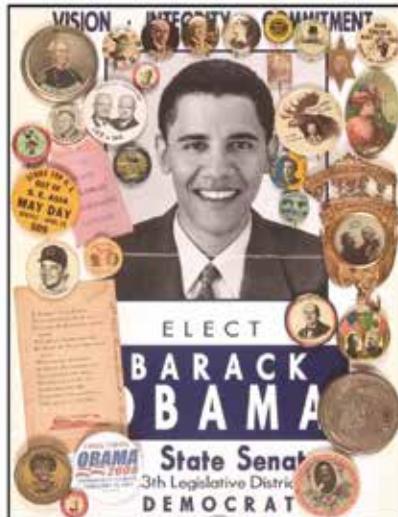


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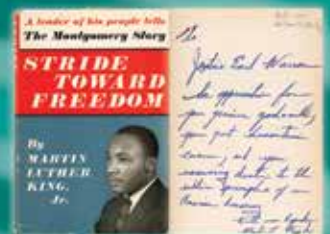
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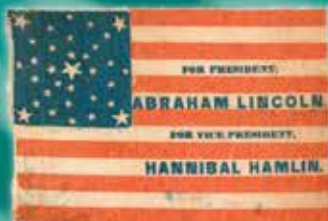
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FROM THE APIC PRESIDENT

What a hobby! It feels like almost every day I receive a notification for another auction, show or sale of amazing political campaign memorabilia. And when reviewing the material being offered, I often see at least one (if not more) items I've never seen before. Maybe it's a Teddy Roosevelt pinback button, a John F. Kennedy window sticker or an Abraham Lincoln broadside, but whatever it is, it was preserved in someone's collection (or desk drawer) for many years until becoming available now.



To me, that's the primary difference between what we collect and the collections of coins, stamps, comic books, baseball cards and many other types of collectors. In those cases, there are reference guides that outline exactly what coins, stamps, books or cards were created each year, and the quantity of every issue is usually well known. But for political collectors, previously unknown items emerge all the time, with no one knowing for sure how many were produced. I think that's what makes our hobby especially exciting and keeps many of us on the hunt for new finds.

I was thinking about this phenomenon recently as I watched the incredible collection of APIC member Rex Stark begin to reach the market. Rex was an amazing collector for so many years, and by the time he passed in December 2023, he amassed what many would say was one of the largest and most varied collections of political memorabilia in existence. Those of you who attended the APIC National Convention in Seven Springs, PA, saw the first of Rex's collection hit the market, with pinbacks and other smaller items being offered at the tables of Bob Fratkin and Germaine Broussard.

Next, while at the Allentown Paper Show in October, a noted paper dealer from New England was offering rare and unique political broadsides, handbills, programs and more from Rex's holdings. Then came the auctions: both the Hake and Anderson fall auctions featured a range of Rex's collection, and we can expect many more auctions in the future with Rex's treasures as the highlight. Whether it was at a show or in an auction, there were one-of-a-kind items available from Rex that even the most advanced collectors said they'd never seen before.

To be sure, collecting rare political material can be a very expensive endeavor. But the great news is that Rex also had a wide assortment of very affordable items available to even the newest collectors. In fact, I'm sure Rex would have been very pleased to know that his collection will be preserved by APIC members of all ages, income levels and collecting interests. After all, none of us will be buried with our collections – we're simply curators making sure our collections will stay in the best possible condition until it's time for the next collector to take over its curation. With that in mind, I hope each of you has a healthy and happy 2025.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tony Lee". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Tony Lee, APIC President

EDITOR'S MESSAGE



Should Richard Nixon have resigned? It's an interesting question that comes up in Bob Bostock's article in this edition of the *Keynoter*.

The 50th anniversary of that event was just this past summer. I asked Bob to write this article because he was one of those important "eyewitnesses to history" since he had volunteered for the Nixon campaign as a teenager, then had actually worked closely with the former president later in life.

Bob offers a predictable opinion on this question, but there's more to it than that as we can, as collectors, appreciate. The letter sent to Bob from 50+ years ago has an important date on it. The other collectibles sent to him with that letter are not rare, but they are quite interesting when it's considered when he got them and where they came from.

While I certainly will keep the *Keynoter* away from current political debates, I think observations from someone who knew the key character in an event 50 years ago are worthwhile when combined with the collectibles associated with it.

As always, if you agree or disagree with anything in that article or any other in the *Keynoter*, I offer you the letters to the editor section. Keep your comments to 150 words and send them to me at TRbuttons@aol.com.

Tom Peeling, *Keynoter* Editor

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FRONT COVER--

Some of the pins created by Dick Bristow.

NEXT ISSUE-- Riding the Rails with the Candidates

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Unearthing the Dick Bristow Story

By Tom Peeling, Keynoter Editor

Just mention the name of Dick Bristow to political collectors and you usually get one of two reactions, depending upon their age.

Newer collectors might know him as the person who produced countless thousands of buttons for the 1968, 1972 and 1976 elections. And it's possible they have heard something about a controversy with him.

Older collectors remember him as the person who was unceremoniously booted out of the American Political Items Collectors organization for making buttons just to sell to collectors.

Did Bristow make buttons to sell to collectors? Yes, he did. But did he also make political buttons and sell them to campaign headquarters across the country. Yes, for a while.

Those are the recollections of APIC member Tom French (APIC 1834), who worked for Bristow from 1971 to 1973.

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, French lived in Santa Cruz, CA, while Bristow lived 22 miles away in Los Gatos. Bristow later moved to Felton, CA, in the Santa Cruz Mountains.

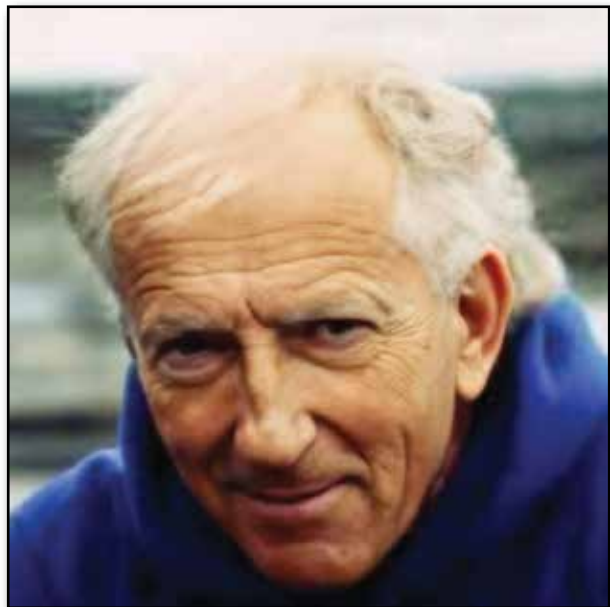
French had begun collecting political buttons after reading about the hobby in *Coinage* magazine. He met Bristow at his trophy shop because French heard he also sold political buttons there, recalling that he was one of the earlier dealers in them.

"He was a true pioneer. There were just a few political dealers back then," French said.

In 1968, Bristow sold buttons that he ordered from Western Badge and sent them to campaign headquarters across the country. He also had a printed list he sent to collectors. There were a few other dealers who actually drew buttons on paper and mimeographed their lists to send out.

"He was the guy," French said. "To find a guy who sold political buttons was cool."

