antiques dealer. "It's one stop shopping. You don't have to drive around from house to house. You can go and park and just walk around." One drawback to sales in England is the weather. It rains often and car boot sales are only held during the warmer months.

On the flipside, here in Arizona we can shop and sell just about any day of the year. Yippee! (Garage Sale Gal slang for hurrah!) Sandra also admits it's much more convenient to walk out the front door and hold a sale rather than taking stuff somewhere else and selling it.

And it's unlikely what happened to Sandra at her recent sale in Mesa, Az., USA, would ever happen at a car boot sale abroad.

Sandra sold a set of luggage—four pieces, nearly brand new-- for just \$25. About three hours later the woman who bought the luggage returned with something Sandra had been looking "high and low" for, for several years—photographs with sentimental value. "I was really excited. I was delighted she took the time to come back. It meant a lot to me to get those back. I should have checked the bags before I sold them." In England the buyer would've had a tough time finding Sandra again in the sea of cars in a meadow.

So, I do say, happy garage saling and until next week, pip pip! (Good-bye!)



(pic by Lynda Hammond) Sandra Conarton grew up in England where there's no such thing as garage sales—can you believe it? But they do have sales in a field where anyone can set up shop. “It was fun, something to do on the weekend. It was always exciting to go through other people's junk and find treasures of your own,” says Sandra who now lives in Mesa. By the way, that's her granddaughter, Natalie Smith, 12, on the right—one of the reasons Sandra moved to Arizona.

MY FAVORITE FIND

Send us a picture of your favorite garage sale find. Include your name, email address and phone number and email it to: Lynda@GarageSaleGal.com. Watch for the story of *your* treasure in this column!

Lynda Hammond is a former television anchor who left the anchor desk for the love of garage sales. Contact her at Lynda@GarageSaleGal.com. Lynda also does garage sale segments on 3-TV's Good Morning Arizona.

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