

On The LIGHTER Side

September 15, 1984

Newsletter No. 7

ETC., E+c., etc.

This month's newsletter should be more interesting than usual because we have 2 Editors for September!

Warren Gerber was in Dallas, Tex. and helped me with this issue (See story on Clark Bordner and "Starter Collection" Ad). He also came to Dallas prepared with a whole box full of his "trading lighters" ----- this was almost like a summit conference! This was my first encounter with trading lighters with another collector. Now I believe Warren's comment made a few month's ago in On The Lighter Side---"Each of us has a pretty high idea of the value of our own 'goodies'." I think this lighter is worth those two---he thinks that lighter is worth three of mine---proved to be interesting!

I am pleased that Warren took the time to see my lighters while he was in Dallas, and it certainly was fun trading with another collector. I hope that sooner or later each and all of us will have the opportunity to meet and tell about our individual collections. I think eventually we could have a convention!

This past month I have also received some more pictures for the scrapbook, but still would like some more from those of you who haven't sent any in. Please take time to take at least one picture!

More later.....

Judith

IN THE SPOTLIGHT....

by Warren Gerber

A "lucky seventh" hobby established residence high on a windy hill in Northeastern Ohio when Clark Bordner and his wife, Anne, happily contracted lighter mania six years ago. Lighter enthusiasm must compete, however, with long-established avocations, including horses (they have 7 Arabians in their stables, pigeons (the Bordners provide room and board for 50 Acrobatic pigeons), 15 goats at last count and 3 other "collections" which now dominate a large recreation room in their 5 year old, 3,000 square foot house located on 20 acres, including a pond, some 30 miles southeast of Cleveland in Streetsboro.

Clark's interest in this hobby was sparked when he and Anne attended an estate sale. An old brass lighter caught his eye. He bought it and told Anne that he thought it would be fun to collect lighters.

Today, approximately 500 table and pocket lighters are displayed on 15 shallow (4" deep and 10 feet long) shelves which line a portion of one wall of the rec. room. A dozen or so lighters on the floor nearby are awaiting display space. Clark, a general contractor and operator of a customized packaging business, can build his own.

As is the nature of the collector beast, usually, at first, Clark and Anne acquired any kind of lighter they could get their hands on at Flea Markets or on trips. As time moved on, Clark has chosen to seek, primarily, older lighters -

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dating back to the 1920's - of any make or brand.

He said that he does not have any grouping or types of lighters for trade or sale, but agrees with the old principle that "everything has its' price."

He counts as his most unusual lighter a relatively small all-brass table unit with a "1912 Capitol lighter-type" sparking mechanism and fuel container about the size of a lipstick tube. Both are mounted on a post over a small saucer. He understands that it came out of an old cigar store.

He also has a pair of tall, brass "lamps" with pull chains from the Art Deco period. Clark's newest lighter uses the piezoelectric ignition system.

His favorite lighter is a German silver "K W" table unit, about Ronson Crown size, with reproductions of Old Master's paintings in bas relief stampings. One side shows four men in a tavern drinking scene. On the other side are a dozen dandies in a pre-hunt setting.

In addition to friends and relatives who have given him lighters on birthdays, anniversaries, holidays and other special occasions, one of Clark's two sons, when he was soldiering in Germany, sent his dad a handsome Opel car lighter. When asked, Clark said that he hasn't converted any friends or relatives into lighter collectors because, quite candidly, who needs more competition for oldies and goodies. There are at least a half-dozen serious collectors in Northeastern Ohio.

Also, because he is aware of the times in which we live, Clark's home is protected by a state-of-the-art security system that detects motion, sound or forced entry. It incorporates a fire alarm system. Several noisy, if not ferocious, dogs and Clark's confidence in his ability to protect his own allow the Bordners to pursue their hobbies and avocations with pleasure and enthusiasm.

Collecting Cigarette Lighters

The 1920's focused attention upon many handy "name brand" cigarette lighters of the fluid and flint class - which rapidly became "must" trinkets for the feminine purse and the male pocket. The use of these little machines was not so much an innovation as a revival in modern dress of a device in use for more than 100 years.