French not only found him, but after visiting his home workshop, he was hired by Bristow to help him sell and package buttons.



Back then in many antique shops, small buttons sold for 25 cents, medium size ones sold for 50 cents and large ones sold for a dollar.

“It didn’t matter who it was,” French said. “It didn’t matter if it was Debs or LBJ or Goldwater.”

There were a few exceptions, even then. Cox-Roosevelt jugates sold for \$1,200 and a Lincoln ferro or Washington clothing button sold for \$100.

Bristow’s 1968 book, the *The Illustrated Political Button Book*, was the first to give collectors and dealers an idea of what prices should be.

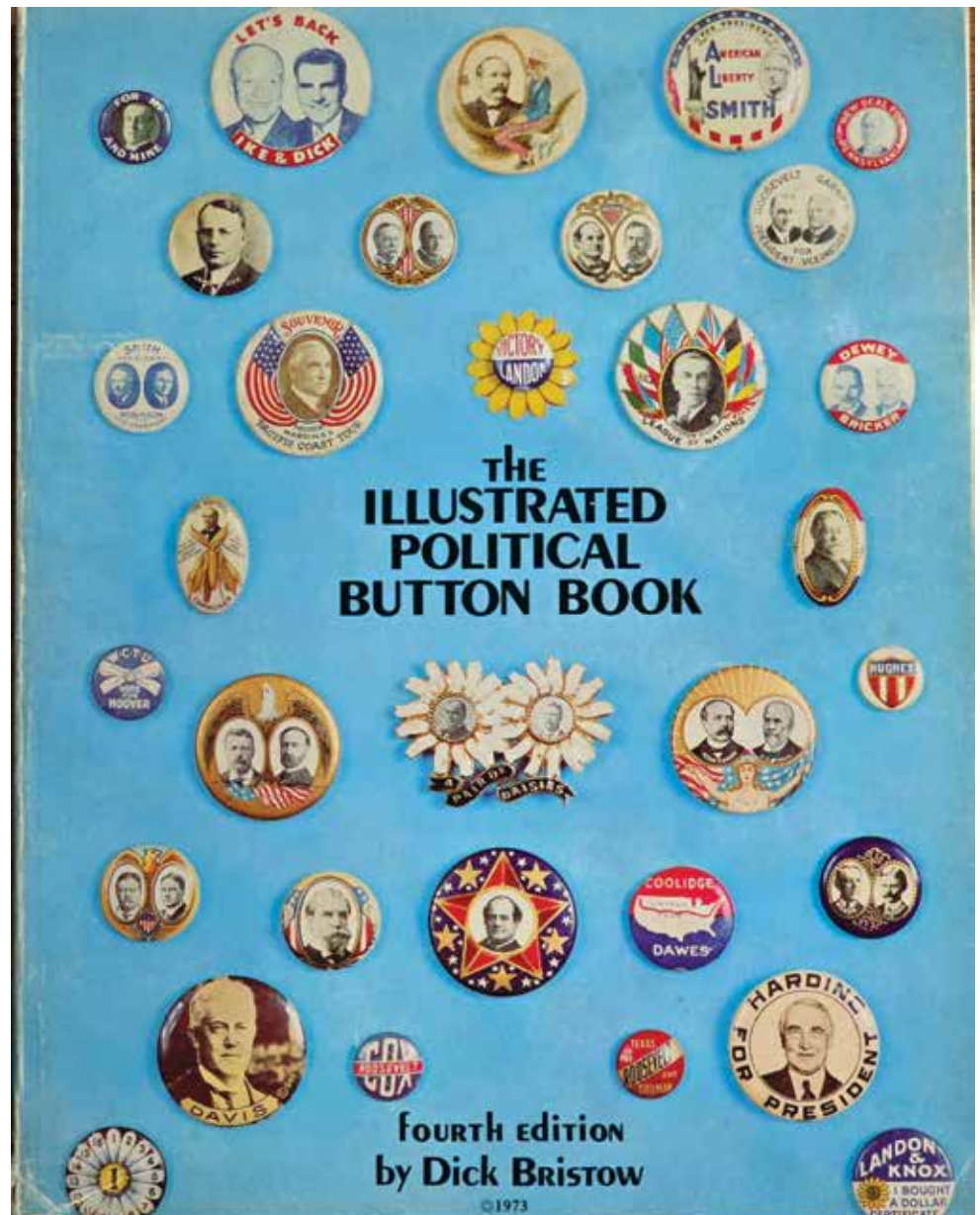
French said the sales were amazing in 1968. Bristow was sending tens of thousands of buttons across the country to anyone who wanted them, but they definitely were legitimate because most of each design were going to official headquarters. The 1968 designs were really nice because they were designed by folks at Western Badge.

Bristow would trade pins to other manufacturers nationwide to add variety to his lists for collectors.

By 1972, after French came aboard, Bristow had hired his own designer who, along with Bristow and his wife, spent much more time smoking pot than actually designing buttons, French said. The designs, as most collectors today will tell you, were horrible.

But something else changed. French had begun publishing *Political Americana* magazine in 1971, later *The Political Collector*, and Bristow bought ads there to advertise his buttons to collectors. By 1972, he said,

Bristow was selling mostly to collectors, and just a tiny percentage to headquarters. He had also changed manufacturers from Western Badge to Buttons Works in Nevada City, CA, making buttons for any party or any candidate.



Bristow wasn't a person to take any gruff from anyone, and when he ran afoul of the APIC hierarchy, he didn't try to appease anyone. He continued to make buttons for collectors, which was against APIC rules then, and was booted from the organization.

"Ralph Callies (another APIC member) was making tons of buttons, too," French said, and he wasn't booted out. "Dick rubbed some folks the wrong way. He had a strong personality. (Kicking him out) was based on what he was doing and his personality."

Another controversy that involved Bristow was the McGovern/Eagleton buttons. When Eagleton

dropped out of the race less than two weeks after being named the VP pick by McGovern, some manufacturers continued to make the buttons with both names figuring they would be worth a lot to collectors.

"As soon as they announced Eagleton for vice president, Dick was pumping out buttons," French said. "They were in the works when Eagleton dropped out. I give Dick some credit. As soon as Eagleton was out, he switched to Shriver."

Bristow soured on the whole idea of political collecting and didn't make buttons again after 1976.

French noted that Bristow didn't make limited edition pins as some are doing today. And he didn't sell them for hundreds of dollars. He sold most of his for a quarter. And today few seem to care if a button was made by a collector or a legit campaign headquarters.

Bristow, who died in 2006, was a pioneer, French said. His 1968 political collecting book pre-dated the Hake books.

"Because he published the book, stuff was coming to his place every day," French said.

And he means old buttons, another point French wanted to point out. A good part of what Bristow sold was old buttons, as far back as Washington Inaugural clothing buttons. The only way to reach Bristow was by mail and each day French would get to see the packages that would come in from throughout the country full of amazing buttons.

"I was making \$3 an hour and I spent it on buttons," French said. And not good buttons, but cheap, older buttons, he added.

"Nobody really knew values," he said. "Pins with cracks and stains sold for about the same as mint condition. Dick made some sense out of it."

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French was going to UC Santa Cruz when he met Bristow, getting a degree in Communications Arts, although he claims he majored in cannabis and basket weaving. He sat in a black sociology class next to Huey Newton and got to meet Rosa Parks when she came to speak.

