

HOBBY HISTORY

FIRST ANNUAL SELECTION OF OUTSTANDING MATCHBOOK COLLECTOR ITEMS

[from June 1953 RMS Bulletin]

Sponsored by the Old Dominion Matchcover Collectors Club, jointly with the national collector group, the Rathkamp Matchcover Society.

Purpose whereas, admittedly the matchbook is an excellent servant for lighting and advertising, to prove there is yet another very important consideration, the value of the matchcover as a collector item. There are one million collectors. To honor those who provide outstanding collector items.

Time & place - at the 13th Annual Convention of Matchcover Collectors, sponsored by RMS and old Dominion. John Marshall hotel, Richmond, Va. Sept. 11th, 1953.

Conditions Any individual, establishment or match company may enter matchbooks with matches in tact, or matchcovers with matches removed. Only the subject matter on the cover will be reckoned in the contest. Factory samples are taboo. All entries will be judged by a panel of 7 collectors selected by the president of the R.M.S. Where covers are entered as a set, the set will be reckoned on the basis of an individual cover. Decision of the judges will be final. No entries will be returned. Selection will be distributed as follows:

CAPITAL SELECTION: THE RATHKAMP CITATION (in honor of the late Henry Rathkamp) for the outstanding collector item in any category, style or size.

RUNNER-UP to the above, the LOCKARD CITATION (in honor of the late Robert Lockard, first president of the R.M.S.)

3 citations for the Outstanding regular sized matchcovers in each of the following categories: (1) Armed Service. (2) Non-advertising types. (3) Public transportation. (4) Hotel & Tourist accommodations. (5) Cafe or Night Club. (6) Communications, Club, Frat or college. (7) Personalized types. (8) Advertising.

*** 3 citations for Outstanding Odd sizes. (9) Half Size. (10) 30 match size. (11) Double size.

19 Honorable Mentions in each of the above eleven categories.

Suggestions: It isn't always the most expensive matchcover that meets with greater collecting appeal. Frequently the simpler design is more esteemed. Many factors enter into consideration. Historic, Geographical, Americana, dates, small towns, county seats, state capitals, burned down or destroyed, notorious events, etc. are but a few. Every matchcover has an equal chance. It costs nothing but the matches and postage to enter the contest. If you don't win an award you may derive some advertising value. Ideal quantity to enter is one full carton of 50 matchbooks—one for the contest, the rest for distribution among the collectors. Winners will be announced as soon as possible.

Address your entries to— Edgar A. Perkins, president Rathkamp Matchcover Society. 600 F Street, N.W. Washington 4 D.C.

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Notice to R.M.S. members- This is the first contest of this kind in the history of the Hobby., and may result in much publicity for collecting. One magazine has already promised to favor us with a feature article after the Contest. Much of the success will depend on you and the matchcovers you send. The panel of judges will consist of Dr. Chas. J. Higgs, Frank J. Ryan, Kenneth Riggs, Alfred Polick, Paul Schaeffer, Sam Rosen and Blanche Kelly.

Ed. note: At first I thought that this was about the initial Outstanding Collector awards, but that came much later, and as one reads further it seems that this was apparently the beginning of the display awards tradition within the hobby.

A couple of especially interesting items—did you notice the “items will not be returned” notice? Imagine displaying your Lindbergh cover and then finding out that you're not getting it back! (ouch!)

Also the reference to “one million collectors.” The hobby never had even a fraction of that amount of people, so he's referring to the informal decanter-on-the-coffee table accumulators across the country. Ah, if only...