

# COLLECTOR'S CORNER

**SP:** Taking into consideration only the records and picture sleeves that are in my collection that the general collecting public has knowledge of it would easily be John Lennon's personal Butcher album. John is my favorite Beatle. Can you imagine holding in your hands "the holy grail" of all the records in the world, and it so happens to be a record that your favorite artist owned at one time and it was autographed by three of the Beatles?! I remember the first time when I held it in my hands and I looked at it. I actually had a few tears in my eyes. I just could not believe what I was holding in my hands! FAB INDEED AT THE TOPOFPOPOFMOST!!!!

**You've mentioned that your quest is to buy the best of the best. What Beatles record have you bought (and sold and re-bought) the most times in your efforts to find the finest quality recording possible? Or did you choose not to buy anything until you found "the one"?**

**SP:** I did not do what most collectors do and/or did, and that is to upgrade. I waited until the right piece came along. Of course, I am still waiting for the rest that I need! Some I probably won't see in my lifetime. I only buy records that are in my Near Mint or better condition. In my collecting career, I have had numerous collectors and dealers attempt to sell me less than Near Mint pieces. This occurred especially in the late 1990s when collectors found out who I was and what I was doing. I had many of the rarest records and picture sleeves offered to me, but they were not in the condition that I wanted them to be in, so they did not "pass the audition." Any record or sleeve that I buy that is in my top 40 MUST be in at least my Near Mint condition and it MUST be the best condition piece known that exists. NO EXCEPTIONS.

The other records and picture sleeves that I have bought that are in my personal collection which are not in my top 40 did not have to be the best one. Just as long as it is in at least my Near Mint condition that would "pass the audition," but I still wanted them to be in Mint condition, if possible. It just happened that I got lucky and obtained many Mint examples.

One of my main goals in collecting is to obtain the example that is verifiable the best example of a title or variation of that title that is in my Top 40. The Top 40 is where the "power"

lies in a Beatle record collection.

**Which, if any, Beatles 45, picture sleeve or LP was your "white whale" when it came to not only finding it, but also obtaining it for your collection?**

**SP:** There isn't any one item that I am still looking for or any one item that I have obtained that I must have. My goal was to get every title and every variation of that title — if there are any variations — in at least Near Mint condition. I am still looking for a verified best copy of the following:

- "Hear The Beatles Tell All" promotional album;
- "Introducing The Beatles" Version 1, stereo, Blank Back album;
- "The Beatles & Frank Ifield On Stage" (Portrait cover), mono.

I have been looking to obtain them since Day One. They are very important to me because these are in my top 40.

I know that I will probably not be able to achieve my goal in this life. Some titles and variations of those titles are very hard to find in my Near Mint condition. If I were to accept the rest of the records that I am missing in at least VG++ condition, then I would probably have all of them within the next year or two. But that is not acceptable to me.

**What's your favorite collecting-related memory?**

**SP:** My favorite collecting-related memory is when I held John Lennon's personal butcher album in my hands for the first time.

**If you could go back in time to spend a day with any (or all of) The Beatles, who would you choose to visit, and when and why? What do you hope to be able to see/do/observe that day?**

**SP:** That is easy. Feb. 9, 1964! I would hang around with Murray The K. As you know, he was able to get complete access to all of The Beatles and their events. By hanging with Murray, I would be able to meet and have conversations with all of The Beatles, George Martin and Brian Epstein, and get their autographs on both "Introducing The Beatles" and "Meet The Beatles!" (yep, both mono and stereo versions for both albums), along with the "I Want To Hold Your Hand" commercial picture sleeve. I am sure that he could also arrange for me to meet Ed Sullivan that day. Of course, I would get lucky and get a ticket to ride to see them perform at the Ed Sullivan Theater later that night!

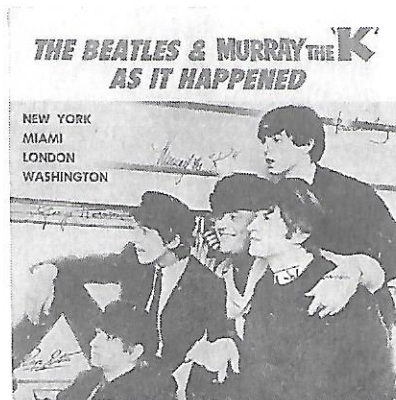
During the day, I would be walking the streets, observing what Beatlemania was like in New York City, and I would visit WMCA and 1010 WINS radio stations so that I could meet and talk to the deejays who were there. Of course, I would get their autographs, as well! I would be observing how Beatlemania

affected these two radio stations. I would ask the deejays at WMCA if I can get one of those special sleeves that they give out to winners of a contest and have them autograph that sleeve. (What I am referring to here is the very rare WMCA Good Guys picture sleeve). Of course, I would visit some good record stores to buy what else — all of the Beatles albums that I could get my hands on!

Oh, I forgot to mention this: If I ever went back there, I am NOT coming back here. I belong in the 1960s. For me, most of the best of

times were in the 1960s. Best music, best sports (better players and they played for the love of the game, not for the love of the money) best TV programs, all of my relatives and friends were living; I had literally TONS OF FUN. The 1960s is what's happening, baby!

**What's your all-time favorite Beatles song, and why?**



Murray The K would be Stan Panenka's ideal time traveling companion, because he always had the inside scoop. This EX/VG-condition disc and picture sleeve copy of "As It Happened" sold for \$334.60 at auction. Photo courtesy Heritage Auction Galleries.