Once APIC kicked out Bristow, he would send French across the country to political shows, such as Meriden, CT, to sell buttons for him. Bristow didn't give out his phone number, but instead when you got his list you just sent him a check for what you wanted and hoped your letter got there first. French said he was offered hundreds of dollars for Bristow's phone number, but he never gave it out.

Although Charlie McSorley, Ted Hake and Bob Coup all had political collecting lists in the late 1960s, Bristow was just ahead of his time.

French shared some interesting inside information about a McGovern button, showing a topless woman in the center with words around the edge.

"The question I get asked the most is 'was that Dick's wife Linda?'" he said. "Yes, it was."

POLITICAL AMERICANA OCTOBER, 1971 page 6

Dick Bristow P.O. Box 1741 Santa Cruz, California 95060

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MY THREE FAVORITE FINDS

Having Political Ties

By Becky Peeling, Keynoter Associate Editor

“Collector/dealer” is a descriptor that Mike McQuillen, APIC 8461, fully embraces. Like others in the hobby, his collecting gets out of hand at times, pushing him into dealer mode.

For example, his acquisition of more than 500 political ties is counted among his favorite finds. Nearly 25 years ago, McQuillen received a letter from a man who was liquidating his deceased father’s haberdashery store. The writer reached out to McQuillen because of his column in a well-known antique magazine. The ties – promoting presidential candidates Eisenhower or Stevenson – were new and on the original cards, just the way they were sold decades earlier.

Apparently having cornered the world market on this type of political tie and before the age of eBay, McQuillen set out to sell them in person at APIC shows and antique fairs.

“I never thought I would give rid of them,” he said.

It turned out that there were several different designs – and even a few Trumans among the lot. The more common versions sold for \$10 and some of the photo ties went for more. He was able to sell many by the dozens. McQuillen estimates that it took about two years to sell off all but one, a black “I Like Ike” tie that he has kept as a souvenir.

“I had a blast,” McQuillen recalled, noting that the lead came from his magazine article. “Just the right person read it.”

As a Willkie collector, McQuillen is thrilled to have in his collection a 1940 lamppost sign from Elwood, IN, used to herald the candidate’s notification of the nomination. These four-by-five-foot plywood signs lined the parade route. The signs are documented in a famous photo of Willkie standing up in his limousine waving his hat to supporters who came out to see him.

This sign wasn’t easy to come by, McQuillen noted. When he started collecting political items in high school in the mid-1980s, McQuillen learned that a local man had one of the signs, though damaged by fire and water. After the parade, the signs had been stored in a downtown hotel that caught fire, destroying most of them. McQuillen had hoped to acquire that surviving example at some point in the future.



He owns the sign today but got it from a different source. It seems that a visitor stole one of the signs as he left town after the event in 1940. So McQuillen's example is in perfect condition.

"I was blown away," he said, adding that he got it for a "very fair price." The sign has been part of his collection ever since though it does take up a good deal of space in his "Willkie room." Since then, a few more signs have surfaced. He said that about four or five are known to exist.

His third favorite find is another Willkie piece that he received as a gift from his wife, Polly, more than 20 years ago. The Willkie fly swatter is among only a handful that are known to collectors. This item also dates to the candidate's notification. McQuillen explained that the event took place in mid-August. An enterprising vendor handprinted the candidate's information on fly swatters, which proved to be handy during the summer heat. Most were used and thrown away, though the item in his collection is like new.

"She has never told me where and how she found it," McQuillen said.

Having been active in the hobby for decades, McQuillen said that he hasn't found much to add to his Willkie collection in recent months. He has branched out into World War II homefront pins and 3-D items. He also collects items relating to Indiana governors. It's a far cry from his first button, which was a Carter pin given to him by his Social Studies teacher from a display of campaign items for the 1976 presidential election.

After serving as an elected official in Indiana for 15 years, he retired from politics four years ago. Now he serves as governmental affairs director for the Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority, allowing him to be involved politically through association with local officials "without having to run for office." And he is still collecting campaign items of interest.



APIC MEMBER PROFILE:

Tony Lee, APIC 7245

By Adam Gottlieb, APIC 4864

Tony Lee, the 18th president of the American Political Items Collectors, has a lengthy 40+ year history with the organization he now leads. A former journalist with *The Wall Street Journal* for more than 20 years and communications executive with the Society for Human Resource Management, Tony hopes to energize the hobby while embracing the tradition of preserving Americana and celebrating the importance of collecting.

While the Titusville, N.J. resident has held significant roles in the APIC, including NYC Chapter President, national show coordinator, and seminar moderator at national conventions, Tony began his collecting journey in high school. It is that same energy and enthusiasm that continues to drive him today.

Tony, 65, got his start in collecting political memorabilia from a family connection.

"My older brother, Sander, went to college in Washington, D.C. during the late 1960s. When he came home on breaks, he gave me the various buttons he acquired while attending anti-war protest marches and political campaign rallies," Tony said.

As a result of those early gifts, one of Tony's main collecting specialties is the Civil Rights movement including buttons, posters, pennants, and paper ephemera.

The collecting bug continued when his high school freshman history class was discussing the 1968 presidential election.

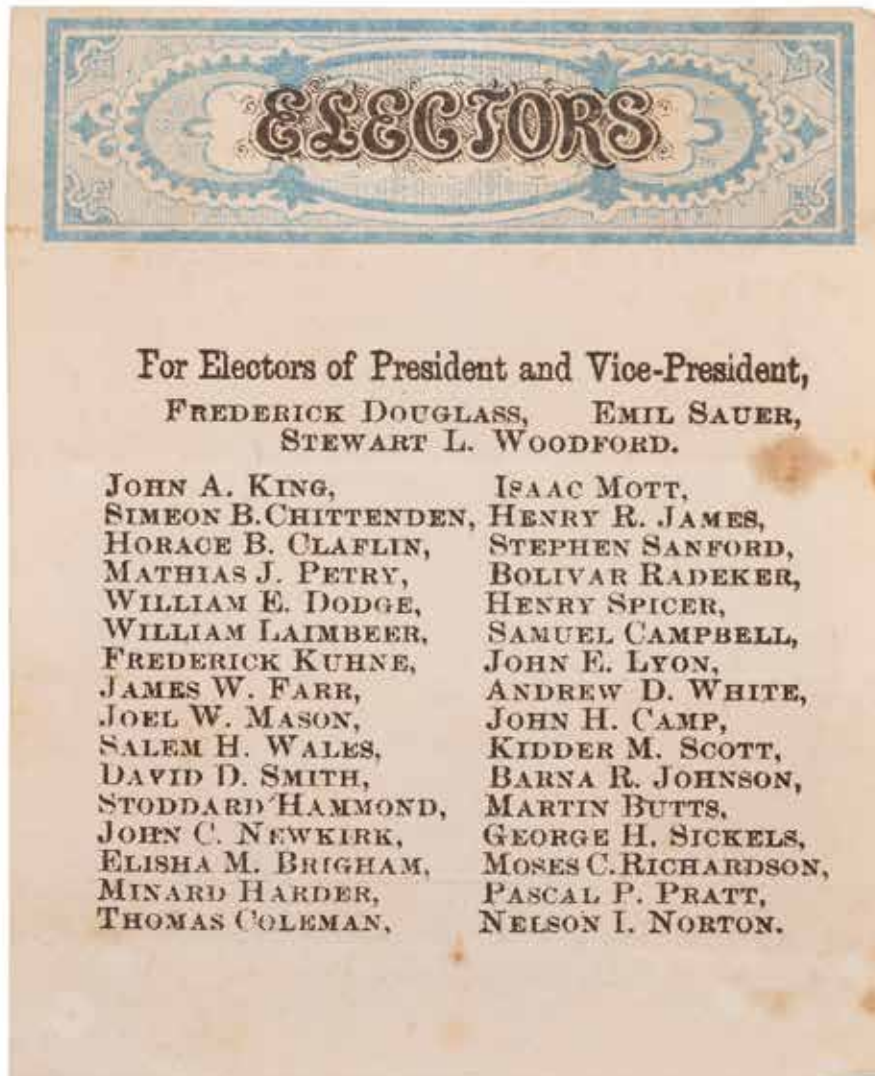
"Since I had buttons from those candidates, I brought them into Mr. Byrd's class and shared them with my classmates," he said. "Afterward, Mr. Byrd thanked me and gave me a cigar box full of old political pinbacks that belonged to his grandfather. Since he didn't collect, Mr. Byrd thought I would like them. From that day on, I was hooked."

