

Among the more interesting items in Dr. Ralph W.E. Cox's collection is a 1920 Baldwin steam locomotive, which currently rests at the Pine Creek Railroad Museum in Allaire State Park in Wall Township.

## Auction

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from the hand-held to the multiton will be auctioned. Unique items included in the collection: a steam locomotive, two airplanes, numerous antique wagons, automobiles and carriages, a pair of high-wheeler bikes, coin-operated mechanized-music players, engines and parts, numerous old license plates from across the nation, an array of horns, lamps, gauges and meters, and an old San Francisco cable car.

"In its present circumstance, and present condition, the cable car is the most extraordinary thing to see," said Rupert Banner, a representative of Bonham's and a motorcar specialist.

Built in 1906, after the great earthquake and subsequent fires that destroyed the city, the cable car was made and styled after the old cable cars that preceded it. It has advertising from its time still clearly visible.

"We're very pleased that the family has allowed us to handle such an interesting sale," Banner said. "Bonham's is a very far-ranging company: We sell all sorts of things and we sell all sorts of automobiles and accessories, and we're very much a part of the hobby for old cars."

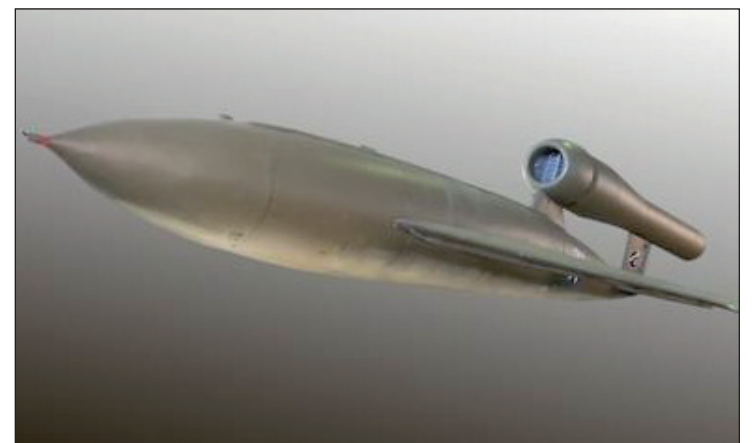
"The other thing I think that's very important: Collectors who were doing this, particularly just after the war, if they hadn't collected these things they probably would have been scrapped," he continued. "They were pioneers who made sure this stuff survived. They valued it; they thought it was important, and without them a lot of cars and other historical things would have been lost because they weren't valued by others. Dr. Cox was a visionary and pioneer in that respect."

The estate includes many different antique motorcars, of which Banner noted early Fords, especially the 1904 Model AC.

The wide variety of old coaches, Model Ts, and other rare automotive oddities is sure to grab the attention of many antique-motorcar enthusiasts. While a vast majority



There are several coin-operated mechanized-music players in the collection. The auction is set to begin at 11 a.m. at the Cape May Airport. Below, another historical oddity in the collection is a 1945 Republic Aircraft-Ford JB-2 Loon 'Buzz Bomb.'



of Cox's collection has been at rest for many decades, a dedicated person could purchase one at auction and feasibly get the rig up and running once again.

When asked about the condition of the cars, Banner noted, "The truth of the matter is, most of the cars were actually restored by Joseph Cox and his friend Ray [Basset] in the early to late '50s or early '60s."

"They were in usable running condition until they were laid up. It's not as if they were laid up because they broke or anything. They were laid up because they chose to," he said. "There will obviously be a range of conditions there. Time isn't always helpful to mechanical things. The engines are generally free. The storage that they've been in was secure, light and well-aided. For a true enthusiast, the reality is maybe a couple weeks of careful work you might have a running car."

Cox had a 1920 Baldwin steam locomotive in his collection, which currently rests at the Pine Creek Railroad Museum in Allaire State Park in Wall Township.

"It was pretty much derelict. They had to restore it themselves. We know it ran originally in Virginia. Esthetically, it's a restored piece," Banner said. "Obviously, with locomotives, there's quite a lot that's mechanical. You have to make sure it's safe to use."

Even though the locomotive has not been used in recent years, with a lot of precise work and care, one lucky person could have a working steam engine, he said.


Another historical oddity that will be present is an original 1945 Republic Aircraft-Ford JB-2 Loon "buzz bomb," naturally missing the actual mechanical parts and propulsion systems. It is one of America's first attempts at self-guided bomb technology, having been reverse-engineered from Nazi V-1 rockets after World War II.

Among the other obscurities of time, Cox had a few old motorized player pianos in his collection. The image of an old motorized piano playing sheets of music after a person inserted a coin in an old Western saloon comes to mind.

"The motorized music is a fascinating snapshot in time. They really are a work of true art, absolutely hypnotic, there's no other word for it," Banner said.

The auction begins at 11 a.m. at the museum. For more information, visit [bonhams.com](http://bonhams.com).

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