

Finders Keepers—*Vintage Aluminum Serving Pieces*

There are a couple of rules for collecting and displaying your collections:

- Collect what you love
- Display items in odd numbers (three things “look” better than two, five “look” better than four)
- A good deal is the price you are willing to pay

I’ve been picking up aluminum serving pieces for a couple of years. They became popular during the depression when metalworkers were looking for more affordable metals to use. Most of the pieces you will find today are from the 1950s and ‘60s when hammered aluminum reached their height in popularity. You can still find items today at Goodwill and flea markets for a few dollars.

Forged aluminum or hammered aluminum serving pieces were available in every serving style imaginable. The three-part divided platter is hammered with a scalloped edge. The bottom is stamped: “Lehman Aluminum Hand Forged”.

This water pitcher is hammered with an attached handle and spout. You can see the hammer marks on the body. There isn’t a seam line on the body or bottom. It’s stamped “Everlast Forged Aluminum. I love the clean lines of this piece. It’s still perfect for serving iced tea or refilling water glasses at the dinner table.



A '60s kitchen table wouldn't have been complete without a napkin holder. This piece is hammered too, but the pattern has a scale look. The top edge is notched. Dan Bartelt carved his name on the bottom. Perhaps this was made in shop class at school?



This leaf plate marked "Wendell August Forge, Inc. #835", is probably the best piece in my collection. The Wendell August Company has been in business since the early 1930s and is still operating today. The plate is embossed in their bittersweet pattern with a notched edge. It really has a 'hand forged' appearance. I picked this up for \$4.99 and have seen it on collector sites for seven or eight times what I paid for it!



The large serving bowl is etched in a very pretty elegant design. These companies were trying to copy expensive silver and silver plate serving pieces that the average 1950s or '60s "housewife" could afford. It was made by N.S. Co Wrought Aluminum.



The covered casserole is unmarked and was only \$1.99. You can serve snacks or cold food in it. I would find a glass dish that fits before I served a hot item. Wouldn't it look great on the table? You could even use it as an ice bucket.



The divided candy or condiment dish with cover is also unmarked. The cover has a chrysanthemum and leaf design along with a flower finial. Filled with candy, this would be the perfect hostess gift.



The tulip basket is also a great piece. Marked "Hand Wrought Creations by Rodney Kent" #429, I found the same piece selling for \$30.00 online. The tulip design is embossed on a hammered base. The attached handle is flowers and ribbons. The back side is as pretty as the front.



Since aluminum pieces haven't been discovered yet, they are still affordable. Not only will they look good on your dinner or buffet table, you can bring your dish or appetizer to pass to the next party and leave the platter for the hostess. You will get rave reviews at bargain prices!

