How do we ensure the safety of History Through Time?

Exploring the Relic Room at Smoky Mountain Knife Works is like taking a stroll through the history of the universe. Our displays showcase unique treasures from around the world, from rare military artifacts to triceratops teeth to dazzling gemstones. The rarity of these items bestows them with an inherent sense of value, but what really sets our store apart is the fact that so many of our acquisitions are authenticated through research, experience and working directly with the discoverers. In the end, it's the story behind each object that gives it its ultimate value.

So how do we discover the history behind our finds? And how do we ensure that each item's history travels with it going into the future? It all depends on what type of object we're working with. Let's take them one at a time:

When it comes to historical artifacts acquired from a metal detectorist, I first verify that he or she was hunting on private property. Then I record the locations where the different items were found and place that information in frames or on cards and display it with the artifacts when they are sold. This isn't always possible with every item, but when it is possible, it's something we make sure we do.

As for artifacts acquired from private collections or trade shows or individual sellers (military relics or political memorabilia, for example), each piece is rigorously authenticated through three generations of experience, or if a second opinion is needed, experts from individual fields are contacted. Once an item is determined to be authentic, I record any verbal information I receive and then do further research in military or genealogical databases. For example, if the find is a Civil War soldier's sword, I will research the history of that specific soldier and include all my findings with the sword at the time of its sale.

With fossils, I travel to dig sites during the summer dig season and first ensure that everything discovered was done so legally. After I review the fossils and purchase the ones I think are of the best quality, our team sits down and labels each individual bone according to species, type, formation where discovered and the county and state of discovery. That information stays with each fossil as it is sent to a laboratory to be professionally prepped, stabilized and preserved. Once preserved and labeled, that item is ready to be displayed at the Relic Room and hopefully sold to a permanent and caring home.

The minerals at the Relic Room go through a different procedure. Once minerals are discovered and identified, the rough materials are expertly processed into collector specimens, spheres, pebbles, slabs, etc. in the countries where they are mined. Once they are professionally prepped in those labs, they are shipped back to our store, identified by mineral type and country of origin, and the metaphysical properties are fully listed before they go on display for sale in our showroom.

So that's it. We go to great lengths to ensure that everything we sell is authentic and correctly identified. We take great pride in fully researching each artifact and preserving not only the item but also the history it bore witness to. It's an awesome responsibility to ensure their passage through time, and that's why we offer them to you at ridiculously affordable prices. History rocks! Wahooooo!