

From Slopes to Style

COLLECTING ANTIQUE WINTER GEAR

By Wendy Lavitt



Antique skis, snowshoes, or sleds give a rustic fireplace mantel a nostalgic touch.

WHEN PARK CITY SKI INSTRUCTOR Mark Miller was a little boy, his grandfather regaled him with ski stories of the old days when skis were made of wooden planks, waxes were homemade concoctions, and rope tows were the only means of getting up the mountain. After his grandfather died in 1989, Miller inherited his grandfather's 1940s wooden skis and snowshoes, inspiring him to collect antique winter sporting equipment. His collection now includes more than 1,000 antique skis, poles, snowshoes, ice skates, and sleds. Miller realized there was a market for his collection and now sells his antiques to interior designers for decorating mantels, bookshelves, and doorways in mountain homes throughout Utah.

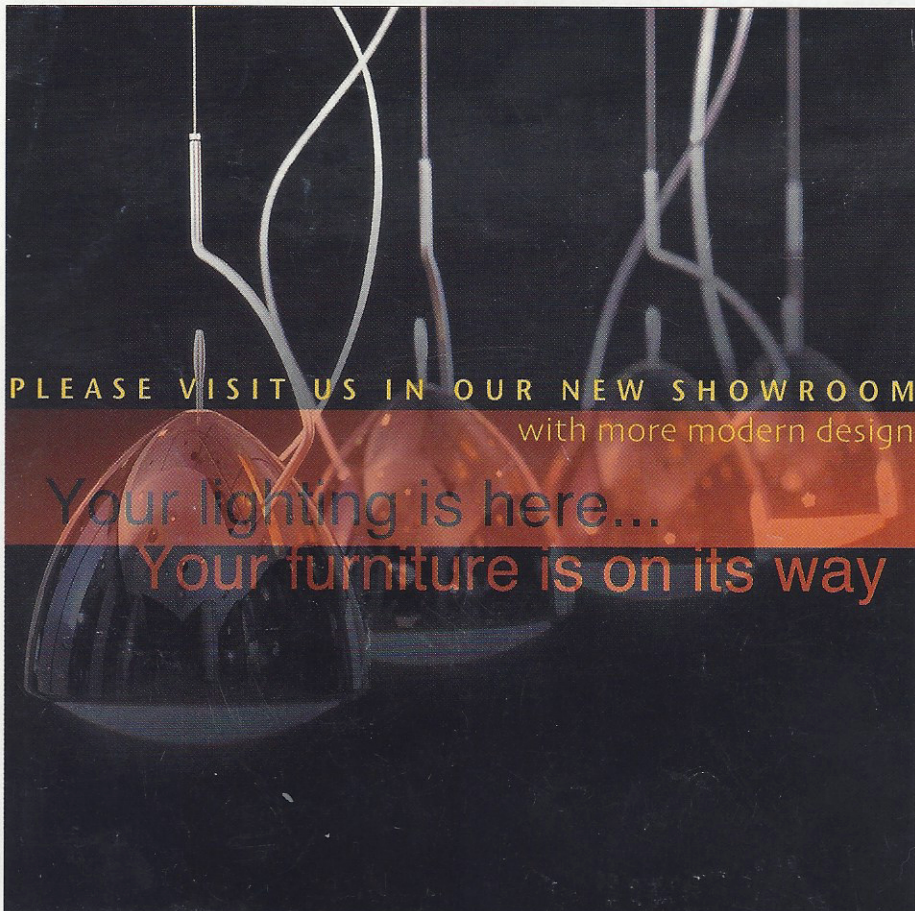
Miller's ski collection includes a variety of vintage skis, from 19th-century wooden slats with leather bindings to hard-to-find metal Head skis from the early 1960s.