The Swank instantaneous lighter of today is actually an improved version of firemaking equipment - the tinderbox. Requisites of the venerable tinder box were a quantity of very dry, readily combustible material - tinder - and a piece of flint with which to strike sparks into the tinder by crashing the flint with a sharp glancing blow against a piece of tempered steel.

For the steel an old file, a piece of sword or knife blade would suffice. The tinderbox itself was

merely a tight, dry container for the tinder, flint and steel. It could be of most any material - wood, horn, metal, sometimes leather. It usually was kept in the kitchen or any other place convenient for starting the household fires.

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The first pocket lighter was simply a pocket tinderbox, the need for which was recognized immediately after the tobacco smoking novelty was transported from the Americas to Europe in the 16th century. It was soon found that a most reliable kind of tinder for portable firemakers was a loosely woven soft cotton rope, called "match", which was used to fire the "matchlock" muskets of the 15th century.

This match which was impregnated with salt peter (potassium nitrate) would, when lighted by a spark, burn slowly with a glowing ember without bursting into flame. Some of the first smoker's pocket lighters, called "tinder tubes" used this type of fuel. Progress eventually replaced the striking steel and fragment of flint with a knurled wheel attached to the match tube which could be revolved against a particle of synthetic flint — a composition of corundum and iron filings — to obtain the spark. Small pocket tinderboxes, complete with tinder and striker, continued to be used in this country until long after the Civil War.

In the 17th century mechanics adapted the firing mechanism of flintlock guns to create a pistol like pocket piece which ignited tinder, instead of gunpowder, when fired. Soon after Japan was opened to American and European trade in the 1850's, Japanese craftsmen began making

tiny precise adaptations of the flintlock mechanism for small egg-shaped pocket lighters. These were among the first Japanese exports.

The first American made fluid and flint lighter is believed to have been the Koopman Magic Pocket Lamp patented in 1889. It was an automatic instantaneous fire-maker. When a knob on the side was pressed, the lid flew back and a spark ignited a wick. The fuel was alcohol. Spots of a synthetic flint composition were spaced around a paper disc which revolved against a sharp steel point to strike the spark. A packet of replaceable discs was provided with each pocket lamp sold.

Several lighters in the shape of pocket watches came out in the 1890's, and in 1907 there was patented the most interesting and ingenious lighter of all time. Working on the principle of catalysis, the lighter has a cylindrical wick wet with high grade alcohol. When a particle of sponge platinum (the catalyst) is introduced into the chamber containing the wick, the thin film of pure oxygen which always surrounds platinum combines with the alcohol vapor to produce a flame which lights the wick.

During the last 50 years, pocket and table lighters have been produced in hundreds of fascinating shapes.

oOo

OTHER COLLECTIBLES

Other things you could look for:

Cigarette Cards bearing pictures of stage folk, ball players, prize fighters, ships, birds, and animals, going back to such popular gay 90's smokes as Sweet Caporels, Admirals, Dukes, Cameos, Conquerors, and Judges and the colorful card albums published by some manufacturers.

Cigarette boxes, the colorful cardboard type which held Turkish Trophies, Hassans, Helmars and Egyptian Deities of the early 1900s. Nor must we forget the various denominations of revenue stamps.

Cigarette stompers, popular in brass and aluminum animal shapes in the 1920s and 30s. Cigarette holders which appeared in many varieties in the 1930s and 40s.

Vest pocket "roll your own" devices, which utilized grain tobacco. These were widely advertised for smokers who preferred 'homemades' to 'tailormades' but did not possess the manual dexterity to twist their own" even with two hands.

