

A Unique “Antique Road Show” in Your Own Back Yard

By John H. Vargo, Publisher

Astor Galleries,

of Kingston, NY has taken the very popular television concept of appraisal of Fine Art, Jewelry, and Antiques & Collectibles to a local level.

While the intention of Astor Galleries is to provide individuals who wish to liquidate personal property by providing them with honest evaluations, as well as reliable and compassionate service, enabling them to get a fair price for those items.

St. Mary's Episcopal Church is a tremendous asset to the village of Cold Spring, it acts as a centerpiece and provides an exclamation point to the beautiful village and what Cold Spring is all about.

I had seen a sign posted on the corner of St. Mary's Church in Cold Spring that said "Auction Appraisals December 5" that triggered me to act on my supposedly valuable mirror stacked in my basement

with other "valuable assets". So one beautiful Saturday morning in December I finally decided to see if the big old heavy mirror was actually worth what someone said it was worth.

Arriving very early this Saturday morning I could see that it was not only going to be an auction appraisal but a Farmers Market both outside and inside another building. The Farmers Market



Laying before the appraiser is an 1854 Officers sword.

is a regular function of St. Mary's and provides much-needed funding to maintain the beautiful church. The auction appraisal was brand-new to St. Mary's and was held in the church itself.

Just inside the church itself there was a table set up to register your antique and pay ten dollars per appraisal. You were then assigned a number so that there was order to the operation of the appraisers who sat in front of the altar of the church. (The money collected was St. Mary's way of collecting much needed income for St. Mary's repairs.)

I was number 5 to register. The appraisals began at 10 Am sharp. When called I took my mirror to the front of the church and approached an appraiser. Polite to the point of perfection, the gentleman asked, "how did you acquire the item? When I explained it had been in our house as long as I could remember he went on to asked as anyone ever appraised it before? I said, "no however someone who saw it in our basement said it might be very valuable!"

After some additional small talk the appraiser said, "if this mirror was in excellent condition it would be worth 3 to four thousand dollars! However this mirror is in very poor condition, but you should be aware that it is still worth 3 to 4 hundred dollars!" I was amazed to say the least.

Looking around there were at least 4 or 5 other men and woman appraising items lying before them on the tables. Heading up the entire group was Stephen Cardile, Director of Acquisitions for Astor Galleries.

I introduced myself and said, "do you mind if I do a story on this unique concept?" He was far to busy to talk on this morning. He agreed and I picked up my mirror and walked threw the now gathering line of people waiting for appraisals.

After interviewing Steve on the telephone it turned out that he has done a number of these "road shows" in 2015 and intends to do many more in 2106.

One unique service that Astor Galleries offers to individuals is to provide a ten-dollar appraisal via email to individuals who cannot make one of the local road shows.

In order to participate vial email go to; <http://www.astorgalleries.com/-10-appraisals.html> and follow the instructions. There is a ten-dollar fee for each appraisal or 25 dollars for 3 items discounted donation.

You can also contact Astor Galleries, email at stephen@astorgalleries.com or by calling 800 784 7876

Astor Galleries is located at 50 Main St., Kingston, NY 12402