He attributes his success in part to the inherent beauty and simplicity of the old-time equipment and a yearning for bygone days. "The patina found on the old wooden skis can be compared to that found on a wonderful old sideboard," he says. "It was fashioned and polished by loving hands and it shows. The simplicity of the lines and the old leather bindings are simply beautiful." Miller notes that even bamboo poles (which are difficult to find in good condition and sell for around \$60 for a matched pair) look great when crossed and hung on the wall. "Some people like to group them with

old skis, while others display them alone," he adds.

Tenth Mountain Division World War II issue skis and snowshoes are considered particularly attractive to collectors as this group trained on Utah's slopes and mountains.

For years JoAnn and David Krajewski of Design Coalition in Park City, Utah scoured antique shops for vintage sporting equipment to use in their many projects. "Old skis have always been a big hit with our clients," David says. "For many people a pair of skis over the mantel reminds them why they are here—they are tangible symbols of relaxation. At the same time they pull at our heart strings as nostalgic keepsakes of past winter landscapes." **USD**

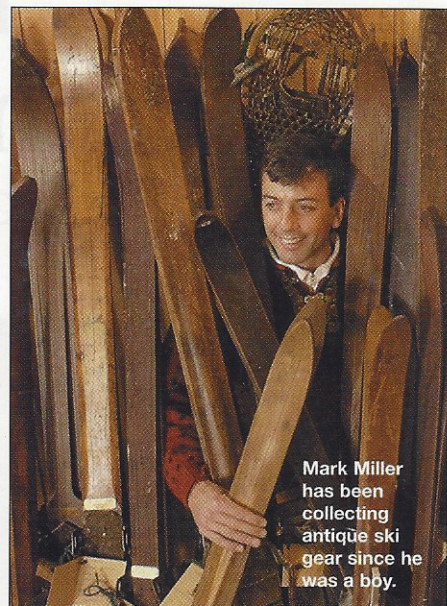


PLEASE VISIT US IN OUR NEW SHOWROOM

with more modern design

Your lighting is here...

Your furniture is on its way



Mark Miller has been collecting antique ski gear since he was a boy.

FRANCISCO KUOLSETH/SALT LAKE TRIBUNE

LOOKING FOR ICONS OF SPORT

Most collectible ice skates:

- Old German and Dutch curled ice skates and wooden ice skates
- Painted ice skates
- Autographed skates

Most collectible sleds:

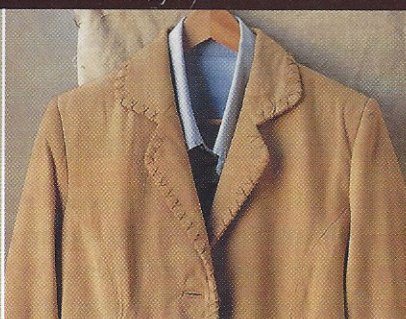
- Hard-to-find painted sleds with figural motifs (such as the famous Rosebud design or horses and winter scenes)
- Reproductions of old, painted sleds (look on eBay and in gift stores)
- Flexible Flyer Sleds from the 1930s-'50s

Most collectible skis:

- Skis with patina, labels, and leather bindings
- Painted skis—red, blue, and green are favorite colors
- Skis with leather boots mounted to the bindings
- Skis from Northland, the 1920s Minnesota company
- Novelty skis such as Disney's Mickey Mouse skis

Most collectible snowshoes:

- Indian snowshoes with fine mesh netting and decorative outer horsehair pom-poms (Indian snowshoes were frequently made by Northeastern tribes such as the Hurons and Ojibwas)
- Military snowshoes from World War II with the date of issue (1942-1945) marked on the wood
- Vintage wooden doll snowshoes—prized especially for shadow box vignettes
- Tags on unused snowshoes with the original price and instructions for use
- Early 20th-century Abercrombie & Fitch snowshoes with original labels



sundance

CATALOG OUTLET STORE

HOME DECOR | JEWELRY | APPAREL | ACCESSORIES | GIFTS

2201 So. Highland Drive | Salt Lake City, Utah | 801-487-3400

Located in Sugar House Commons