



Checkerboard

July, 2016

The 2016 AAAA Convention

In a matter of days, the 2016 Convention will be taking place. Anticipation is running high! While it is too late to register for the full Convention at this time, if you live in the area and for some reason did not register, please consider attending the Room-Hopping event that is open to the public. It takes place from 6:30-10:00 PM, Friday, July 22.

If you are one of the unfortunate ones not attending, you can look forward to a Convention report with photos in the August issue of the Checkerboard and the September issue of PastTimes. For those attending, get some good rest these next few days and be prepared for non-stop fun and action!

Space Age Food and Household Products Containers

By Jeremy Blum

Images of the future driven by scientific and technological advances have been a part of our popular culture since the late 1800s. Many of these images involved science fiction, including space travel, at the time considered the most advanced futuristic technology. It started with novels by foreign authors such as Jules Verne who in the mid-1800s wrote novels such as Journey to the Center of the Earth, From the Earth to the Moon, and Twenty Thousand Leagues under the Sea. In 1895, H.G. Wells wrote The Time Machine. These were followed in the early 1900s by futuristic movies such as Un Voyage Dans La Lune in 1902, one of the first movies ever made, about a voyage to the moon. In 1927 came the futuristic movie classic, Metropolis. World's Fairs drew millions of visitors by showing the latest advances and images of what the future might look like. The future really took off in the 1930s, when the depression made people want to forget the present, and look forward to a better day. That is when hobby magazines such as Popular Science and Popular Mechanix started showing

futuristic vehicles and gadgets on their covers. Advertisers started using images of the future in their ads. Futuristic serials such as Flash Gordon and Buck Rogers could be seen at the movies.

Around 1950, our use of the future in popular culture changed. No longer were we trying to escape from the present. Hard times from the depression and the war were over. Suddenly, the future seemed bright. The middle class swelled. Parents expected their children would have a better life, and pushed them to succeed. Numerous innovations changed how we lived and promised a better tomorrow. These included space exploration, jet airplanes, computers, medical advances, atomic energy, interstates, television, supermarkets, better plastics and increased travel. Designers, advertisers and architects started using the future as an important marketing concept. Some of the innovations were used so much by designers, advertisers and architects, that their names are now used to describe the age. One in particular was the U.S. and Russian space programs.

Disney took advantage of the fascination with the future by creating Tomorrowland as part of the first Disney World opened in 1955. Exhibits included a plastic house of the future by Monsanto. The 1950s were also the heyday of American science fiction. Colors used in interiors, appliances, cars, buildings, signs and other items became brighter in response to the drab colors of the war years.

American Midcentury futuristic design is known today by several different names, primarily Space Age, but also Jet Age, Atomic, and Googie. The first three refer to innovations during the time period that just a few years earlier were science fiction. Googie is Space Age design for buildings. Space Age design is bright, angular, and attention grabbing. It can be humorous, weird or whimsical. Space age design was considered ultra-modern at the time. Products using Space Age design were often made of newer lighter materials such as plastics and chrome for consumer products and stainless steel, fiberglass and more glass for buildings. It was very commercial and often used by businesses to draw attention to themselves. Space Age design was heavily used in the architecture and signage of restaurants, motels, car washes and bowling alleys. Advertisers used it in magazine ads, signs and billboards. American automakers heavily utilized Space Age design, particularly from 1958 to 1962. In an ad or sign it is often so exuberant, that it appears to jump off the page. Manufacturers of discretionary products like soda in particular liked it. It was also used in other products such as food containers, clothes, furniture, housing, appliances, and household products. Its heyday was the mid-1950s to the early 1960s. However, elements of Space Age design are still used today.



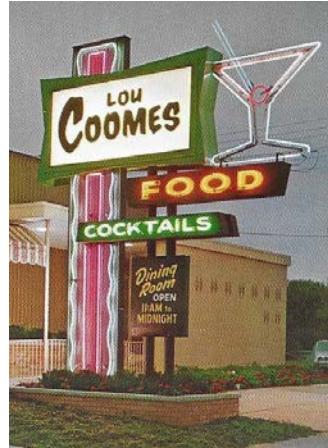
Perhaps nothing influenced design from this period more than space exploration. The viability of space flight started with a paper published in 1919 by American, Robert Goddard. During World War II, German scientists developed unmanned rockets as weapons that could fly hundreds of miles. It was a German V-2 rocket, that became the first to reach space in 1944. In 1957, the Russians launched Sputnik 1, which became the first man made satellite to orbit the earth. The Russians followed this up with Vostok 1 in 1961, which became the first manned space flight. American rocket research in the early 1950s centered on rockets used as weapons. Space travel in America went from fantasy to serious with Disney's Man in Space television program in 1955. In 1958, President Eisenhower created NASA which was focused on space exploration. President Kennedy gave a widely followed speech in 1961 promising to put a man on the moon that decade. Space age design included sleek rocket like designs, starbursts, Sputnik-like lamps, and cartoons like the Jetsons.

