

# History Hidden in the Paper World of E P H E M E R A

Ephemera. It's a big word and likely one you never heard before. But even if the word is unfamiliar, ephemera are things you saw and touched today. And you probably threw them away.

Maybe you are a person who collects ephemera. Do you have a box of stickers or some favorite posters on the wall? Did you save the valentines you got last winter or the ticket from the talent show at school? Then you are a collector of ephemera!

What are ephemera, anyway? They are printed items produced for quick use and then generally tossed in the wastebasket. Baseball cards, circus posters, raffle tickets, soup can labels, restaurant

menus, theater programs, movie tickets, concert posters, gum wrappers, grocery bags, greeting cards, and campaign posters are all examples of ephemera.

Today historians and collectors are searching for old and new ephemera of all kinds. Why, you might ask, would anyone want to collect old lottery tickets, travel folders, or business cards, let alone *buy* them? Most of us collect ephemera because we like the way they look, because they remind us of something special, or just because we like to collect things. One day your collection could help someone else understand how Vermonters lived in the past.

**Question:** What kind of ephemera are always on the go, turn brown during mud season and white in winter?



Answer: bumper stickers!