

Iowa State College Yearbooks

\$4.00/2
Paid

From: Garage sale



Iowa State College Yearbook 1934 Deco The Bomb

Description:

Yearbook from Iowa State College 1934. Great art deco embossed cover. Yearbook is called *The Bomb*. Included with the yearbook is a folded copy of the Dec. 24, 1934 Des Moines Register newspaper featuring Iowa State's Most Beautiful girls.

Winning Bid:

\$45.00/2

Ended: 4/1/06

History: 1 bid, (buy it now)

Starting Bid: \$45

Winner: Iowa

Viewed

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Iowa State College Yearbooks

Julia's Story (eBay id: juliawww)

Estate sales are one of my favorite kinds of places to find collectible books to sell on eBay. Finding valuable books can be tough; they have to be both rare and desirable. What kind of book is virtually guaranteed to be rare by its very nature, and also has a built-in fan-base? The yearbook.

When I see a yearbook, I almost always snap it up, unless it's priced ridiculously high. At one particular estate sale, in the home of a couple who had lived into their 90s, I came across two college yearbooks from Iowa State College, where the man had gone to school. They were dated 1933 and 1934, and had the most beautiful embossed art deco style covers.

I picked up both yearbooks for around \$2 each. When I got them home, I found surprises inside: One was a folded copy of the Dec. 24, 1934 Des Moines Register newspaper featuring Iowa State's Most Beautiful girls. (That's a tip for scouting books, especially at estate sales: remember to look inside them! Sometimes people stash clippings, post cards, other ephemera, or even money -- inside).

Also featured in the newspaper were historical figures such as Eleanor Roosevelt; Mrs. Woodrow Wilson; Mrs. William Howard Taft; Gary Cooper and wife; Soviet Commissar Litvinoff and Italy's Mussolini; and many more. But the yearbooks themselves were also wonderful windows into the past; they reflected the fashions and concerns of the day. One thing I thought was funny was that most of the junior ladies were photographed outside, and most of them had on fur coats! A bit politically incorrect for today's tastes, but still fun to look at.

Who buys old yearbooks? All kinds of people. Many are folks doing genealogical research. Others may be people who now work at that school, or who went to that school and didn't buy the

yearbook when they were there. Others may just be interested in that time period or region: One man bought a military prep school yearbook from me just because he's just moved to the town in Georgia where the school was located, and he wanted to learn more about it.

The thing about selling yearbooks on eBay, I've found, is you often need to be patient. I usually list them as an auction first, and then send them into my eBay store if they don't sell that way. These yearbooks sat there for a few months until the right buyer came around. Then one day, I got a question from a lady asking if either of her grandfathers was in the yearbooks. It turned out that one of them was in both -- one as a senior, and the other as a junior.

Because she was so nice, and I was happy to give her a deal to move the inventory, I offered her the first book at full price (\$34.95, a price I came up with based on comparable ISU yearbook sales), and the second at only \$10. So that brought me \$44.95, nothing to sneeze at after a \$4 investment for both books.

But many yearbooks go for even more: some of the highest prices are for yearbooks with celebrities before they were famous - a recent sale was \$855 for a Hollywood School for Girls 1924 yearbook featuring Jean Harlow; West Point yearbooks and other famous school yearbooks also tend to sell well.

It can be poignant looking at the pages of a yearbook: all those earnest faces staring out - what happened to them? Did they go on to lead happy or sad lives? But it's happy when that lonely yearbook finds its way into the hands of someone who will treasure it again. And it's happy for you when you make back your investment tenfold.

- Julia Wilkinson, author, The eBay Price Guide