Also influencing Space Age design was the invention of the jet engine. The first jet engines were created by the Germans during World War II. By the 1950s, most new fighter planes had a jet engine. Commercial aircraft followed, becoming widespread in the early 1960s. The jet engine revolutionized travel, making it quicker, easier and safer to travel long distances. Jet Age design can be seen in the design of some automobiles from 1958 to 1962 where the tail lights or grill often looked like a jet engine.

The atomic age was influenced by advances in atomic energy and research and fears about atomic weapons. It was also influenced by modern art by artists such as Jackson Pollack, Alexander Calder, and Pablo Picasso. Pollack's drip paintings and Calder's curvy forms were turned into abstract atomic patterns. Atomic particles and modern art influenced geometric designs that were found in architecture, curtains, vinyl top kitchen tables, counter tops, dishware, glassware and wallpaper.

Googie is an architectural style named after a coffee shop in Los Angeles. The term is not used much today, as it is an unappealing term, originally meant to be derogatory. But usage of Googie style architecture was extensive. Starting in Southern California, it spread to Las Vegas, then to the rest of the country. It was bright, angular and particularly attention grabbing. It was partially a result of a new age of American travel. Futuristic and garish signs and architecture were used by restaurants, motels, car washes and bowling alleys to pull travelers off of the road. It was perfect for the youth car culture of the time. The original McDonalds was pure Googie style. Surprisingly, Googie was also extensively used by banks who were trying to change their image from intimidating stodgy

institutions, to one more welcoming to the public. Googie was considered kitschy by many established architects and critics of the day due to its commercialism. But today it is better remembered than most other styles of the day.



Industrial design has in its golden age in the 1950s and early 1960s. Designers often became as important as engineers and scientists. Consumers suddenly had money to spend and expected stimulating new and improved products to buy. Luxury items today became standard in the next year's model. Products that were sold loose over the counter now came in packages. Product packaging had better, brighter and more attention grabbing graphics. Packaging came in new materials such as plastics and new forms such as the aerosol can.

American culture changed abruptly in the mid-1950s with the advent of rock and roll. Teenagers and young adults now had their own music and were increasingly catered to by advertisers, television and the movies. Magazines geared to teens appeared. It was the teenagers and young adults who most adopted the midcentury styles. Their homes had modern looking furniture while their parents bought revivals of earlier styles.

American culture also became more American, driven by our own designers, architects, movies, television and advertising. The biggest foreign influence was Scandinavian design for furniture. However most cars, homes, commercial buildings and consumer products were uniquely American. Due to our prosperity, American culture was also exported like never before.

We became more mobile. People were moving in droves from the inner city to the suburbs. This affected the country in many ways from developing a car culture, to increasing home ownership, to providing stability. More people had cars and they were more reliable and had much more horsepower. For the first time you could use a drive in for a restaurant, bank, movie or even to worship god. Radios became mobile with the advent of the transistor radio. Increased travel led to more motels, restaurants, billboards, car washes and gas stations. All of these heavily used Space Age design to pull people off the road.



Space Age design took design and commercialism to an extreme that has not been repeated since. The only time-period of similar extremes was the late Victorian Age when design of homes, commercial buildings, furniture, women's clothes, and advertising became very busy and ornate. Space age design was preceded and influenced by the Streamline Moderne design of the late Art Deco period. Streamline Moderne was characterized by long line and curving forms. I include some of the 1950s and early 1960s Japanese toy design as Space Age. The Japanese after World War II eagerly absorbed American culture, added their own twist, and sold it back to us.

Space Age design was most used in commercial architecture and signs. Some of the custom made homes of the era were very futuristic. In fact there is a fabulous magazine today called Atomic Ranch dedicated to midcentury homes. Some of the most extreme usage of Space Age design was American car prototypes of the 1950s and early 1960s. GM, Ford and Chrysler produced numerous prototypes designed to awe car show attendees and whet their appetite for future models. Components of these prototypes were often put into production models a few years later. Some household appliances such as radios, vacuum cleaners, and televisions used Space Age design. The best known Space Age television show of the era was the cartoon The Jetsons, about a futuristic family. While the show only lasted one year, its futuristic style has remained iconic. Other futuristic shows of the era were; Science Fiction Theatre 1955-1957, Out There 1951, Tales of Tomorrow 1951-1953, Men into Space 1959 and Twilight Zone 1959-1964.



Dodge Charger Concept Car



Swift Homes Model 1950s

Space Age was far from the only design of the 1950s and early 1960s. Scandinavian design which emphasized simplicity, minimalism and functionality was heavily used in furniture. Italian design also influenced furniture and glass. Colonial revival was seen in homes and furniture. A South Pacific style known as Tiki had appeal. The Europeans also used futuristic design though their designs were more stark, less flamboyant and whimsical.

