



Artifact Showcase:

RCA/Marathon Coin Bank

This cylindrical coin bank presents a mystery. It says

"8 transistor
Marathon Savings Bank"

Why would RCA team up with a savings bank? Circa 1960, transistor radios were an exciting new thing. Everybody wanted to have one. At that time, businesses sometimes used transistor radios as promotional items. The Museum has two transistor radios that look like gas pumps, with logos from oil companies. Chevron might advertise, "Fill up with at least 15 gallons of gas and you can get one of these terrific Chevron gas pump transistor radios for only \$5." The radio then continued to be advertising for the company, reminding its owner to use Chevron gas.



We can only speculate, but perhaps Marathon Savings Bank had a promotion along the lines of "Open a savings account with Marathon for \$100 and you will receive an eight-transistor RCA radio plus a coin bank." RCA of course would have given Marathon a generous discount on the purchase of a quantity of the radios.

If any of you know the *true* story of this bank, let us know!

We appreciate your support of the museum so that historical artifacts like this one, and the stories that go with them, can be preserved for future generations. THANKS!