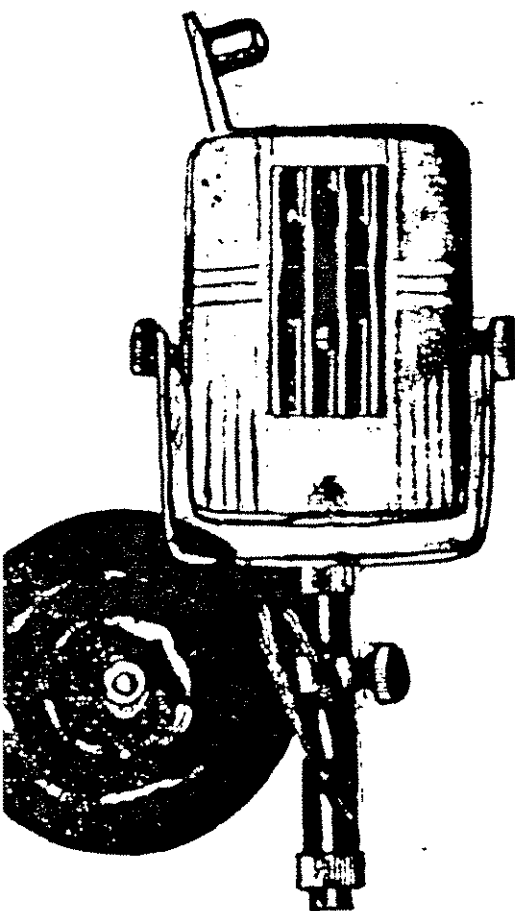
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Looking at an advance copy of the article, member Gerber, a 34-year collector, praised it highly. He added that a Prof. Dobereiner developed the sponge platinum-gas principle in Jena, Germany (1823?) and the Elias Koopman's 1889 Magic Pocket Lamp used Fulminate of Mercury bits as the sparking material.

For Sale or Trade

Two M.I.O.J.: white metal-chromed "Sailing Ship", "Cornucopia" fair-good condition, both work, both mechanism inserts marked M.I.O.J., both exterior bases marked M.I.O.J. \$50 for both or trade. Please see Gerber's wanted. Warren Gerber (Member)

Very scarce "Occupied Japan Microphone Cigarette Lighter" Mint-IOB - Replica of early 1930 Microphone, 4 1/2" tall x 2" wide, Detachable stand-becomes pocket lighter. "On-The-Air Table Lighter" trade mark-HWA MEI Trading Corp. New York. \$55 PP. Bob Gee (Member)



For Sale or Trade

Starter Lighter Collection

For Sale - \$500 Warren Gerber (Member)

100 mostly "Plain" Pocket, .75 ea.....	\$ 75.00
50 Advertising/Souvenir Pocket, 2.00 ea..	100.00
10 Plain Zippo, 2.00 ea.....	20.00
10 Advertising/Souvenir Zippo, 3.00 ea...	30.00
20 Miscellaneous Table, 3.00 ea.....	60.00
20 Novelty/Figural Table, 5.00 ea.....	100.00
5 Pocket/Table "Made In Occupied Japan",	
15.00 ea.....	75.00
5 Different Cigarette Case Lighters,	
8.00 ea.....	40.00
<u>220 Lighters</u>	<u>\$500.00</u>

For Sale or Trade

Wanted to Buy or Trade

Will pay \$25 and up for "Ceramic 'Occupied Japan Cigarette Lighters". Also will buy other O.J. Lighters, send complete description w/prices. Bob Gee (Member)

Wanted to Buy or Trade

(continued)
hole/fitting for wick, WWI scene or leaders or coins NOT Japanese made-"Belgium or French" coins. Warren Gerber (Member)

Dunhill lighters. John Cuevas (Member)

Authentic flint & steel flintlock tinderboxes & other pre-lighter fire-making devices. Warren Gerber (Member)

Occupied Japan lighters. Judith Sanders (Member)

Musical lighters. Warren Gerber (Member)

1910-1930's round, brass/copper, similar in size/shape to man's hunter case pocket watch, French, German, English, flint post pulls out,

ON THE LIGHTER SIDE

Printed Once a Month
for Collectors

Judith Sanders
Editor

All ads appearing in this section need to be received in this office by the 10th of the month in which you want the ad to appear. If you wish an ad for more than 1 month, please specify. Ads are free for members. There will be a \$1 charge for ads placed by non-members. Please send ads in type-written form. For information, write or call:

Judith Sanders
4409 Hyer
Dallas, Texas 75205
214/528-1926