The Space Age came to an abrupt end right around 1964. The architectural design in particular was expensive, often impractical, and overly flamboyant for the age that followed. The age of optimism, from 1950-1964 was succeeded by an age with a harder edge. President Kennedy, a beacon of hope for the future, was assassinated in 1963. Protests developed due to disillusionment with the Vietnam War and a push for civil rights. The music became less pop oriented, louder, and more electric guitar based. This was epitomized by Bob Dylan going electric at the 1965 Newport Folk Festival. Movies did not always have a happy ending. Feel good terms from 1950-1964 such as swell and gee whiz were laughed at. Design became earthier and occasionally machinelike. Hairstyles became longer and more unkempt. The remaining optimism was squashed by the Watergate scandal in 1972 when many Americans lost faith in the government.

One of the most fun uses of Space Age Design was food and household containers. The new supermarkets were much larger and better lit than the corner grocery store they recently replaced. An attention grabbing design was

needed among the large new number of competitors to attract shoppers. Terms such as new, improved, and sale were added and highlighted. Below is my collection of Space Age food and household products containers. Compare these to earlier food and household products containers and you will see how much more bright, angular and attention grabbing they are.











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Editor's Note: In addition to being a gifted writer, Jeremy Blum is a new member of the AAAA Board of Directors. He will be attending the upcoming AAAA Convention so those in attendance with questions or comments can connect with him directly. Others can reach him at: j.blum1@comcast.net.

In Memoriam: The "Country Lady"

It is with great shock and sadness that we report that Barb Lesniewski, who was commonly known as the "Country Lady" on eBay and elsewhere, passed away this week. A long-time AAAA member, Barb was registered to attend the AAAA Convention but let us know on July 7 that she would not be able to attend due to "medical issues". On July 11, we were notified by her daughter that she had unexpectedly passed away. What a tremendous loss to the collecting community!

Barb was a popular dealer at AAAA Conventions, Indy Ad Shows, and other venues. Many would be sure to visit her booth first to see what new treasures she had brought. In the genre of "general store", she had very few peers. Although she would frequently underscore that she was a dealer and not a collector, you could tell that she had a great love for antique advertising. She had a keen eye and was a discerning buyer. Other collectors report that she was a skillful hunter and that it always seemed she was one step ahead of them in finding those special pieces.

Barb will be greatly missed. AAAA extends its deepest condolences to her family, friends, and all those who will sense the absence of the "Country Lady" at future antique advertising events.

Trade Card Album on Line

What has been billed as the "largest trade card album on line" is now available for your enjoyment. The "Earl J. Arnold Advertising Post Card Collection 1885" has lovingly been placed on line by Mr. Arnold's grandson, Jeffrey Arnold Driver.

The collection, which contains over 1,000 examples, was originally assembled in Victorian times by the Arnold family and has been preserved intact over the years. Jeff Driver took on the laborious task of not only digitizing each of the pages and cards, but providing an extensive annotated bibliography about the history of the cards, the companies they represent, the people behind the cards, their place in history, and well, a whole lot more. It makes for very fascinating reading. There is also the valuable benefit of an alphabetized index that enables the reader to research and seek out specific topics, locations, and companies. Another delightful feature is a copy of a typewritten synopsis about the collection and the family written years ago by Earl J. Arnold himself.

Jeffrey Arnold Driver possesses over four decades of experience working in public service at the Cornell University Library in Access Services, Reference and Computer Center management.

For lovers of trade cards, ephemera, or history in general, this is a highly recommended resource.

To access the web site, [click here](#).



June, 2016 Issue of PastTimes

To further your enjoyment of PastTimes, our quarterly print newsletter, we will make each issue available as a PDF file in the following month's issue of the Checkerboard. While glossy print is a wonderful medium, a PDF document allows you to zoom in on items of special interest and really see those fascinating details.

To download the June, 2016 issue of PastTimes, [click here](#).



Wanted Items

In this column are those sought-after items of desire that seem to be elusive. If you know where any of these items can be acquired or if you have one available, please click the link to reply directly to the seeker. To place a listing in this column, [click here](#). There is no fee for AAAA members. Up to three listings per member is permitted.

[Ice Cream Advertising](#). Mr. Ice Cream desires better ice cream advertising including: postcards, trade cards, letterheads, billheads, booklets, poster stamps, blotters, magic lantern slides, pinbacks, watchfobs and pocket mirrors. Allen Mellis, 1115 West Montana St. Chicago, Illinois 60614-2220. mellisfamily@rcn.com. [Click here](#) to reply.

[Empty tin cans \(new\) to place vintage labels on](#). Different sizes preferred. Do you know of a source where these can be purchased in volume? To reply, [click here](#).

