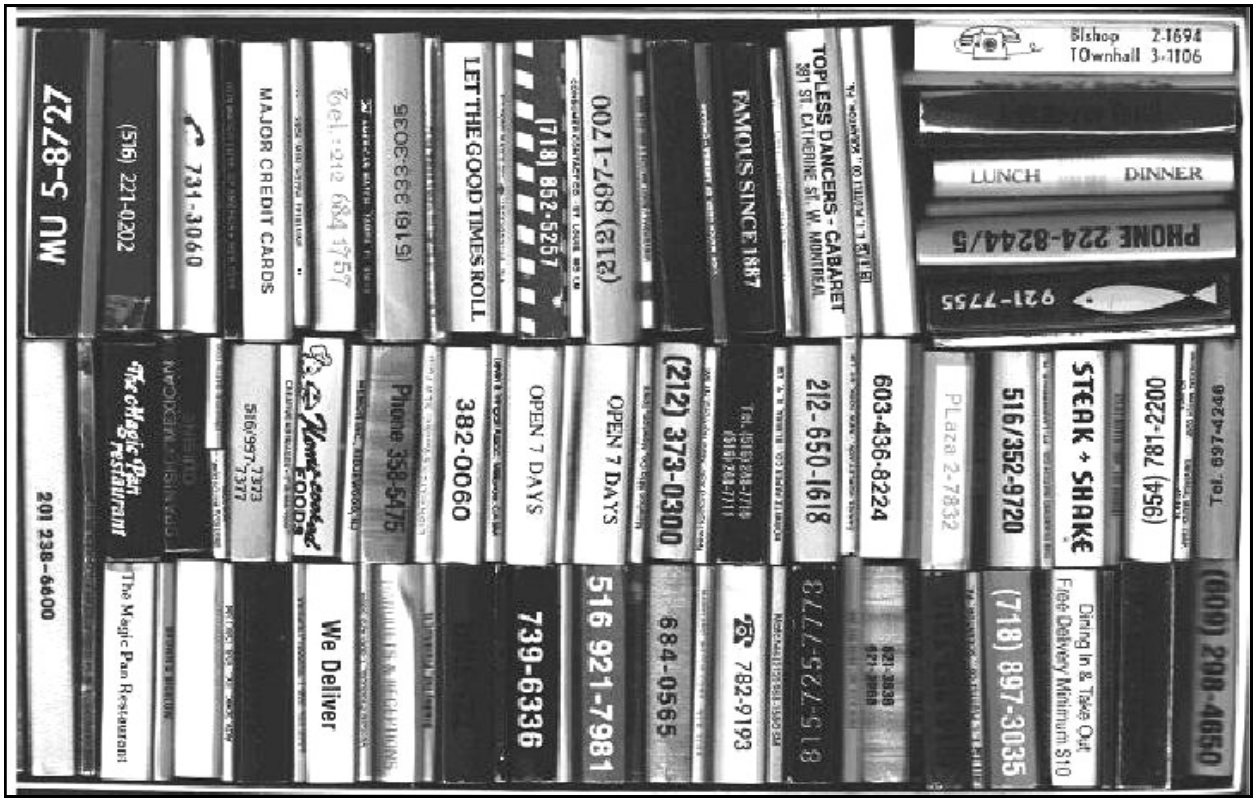
STORING FULL BOOKS

By Ken Ryesky

Those of us who collect full books must deal with the problem of storing them. After years of using whatever glass jars or Barton's Candy tins happened to be around, I have found a more efficient solution: Mason Box Co.'s stock item No. U65, a paperboard utility gift box with a lid, 8.25 inches long, 5.25 inches wide, and 2 inches high. Smaller types are often used for items of jewelry.

The 2-inch height is exactly the height of a standard matchbook. The 5.25-inch width will accommodate a row consisting of two 20-strike plus one 30-strike book, and the 8.25 inch length allows approximately 35 of those rows. Of course, one 40-strike can be accommodated in lieu of two 20-strikes, and two 10-strikes will take the place of one 20-strike. There is great flexibility in arranging the matchbooks in the U65 box (see illustration).

The rows of matchbooks are alternated, upright and inverted. This means that the saddle is visible on about half of the books stored in the box, thus making them identifiable. As for the other half, it usually is not that difficult to find the matchbook listed in my catalog because the manumark and color are usually visible. The box is also good for storing matchboxes, or novelty matchbooks. And, when the armoire drawers became too full with the U65 boxes, I found, to my pleasant surprise, that 16 of the U65 boxes will fit, exactly, into one of those familiar copy paper cartons that once held 10 reams of paper, and which my college's computer lab and/or the copy center people are only too pleased to give to me.

And so, I can now consult my matchbook collection spreadsheet, identify which individually-numbered U65 box contains the matchbook in question, and then find the matchbook itself without too much trouble. The U65 Utility Gift Box is available, in quantities, from the Mason Box Co., P.O. Box 129, North Attleboro, MA 02761, Telephone 800/225-2708, http://www.masonbox.com.