



Editorial

Hobby Costs

"Matchcover collecting! It's a fascinating and inexpensive hobby!" One hears variations of that all the time, and, in fact, that's how we advertise ourselves...But, is this *really* an inexpensive hobby?

The question randomly flitted through my mind the other day [*lots of room in there for randomly flitting questions*]. Well, *is* it? I'm sure that if I had asked collectors, say in an *Insta-poll*, how much money they spend on the hobby in an average year, most wouldn't have any idea. I didn't! So, I had to sit down and list it all out just so I could get an idea, myself.

First, I had quite a time just nailing down the areas in the hobby that I spent money on, and even now I can't guarantee that I've identified them all. Then, I had to figure out how much I spent on an annual basis on each. So, I just took my expenses for the last year and used that as a basis for my figures. I should also point out that, being an editor, some of my hobby expenses are compensated--some postage, some ink cartridges, etc.--but I haven't included those expenses in my calculations, here.

Here's what I came up with...

Albums	\$ 46
AMCAL	\$375
Classified ads	\$ 12
Club dues	\$ 60
Plastic pages	\$300
Postage	\$148
Printing cartridges	\$ 75
Sierra-Diablo Swapfest	\$ 28
Stationery supplies	\$ 42
Web expenses	\$148
	\$1,234

Hmmmm...\$1,234. Well, from my perspective, that *is* pretty cheap, considering how much time I spend on the hobby during the year and what percent that represents of my total annual income. Plus, when I think of how many pleasurable hours that \$1,234 results in over a year...no contest! This *is* an inexpensive hobby!

But, that's me, and I may not be your average collector. Most collectors won't have web site expenses, for example, and I don't attend any regular club meetings. I'm also single and my kids are grown and out of the house, so all my hobby expenditures are individual expenses. On the other hand, all those collectors who attend activities with their spouses would have at least some of their expenses doubled--convention registration, restaurant costs, etc. Some collectors go to *a lot* of club meetings and most or even all of the major conventions and swapfests. Some collectors don't attend any outside activities and simply quietly collect at home.

What about you? Would *you* say that this is an inexpensive hobby?