

TREASURES AND HEIRLOOMS

By Rob Reid

A bright, dry and crisp November to all.

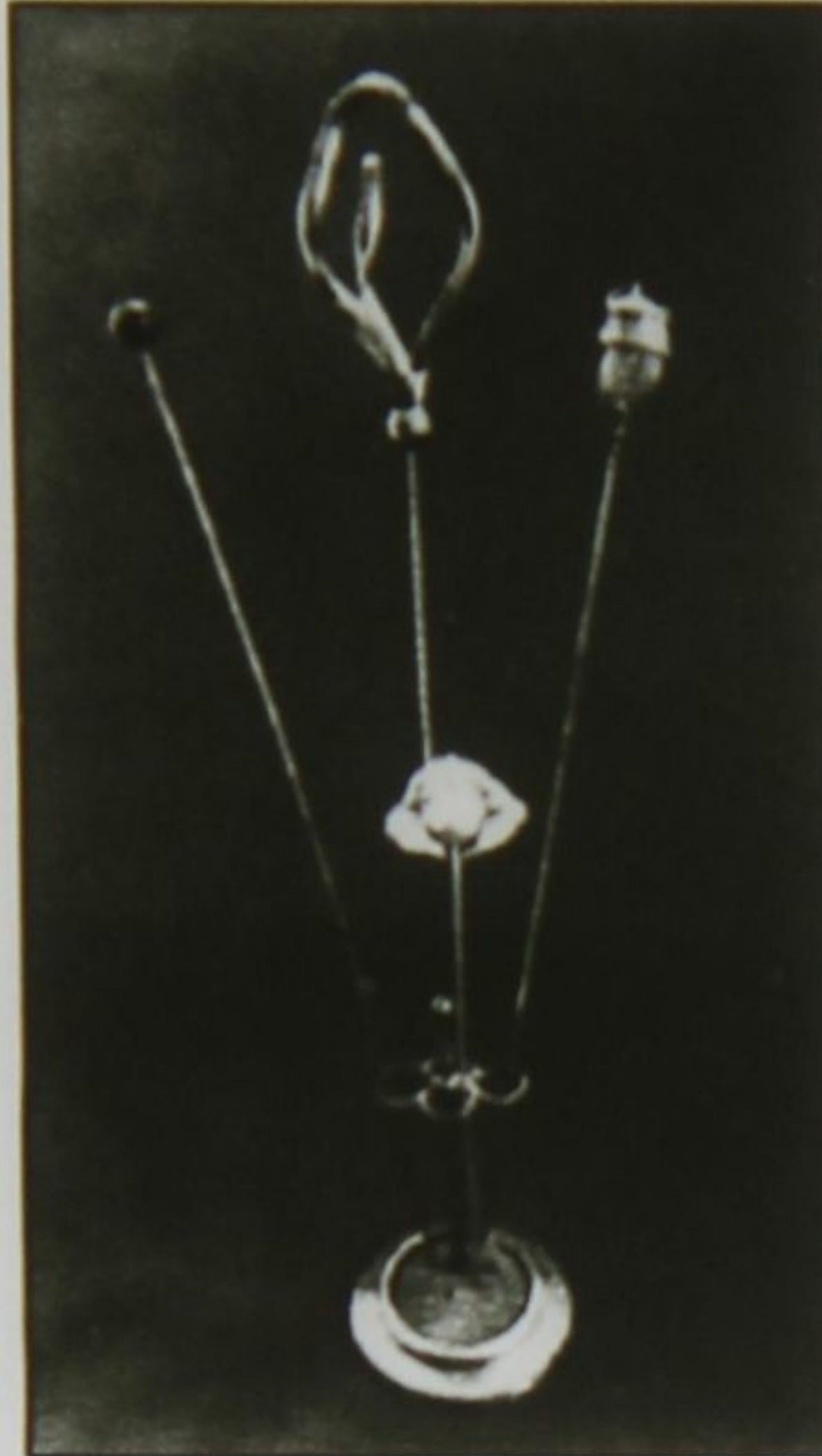
This is a nice little collection of hatpins supported by a vintage hatpin holder. Hatpins have been used as hat fasteners for centuries but we are mainly familiar with them as Victorian items.

By the mid 1800s women were changing from the bonnet ribbons to keep their hats on to the use of one or more hatpins to do the job. The fashionable Edwardian women wore large hats and as the hats grew in size so did the hatpins. At their peak some hatpins were 10 to 12 inches in length.

With the rise of the Suffragette movement came a concern that women might use these long, sharp hatpins as weapons and laws were passed in the U.S.A. and Britain that restricted the length to 9 inches. This also had an influence on hat sizes. With shorter hatpins smaller hats and shorter hair came into fashion and by the 1920s the small cloche style, which needed no pins at all, was being worn by stylish flappers.

Hatpins were made from as many different materials as one can think of. The basic mass produced white or black bead was used as an everyday item and would not be missed if lost. Pins could also be made by a jeweller of any metal and topped with fancy embellishments. This group represents a good selection of different types of pins.

The longest pin is about nine inches and is topped with a black glass top and would have been used as a basic utilitarian piece. The next pin is actually the



tallest, however the pin itself is only eight inches. It has an Art Nouveau style sterling silver top and was made in North America. The third pin is also sterling silver and has a green stone, perhaps agate, wrapped in silver. It too is of the Art Nouveau style and was made in Great Britain in 1905. The final one is a short five inch, silvered brass pin that has a figural top which depicts an angel head with wings.

All four of these pins are supported by a small hatpin holder. Holders were traditionally made from either porcelain or metal. Both Nippon and Limoges marked pieces are readily available while this one is sterling silver, dated 1906 and much harder to find.

The most desirable, and expensive, hatpins are those that have figural tops, or gems that are set in gold or silver. Art Nouveau and unusual topped pins often command high prices as well. While a basic glass or porcelain topped pin can be bought for less than \$10, some of the best have been sold for as much as \$1,500 and a new collector should be aware that there are many copies and fakes for sale.

The basic black glass

topped pin would sell for about \$10 and the figural angel for about \$25, while the two sterling Art Nouveau pins would generally sell for about \$75 each. The hatpin holder itself would also be about \$75.

I welcome inquiries about any objects and look forward to seeing and perhaps writing about them. Please forward a photo and a description to me through Stouffville Free Press or drop them off at Reid's Antiques, 6397 Main St. Stouffville during regular business hours or via Robert@reidsantiques.com.

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