

LIVE DEMONSTRATION OF THE RESTORATION OF A RARE PAIR OF WILLIAM IV END TABLES WITH DRAWER (CIRCA 1830 – 1837)

This year at the 45th Irish Antique Dealers' Association Fair, Ireland's leading antique restorers Daly Antique Services are demonstrating a live restoration project of a rare pair of William IV end tables with drawer (circa 1830 – 1837).

Last year, over the four days of the Fair, visitors observed the staged restoration of a Georgian Secretaire tallboy showcasing the myriad of skills necessary for all aspects of cabinet making and French polishing. Visitors, who viewed the tallboy in the early stages of restoration, were presented the finished item in the closing hours of Sunday evening to great acclaim and approval. This year, visitors can now witness the Secretaire tallboy restored to its former glory, as it will be on display at Daly Antique Services stand at the Fair this September.

For this year's event, Daly Antique Services have carefully sourced a pair of antiques, as they believe a pair is the best example to help visitors understand the complete restoration process. We are presenting one in the early stages of restoration and the other fully restored.

Daly Antique Services are seeking to demonstrate that there has never been a better or more apt time for antique owners to look after and maintain their antiques, which function as beautiful additions to their homes. The said pair are William IV end tables which have already stood the test of time, dating to circa 1830's. Daly Antique Services intend to, with some care and attention, return these pair of tables to their original splendour of 180 years ago. The rarity of this pair is signified by the fact that the tables are still a couple as it is often the case that pairs become separated through the ages. Therefore, generally William IV end tables are individually sought after; but as a pair, they are even rarer and all the more exceptional.

In their present condition, the pair of tables are unsuitable to function for the purpose they were designed for, which in the latter half of the 1800s was to be placed at either side of a window or doorway or at both ends of a couch, perfect for placing your drinks or a pair of lamps. Currently, the tables are in a number of pieces with the pods unattached and separated from their tops. The pair are in poor disrepair overall. There are a significant number of splits and cracks in the tops of both tables and a number of carved mouldings are missing. As the tables were previously badly repaired, the tops were re-veneered

with a veneer of a later period; hence the veneer is of inferior quality to the rest of the table. Due to dampness, the veneer has lifted on the apron and drawer and the overall structure is loose due to the disintegration of glue. During the live restoration at the upcoming Fair, visitors can view many cabinet-making and French polishing skills on Daly Antique Services stand. They have painstakingly sourced wood of similar age, colour and characteristics to re-veneer and crossband the tops as per their original state. Visitors can see the re-veneering method and technicality of the crossbanding process of the tops. Splits and cracks will be secured and glued. Mouldings will be re-attached and carved in to match existing. All joints require re-gluing and securing to ensure they are structurally safe. Pods will be re-attached to tops and secured in place. To finish, the pods will be cleaned and waxed up retaining the original finish. The tops will need to be fully stripped of their existing finish and then French polished and waxed to match the base. Over the four days of the Fair, Daly Antique Services will also be demonstrating other cabinet making skills including leather tooling, carving, marquetry and fret-work.

As experts in the restoration and conservation field, Daly Antique Services appreciate the potential and beauty in each and every piece. Therefore, they encourage visitors to the Fair to bring along detailed pictures of your treasured items (and maybe not so treasured items), for free estimations on restoration. They urge antique owners to look beyond the dirt and dust of a dilapidated piece of furniture and see the piece for what it truly can be. According to Fergal Grogan, director of Daly Antique Services, "there is nothing more satisfying than the look on a client's face than when we return an item of furniture, restored to its former glory. Many of our clients have pieces of furniture in a non-functioning, damaged and dilapidated condition, sitting in their attic or in a cold damp shed – but once restored and revitalised the item is returned to the best room in the



client's house and given pride of place. The combined skilled workmanship of previous and current generations and good quality materials will always shine through."

They also advise antique owners to look at value in rarity and in something that cannot be recreated, mainly due to the scarcity of quality materials used in the creation of these items many generations ago. The cabinetmaking, workmanship and materials used in antiques are of a superior quality and, in many cases, are extinct or protected specimens. The prolonged existence of these antique furniture pieces is testament to their

strength and quality. Therefore, it is in everyone's interest to look after these pieces, as the beauty of antique furniture is that it has lasted generations and this is proof and testimony to the skills of the cabinetmakers of the period.

As Ireland's leading restoration specialists, Daly Antique Services cover all aspects of antique restoration – from consultation through to completion – for all private, historic and commercial clients throughout Ireland. Fintan Daly and Fergal Grogan established Daly Antique Services in August 2002; and since then the company has continued to go from strength to strength.

Together, Fintan and Fergal have 47 years combined antiques restoration and trade experience, as well as being fully qualified cabinet-makers.

Daly Antique Services are exhibiting on Stand 51 at the IADA Fair in the RDS on 24th - 26th September. Scheduled live demonstration of a rare pair of William IV end tables as well as other cabinet-making and French polishing skills showcased. For free estimations on restoration, please bring along detailed pictures of your items requiring restoration. www.dalyantiqueservices.com for details. ■