Tony is a long-time collector and dealer with the APIC and his passion for collecting spans several categories.



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"I love everything about U.S. political history, including the stories behind the items," he said. "I also collect other genres such as rock concert memorabilia, especially concerts held to support political candidates. My first love are promotional items issued by newspapers including buttons, pocket mirrors, aprons, and more. I especially like pinbacks and ribbons issued by newspapers and magazines endorsing candidates. I spent my career in the newspaper business, and I worked closely with the (now defunct) Newseum in Washington, D.C., where I was the largest single lender of artifacts. While the Newseum is now closed, items from my collection are still in their traveling exhibits," Tony said.

When asked for his APIC mentor, Tony replied, "It's hard to choose just one, but the first person to take me under his wing was Ed Stahl at the old Bordentown (N.J.) show. As a newbie, he guided me around and gave me advice, which is still relevant. Also in the room were Ed Veleber and Charlie McSorley, who were quick to offer guidance and support, and Bob Fratkin, who to this day is always willing to provide expert help and feedback."

When pressed on other memories of Bordentown button shows, Tony recounted an amusing anecdote.

"I was offering buttons for sale and a fellow walks up to my table holding a blue IBM notebook," he said. "I asked if he worked for IBM and he said 'yes.' In fact, he had just left a meeting in Armonk (NY), to drive to the show. I mentioned my wife worked for IBM in corporate communications and he said he also worked in that group. He asked her name and I replied Jane. 'Jane Lee?' he said. It turns out he was sitting next to Jane in the meeting he left. The guy was Greg Thompson, and we've been friends ever since. And, he doesn't let me forget he was friends with Jane before he and I ever met or found out we both collected political items."

During his time at Northwestern University pursuing his master's degree, Tony saw a newspaper item mentioning the 1983 APIC National Convention at a hotel near the Chicago O'Hare Airport.

"I had been collecting through college, so I was eager to go," he said. "I brought \$200, which was all I had to spend. The first table I visited belonged to a nice guy with a Southern accent, and we talked extensively about collecting and politics. He showed me great pins and I spent my entire \$200 with him. That guy was Chris Olmstead, a lovely APIC member from Atlanta, who also encouraged me to join the APIC and keep attending shows."

The APIC used to publish a printed roster of club members (now online). While visiting other states, Tony would often call local members and ask to see their collections. In 1989, one such fortuitous meeting occurred when Tony was visiting his parents at their new home in Palm Beach, Fla.

"I called a guy named Tom Peeling who sounded as young as I was and he invited me over. We immediately hit it off, especially since we both worked at newspapers, and (our wives) Jane and Becky also became buddies – they both worked in public relations-related fields. Tom showed me his collection – half of one Riker mount filled with Teddy Roosevelt buttons. We did some trading (the beginning of a tradition we've maintained for years), and talked about putting on a show in Florida someday. The following year, Tom and I launched that show and the South Florida show continues to this day.

At about the same time, Tony first attended the APIC's New York City show, which was held in the back of a Howard Johnson's restaurant in midtown Manhattan. He helped organizer Mort Berkowitz set up the dealer tables for a show that included APIC luminaries such as Peter Scanlan, Tom Farley, and Mark Evans.

"It was at that show I was elected president of the Big Apple Chapter, and it wasn't long before Mort proclaimed me president for life," Tony said.

Without a fixed location, the Big Apple show moved around for many years, from the restaurant to two different synagogues to a church and then a high school gym, where it was last held prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.

“Unfortunately, until a new location can be found to host the gathering, we had to leave New York,” Tony said. “The show is now held in Titusville during Super Bowl weekend where the popular event attracts a large attendance.”

When asked about his goals for growing the APIC, Tony identified a few challenges.

“The APIC has around 1,200 members, but many Facebook groups dedicated to political item collecting have thousands participating,” he said. “One of my goals is to try to identify why so many people are actively collecting, but not joining APIC.”

To begin the process, Tony and APIC leadership have launched three distinct online surveys to gather information from current APIC members, lapsed/former APIC members, and collectors who have never joined the APIC.

“The results from the first survey of current APIC members are extremely positive and helpful,” he said. “The second survey asked former members what they like and didn’t like about the organization, as well as what could be done to have them rejoin. The feedback has been excellent. The results from the third survey are encouraging and will help provide a roadmap for actions to take in 2025 and beyond to grow APIC membership.”

Tony identified a few trends.

“Feedback isn’t showing survey respondents don’t find APIC relevant – it’s that they can’t justify spending \$42 a year to be a member,” he said. “The most common response is they have limited funds and they’d rather spend \$42 on buttons. One potential solution we are working on is to provide new APIC members with \$42 worth of political buttons when they join.”

Another pushback from potential members is they get all the information and buying opportunities they need for free on Facebook, so they say “why join?” However, potential members have posed questions about the best practices to preserve and maintain their collections. Based on that, a new section addressing those concerns has been added – in the APIC members-only area – as one way to encourage non-members to join.

“One comment we are hearing from non-members is while they enjoy collecting political Americana, it’s not a hobby they feel they can share with their children” Tony said. “Several survey respondents say they can take their kids to a baseball card, antique toy, or comic book show and the whole family can get excited about it. Given the rancor in the current election cycle, respondents have said they’re keeping their kids away from their political collecting hobby until things cool down.”

As 2025 dawns, Tony will lead the collectors’ organization he has dedicated much of his adult life toward into its 80th year. Tony and the APIC leadership will look to the membership for feedback on new ideas, volunteer time, and/or to contribute financial resources to ensure the future of the APIC remains healthy and focused on collecting and curating the historical artifacts from America’s political past.

If you have ideas on how the APIC should recognize its 80th birthday or other suggestions to help advance the hobby, please email Tony Lee at president@apic.us or tonylee08560@gmail.com.

Reflections on a Resignation, 50 Years Later

By Bob Bostock, APIC 17327

Hanging in a frame on the wall of my home office is a letter from a White House aide, along with a boxed set of presidential cuff links, and a presidential tie bar. What makes these commonplace items special – at least to me – is the date on the letter. Aug. 8, 1974, the last full day of the Nixon administration.

