
How To...Get Covers

Oh, I know. Over and over again, these days, all one seems to hear is how difficult it is to get covers. But, that's misleading, at best, and downright wrong, at worst. When moaning about the availability of covers, what collectors are actually referring to is *new* covers. And they're right. New covers are not as easy to come by as they once were. Yet, at any given moment, new covers are only a small fraction of what there is to be had. There are untold *millions* of covers from the 1930s-2000 out there and waiting...for *you*! All you have to do is...

1. Make sure your relatives and friends know to pick up covers for you whenever they can.
2. Covers abound at most club meetings, and many club meetings have freebie tables, as well.
3. Conventions and swapfests are glory holes as far as covers are concerned: freebie tables mounded over with all sorts of offerings; all types of trading opportunities; room hopping with stacks and stacks of covers for the taking; auctions with lots both large and small, exotic and rare. And, don't forget the dealers' tables.
4. "Build it, and they will come"Advertise, and they will appear! Boxes, bags, trays, albums...they're in attics, closets, garages, long-forgotten cabinets...in *every* community across the country. But their owners don't know that you want them. Take out an ad in your local weekly circular, such as the *Penny Pincher* here in my own area. Offer to buy collections and accumulations. You'll get a number of calls; not all will pan out, as some people will be expecting to become overnight millionaires, but you'll usually end up with some of those boxes, bags, and trays! And, *sometimes*, a veritable treasure of oldies will come your way!

A great byproduct of such advertising, by the way, is that your ad may continue to pay dividends *for years*! Once your ad is out there, some people will keep it for future reference. I've had people contact me several years later.

5. Trading will get you covers, of course, but in order to trade you have to already have covers, so I'm Not going to focus on that here.
6. If you're willing to spend more than the pennies you'll pay for local accumulations, then auctions certainly open a vast additional avenue to get covers. Auctions have not only become one of the main ways for collectors to acquire covers, but an important financial support for many of the clubs who are looking for a way to maintain their bulletin costs without continually raising dues.

Wherever there is a formal gathering of collectors--club meetings, swapfests, conventions--invariably you'll find auctions, both silent and regular. By far the most common type of auction, Though, is the bulletin auction that many clubs conduct by mail through their bulletin mailings. And, thanks to technology, we now have on-line auctions: private auctions by collectors and those from auction houses, such as ebay.

7. If you have even bigger bucks available, you can try to purchase whole collections and estate sales, although the competition for such within the hobby is pretty stiff, so the pickings may be slim and sporadic...and expensive. Still, when acquiring a collection of 100,000, 500,000, or even a million, you may well only need to score once!