[Tall 1 lb. Mallard Coffee Can- Shows duck taking off](#). To reply, [click here](#).

[Chewing gum packs, sticks, wrappers, full boxes, lifesavers, candy bar wrappers, displays, and boxes](#). Anything candy related. To reply, [click here](#).

[Pre-1900 advertising items related to: barbed wire, farm fence gates, tools for erecting or mending wire fences, and farm fences](#). Only primary material please-no ads from newspapers, etc. Larry W. Love. To reply, [click here](#).

[Armour Foods Signs, Cardboards, Store Displays, Die-Cuts Wanted](#). To reply, [click here](#).

Cigar advertising tip trays, pinbacks, or any unusual cigar advertising items. Harry Cohn: To reply, [click here](#).

Walt Foster Art Books Store Floor Rack: To reply, [click here](#):

JG Flynt Sir Walter Raleigh Pocket Tin: To reply, [click here](#).

One (1) Pound FULL [Unopened, Sealed] Key-Wind Coffee Tins: To reply, [click here](#).

Near Mint English Biscuit Tins: 1880 to 1925 To reply, [click here](#).

Scarce or Rare Tobacco Pocket Tins: One or a collection. To reply: [click here](#).

Vintage Photos of General Stores or Soda Fountains. Authentic 1890-1930 examples only--no modern reprints please. Mounted photo or RPPC. Interior or exterior. Send scan. To reply, [click here](#).

ENSIGN Perfect and ENSIGN Perfection vertical pocket tobacco tins to enhance my collection. Feel free to contact me at 614-888-4619 or k8pyd@wowway.com to see if you can help fill the voids.

Firecracker Packs: Collector buying all old fireworks-packs, boxes, advertising, whatever. To reply, call 931-237-3646 or [click here](#).

Lefkowitz & Sons Company Soda Fountain Collectables: I am seeking any soda fountain product or equipment labeled "Lefkowitz". To reply [click here](#).

Posters of Beautiful Women or Children Advertising a Drug Store or Country Store Product. Pre-1930. Preferable with product shown in image. Original frame and good condition a plus--also NOS country store or drug store products, advertising of any kind, or any product with great graphics and full of contents a plus. To reply, [click here](#).

Spice Tins WANTED!! Hard core collector looking for brands I don't have and upgrades for ones I do have. Looking for good old spice tins with pictures. Birds, people, trains, etc. I have a few traders but mainly a buyer. To reply, [click here](#).

Minnesota Brewery Items including Hamm's, Grain Belt, Fitgers, Gluek and others. Also collect rare Minnesota advertising pieces. To reply, [click here](#).

Vintage Baseball/Football Cards: Pre-1970 Only To reply, [click here](#).

Clicquot Club: Lighted Clicquot Club advertising clock made by Telechron and Telechron lighted advertising clock. To reply, [click here](#).

"ANTI-FAT," Weight-Loss, "Reducing," Obesity Items: Signs, bottles, anything related. Also, any items related to VITAMINS. To reply, [click here](#).

Yellow Kid Wanted: The more unusual,the better. To reply, [click here](#).

Harvard Brewing Signs/Lithographs: To reply, [click here](#).

Ivanhoe Pencil Tin: Fair price and also finder's fee paid. Approx 1" diam, 9" long, blue in color, round, with picture of Ivanhoe on horseback. To reply, [click here](#).

Noaker Ice Cream Company Canton, Ohio: 13" Round ice cream tray from "the Noaker Ice Cream Company Canton, Ohio" in good or better condition. It has the boy & girl eating ice cream on the front. To reply, [click here](#).

B.T. Babbit Soap Advertisement Posters: See Antique Advertising Encyclopedia (Vol. II) by Klug page 54 and 55. Condition is very important. To reply, [click here](#).

DeLaval: Tin advertising, give-aways and other collectibles produced by the company. To reply, [click here](#).

Edmands Coffee Company, Edmands Tea Company, 1776 Coffee, American Beauty Tea, Japan Tea, Devonshire Tea, (imported by Edmands, Boston/Chicago): Any items such as tins, signs, paper, or anything else related to the Edmands family of companies in Boston is desired. To reply, [click here](#).

Heathman Bakery, Dayton, Ohio: Interested in any items related to this business. To reply, [click here](#).

Indianapolis Brewing Company Ephemera: Circa 1920. Specifically looking for signed documents. To reply, [click here](#).

The AAAA *Checkerboard* is a monthly e-newsletter that is made available to all AAAA members at no cost. The mission of the *Checkerboard* is to increase knowledge about antique and collectible advertising among AAAA members. The *Checkerboard* also provides news and updates about AAAA. It is produced each month with the exception of the four months per year when the award-winning PastTimes print newsletter is published. Paul Lefkovitz (plefk@generalstoreantiques.com) serves as Editor of the AAAA *Checkerboard*.



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