In the days of my youth, I was an ardent supporter of President Richard Nixon. I volunteered as a 14-year-old on the Bergen County, N.J., phone banks. I continued to support the president throughout Watergate. And I have ever since.

On the morning of the day that President Nixon announced his resignation, presidential aide Bruce Herschensohn appeared on the Today show. He expressed his belief that the president should not resign.

His strong support for the president moved me to call the White House and ask for Mr. Herschensohn's office. I was put through and talked to his secretary. After a few minutes, she asked me to hold. Mr. Herschensohn came on the line, and I ardently expressed my support for the president. Of course, the president did resign.

But, according to the letter in a Special Delivery package I received from Mr. Herschensohn two days later, the president was "aware of (my) hard work and loyalty" and assured me that my call "meant a great deal to all of us here, and, more important, it means a great deal to the president."

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

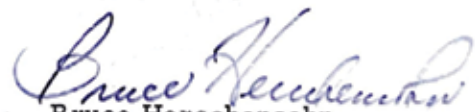
August 8, 1974

Dear Bob:

The President wanted you to have these as a memento. He is aware of your hard work and loyalty.

Thanks, too, for your telephone call today. It meant a great deal to all of us here and, more important, it means a great deal to the President.

Respectfully,


Bruce Herschensohn
Deputy Special Assistant
to the President

Mr. Robert Bostock
1 Burlington Place
Fair Lawn, New Jersey 07410

The cufflinks and tie bar were enclosed.

Fast forward 50 years, to Aug. 8, 2024. Shortly before noon, I found myself sitting in the media studio in the offices of the Richard Nixon Foundation at the Nixon Presidential Library in Yorba Linda, CA. I was waiting to appear as a panelist on a National Archives live-streamed panel, *A President Resigns: 50 Years Later*. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X7j_fmORZ1Q&t=12s

As I awaited the start of the program, I reflected on my own journey to this place.

- Working Nixon re-election phone banks in 1972.
- Traveling to Washington in July 1974 with a group of people opposed to impeachment.
- Working with former President Nixon during the last five years of his life, including in 1990, when I wrote descriptions for the new Nixon Library exhibits covering his presidency, including the Watergate exhibit.
- Attending the president's funeral at the Nixon Library in 1994. Because I was wearing one of the coveted purple buttons, I was able to speak with President Clinton at a reception after the services. I told him how much I appreciated his eulogy, especially when he said, "May the day of judging President Nixon by anything less than his entire life and career come to a close."
- Being criticized, by name, in a New York Times editorial for expressing my view that President Nixon made mistakes, but did not commit impeachable offenses. <https://www.nytimes.com/2010/08/21/opinion/21sat4.html>
- Curating and writing numerous special exhibits for the Nixon Library, including the President's Centennial Exhibit in 2013. I'm currently working on an upcoming exhibit to mark America's Semiquincentennial.
- Appearing in a documentary on Watergate released on Aug. 8, 2024: *Watergate: Secrets and Betrayals*. I spoke about my experience writing the Watergate exhibit working directly with the former president. www.watergatesecret.com



As the clock ticked down to noon, I marveled that a 14-year-old kid from New Jersey – one of millions of volunteers that helped President Nixon win his historic re-election, carrying 49 states and 61 percent of the popular vote – was, half a century later, representing the Nixon Foundation (and, in a way, the president) on a National Archives panel discussion reflecting on the premature end of his presidency.

A week after I received that Special Delivery package back in 1974, my local paper carried an article about my experience supporting the president. The last paragraph of the article closed with a quote from me: The resignation “is going to make me work harder than ever. I know President Nixon would not want me to sit on the sidelines and watch. The reasons he was elected still live.”

I’ve kept that pledge now for 50 years, but as the president said to his staff on Aug. 9, 1974, “it is only a beginning, always.”



RICHARD NIXON
PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARY AND MUSEUM

A President Resigns: 50 Years Later
A virtual panel discussion on the resignation
August 8 from noon to 1:30 p.m. (PDT)



Using records from the collections at the Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum, the program will look at President Nixon’s decision to resign and final days at the White House. The panel will offer diverse perspectives on this day in American history and its impact 50 years later.

Panel discussion will stream live on YouTube
<http://youtube.com/@RichardNixonLibrary>



WATERGATE

ASSOCIATED PRESS | Updated May 16, 2017

Pickers are shown marching outside the CBS Television studios in Washington, July 21, 1974, in protest over the network’s handling of stories relating to the President. A spokesman for the pickets said the network did not report much of the good the President is doing, only problems he is having. (AP Photo)

TRUTH BE TOLD

Long-time Pin Mystery Solved

By David Holcomb, APIC 5993

Recently David Yount, APIC 6913, made a wonderful discovery. For many years there has been a debate about the C 1st Voters League, 5/8-inch button. Some thought it was C for Cox, others C for Coolidge and others, like me, have thought it to be C for one of the C states, California, Colorado, or Connecticut.



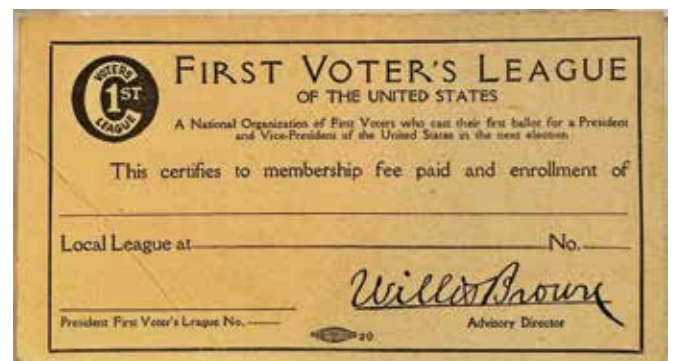
David Yount's find of a membership card for the organization picturing the exact design of the button was the key to solving the mystery.

The biggest clue to solving the mystery was the signature of the Advisory Director, Willis Brown, or as he was known, Judge Willis Brown. Some background on Judge Brown. About 1904, he advocated for a juvenile court system in Salt Lake City. It came to pass, and he was appointed the first judge in 1905, a position he held for two years. It turns out that he was not even a lawyer and after learning of this he was removed from the bench.

From 1910 to the early teens, he started "Boy Cities" in Charlevoix, MI, and Gary, IN, like Boys Town in Omaha. He produced a silent film advertising Charlevoix, Michigan Boy City and he caught the bug to make movies.

He then moved to Hollywood and set his sights on writing, producing, and starring in two-reel silent movies. He started the Boy City Film Co. in Culver City. The studio produced twenty movies dealing with moral issues and other topics pertaining to good character. "Judge" Brown gave legendary director King Vidor his first director's job. Vidor directed several of Brown's films. The studio also became a homeless shelter.

Brown then started the First Voter's League of the United States in February 1920. From what I can find out, the First Voter's League of the United States was pretty much a one man show, that of "Judge" Brown. In September 1920, the press reported that he had given honorary membership to those in the Seattle area in the Cox-Roosevelt Club after the club welcomed Gov. Jim Cox's message to first voters. At the end of October 1920, Brown addressed a Democratic rally in New Haven, CT. and the press reported "A strong appeal to the first voters was made by Judge Willis Brown of Salt Lake City, advisory director of the First Voter's League of the United States. He told of the work being done in the way of inducing first voters to help elect Governor Cox."



