

Dog Tales – The Dog Rides Again

An Occasional Column by Mike Whiteside, co-owner of Black Dog Architectural Salvage, Chronicling His Adventures While In Search of Salvage

Thank you, my loyal fans, for tuning in for the latest log entry of the Dog Tales. If you are reading this, then I consider you loyal, as this is only my second attempt at column writing. It is only going to get better, or my writing career will be short-lived.

When you last left the wandering canines, we were in the prairies of Minnesota, searching out a cache of Egyptian iron dropped, presumably, by some overloaded alien spaceship. How else do you explain its presence there? Turns out that it belonged to Craig Dale of Valhalla Trading Co. in New Ulm, Minn. Craig is an importer of cool stuff from all over God's creation.

After some crude negotiation on a bar napkin and over a few of the local brews – wheat something – the Treasure is ours. Now the hard part. How do I get this load back to our store in Roanoke, Va.? Waiting for the aliens to return didn't seem like a good idea as they would get a bit upset that I had laid claim to their booty. But as any mariner knows, cargo set adrift is fair game to anyone with a rope to haul her in. If they pull out some ray gun I'm out of there.

With ankle-deep mud for the first two days, a 4x4 forklift, and eight flat beds heading in, we hunker down. Five days later and all my clean clothes gone, the Alien iron is in Black Dog Central. I could have done it a bit faster if it weren't for the locals wanting to know if I wanted to sell this lot for scrap. Some people's children. Now you out there in salvage U.S.A., you know where to get your fill of the good stuff from Egypt.

That lot secured in the Dog House, we peer over the bow for the next plunder to bring home and feed the pups. Not much time goes by before we get the call over the WWW to venture up into the uncharted hills of Southwest Pennsylvania to see an Episcopalian church that was unloved and getting ready to look like a Thanksgiving turkey after the feast.

Brian Allen, a purveyor of salvage in these parts, gives us the skinny on this 150-year-old. He informs us that it is destined to become a parking lot for the college next door. Where is Joni Mitchell when you need a song? "Oh pave paradise, put up a parking lot." I look over at Robert, Black Dog's other half, and with the best poker face I can muster, I whisper in his ear "How the hell we gonna' get these big-ass windows outta here?" Looking back at me, he calmly said, "You'll figure a way."

Now as anyone that knows me can attest to, I'm better with a sledge hammer than with the tools needed to recover these jewels of color and light. Did I just say that? Man, who do I think I am? Walt Whitman? This will be another first for the Black Dog Gang.

All levity aside, this is quite an impressive collection of non-religious church glass that will find its way into some new builds around the country – we hope. As always, it isn't the finding and recovery that is the real hard part, but the selling that makes our world go round.

Keep an eye on the Blackdog website for the arrival of these relics. I'll be back next month to let you know how we "get-ur-dun" (Thanks Larry the Cable Guy) and to add to the adventures of the dogs. Who knows where the trail leads. Stay tuned.

Release the hounds!

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