
The Mystique of

What is it about the Lindbergh covers?—They're not the oldest; they're not the rarest; they're not the most attractive—But, the hobby has settled on them as *the* treasure of the hobby. On the other hand, there certainly aren't many of them, after all, *and* they're dated, *and* they feature a VIP. Overlaying the covers, themselves, though, there has always been a certain mystique about them within the hobby—How many are there? How many are in the hobby? Who has them? Where are they? Where were they found? How were they obtained? The answer to all of these questions is either “Unknown” or “Not widely known”, but I've managed to identify and track down ELEVEN of them.

Background:

In June 1927, Lindbergh was apparently wined and dined at both a luncheon and a dinner in NYC. Matchbooks were given out at each (I've heard about 200). That's two variations. There's supposed to be a third variation (perhaps an error having to do with whether he was a Capt. or a Col.), but I haven't been able to find anything on that).

Where are they?

—Regina Hardin, CA, has a full-book.

—Helen Hollmann has one that's a cover, which she received as a gift from Joyce Loveless for her being so nice to her after George passed away years earlier.

—Tom Stephen has an unstruck cover.



—Jack Barnes has two—both the luncheon and dinner versions.

—Marc Edelman has one.

—Stanley King of New York, NY, a retired businessman and not in the hobby, has one.

—Larry Stone, TN: “About ten years ago, I found a matchbook cover from the banquet held at the Hotel Astor in NYC on June 15, 1927 in honor of Charles Lindbergh's flight to Paris. It was in my father's effects after he died. My supposition is that my aunt (who would have been 25 at the time) went to the banquet and gave the matchbook cover to my father.” This cover was sold in 2010 to an anonymous RMS member for \$1500-\$4000. I don't know who has this one.

—Lance Campbell, KY, purchased his matchbook (minus 4-5 sticks) at the 1991 RMS convention for \$4000.

—Kevin Saucier: found his in April 2010 on eBay...after a 15+ year serious search. Paid - \$50 (only bidder!) It came from a WWII vet in TN whose grand-uncle attended the NY dinner. He sold it for \$5 to a single mom eBay dealer. She obviously had no idea what she had...until offers of \$2K and up poured in ...well after the auction closed.

—Clem Pater has the luncheon one—“1970 RMS convention in Newton, Mass., this cover was up for auction at the very end of the last day...Ralph Arnold was the auctioneer and I do not know whose cover it was...Evelyn [Hovious] kept telling people she was going to buy it...I sat next to her in the very last row and she was

the Lindbergh Covers

bidding against Loren Ross and Duke Rohrer..I think she paid \$160 for it but I'm not sure and when the bidding was over, she got up and said to the crowd, "I'm buying this cover for Clem Pater to have some day!" You can imagine my reaction..anyway, 13 years later, via registered mail, comes the cover, a letter telling me it was time for her to give it to me along with an envelope with an air mail stamp on it that I have been told is more valuable than the cover..it's been in a vault in my office until last year when I had the cover, letter and envelope framed and it now hangs in my hobby room...underneath it I have inscribed the words "from Evelyn Hovious. my best friend in the hobby." The cover is stripped and has a couple of strikes on the striking surface but otherwise it is in excellent condition..."

"Evelyn Hovious had two—(one she gave to Clem, see above) - Now to the other Lindbergh cover she had...I saw it many times at her home...she kept it in that framed case behind her reading chair...the Bitters had it on display for her at the 1987 convention in Denver...the last time I saw it was shortly before she died and she would never say what was to happen to it after her death..I do know that sometime during that last short period of time before her death, that frame with the cover disappeared along with most of the main part of her collection."

Known Prices:

- 1970 Evelyn Hovious bought a Lindbergh for \$160 at RMS Convention. This is believed to be the highest price paid for a single cover to that date.
- 1991 A Lindbergh cover was auctioned for \$4,000. This set a new record for a single cover.
- 2008 Lindbergh matchbook goes for \$1725 on ebay
- 2010 Kevin Saucier, CA, buys Lindbergh for \$50 on ebay
- 2010 Larry Stone, TN, sold a previously unknown Lindbergh for "more than \$1,500 and less than the record bid for a Lindbergh matchbook cover of \$4,000"

Notes:

The Lindbergh that went for \$4000 in 1991 had reportedly been found by a trash collector in someone's garbage put out for pickup.

Two Lindberghs in the hobby have been stolen. One was from Frank Lawton in the late 1940's at a New England meeting at his home. The other was from Evelyn Hovious in the 1980s in a burglary. The whereabouts of both are currently unknown.

"At one time, Tony Fortunato of Cleveland had 3 Lindberghs from the collection that his son pulled out of the garbage; one of those three was the one sold at the 1991 convention in Cleveland \$4,000."

[Thanks to all the people mentioned above; their input was invaluable]