So, I am convinced now that the C does stand for Cox, and I have placed my example in my Cox frame. Kudos to David Yount for finding this and sharing.

Democratic Rally Largely Attended

Was Held At Poli's Theater Yesterday Afternoon

CLOONAN CHAIRMAN

Addresses By Judge Willis Brown, Judge D. T. O'Brien And Sheriff Reilly

About 1000 people attended the final rally of the Democratic party yesterday afternoon at 3 o'clock at Poli's theater. The rally was preceded by a concert by the City band on Crown street square and at 3 o'clock the band, playing a popular air, marched into the theater and on to the stage where they played the national anthem.

Town Chairman Michael J. Doran introduced James F. Cloonan as the presiding officer.

The first speaker was George Sims of Ohio, vice president of a railroad men's association. He stated that organized labor was for the league and that both Harding's vote and voice were always detrimental to labor. "His record shows that he failed to respond to roll call 1163 times" said the speaker. He added that as governor of Ohio Cox swayed the people three times and that during that time he forced through many acts favorable to the working man.

Appeal To First Voters.

A strong appeal to the first voters was made by Judge Willis Brown of Salt Lake City, advisory director of the First Voters' league of the United States. He told of the work being done in the way of inducing first voters to help elect Governor Cox.

Teach Youth

JUDGE WILLIS BROWN, formerly of Salt Lake, advocates education of boys and girls to vote intelligently.



NEW YORK, Feb. 29.—Formation of "first voters' leagues," so that young men and women may be instructed to "vote intelligently," was advocated by Judge Willis Brown, formerly of the juvenile court in Salt Lake City, in an address here today before the Eaton class for men of the Madison Avenue Baptist church. Judge Brown has been engaged for years in establishing juvenile communities, or "boys' cities" throughout the country.

"It is important," he declared, "that the new voters be instructed in the degrees of citizenship in order that they may understand party platforms and principles." The solution of the Americanization problem, he added, is the proper education of the children of immigrants.

Judge Willis Brown left Salt Lake some years ago to pursue juvenile welfare work, in which he attained much prominence through motion picture productions.

SPOKANE FIRST VOTERS TO GET IN U. S. LEAGUE

Give Honorary Membership in National Club.

Secretary Canfield of the Cox-Roosevelt club has received a message from the head of the First Voters' League of the United States tendering honorary membership in the league to the young men and women of Spokane who participated in the reception to Governor Cox, receiving his "message to first voters."

Mr. Canfield is instructed to forward a list of such first voters, and is informed that membership cards have been sent here to the members.

This league is an organization for the whole United States of men and women who are casting their first vote for president and vice president. Its declaration is as follows:

"I shall vote for men, not against men; for construction not for destruction; for equality of all, not for or against class; for the love of all not for hate and suspicion; for my country, not against other countries."

Secretary Canfield has forwarded the list requested, which numbers 100, and the signers will at once be called together to organize a local branch.

It is the purpose to extend the same organization thruout all eastern Washington and especially in the Fifth and Fourth congressional districts. This work will probably be placed in charge of Mrs. Jay Daniel, for the Women's Democratic club.

"Judge" Brown's end was not a happy one. In October 1931, 49-year-old Brown was shot to death by a widow he had a romantic relationship with. She was charged with first-degree murder but ended up pleading to manslaughter and was sentenced to three years' probation. News accounts are not very clear on what happened but there was a struggle for the gun and Brown ended up dead. But his button lives on and can now be attributed to him, and Gov. Cox.

Editor's note: Years ago I bought a group of 10 pins from a person in Ohio. In the group were six Cox pins and three Harding pins, plus the C 1st Voters pin. So always assumed the pin was for Cox, but thanks to the two Davids, the mystery is solved.

Remembering a Fallen Hero

By Al Kampmeyer, APIC 17397

More often than not the political items we collect don't have a back story attached to the item. Some of us have worked on campaigns and met candidates, congressmen and congresswomen, senators, and even presidents. There are stories of working with these people to get them elected. The story associated with this political item of mine is a tragic tale from the Vietnam War.

The red, white, and blue canvas McGovern Shriver bag from 1972 is not uncommon. I bought this one more for the story than the bag itself. The bag belonged to Charlene Carson LaGrange and I bought it from her best friend Julie in 2004.

Charlene was born in 1947 and married Lance LaGrange. Lance was the only child of Caroline and William LaGrange. He attended ROTC at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and received a degree in aeronautical engineering. He enlisted in the Air Force in 1966, trained at Craig Air Force Base in Alabama, was shipped out of Clovis, NM, and arrived for duty in Vietnam on June 6, 1968. He was assigned to the 306th Tactical Fighter Squadron.

Twenty-six days after arriving in Vietnam, while piloting his aircraft, he was hit with enemy fire and killed in action in Binh Dinh Province. Charlene was devastated by her young husband's death and had a complete breakdown. After 18 months of wild living in California and Hawaii, she returned to college and received a degree at SUNY Albany in 1971. Along the way she became very much against the war in Vietnam.

Julie, her best friend, met Charlene during the McGovern campaign. In Julie's words, the McGovern campaign used her shamelessly but Charlene didn't care. Charlene hated the war, would wear her husband's medals and hold his photo and pose whenever and wherever the campaign asked her while wearing this bag with McGovern campaign pins on it.



During her involvement with the McGovern campaign, Charlene met two men who had connections to the Kennedy family. One of these men, John F. English, gave Charlene the McGovern canvas bag. John F. English was a top political adviser to John F., Robert F. and Edward M. Kennedy. He was instrumental in persuading Robert Kennedy to run for the Senate in New York in 1964. John English died in 1987.

After the 1972 election, Charlene settled into life in Albany, NY, in various academic librarian occupations. She never remarried. In 1993, while traveling by air, she suffered a brain aneurysm and died at age 45.

This story has had an impact on me ever since I knew of it. It's a story that should be remembered, though there are countless others like it. To add my touch to the canvas bag history, I wanted to get a rubbing of Lance La Grange's name from the Vietnam Memorial Wall in Washington, D.C. Recently my friend Adam Kress, APIC 17797, made this happen and the rubbing now resides in the McGovern bag.



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Remembering Bob Coup

By Tom Peeling, Keynoter Editor

I can't say it's ever fun to write an obituary, especially when it's for a long-time friend. But this one sure comes close.

You see, everyone you talk with in this hobby has something great to say about Bob Coup. It's not hard to find folks who will say nice things about someone when they are gone, but in Bob's case, folks said the same thing when he was still with us.

"I always enjoyed being around him," Charlie Hertlein, APIC 5135, said. "He was always upbeat and positive. He had a really special personality and demeanor about him."

Hertlein said he would often go out to dinner with Bob and his wife Jeannine after the Dixie Chapter shows whether they were held in Atlanta, or Tennessee or Greensboro, NC. Bob would always have neat collectibles in many categories, he added.

"It becomes really family oriented and not just about the hobby," he said.

APIC President Tony Lee said he first met Bob in the early 1980s.

"He was one of the guys on the East Coast that everyone met," Lee said.

