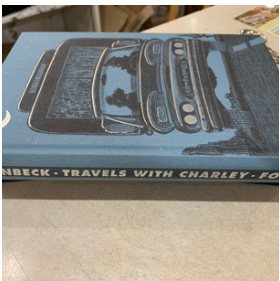


The Great Tidepool

TALES OF PACIFIC GROVE, CALIFORNIA
by local award-winning author, [Brad Herzog](#)

TREASURE HUNT



I recently wrote a screenplay, a true story, about a man who bought some yard-sale photo negatives for \$45 some 20 years ago in Fresno and came to believe they were lost Ansel Adams negatives... worth \$200 million. But the possibility of a windfall isn't why I'm enamored with antiques. For me, it's about exploration and nostalgia. And it's yet another reason why I love Pacific Grove, which is somewhat of an antique itself - lots of history, an old-school aesthetic with modern appeal, and a fun find for savvy explorers. So let's go antiquing in PG. I did so with my parents (I'll resist call them antiques) when they visited town a few weeks ago.

We started at Pickings Antiques, which has settled into its home on Forest Avenue over the past five years. Helpful proprietor Sherrie Welchner oversees a collective in which a half-dozen dealers offer their old-school treasures. A Pickings specialty: postcards from yesteryear - tens of thousands of them, covering... well, nearly every city, state and subject (Louisiana to lighthouses, Santa Barbara to Santa Claus). My parents are Chicagoans, so the Windy City scenes fascinating them. But before my ancestors settled in the Midwest, they sailed from Europe in 1859, and it turns out my favorite find at Pickings Antiques was a super-cool old mantle clock in the form of... an old sailing ship.

Next stop: The Treasure Grove, located in a historic building on Lighthouse Avenue that housed Grove Laundry a century ago. We strolled in to the sounds of Parisian "bal musette" playing, and we felt as if we'd been transported to the 7th arrondissement. It was formerly called Pacific Grove Antiques, but the shop is now a hybrid of actual antiques and Art Deco items (many from France). Indeed, my favorite find was an 80-year-old French-keyboard typewriter upcycled into a steampunk-style table lamp. It naturally appealed to this writer constantly seeking a lightbulb of an idea.



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Finally, we strolled along Lighthouse Ave toward the center of town and PG's newest antique emporium. Vintage Finds is a sprawling space offering everything from a 100-year-old Gibson mandolin to a gorgeous soapstone-and-chalkware chess set that my dad particularly loved. But again, we tend to gravitate toward items that remind us of ourselves in some way - our ancestry (the ship clock), our chosen professional path (the typewriter lamp) and... our personal journey. Mine took me to Pacific Grove a generation ago after a year-long, 48-state home search. The trip became the subject of my first travel memoir, and along the way I read classics of the genre - starting with John Steinbeck's *Travels with Charley*.

So what vintage find stood out among the shelves of classic old books at Vintage Finds? A beautifully illustrated, blue-cloth hardcover of that seminal travelogue, its cover showing the dog, the man and their classic van. Now it sits on my bookshelf at home, a reminder of why I chose this home in the first place.

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