

MARCH 2009 "COLLECTING WITH JEFF"  
by JEFF FIGLER

The radio show is going great!

Jeff is available to talk with groups around the United States about collecting.

For more information, please call Cathy at (858) 679-1233 or you can email us at [collectingwithjeff@sbcglobal.net](mailto:collectingwithjeff@sbcglobal.net)

### MAN OF STEEL ITEM SURE TO BE SUPER ATTRACTIONS

Later this summer the extremely popular Comic-Con International convention will again be held at the San Diego Convention Center . It is one of the major events held each year in San Diego , and attracts interested collectors and hobbyists from throughout the world. For more information about the event call (619) 491-2475.

Superman-related items and memorabilia are one of the major attractions within the show. Superman is one of those unique characters which provides a common ground for collectors of all ages. Superman items run the gamut, and include patches, buttons, puzzles, clothing, games, utensils, toys, comic books and of course, lunchboxes and rings.

However, the Superman phenomena certainly started slowly. The character Superman was the brainchild of two teenage science fiction fans, Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster. After being rejected by a number of newspaper syndicates, their Superman comic strip first debuted with the company that would later become D.C. Comics. Its publisher Harry Donenfeld contacted Sheldon Mayer, an editor at the McClure syndicate for material for his new Action C. Superman was included in the material sent to D.C. Comics, and the Man of Steel became a reality.

Action Comics #1, which was distributed in June 1938, is the comic that collectors most desire. The oddity is that even though Superman was first seen on its cover, only the last several pages of the issue are actually devoted to Superman. There are between 25-30 known copies of Action Comics #1 in existence in unrestored condition. Action Comics #1 was the beginning of a character and an industry, and is regarded as the one comic book that made all the others possible.

The character Superman was the first superstar of the newspaper comic page, the funny pages. The comic led to the introduction of the Superman comic book in 1939, as well as to a weekly radio show, a cartoon series, and of course, the television series. The star of the television series was [George Reeves](#). Reeves was born in Iowa in 1914, but was raised and attended school in Pasadena , California . He also played the part of Stuart Tarleton in the 1939 movie "Gone With The Wind". As Reeves was not a prolific autograph signer, and coupled with the fact that he died when he was only forty four years old, a Reeves signature is difficult to obtain. A real collectors item worth around \$7000, is an

original program of the movie "Gone With The Wind" with autographs of Clark Gable, Vivian Leigh, Olivia de Havilland and George Reeves.

The television show Adventures of Superman" consisted of 104 episodes and lasted from 1952-1958. In 1954 the "Adventures of Superman" became the second television series to be filmed in color (Cisco Kid was the first). Reeves was the "Man of Steel" whose demeanor changed when entering the phone booth, while his alter ego Clark Kent was a mild-mannered reporter for a metropolitan newspaper. For years Superman would crash through walls, deflect bullets off his chest, change the course of rivers, bend steel in his bare hands, and leap tall buildings in a single bound. Superman was a household name.

Reeves himself, however, resented the Superman role as he felt it prevented him from being cast in any non-Superman roles. Reeves was known to have become depressed because of his inability to obtain more movie offers, a fact that was explored in the 2006 film "Hollywoodland", featuring Ben Affleck. How Reeves actually died on June 16, 1959 may forever remain a mystery. Did he commit suicide by shooting himself, or was he murdered by an associate of girlfriend Lenore Lemman, or of former girlfriend Toni Mannix? We may never know.

Despite the loss of George Reeves, the Superman character remains as popular as ever today. The late Christopher Reeves starred in the 1978 Superman movie as well as in the other Superman movies that followed in 1980, 1983, and 1987. "Superman Returns" starring Brandon Routh hit the silver screen in 2006.

For the collector, the Super Museum in Metropolis, Illinois is a must see. The museum is across the street from a super-sized Superman statue, and features over 20,000 items. The museum is owned by Jim Hambrick (who owns over 100,000 Superman items), and is located at 517 Market Street in Metropolis, Illinois. The phone number is (618) 524-5518.

If you are interested in collecting some more common and affordable Superman items, you should view the Warner Brothers's™ Shop website at [www.wbshop.com](http://www.wbshop.com) or the website at [www.JohnsToys.com](http://www.JohnsToys.com). For the serious collector an unrestored Action Comics #1 will easily cost \$100,000, (depending on condition) a Superman Lunchbox, by Universal, will set you back about \$15,000, and a 1978 Superman Record Player about \$300. Also extremely valuable are Superman premium rings and Superman of America Club Action Comics patches.

Remember, today "collectibles are tomorrow" treasures.

#### EMAILS:

**QUESTION #1:** I have an autographed panel football signed to me by Walter Payton. It is in excellent condition. What is the value?

**ANSWER:** It is worth between \$650-750.

**QUESTION #2:** I was given a St. Louis Blues #99 replica jersey signed by Wayne Gretzky. Could you please tell me the value of the jersey?

**ANSWER:** It is worth about \$600-700.

### TRIVIA QUESTIONS:

**Easy:** What was the original name of the Super Bowl?

**Moderate:** After the 1956 season Jackie Robinson was traded from the Brooklyn Dodgers to the New York Giants. He decided to retire, but who was the player he was originally traded for?

**Difficult:** Who was the last major league baseball player to play for all three New York teams, the Dodgers, Giants and the Yankees?

### TRIVIA QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FROM THE FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER:

**Easy:** Who was the L.A. Dodger pitcher who gave up two grand slam homeruns to Fernando Tatis of the St. Louis Cardinals in the third inning of their game on April 23, 1999?

Chan Ho Park

**Moderate:** Which member of the Basketball Hall of Fame was the first member to be inducted as a player and then as a coach?

John Wooden

**Difficult:** Who was the first major league baseball player to hit a pinch hit homerun in a World Series game?

Yogi Berra