He talked about going to flea markets in that time period in eastern Pennsylvania – Adamstown, Rennings, etc. – and hearing about Bob.

"I'd come up as a little kid (to the dealers) and ask if you have any political. They'd say 'yes' but I'm holding it for Bob Coup!"

Friendship ran deep with APIC member 3158, Harvey Goldberg.

"It went beyond friendship. It was family," he said. "Bob and Jeannine were at our daughter's wedding."

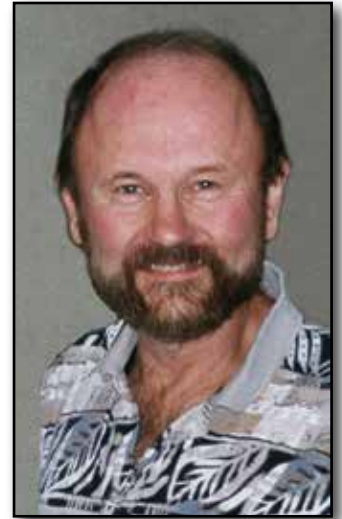
Goldberg has a couple stories that share that warmth.

"One weekend a while back, Bob stayed over at my house. As he was looking through my RFK collection, he saw that I had four different "KENNEDY ACTION CORPS" buttons and mentioned that there was another version – a plastic pin. A week or so later I received a package from him – with the 1-3/4 inch plastic version of the pin. When I phoned him to thank him, and asked how much the pin was, he told me 'It's a gift' and added something like "We don't want that particular grouping to be incomplete."

They even shared a love of football, sort of.

"I took Bob to Giants Stadium with the Giants playing the Pittsburgh Steelers. We were both football fans. Bob was a Steelers fan and also liked the NY Giants. I'm a Giants fan and also like Pittsburgh. Pittsburgh won the game. I think the score was 17-14. But what I remember most is how much we enjoyed each other's company as we each rooted for our favorite team."

Bob had a degree in elementary education from Indiana University of Pennsylvania. After that he moved to Lancaster for a job, and continued his education nearby at what is now Millersville University. There, he met Jeannine, who was working on a bachelor's degree in secondary history education. A friend of Bob's



had suggested he call Jeannine for a blind date and both couples could double date.

"I had never blind dated before," Jeannine said. "But this guy was really funny."

They went to a drive-in movie. That's when it got interesting.

According to Jeannine, Bob said: "After the movie, we'll go back to my apartment and fondue."

"I had no idea what fondue was," Jeannine admitted. "It sounded like a foreign word. I told this funny man that I don't fondue on a first date."

Turns out it was just cheese and bread, she said.

Her introduction to "buttoning" came as a shock to her.

"One of our weekend dates was to drive down to Gary Lundquist's (another collector) house, and Bob bought \$1,000 of buttons. We came home with a box of buttons."

It was 1970, and that was a lot of money then.

"But I was hooked on the guy," she said.

Bob put out a mimeographed list to 100-200 collectors and immediately sold some of those buttons he bought.

He would often bring her handfuls of buttons that he bought on weekends.

"He couldn't date me on Sunday because all the flea markets were open on Sunday," Jeannine said.

They dated for several years. This was during the Vietnam War, so Bob joined the Army Reserve. Besides a short stint each month where they "played Army," as Jeannine called it, they would have a month of training in the summer. Bob returned after that month and told Jeannine how much he missed her. Soon after they married.

Bob told her that if she didn't collect, their relationship probably wouldn't work.

"There are people who collect and there are people who don't," she said. "I guess we got two collectors hooked up."

More than 50 years of wedded bliss and two kids later, it seems to have worked out fine.

Bob liked the good stuff, but he also liked quantity, she said. A friend once told him that "you could put Bob naked in an empty room and he could fill it."

After 10 years of teaching, Bob realized he could quit that job and do the antique business full time. He started with a sales list that grew into a mail auction.

Jeannine said she has been truly touched by the number of cards she has received since Bob's death. How he guided them in their collecting, was generous with his time, etc.

But North Carolina collector Hertlein probably summed it up best: He was "just somebody everybody liked to be around."





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Bush's Other Purse Strings

By Greg Thompson, APIC 4225

Faced with the tedium of campaign travel and appearances in 1964, Barbara Bush knew she had to do something. So she turned to her hobby of needlepoint to pass the time and to keep her fingers and mind busy.

Being practical and wanting to support her husband's campaign for the U.S. Senate in Texas, the future First Lady designed and began creating needlepoint purses and tote bags that became iconic and rare campaign collectibles.

The first design, in red, white and blue, said, "Be for Bush for U.S. Senate" and featured a cute Republican elephant. Her purse drew immediate notice, so she created another, and another. They were an instant hit, with other GOP wives and with news photographers covering George Bush's campaign against Democrat incumbent Ralph Yarborough. In addition to always carrying one herself, Barbara would donate the purses to GOP fundraisers and give them to other supporters.

In his first-ever campaign, George Bush lost his uphill battle for the Senate in the Democratic landslide of 1964. He ran successfully for Congress from Houston in 1966 – with Barbara making more purses. He then ran unsuccessfully for the U.S. Senate again in 1970 against Lloyd Bentsen. She still made purses that year, some featuring the blue and green color motif used by her husband's 1970 campaign. I have yet to see any examples in news photos or articles to show whether she continued making and using purses as her husband began running for president in 1980.

I have four different variations of Barbara's purses in my Bush pre-presidential collection, including the one Senate version featured in the iconic Associated Press photo from 1964 and one of the blue and green variations from 1970. I recently discovered a new version of a knitted navy blue Senate purse, along with a photo of Barbara holding one of that style (with a different design). News articles suggest that style was used in 1970.



(1964)HOUSTON, Tex., June 6—APPEARING BUSH-COPY WISHES—George Bush, candidate for the Republican nomination for the U.S. Senate, gives a gift to his wife Saturday night at his headquarters as his wife beams her pleasure at the news. Bush was leading his opponent Jack Can in the runoff primary. Bush will face Senator Ralph Yarborough (D-Tex) in the November general election as if his lead holds and he is the winner. (AP Wirephoto) 10/10/64

Barbara Bush's needlepoint campaign bags are referenced in numerous news articles and photos from the Senate and Congress races in Texas in the 1960s. One of the articles indicated that some of Barbara's close friends helped by taking her design and needlepointing



an occasional purse, so apparently not all were actually produced by the future First Lady.

It took me many years to find one of these purses for my Texas collection and I only know of a few in the hobby. It would seem that these purses would be more common. I know of a couple that reside in county history museums in Texas and at least one in the George H.W. Bush Presidential Library collection. However, I'm told that even Barbara did not have one when the presidential collection was being assembled and that a family friend had to donate one.

All I know for sure is that my wife and young granddaughters, who don't really care for my political collection, love my Barbara Bush Senate purses.



Political Items as a Portal to History

By Matt Dole, APIC 16847

In my collection of books, the fiction section has just four or five books, isolated on their own shelf away from the hordes of nonfiction history and biography. It's not that I dislike fiction. It's just that I think there are too many incredible, unique, and true stories, and I want to get to all of them first.

My political collecting is like that, too. I focus on locals because everyone knows the "best sellers." Presidential campaigns don't need my attention, and I would offer woefully little to their study. Give me the obscure congressman, winner of a special election in November to serve out the remainder of a term. He went to Washington to get sworn in and sat in his office, but never experienced a single day in session during his brief tenure.

