

## Matchbooks/Boxes In The Real World: IV

**MATCHBOOK SAVES CAREER...**A big businessman from our town was in a jam. He'd gone to New York the night before a super important business conference. And at 6 A.M. after a round of the clubs he realized he'd lost his briefcase—and all the papers necessary for the meeting. Was he panicked? Not at all. He just reached into his pockets for all the match packets he'd glommed on his night clubbing tour, and patiently called each one until he found the one where he'd left the briefcase. (from Chester, PA, *Evening Bulletin*, October? 1957)

**TV PERSONALITY A COLLECTOR?...**For a man who gives away real money on TV quiz shows, *Treasure Hunt* emcee Jan Murray probably has the least expensive hobby of any TV star. He collects matchbook covers—and they're free. Jan picks them up at each place where he entertains or visits. Jan spends much of his spare time cataloging the matchbooks and filing them neatly in albums. (from *TV Guide*, September 1957) [*Jan Murray later reported that the whole thing was a misunderstanding; he was not a collector*]

**MATCH BOX COVERS MAY BRING A FORTUNE...**London, May 4 (AP)—George Thelwell, a lathe operator, may end up rich thru his hobby of match box covers. He recently took his album to R.L. Cantwell, secretary of the League of Hobbies, and was told that it may bring \$140,000 at auction. Thelwell has 200 covers, some dating back to the 1820s. (from *RMS Bulletin*, July 1958) [*Obviously "match box covers" are not matchbook covers! Labels go back to the 1820s, though*]

**MATCHBOOKS BREAK UP MARRIAGES...**From a private eye: "On a number of occasions during the past several years of private investigation work, I've had many cases where doubting wives have found paper matchbooks from cafes, motels, and hotels in their husband's pockets....a man can pick up a book of matches without ever having been in the place advertised...Marital misunderstandings crop up frequently enough. Let's not add the matchbooks as positive evidence of wrong—doing." (from *Minneapolis-Memorial Star*, July?, 1958)

**BANK'S MATCHBOOKS TRIP THIEF...**According to the Mohawk National Bank in Schenectady, NY, its full-length bank check matchbook has led to the arrest of an alleged burglar in Setauket, NY. The matchbook with its distinctive cover was found in the possession of a man suspected of breaking into a Long Island real estate operator's office. The businessman was given several of the matchbooks by John Halpin, head of the bank's advertising agency. (from *Schenectady Gazette*, November 12, 1959)

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL DIG PRODUCES MATCHBOXES...**A Upper Ohio class steamer, the *Bertrand*, was sunk along the Missouri River on April 1, 1865. During 1968-1969, a successful excavation of the cargo was undertaken by the National Park Service. The boat wasn't under the water, however, because the river had shifted its course. The cargo, under some 24' of topsoil, clay, silt, and debris, was nearly intact, and it included app. 500 boxes of matches, 48 boxes to a case. The cases read: "Telegraph Matches, A. Eichele, St. Louis". (from *Long Beach Bulletin*, April, 1990)