## Restaurant Ware Collectors Network®





## Iconic Establishments

A series of articles about the china used by venues ranging from hotels and restaurants to burger joints and hospitals

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## RCA BUILDING - RADIO ROOM 29 October 2019

The 70-story, 872-foot-tall RCA Building opened in May, 1933, with the address, 30 Rockefeller Plaza. In 1988 it was renamed the GE Building after General Electric bought the Radio Corporation of America. In 2014 it was renamed the Comcast Building after Comcast bought the National Broadcasting Co. Now it is often referred to as 30 Rock.

The most famous restaurant in this building is the *Rainbow Room*, on the 65th floor, which opened October 3, 1934. It was originally going to be named the Stratosphere, but the Rockefeller's thought that sounded too much like an ordinary nightclub, so it was changed to Rainbow. At the opposite end of the 65th floor was the *Rainbow Grill*. The **Rainbow Room** was closed during World War II, from December 1942 until 1950. During that time, Union News rented it to anyone wanting to use it for receptions and parties. It closed again in the 1980s, but following a two-year, \$25 million renovation, reopened in 1987. On June 5, 2009, it closed once again and did not reopen until 2014, 80 years after it first opened.

An early view of the **Rainbow Room** shows a plate with a dark border on the table at lower left. That crazy habit of placing a napkin on the plate keeps us from seeing the entire plate. The dark border might be black, which would fit in with the ashtrays made by Hall (See information in IDwiki). Early menus use the same style name logo. Square ashtrays, which may be gift shop items, have this same logo. A different 1934 view shows plates that are plain or possibly with a narrow border decoration. A 1974 photos shows a narrow rim band on the plates. By 1975 the less formal Rainbow Grill dining area was using plates with a solid dark glaze. Today the Rainbow Room china is pure white. A WorthPoint entry shows 10 1/2" plates by Mikasa with a center of the well design and series of triangles at the rim and verge. This listing does not give any information on the date nor show the backstamp.

A series of photographs in the Museum of the City of New York are of the "Patio Restaurant". This is the same space that was later named the **Rainbow Grill**.

On July 9, 1934, the Rockefeller Center Luncheon Club was organized as a membership social club. It was limited to men only, with approximately 1,100 members. The Luncheon Club used the 231-seat **Rainbow Room**, along with the **Patio** and **Rainbow Grill**, containing 156 seats. There were two small private dining rooms of 14 and 18-person capacity. The kitchen and other food service facilities are on the 64th floor. This Luncheon Club had a view of the Empire State Building, to the South, and Central Park to the North. 1949 photos in the Library of Congress collection show no china on the tables. The Luncheon Club probably used the **Rainbow Room** china because having a separate

china service would have been difficult to manage. The Luncheon Club did have a nice interlocking" RCLC" monogram that formed a circle. Maybe there is a service plate somewhere with this graphically interesting crest?

- PHOTOS
  1 Early view of the RCA Building
- 2 Entrance to Rainbow Room, Observation Deck, and NBC studios
- 3 Early view with dark glaze plate on table in foreground
- 4 Ashtray by Hall China
- 5 Same logo on menu
- 6 Square ashtray with logo
- 7 1934 view with white china
- 8 1974 photo with banded china (Yes that is who you think it is)
- 9 1975 Rainbow Grill with dark glaze on china
- 10 The Rainbow Room china today
- 11 Crested china by Mikasa
- 12 65th floor plan
- 13 1934 Patio Restaurant view
- 14 1934 Patio interior
- 15 1934 Patio exterior
- 16 1944 Luncheon Club menu cover
- 17 1944 menu open
- 18 1949 Photo
- 19 1949 view with draperies
- 20 1949 Bar
- 21 Luncheon Club matchbook with monogram logo

Information sources. IDwiki. Wikipedia. eBay. WorthPoint. AOL image search. Google image search. Rainbow Room website. JUSTIA US Law website, Rockefeller Center Luncheon Club v Johnson, 131F.Supp.703 (S.D.N.Y.1955) Tax Case.





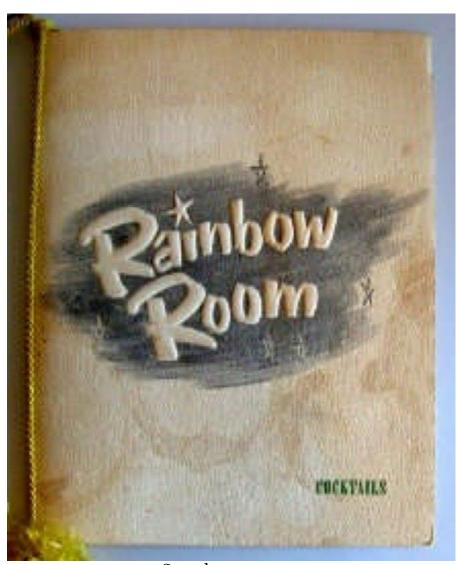
Entrance to Rainbow Room, Observation Deck, and NBC studios



Early view with dark glaze plate on table in foreground



Ashtray by Hall China



Same logo on menu



Square ashtray with logo



1934 view with white china



1974 photo with banded china (Yes that is who you think it is)