Give me the county sheriff who happened upon his wife and one of his former inmates gallivanting around town one day, knocked the ex-con out cold, and promptly filed for a divorce.

Give me the little-remembered governor who called the legislature into special session to debate and pass the gargantuan legislation to untangle Ohio's prohibition laws upon the repeal of the 18th Amendment in 1933.

That's where I'm comfortable. Pieces of memorabilia serving as portals to the past, often opening up vivid histories filled with incredible, unique, and true stories. There's nothing better for me as a collector than getting an item for a candidate I don't know and googling or using a newspaper database to learn more about them and the world they inhabited. It reminds me of the theme from a childhood favorite TV show, *Reading Rainbow*, where readers were transported into the worlds they read about. What better way to discover the past than through a relic of that time? But you don't have to take my word for it...

The Congressman was Ward Miller of Ohio's 6th District. I bought his congressional ID card and other personal items on eBay. He was elected on Nov. 7, 1960, to serve the remainder of James Polk's term. Polk passed away in 1959. Miller wasn't a candidate for election to the full term. Miller was sworn in by the House Clerk about Nov. 21 and served until Jan. 3, 1961. The House never met, but the congressman did make nominations for the military service academies.

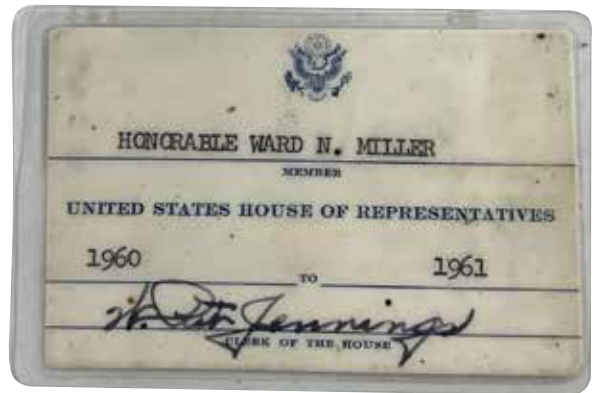
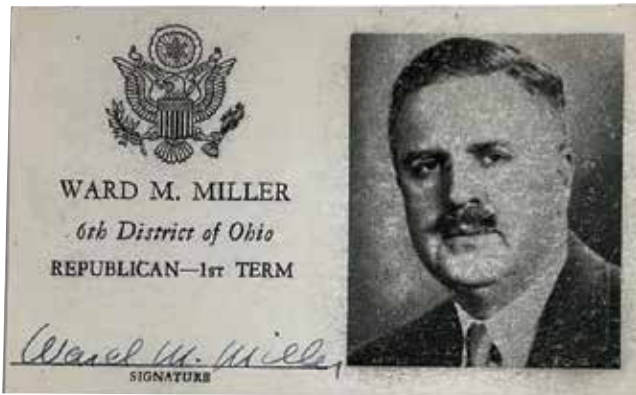
The county sheriff was Charles Swank, who not only knocked out his wife's lover but later arrested him for murder and sent him up the river. A friend gave me a small card promoting Swank's re-election in 1916 with an early lenticular. A Google search revealed a ruler on eBay, so now I have the start of a Swank sub-specialty. I found a lovely tidbit while reading about the sheriff's activities in newspapers of the day. Swank arrested a hermit for operating a moonshine still on his rural property. When they brought the man in, he promptly admitted to a long-unsolved murder for which he wasn't even a suspect. On the moonshine



charge, though, the newspaper reported that the hermit would neither admit nor deny his guilt.

I bought an inscribed-to-the-photographer portrait of Gov. George White signing the “beer bill” which set state policy for buying, selling, and taxing booze following the repeal of the 18th Amendment. White had called the legislature together to consider some monumental questions, such as how the state would operate liquor sales (it created a state monopoly in place to this day) and whether or not hotels and other eateries could sell individual portions – liquor by the glass. The governor was in favor, while his Democratic colleague U.S. Sen. Robert Bulkley vehemently opposed glass sales. Ultimately, the legislature compromised, allowing individual sales only if an establishment went to its neighbors and passed a local option. The legislation also might have been the only time in history when people yearned for taxes. You see, making it a tax bill meant it could go into effect immediately without the customary 90-day wait. After 14 dry years, Ohioans were thirsty.

All that from a laminated card, a ruler, and an inscribed photo. You can’t beat the value. So go search out those locals. Look them up. Because the stories they tell are incredible, unique, and – often – stranger than fiction.



When Luck Is on Your Side

By David Yount, APIC 6913

Sometimes it takes a while for a (sub)collection to take root. But, it first requires that single seed from which to grow.

Thirty years ago, I was attending the Michigan APIC show where I encountered the table of a local postcard dealer. Most of his material was non-political, but he did have a few political postcards. The one which caught my eye was a RPPC (real photo postcard) of some men posed in front of an innocuous looking harness shop. But, hanging in the window of the front door, behind the men, I spied the classic Roosevelt and Johnson standing jugate poster. The men nearly obscured it, but there it was. It was just "background music" in an ordinary occupational photo of some small-town merchants. The poster probably went unnoticed by even the photographer. But, to me, that is what made it special. So, I happily bought it. As I walked away, I wondered if this might be the only such "real photo" postcard that accidentally captured that TR poster from 1912.

Fast forward to late April 2024. I was going through my usual eBay searches, when I spied a real photo postcard of a Milwaukee construction site with what looked like a familiar poster peeking through in the background. Sure enough, hanging on the side of a shed, was that same TR and Johnson poster that I found in the postcard I bought in Michigan an eon ago. After an easy negotiation with the seller, the postcard was mine. So now I had two RPPCs of this same classic TR campaign poster. What were the odds?



Amazed by my good fortune, I decided to post these two RPPCs (and a copy of the same TR and Johnson poster I had in my collection) on the APIC Facebook page to share my "lightning strikes twice" story with our fellow hobbyists. Within a few hours, a member commented that he had a RPPC with this same poster in the background! He kindly sent me a photo of it, and I couldn't believe my eyes. Now three. He agreed to a trade for me to acquire this third example.

Later that week, I called my good friend and fellow TR collector, Greg Wynn to tell him of the crazy happenstance of finding three RPPCs of the same TR poster. After relaying the story, Greg paused on the other end of the phone, "Dave, you're not going to believe this. I have one, too." And, he followed up, "I'm putting it in the mail to you tomorrow with my compliments." I was just shocked, that is, until Greg called back a few minutes later and said, "You're not going to believe this, I don't have one, I have two, and this one is coming your way also." Incredible.

So, now you see how one accidental find turned into quite a strange set of coincidences to create a wonderful little sub-collection within my TR collection. Who would believe lightning striking in the same place five times? I'm now a believer, and one lucky collector!



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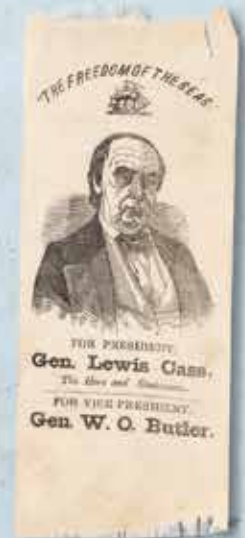
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