



Grey Flannel May 16 Auction Features Southerland Tobacco Ad Collection, Ring from Elvis

Mark Southerland's tobacco ad collection comprise about a third of the Grey Flannel Auctions sale on May 16. The auction also contains one of the earliest signed Babe Ruth baseballs. The consignor has owned the ball for more than 40 years. It's signed by Ruth and dated "10-20-1919." Other blockbuster items added late to the auction include racing suits worn by the late Dale Earnhardt and a fire opal ring given by Elvis Presley to Priscilla, then his fiancé.

Manhattan, NY, April 20, 2007 --(PR.com)-- Mark Southerland of Perry, Fla., owns and operates South House Furniture, one of the area's largest furniture companies. So it comes as no surprise that someone who has dealt with taste and design for 26 years has a pretty good eye for artwork.

The kinds of artwork that attract Southerland are Chesterfield tobacco ads. He loves the brilliant colors and design, which just so happens to incorporate famous baseball players and lesser known individuals, including sharpshooters, canasta players and Miss Harlem.

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Southerland is widely acknowledged as having one of the most extensive private tobacco ad collections. They've occupied rooms of furniture in a 45,000-square-foot showroom and a separate 2,800-square-foot building next to his home.

He had dreams of putting together a coffee table book of sorts, but that enterprise might compete for time in building the rest of his collection of baseball memorabilia

"I started my collection by buying (late player) Jake Powell's collection in 1991 and within that collection were the Chesterfield tobacco ads," Southerland said. "I loved the colors in the designs and the images of Ted Williams, Bill Dickey, Mel Ott, Stan Musial, Joe DiMaggio, Bill Terry, Bucky Walters and others."

He pursued this niche with a passion, but never chose to devote much time to researching the history of or artists associated with the ads. Yet, he did acquire priceless anecdotes over the years. "I talked to Ted Williams one time," he recalled. "He told me he got 50 bucks so Chesterfield could use his name and picture... One of the ads featured the image of pitcher Whitlow Wyatt, who incidently never smoked. He actually gave me his ad and signed it for me."



Interestingly, tobacco companies targeted African-American smokers in small towns. Thus, such ads have formed a further niche in Black Americana and Southerland's collection.

Over the years, Southerland has met and done some trading with other like-minded collectors, mostly through the Internet. Among his favorites are the Granger tobacco ads with Mel Ott and anything with Babe Ruth's image.

He's worked hard and paid a fancy penny to collect tough-to-acquire pieces. The ad with both Mel Ott and Bill Dickey is a toughie, he said, but he's got it and it's in the Grey Flannel sale. "That is one of the rarest ones," Southerland said. "Also ads with Willie Mays also are in short supply and high demand."

Since 1991, Southerland has seen other collectors compete on the Internet and in some catalog sales for tobacco advertising artwork. • The ads have sold from \$100 to \$60,000.

"It's the craziest thing I've ever seen," he said of the maturing marketplace for cigarette ads. "The one I sold for \$60,000 is one I bought for \$500. It's still possible to buy some of the plentiful ads for \$45 or \$50. There are a lot of (Leo) Durocher ads. His are among the most common."

Richard Russek, president of Grey Flannel Auctions, said value is found in Southerland's collection from so many angles. "It's art, marvelous art," he said. "It also harkens back to a time when smoking uniquely defined one's personality. Finally, these advertising pieces capture the portraits of iconic ballplayers during a golden age of baseball. Ruth. DiMaggio. Mantle. Williams, Ott. Musial. Nothing says 'sports hero' like these names. So these works of art contain volumes of history as well as speak as wonderful aesthetics."

The Southerland collection represents about a third of the items in the May sale. As Grey Flannel bidders have come to expect, this sale will feature an array of game-used jerseys and array of other memorabilia, among them:

- o A single-signed Babe Ruth baseball, dated in his hand 1919;
- o A game-used Roberto Clemente bat;
- o Ted Williams' jersey worn on opening day in 1947;
- o A Carl Eller, game-used Vikings jersey;
- o A John Havlicek game-used, home Celtics jersey;
- o A Bill Russell pre-game Celtics warmup jacket;
- o A Johnny Unitas game-used Colts helmet;
- o A 1990 Troy Aikman game-used Cowboys helmet;
- o A 1979 Dan Marino game-used Pitt road jersey;
- o A Brooks Robinson game-worn Orioles jacket;
- o A Willie Stargell game-used and signed road jersey;
- o A 1996 World Series trophy;
- o A Jim Palmer game-used home Orioles jersey and cap; and
- o A Muhammad Ali training robe.



Movie and Elvis fans will check in to see many sparkling items, among them:

- o A fire opal ring given by Presley to Priscilla, then his fiancé;
- o Clint Eastwood's jacket worn in the movie "Pink Cadillac"; and
- o The bowtie worn by Sean Connery in the .007 movie "Doctor No."

For the latest bids on these spectacular lots, please consult
www.greyflannelauctions.com.

Grey Flannel serves as the official appraiser for the Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame and Museum in Springfield, Mass. It also worked with Sotheby's in authenticating the largest private collection of jerseys, the Barry Halper collection, part of which landed in the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum in Cooperstown, N.Y.

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