

# Disney Military Logos

by Mike Prero

One of the many attractions that Military covers have for collectors is the art work; they're certainly not all faded and tarnished blue and gold covers! And it was Walt Disney that had more to do with Military art than any other person. Aside from the famous Pepsi Set that features his logo designs for various military units, his art touched every phase of the Military, not just in World War II, but in Korea, Vietnam, and into present times.

His art is seen in unit logos, posters, and aircraft nose art of the times. Indeed, after Pearl Harbor, Disney assigned a team of 5 artists to do nothing but work on nose art projects, and his most renowned contribution in that area was the set of designs he completed for Claire Chennault's Flying Tigers.

If you page through your Military collection, looking closely at the logos, you'll occasionally run across Walt Disney designs. Some, as the ones pictured below, are readily identifiable because they carry the Walt Disney copyright; others, however, are not because they don't carry the copyright text. The really interested collector would have to research each of the latter to find whether they are, in fact, Disney designs or not.

These cartoon characters might seem a trivial thing set against the colossal struggle of nation against nation, but they actually served a very real and important purpose in helping to maintain morale and the team spirit necessary for efficiency and effectiveness. For the military, each logo became a rallying point for the members of its unit, a symbol of both pride and individuality. For civilians, Disney characters served as a reminder that everyone was in this struggle together. On the surface, it seems ludicrous that a creator of cartoon characters would have any real contribution to make in the war effort, but Disney did, and today the matchcovers bearing his art remain some of the most popular and sought after covers in the hobby.

