

THE AMAZING FANTASY COMICS
AND
R.J. LONG
COLLECTION
By Jerry Ringi

About two months ago R.J. Long Jr. visited my shop (Amazing Fantasy of Chesapeake, Virginia) and asked me if I was interested in helping him sell his comics. Since I had had previous dealings with him I told him that I would be glad to help him. He said that he had some 20 plus boxes of comics that he had collected when he was a kid. He wasn't sure what was in the boxes but he knew that he had a run of Superman comics from the 1950's that should be worth something. I responded that I would be glad to look at them and if I could help him I would.

A few days later I walked R.J. and asked me if I was ready to look at the books. I said sure, and he said that he would drive his car up to the door. Surprised, I asked him if he had all the books with him and he said yes he did. So I got my dolly and met him at his car. Twenty-two boxes (apple or typing paper boxes) were loaded on the dolly and transported into the store. I was amazed but not very hopeful since they were not bagged and boarded and in fact they looked as if they had been thrown into the boxes without much organization or care.

A quick look at a couple of the boxes showed me that they were from the 50's and 60's and so I told him that I would be interested. I explained that I could purchase them from him or I could be his agent and sell them for him sort of like on consignment. I once again asked him if he knew what was in the boxes and he said not really, but that he did know that he had that run of Superman. We agreed to become partners and Amazing Fantasy Chesapeake would be his agent. He left the books with me without a list of what was included, saying to me that he checked us out and he trusted us. I said thanks.

What a collection it turned out to be. The average condition of the comics in this virgin collection would come in at a very fine. Now remember, for over 50 years these books were not bagged and boarded or kept in a cool dry place, but in an attic in southern Virginia which is known for being hot and humid. The 2,200 + book collection is very broad based including super heroes from DC, Marvel, Archie, and other publishers; mysteries, EC's, westerns, Showcases, Brave and Bolds, Classic Illustrated, Four Colors, and various war comics; Walt Disney's, Archies, Caspers and various lighter fair comics; and others. They ranged from the 40's through the mid sixties with most coming from 1961 to 1965 range. We are so impressed with this collection we will be calling it a Pedigree Collection and will be issuing a certificate with every book sold stating that the book is part of the AF COMICS & R.J. LONG JR. PORTSMOUTH COLLECTION 2001.

I am still working on bagging and boarding, grading and pricing the books. The highlights of the collection so far are the following books, graded by CGC (of which I am an authorized dealer):

Amazing Spider-man #1 9.2 Universal grade.
Amazing Fantasy #15 7.5 Universal grade
Inc. Hulk #6 8.0 Universal grade
Inc. Hulk #4 6.0 Universal grade
Tales of Suspense #39 7.0 Universal grade (first Iron Man)
Journey into Mystery #83 7.5 Universal grade (first Thor)
Not graded as yet:
Tales To Astonish #27 Vg+ Universal grade (first Ant Man)

This does not even take into consideration the vast numbers of Action Comics, Adventure Comics, Superman, Batman, Detective Comics, Lois Lane and many other Silver Age D.C. comics. Since this is a one man operation it has been taking time. I have sold some to local individuals, including Amazing Spider-man #2 and #4 (which turned out to be a CGC rated 9.0) and a Hulk # 6 (CGC rated 7.0).

The collection is currently for sale at my store in Chesapeake, Virginia and I can be reached at 757-465-8390 or be e-mail at kalelj@aol.com or at our web site www.afcomics.com. They will also be for sale at the Comics at the Beach Show on August 26, 2001 from 10 A.M. to 5 P.M. The show location will be at the Virginia Beach Pavilion in Virginia Beach, Virginia.

