



Sew — what's it worth?

Dear Connie Sue,
I would like to know the origin and current value of my New Deal sewing machine.

Thanks,
Marilyn Galloway
Rogersville

Dear Marilyn,

By 1890, many families in the U.S. had a treadle or crank sewing machine. Victorian treadle sewing machines were sturdily built and evoke the image of our matriarchs producing clothing from yardage. Many machines still function, and most could be restored with a little oil and patience on a rainy afternoon. Also in 1890, an ad for the New Home Sewing-Machine Company read: "The Most Popular of all sewing machines is the Light Running NEW HOME. Rapidly taking the



New Deal

place of all machines ... 200,000 sold yearly ... liberal inducements to dealers." From their plant in New York City, Marilyn, they manufactured your machine, the New Deal model.

Because of the box that covers it, this is called a "coffin" model. Unfortunately, that feature prevents its use as a table-top, which makes it less attractive to buyers. It's worth \$90. Although the case looks a bit rough, the machine appears to be threaded, so I assume it's in working order. Originally, the New Deal cost \$12.

Connie,

I have an Eldredge Model B treadle sewing machine that was made between 1869 and 1890. It has a very nice wood cabinet with a chain lift to raise the machine into place and has three drawers on each side for sewing accessories. I would like to know its value and if there is a current buyer's market for it.

Thank you,
Annette



Eldredge

appears rusty, it drops into the top and is covered by the furniture's apron, which makes it a more versatile piece of furniture. The flat top and six drawers could provide storage and a table top for any room. I'd ask \$185 for it. In today's market, there are sewing machines aplenty and not enough buyers.

Elias Howe is credited with inventing the sewing machine in 1845. By 1871, nearly 1,000 different patents for machines had been issued. Of course, the most familiar sewing machine company is Singer. In 1997, Singer Sewing Company relocated its consumer services division to LaVergne, Tenn. It celebrated its 150th anniversary in 2001. ☺



Eldredge

After only two editions of my antiques column, I've been very pleased with the response from readers! I've received many interesting inquiries about your antiques and collectables. Please keep in mind that for use in the magazine, I'll need good, clear photographs, along with any history and physical details of the piece. E-mails and letters are equally acceptable. Unfortunately, I can only provide values for the items that are published in the column. I am, however, available for private consultations.

Find an interesting piece while cleaning out the attic? Want some more information on a prized heirloom? Then send your detailed inquiries to Connie Sue Davenport and look for her answers in future issues of The Tennessee Magazine.



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