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T'boli's postcard collection is stamped with diversity

By ANNE RAUGH

There's a place in Chapel Hill where you can find just about any type of postcard to convey any type of mood, emotion or message imaginable. It's called T'boli.

T'boli sells postcards with humor, such as a woman in a bathing suit selling a jackhammer; postcards with warmth, conveyed through smiles, handshakes, children, embraces and picnics with red and white checkered tablecloths; and tacky postcards picturing chicken-shaped buses. Other postcard subjects include insanity, obesity, frustration, rain, lust, confusion, boredom, anger, heartbreak and Happy 23rd Birthdays. The list goes on and on.

Among the main topics of T'boli's postcards are contemporary and impressionistic painters, photography, comedy, animals, writers, composers, children, tackiness, tastelessness and all types of seasons and special occasions.

Congress

budget request) had not been turned in, when it was too late to do anything about it."

Under questioning from congress, Roddy said that she didn't think the BSM would lose all of its funding, and that some of the funding could be regained in the fall. Being cut off from the spring budget process would complicate the operations of the BSM severely, she said.

"If we waited for subsequent budgeting in the fall, we would not be guaranteed of the funding that we need to do what we have to do

John Thompson, co-owner of T'boli, claims to own one of the largest and most varied postcard collections in the country.

"I've only seen one store in New York City with more postcards than we have," Thompson said.

Postcard collecting is the nation's third largest collecting hobby. The nostalgia behind postcards is the people, memories and places they freeze in time.

When T'boli first opened 10 years ago, Thompson intended to sell only postcards. "We wrote to 700 museums all over the country and happened to end up with enough room in the store for other things," Thompson said

T'boli has over 8,000 different cards which come from all over the world. Thompson hand picks all of his cards and changes them often.

"We were in Mexico a few months ago and we picked up some post cards in a village market," Thompson said.

"It's a difficult business to keep up to date. We try to please our

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that he hadn't been fully informed about the BSM's situation. He said the entire group shouldn't be blamed for communication problems among its officers.

"We'll be working with the BSM to help them get as much money as they can," he said. "I was worried about the perception that other groups might say, 'How come we didn't get an exemption?" "

Located on Hwy 54 Bypass.

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younger customers and try not to offend others at the same time," he said.

Tacky cards are some of Thompson's best sellers. The tacky cards are rarities. They come from eccentrics and even from serious designers who blooped along the way. Many come from advertisements from the '30s and '40s for hotdogs, hairdos, Eureka easy glide vacuum cleaners, wigs, cars and refrigerators.

Most of the postcards are blank but some are accompanied by strange messages such as "Zorita Lambert, the fearless woman who eats electric lightbulbs with the ease of an apple," and "the man who smokes through his eye."

Personalities range from Marlon Brando to Pablo Picasso and from Lucille Ball to Albert Einstein.

Thompson said he buys his most unusual cards at stationery shows in New York City, but finds that his best cards come from card stores run by local people in small towns around the country.

"Humor and sex sell; beauty does not sell. Happy sells; serious does not sell," said Thompson.

"We encourage people to buy postcards without messages instead of greeting cards," he said. "On a national average, greeting cards sell better than postcards, but most of the success of greeting cards is attributed to the fact that many people find it difficult to express themselves. It's much easier to send a printed message in someone else's words rather than your own."

Thompson prefers the black and



Robert Leath (left) and Steve Benton get a kick out of the large postcard collection at T'boli

white photographic postcards because they are more classic as opposed to the colored paintings.

"Black and white preserve nostalgia," he said. "They give you the exact photographic images intended by the artist at that time. Good black-and-white postcards are harder to come by and they tell you

the whole story with a truer representation of what the photographer intended."

The United States was a latecomer in using cards with pictures. Their origin can be traced to written messages used to celebrate New Year's gifts in Egypt six centuries before the birth of Christ.

Woodcuts, miniature paintings and engravings became popular in the Middle Ages in Central Europe. St. Valentines and Christmas cards were among the first to arrive in the U.S. in the mid-1800s, featuring elaborate paintings of flowers and landscapes, distinguished with bells, bows, feathers and silk fringe.

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efficiently," Roddy said.

Bailey agreed. "They may substantially get all they want later on, but it's a risk, a risk we don't have to take," he said.

Guy Lucas (Dist. 19), who voted in favor of the proposal, said he disagreed with the idea that blacks on campus should not be treated differently from whites.

"We say we shouldn't treat them any differently, but let's face the fact that they are treated differently anyway," he said. "One of the reasons we only have 8 percent black enrollment is the perception that we're racists on this campus. They (black students) are going to go back to their towns and say a body of 23 whites and one black cut their funding."

After the congress rejected Bailey's proposal, Roddy said that some members of congress had not understood it.

"Whatever comments were made by members at the meeting were made without a full understanding of the issue," she said. "The proposal made it seem as if the BSM were trying to sneak around, and we weren't." She said she hadn't wanted Bailey to propose the bill.

After the meeting, Friedman talked to Roddy and said he agreed

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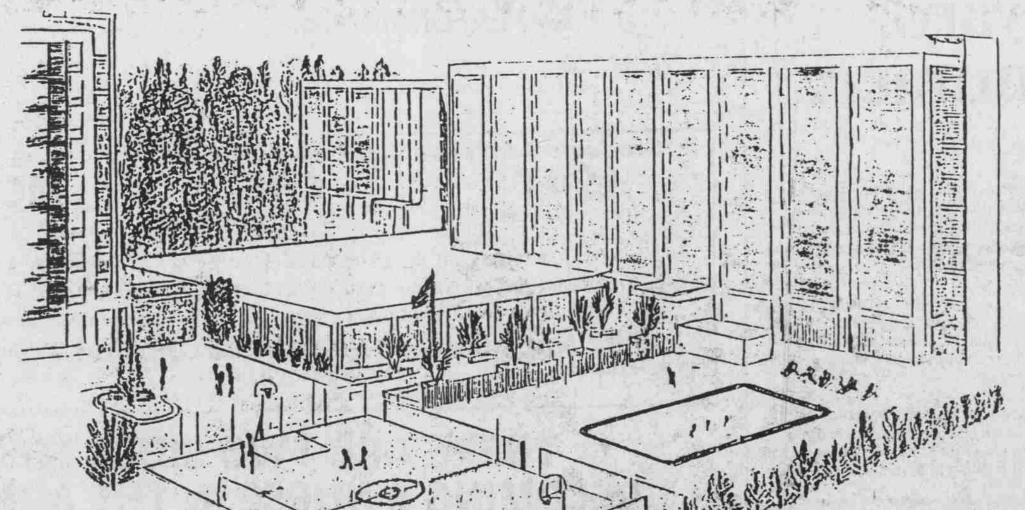
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