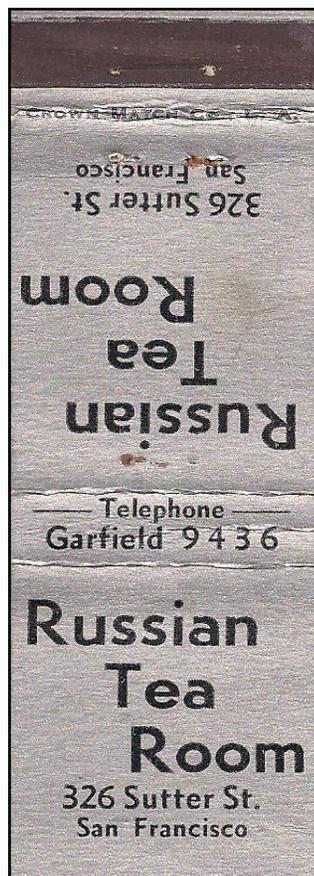


Collecting

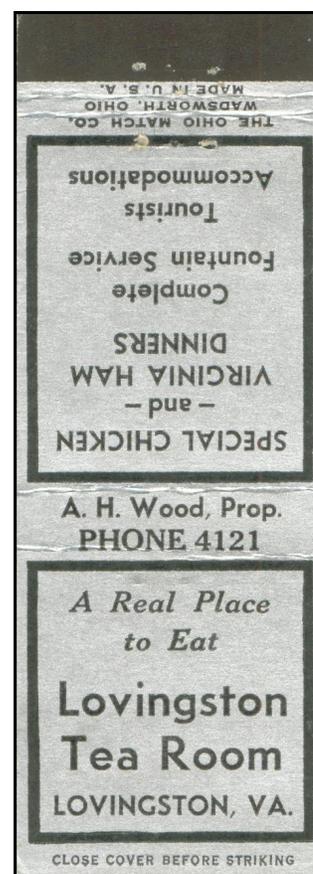
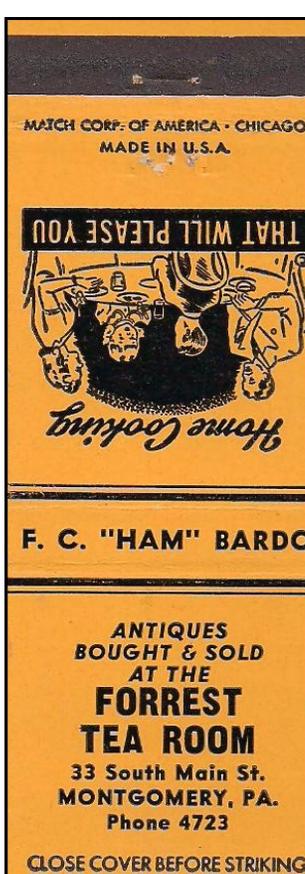
By Duane



I began collecting tea rooms because, as I stated in my article "Why I collect Matchcovers" in the November/December 2004 *RMS Bulletin*, "we will never see them again." When I first saw a tea room matchcover, that was the first time I had ever heard of them. I, guess, though that there are a few around today. I prepared a listing of my collection, including 410 matchcovers. As far as I know, no one else collects them. As you might suppose, Midget matchbooks were popular with tea rooms. I have some 14 of those. Marshall Fields had one of the earliest tea rooms. In fact, around 1920, they had six. Their cover, which I have, is a 40-strike.

Tea rooms were enormously popular in America in the first half of the 20th century. They were the fashionable places for women, especially to eat and meet friends. They reflected the latest fashions in interior decorating, using a variety of decorations to transform cottages and shop rooms into places of beauty and delight. They also specialized in the type of food that women liked, particularly beautiful salads, dainty sandwiches, and delicious desserts. Often old buildings, such as gristmills, windmills, and barns, were turned into tea rooms.

The tea rooms that I have from Pittsburgh are:
 -Mystic Tea Room 241 5th Avenue



Tea Rooms

Ready

- Gypsy Tea Room 207 5th Avenue
- Anthon's Penn at Highland (East Liberty)
- Betsy Ross Tea Room Forbes at Oakland Avenue
- Kaufmanns Restaurant and Tea Room
- Frank and Seder Tea Room
- New China Tea Room 754 Penn Avenue (Wilkinsburg)
- Fremont Farms Tea Room at Criders Corner (Zelienople)
- Nursery Tea Room Route 8 (Butler)
- Rymer's Tea Room
- Marie's Tea Room 237 Fifth Avenue (Downtown)
- Weinstein's 3708 Forbes Avenue

The Mystic Tea Room offered "free Readings with Meals" and the Gypsy Tea Room offered "your fortune free from leaves of tea" as described on the covers. I still remember the guy who carried a placard that covered his front and back that advertised the Mystic Tea Room downtown. If you were downtown, you would always see him walking up and down the streets. This would have been in the late 50's-early 60's.

[covers pictured here courtesy of Loren Moore, CA]

