

Collecting Dinosaurs: What it was like to collect B.E. (Before Ebay)!

Written by Ron Sweet

Tuesday, 01 February 2011 03:46



Welcome!! This is the first entry of my very first blog! That's me on the far left.

The much more attractive dinosaur on the right is my long time friend and site-partner [Laura](#) .

Beginning with the official opening of our site, we hope to use this space to share with you some experiences and stories that helped us along the way. No, nobody made us an “authority” on collecting Michael Jackson records, CDs, or memorabilia. In fact, many of you out there probably have amassed collections larger (and/or more valuable) than ours by now. And believe it or not, there are collectors out there that have been collecting even 10-12 years longer than we have (yes, pre-historic, back when the Earth’s crust was still cooling), but I assure you it’s true!

Back in the early to mid-80’s when Laura and I first started collecting, we had to rely on some really good traders overseas to build our collections. Oops...you’re not familiar with the practice of “trading”? Well, it’s something that us collectors used to do “B.E.” (Before Ebay)! Back before Ebay was invented, we relied on collecting *publications* (back then, they were made out of actual *paper*, you know, from trees?) like Goldmine and Record Collector. That was how we were able to find things that we couldn’t buy locally. And then we would develop some relationships with sellers so that when they found MJ related items, they would contact us first...and this is how we would accumulate trade items

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to send to our trading partners overseas.

Yeah, it took a long time to complete trades back then, because email hadn't been invented yet. We used to have to write letters BY HAND, and then (if you were lucky), it would take a week to get to your trading pal, and then (if you were *really* lucky) you would hear back from them within two or three weeks (yeah—WEEKS!) Nowadays, a Pay Pal account and a couple "Buy It Now" clicks on Ebay is all you need to do anymore. In some ways, it's a little sad, as it takes a lot of the challenge and excitement out of finally finding that one item that you had spent weeks searching for. Or the overwhelming joy in getting a *huge* parcel filled with MJ rarities from a faraway land (for me, Europe or Japan), sent to you by someone who shared the same enthusiasm for collecting as you did.

But it's not all bad. In fact, on the plus side, the internet has opened up collecting to a whole new generation(s) of collectors, on a much wider scale than ever before. Laura and I hope this web site will inspire a "community" of MJ collectors who use this site to network with each other regardless of how or where you find your collectibles. Yes, the internet has *completely* changed collecting in the past 15 years. But one thing that hasn't changed is that it's still fun to add new items to your collection!

We look forward to interacting and "meeting " many of you, and hope that you decide to make this site your own, and create your own blog as well. To start your blog on our site, simply visit your [Profile](#) or click directly to your [Blog Dashboard](#) and click "New Blog". And then start writing whenever you feel the urge.

What to write about? Anything that is related to collecting, from why, when, and how you got started, your favorite items (or eras) to collect, your very first collectible, your most prized collectible(s), general collecting tips, and anything else that you think would be helpful, informative, or entertaining to other members. In other words...the *HIStory* of your collecting! If we feel your blog is a valuable resource for our members and you update it periodically, we will feature it on our site's

["Featured Blogs"](#)

page.

In the meantime, please feel free to browse our site to learn more [about us](#) , and read our [FAQ's](#) to learn why we are building this web site.

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Happy collecting!

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