

## Fraternal: F.O.E.

...That's Fraternal Order of Eagles, an old and much-honored fraternal organization, and, to our benefit, an organization which has put out a long and varied line of matchcovers.

The Eagles were established on February 6th, 1898, in Seattle. Over the years, they have been very active in community services. In 1900, they sponsored America's first Workmen's Compensation Law; in 1923, they sponsored the first Old Age Pension Law; in 1935, when FDR signed the Social Security Law, he gave the pen to the Eagles, as a symbol of their invaluable support. In fact, the Eagles have been recognized for their community support by every president since FDR. In 1976, the Eagles founded their first European chapter.

There are over 1,900 chapters, or "Aeries," in the U.S. and Canada. There are also more than 1,700 auxiliaries. While the aeries don't seem to have been as prolific in their output of matchbooks as, say, the Elks lodges, still—think of all the covers!

That's what first attracted me to this category. I love l-o-n-g series! I've been collecting F.O.E.s, now, for almost nine years, and I currently have 986. The largest collection I know of is Mel Garrett's, KS, who had 1,064 back in 1993.

Within this category, there are stock and non-stock issues, sets, Girlies, Christmas, Dated, Full-lengths, and even some errors [see below]. There are also some 'golden oldies'—Federals and the like. Not surprisingly, the vast majority of these covers are front-strike 20-strikes, but there are 30s, 40s, and at least one Swedish Foil box. I have dupes. Anyone want to trade?

