

Object information





Crinoline Lady Table Brush

These Lady table crumb brushes were popular in the early 1950s. She was sold by Betterware, a popular company in the twentieth century that sold household products. A crinoline is a stiff or structured petticoat designed to hold out a skirt. You can see how the brush bristles represent her large dress design.

Suggested conversation starters: household cleaning, catalogues.



Carbolic Soap

Carbolic Soap has a distinctive smell and colour. It was first introduced in 1894 and can be used for washing clothes as well as washing your body!

Suggested conversation starters: wash days, brands of the past.



Darning Mushroom

Households used darning mushrooms to repair old clothes. To fix a hole in clothing – a good example is a sock – by stretching the material over the mushroom shape and repair the hole by stitching backwards and forwards.

Suggested conversation starters: Make do and Mend, fashions.



Decorative plate

This decorative plate is from the 1950s. Plates like this were made by Ridgway potteries under the Homemaker brand and sold in Woolworths stores. The design features a black and white design featuring illustrations of the latest fashionable home furnishings. Woolworths stopped trading in 2009.

Suggested conversation starters: bygone trends, shopping in the past.



Greetings cards x6

Traditional birthday cards for a one-year-olds birthday. Sending handmade, paper birthday cards go back as far as the early 15th century! The first Christmas card was sent in 1843, by Sir Henry Cole. He was a post office worker and wanted more ordinary people to use the postal service.

Suggested conversation starters: Birthdays and celebrations.



Illustrated Magazine

This popular magazine was first published in 1898 by Odhams Press in London. This issue is from December 19th 1953 and includes articles about Queen Elizabeth's Commonwealth tour and the TV programme Muffin the Mule.

Suggested conversation starters: old adverts, old film stars and TV programmes, old publications.



1950s Scrapbook

These scrapbooks are great to see all the old brands and how much our buying habits have changed!

Suggested conversation starters: brands, household equipment, changing trends.



Lavender Pomander

Pomanders are used around the house to ward off unpleasant smells. They have been used since the Middle Ages where they were used as protection to ward off diseases or expel foul smells! The centre is filled with aromatic substances, like Lavender to perfume the air and is usually stored in drawers or cupboards.

Suggested conversation starters: popular scents through time.



Light switch

The first light switch that used the up/down on/off was invented by John Henry Holmes in 1884 in Newcastle upon Tyne. This vintage switch is made of Bakelite and switches like this were popular in the 1930s.

Suggested conversation starters: home renovations, different materials, DIY.



Milk Bottle

This glass milk bottle is from Britton Dairies, which operated from Main Street, Fulford, from the 1920s. The UK began to transition away from glass milk bottles in the late 1970s.

Suggested conversation starters: milk deliveries, changing trends in shopping.



OXO Tin

OXO introduced its famous OXO cubes in 1910. The brand was well known throughout the twentieth century. Lots of households kept their handy oxo tins to use for storage when they were finished with. They are known for storing things like sewing kits, screws, nuts and bolts etc. Today OXO cubes are sold in cardboard boxes.

Suggested conversation starters: tv adverts, keeping tins to store things in.



Puzzledem party game

Puzzledem party game – used in the home. This photo guessing game shows strange angles of regular household objects and players must guess what they are.

Suggested conversation starters: games night, parties, friends.



Rotary dial telephone

On the 14 January 1878 Alexander Graham Bell demonstrated a telephone device to Queen Victoria. Bell originally proposed "Ahoy!" as the standard greeting for answering the telephone! The first patent for a rotary dial was in 1892. They were a common sight on telephones until the 1980s when touch tone buttons gradually replaced dialling on phone models.

Suggested conversation starters: talking on the phone, sharing a line, internet, mobile phones.



Records

Beatles, Bach, Bacharach Go Bossa LP is a 12-track easy listening record from 1971.

Top of the Pops record from 1971 includes tracks such as My Sweet Lord, Your Song and She's a Lady.

Christmas with Pinky and Perky 7" record from 1961 includes songs such as Jingle Bells and Little Donkey sung by Pinky and Perky.

The Ovaltine Theme for Swinging Ovaltiners 7" record
The Ovaltine song is sung by Eric Delaney and the Beat Group.

Suggested conversation starters: parties, favourite music, collecting, nights out.



Smith's crisps tin

Smith's Potato Crisps Ltd was founded by Frank Smith and Jim Viney in 1920. The packets used to contain a twist of salt with its crisps in greaseproof paper bags. Smiths created the popular Salt and Vinegar flavour in 1967.

Suggested conversation starters: snacks, packed lunches.



Stoneware Hot Water Bottle

Hot water bottles like this were popular in the first half of the 20th century. They were filled with hot water via the cap at the top. This was screwed back in place and the bottle would be placed inside bedsheets to warm them up.

Suggested conversation starters: guess the object, household objects.



Wills Cigarette Cards – Air Raid Precautions

Collecting cards given away with cigarette packets was popular in the early twentieth century. The themes on the cards could be anything from animals, flowers, or cartoons. This set is from the second world war and shows illustrations of how to protect yourself during an air raid.

Suggested conversation starters: collecting, cigarette smoking.

You can see various home objects through time in the following galleries at our venues:

York Castle Museum	Victorian Street, The Period Rooms, The Sixties, The Kitchens.
Yorkshire Museum	Roman and Medieval galleries.
York Art Gallery	Centre of Ceramic Art, Burton Gallery.

Alongside these objects, you'll find our Collection Cards that feature images of items from our museums and galleries, with prompts, questions, and facts to spark more conversations.