

Collecting Clubs

by
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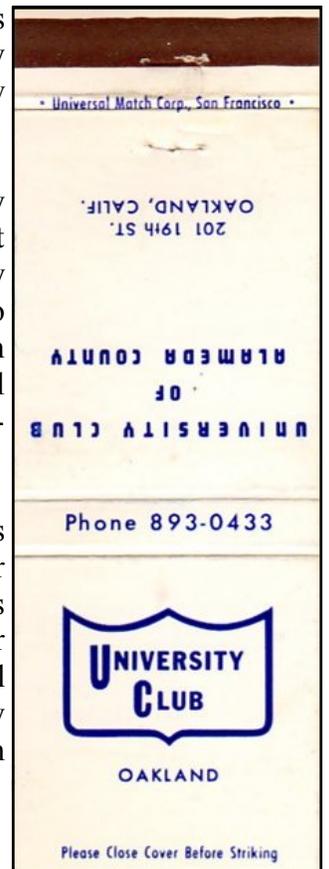
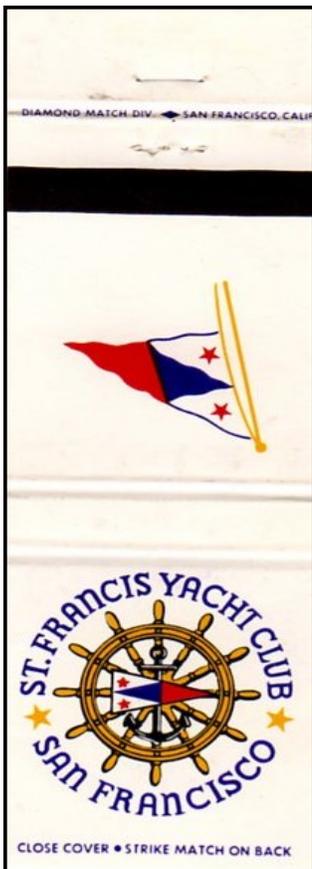
As with so many categories, it's my perception that Clubs used to be much more widely collected than they are now...Of course, with fewer collectors in the hobby, I suppose they would be less collected now! Still, if

my own experiences can be any indicator, none of my traders ask for Clubs, and it's never been a popular category in my auction. In any event, current Club collectors, however few they might be, are no less ardent in their collecting, I'm sure.

So, what is Clubs, anyway? Well, it's a large category for...hmmmm....let's see....clubs! Simple?...No! It turns out that just because the cover says "Club" it doesn't necessarily qualify it as a...club! Confused? I thought so. Allow me to clarify. Clubs, here, refer to clubs as institutions rather than organizations. So, a press club would qualify, but a baseball club wouldn't. Similarly, coin clubs, stamp clubs, computer-users clubs, etc., as organizations, wouldn't count either.

As it happens, a goodly number of clubs are not collected as Clubs; they're collected separately, as their own categories, or simply as part of other categories. For instance, night clubs don't qualify. Neither do Golf Clubs. And, the same goes for Country Clubs. Nix on supper clubs, too. A lot of cocktail lounges and bars call themselves clubs, but they don't qualify either. So, on the face of it, that wouldn't seem to leave much in the way of clubs for...Clubs!

continued on p.3



But, we're wrong! There's *a lot* left! Although, it should be noted right up front that the actual dividing line between those clubs that *are* Clubs and those that *aren't* can be rather fuzzy at times, and, certainly, all Club collectors may not define said covers in the same way. [*still with me?*] So, what, exactly do we have as Clubs? Looking through a stack of trading stock, I see press clubs, university clubs, athletic clubs, yacht clubs, private clubs, etc. And, when it comes to sports, golf clubs, for some reason don't count, but tennis clubs and racquet clubs do.

I'm not a Clubs collector, myself, but it would seem that athletic, press, university, and yacht clubs are the biggest contributors to this category. [*You wouldn't think that there would be that many yacht clubs, but there are!*]

The real headache here is all the covers that say they're clubs, but they give no indication as to *what kind* of club they are. The 'Cambridge Club', for instance. Would that be a restaurant? A night club? A private club? Sometimes, [*pathetically few times*] you might be able to get a hint from an accompanying graphic. But, when there *is* a graphic, all too many times it's a building front, or the like, that still leaves you wondering.

The late Andy Anderson, MO, reported having 4,189 Clubs in July 1996. There is no Clubs listing.

If you're a Clubs collector, yourself, I'd be interested in the solutions you've arrived at in dealing with your own Clubs. Where do you draw the line at what qualifies as a "Club", and what doesn't. Why? Does any cover that says "Club" qualify?

This is a nice, large-numbered, small category, but I don't think there's doesn't appear to have much interest in it for collectors in general. Of course, that's why it's a small category.

