



60-5

Caring for your Silver



ilver objects epitomize both practicality and elegance . . . eminently suitable for everyday living as well as special occasions and celebrations. Did you know that:

- Solid silver (like gold) is too soft to withstand general use, so silversmiths customarily use alloy with small portions of copper. Whatever you call it — sterling silver in the United States or silver plate in Great Britain — it consists of 925 out of 1000 parts pure silver.
- Since the 12th century, the British silver trade has painstakingly regulated Old English silver. The Worshipful Company of Goldsmiths is entrusted with the traditional task of hallmarking — providing the small letters and symbols on the bottom of each piece that tell you something of its history.
- Pieces from the Georgian era are the most valuable, followed by those from the Victorian and then the Edwardian period. While the age of a silver object is a significant factor in establishing its value, nothing can substitute for the importance of fine design, craftsmanship, and tender loving care from an owner.
- Patina or bloom is the surface color of an individual silver item. Even when two pieces have the same amount of pure silver, each one has its own unique look and personality — so don't over rub when cleaning!

Here are some practical tips about taking care of your most prized pieces:

- Polish your silver no more than is necessary. Don't use all-purpose metal polishers or dip cleaners, but rather a nonabrasive foaming paste cleaner like Goddard's®.
- For difficult to reach areas, use a cotton swab, a jeweler's silver brush or the softest available natural bristle toothbrush.
- To polish or dry, use very soft cloths. The texture of a linen dishtowel is far too abrasive and may scratch. Handi Wipes®, recycled flannel nightgowns, cloth diapers and T-Shirts are ideal.
- Don't wrap silver in felt, newspapers, or chamois leather. Use special silver bags or put each piece in its own plastic bag. To avoid unnecessary tarnishing, press out as much air as possible before closing each bag. Avoid using rubber bands — they contain sulphur that can penetrate the wrapping material.
- Dust your silver pieces with a very soft watercolor brush. Dusting tends to scratch the surface, so do so gently and infrequently.

Our job is to help you protect the investment in your home and your valuables. In conjunction with Fireman's Fund Insurance Company, we are providing this series on Caring for your Valuable Possessions. It is part of our ongoing commitment to provide information as well as insurance.

Compliments of:



About the Artist's Work

This is an altered photograph by Michael Going — a unique art form that combines modern technology and traditional impressionistic techniques.

Mr. Going first shoots an image with a standard Polaroid camera. Once the picture is developed, he waits from five to thirty minutes. He then uses various tools and carefully manipulates the emulsion that lies beneath the protective acetate. The outcome is an impressionistic brush effect, a unique blend between painting and photography.

Fireman's Fund Insurance Company has selected Michael Going's work to represent their *Prestige*® homeowners policy. His images convey the warm, shimmering quality of the American home as an "oasis for the soul", deserving and worthy of the finest in insurance protection.

©The Market Planning Group, Norwell, Massachusetts, 1990



A company of the
Allianz Group