EPSOM & EWELL TIMES
For the community, by the community. A not-for-profit service

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Up to £1 where sold

Urning a big profit on rare Epsom find

30 July 2023

A young Epsom couple will be making a large donation to charity after the miniature vase they purchased in an **Epsom** charity shop for £2.50 sold this weekend at auction for £6300.

The beautiful black Japanese cloisonne 4-inch-high vase by Namikawa Yasuyuki, featuring a cockerel, hen and chicks was created during the late 19th century. The same technique was used to create the taller red vase shown, which I purchased from the Debra charity shop in Ewell Village a few years ago.

Whilst charity shops, like Debra in Ewell and the one in Epsom the young couple visited, are always on the lookout for Asian treasures, due to the profitable Chinese and Japanese antique markets, work of the quality of Yasuyuki rarely finds its way onto the bric-a-brac shelves of charity shops; so it is not difficult to understand how the fine detailed cloisonne work was overlooked and perhaps mistaken for a transfer print. Note how different the red Debra charity shop Japanese cloisonne vase looks to the young Epsom couple's find.

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Cloisonne is the technique of creating designs on metal vessels with coloured glass paste which is placed within enclosures made of copper or bronze wires attached to the vessel. Then the vessel is fired in a kiln at a temperature of about 800C.

Although there were markings on the base of the black cloisonne vase, it would have taken an expert to understand the significance of these, which is why the young Epsom couple contacted Canterbury Auction Galleries who succeeded in selling the much sought after vase today. The auction house had sold a larger vase by Yasuyuki for £29,000 in April 2019.

The Epsom couple that found the Yasuyuki cloisonne vase have generously pledged to make a large donation to the Epsom charity shop they purchased the vase from.

The finders intend to treat themselves to a well-deserved holiday with the remaining sale proceeds.

DEBRA was established in 1978 by Phyllis Hilton, whose daughter Debra had epidermolysis bullosa (EB), as the world’s first patient support group for people living with EB. Epidermolysis bullosa is the name for a group of painful genetic skin conditions that cause the skin to become very fragile and tear or blister at the slightest touch.

The local branch can be found at 78 High St, Ewell, Epsom KT17 1RE

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