

Lynda Hammond **THE GARAGE SALE GAL**



*Rich history at garage sales in the
east*

Lynda Hammond

A big week next week—it's the inauguration of the 44th President of the United States. A lot of us may not be going to the ceremony but there's still a way we can feel a bit closer to the historic event. How does an inaugural blanket for \$150 sound? Or a \$500 Barack Obama picture signed (by the artist)? Or maybe you'd prefer a presidential tea cup and saucer for just \$78. That's some of the merchandise up for sale to mark the day--stuff that just might one day end up in Heidi Ludkey's bathroom. "I don't mean to diminish these things. In fact, it's just the opposite. I'm putting them up on a pedestal. It's just that it's in my bathroom," Heidi says.

Yep, thanks to garage sales Heidi has a presidential-themed powder room in her Mclean, Vir. home just outside Washington, D.C. She and her husband moved there from the Valley almost two years ago. Heidi loved bargain hunting in Arizona and the move hasn't changed a thing. "I was actually looking forward to it. The area is so much older and the chances are great here of getting antiques at garage sales. You think of the length of time the people have been living out here I just really thought there would be a larger selection of antiquities and I've certainly found that to be true."

So, Heidi is buying up some of those old things at garage sales close to her home hunting for treasures in upscale areas in Maryland and Arlington in Virginia. A lot of what catches her eye is presidential memorabilia which is why she wanted a designated place to put it all-- the guest bathroom. A few of the tchotchkes she's discovered: a 1950s Eisenhower plate with a smiling Ike and Mamie for just \$10 from a garage sale—which she uses as a soap dish; a coffee cup from the 2000 inauguration of President Bush for \$3 and a book on presidential doodles for just \$2. "Oh, the sales are such a wealth of history. It's just a gold mine out here because so many people save these things for so long and then just want to get rid of them."

Heidi also likes estate sales---where a seller is getting rid of just about everything in a household. Heidi says even if she doesn't buy a thing they're hard to pass up. "You go into these places, Lynda and the ladies will have a hundred ball gowns for sale because they've gone to so many functions. It's just fantastic memorabilia because the sellers spent a lifetime in government."

Heidi says she'll skip the upcoming inauguration ceremony Tuesday to avoid the big crowds that are expected. "I don't have Obama things in the bathroom yet. I'll get memorabilia at garage sales."

President Eisenhower once said; “There’s no victory at bargain basement prices”. That’s the sentiment in a 1946 Eisenhower speech but for Heidi and those of us who love garage sales, it sure feels like triumph when we find a unique bit of history for a few bucks.



(pic provided Heidi Ludkey) Former Valley resident Heidi Ludkey holds one of her estate sale buys she’s made since moving to the Washington, D.C. area. And then behind her on the wall? An August 1990 note and picture to an ambassador signed by then President Herbert Walker Bush and First Lady, Barbara she bought for \$20. “I thought it was deal. You can’t find that stuff unless it’s at garage sales or estate sales,” Heidi says.

Garage Sale Tale?

Do you have a question, comment or garage sale tale you’d like to tell us about? Email the Garage Sale Gal: Lynda@GarageSaleGal.com.

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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