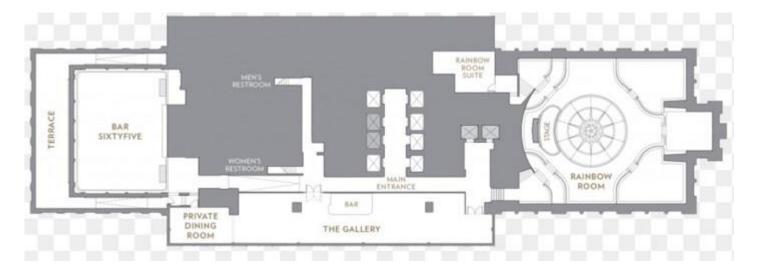
1975 Rainbow Grill with dark glaze on china



The Rainbow Room china today



Crested china by Mikasa



Floorplan of 65<sup>th</sup> level



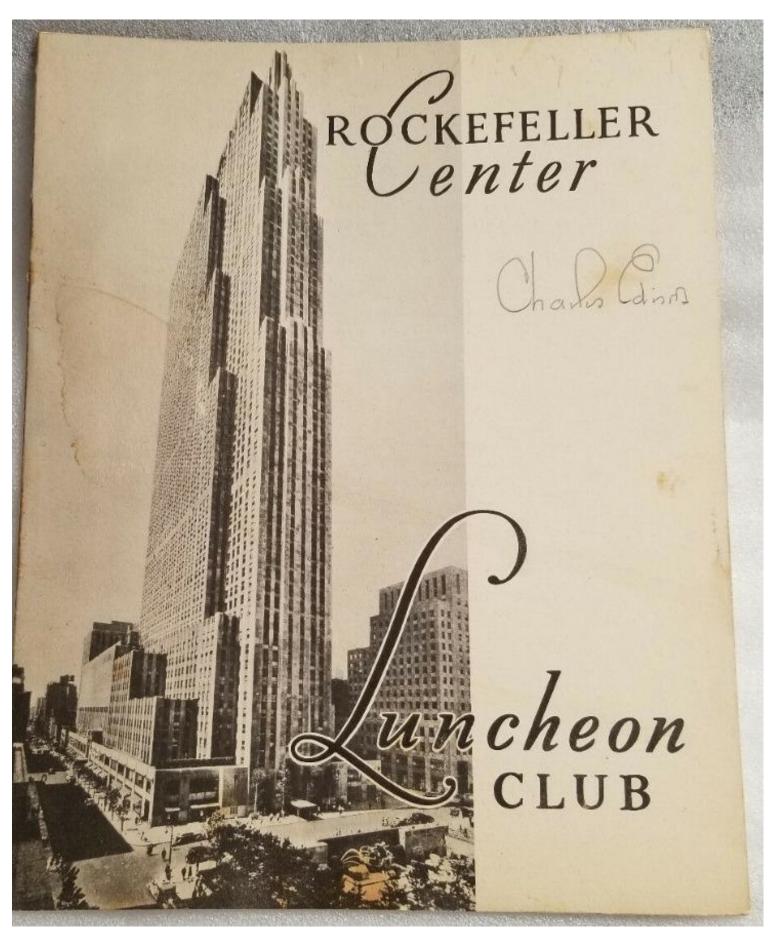
1934 Patio Restaurant view



1934 Patio interior



1934 Patio exterior



1944 Luncheon Club menu cover

Libiors	
ELECTIVE ENTREE DETERMINES FRICT. OF LIPICHEON	A LA CARTE
	Fresh Shrimp Cocktail 60
Clam Juice Cocktail Pineapple Juice	Half Grapefruit 35 Half Grapefruit Juice 30 Supreme of Fruits 45 Kraut Cocktail 20 Crap Mea
French Online Mariniere P. Apple Juice	Vichyssoise 40
Seried Chicken-Sorm	French Onion Soup 30 Flellied Consomme 30 Jellied Consomme 30 Jellied Consomme 30
Fresh Sea Food Cutlets with Cardinal Sauce	95
Poached Eggs with Creamed Spinach 145	Fresh Sos Food Cutlets with Cardinal Sauce 160 Crab Meat au Gratin
Tenderloin of Beef with Fried Potatoes 125  Curried Chicken on Rice 200	Change 80
Roast Sugar Cured Hamilton	EGGS Poached Eggs with Creamed Spinsch 85 Poached Eggs, Benedict 95 Fresh Tomato Omelette 80
	extrees (Ready)
Mignon of Pork Tenderloin, "Polish Style with Sauerkraut 145  AMERICAN WINE, RED OR WHITE (P	Tenderloin of Beef with Fried Potatoes 95 Curried Chicken on Rice 100 100
AMERICAN WINE, RED OR WHITE (Per Glass) 40c.	Curried Chicken on NAVE 100 Color Sauce 800 Color Sauce 100 Color Sauce 950 Steamed Smoked Sausage, Polish Style with Saucrkraut 950 Steamed Smoked Sausage, Polish Style with Saucrkraut 950 Color Sauce 950
COLD SUGGESTIONS	FROM THE GRILL
Chicken and Vegetable Salad  Assorted Cold Curt with Paper Cold	Call's Liver with Bacon 95 Lamb Chop (1) 75 Broiled Chickes, halt) 1 10
Assorted Cold Cuts with Potato Salad 145 Grilled Deviled Ham Sandwich 175	SANDWICHES
Smoked Sardines, Garnished	Chicken 70 Club 85 Tongue 50 Ham 50 Combination 60 Melted Cheese and Bacon 65
Shredded Wheat with Cultivated Blueberries 125	COLD SUGGESTIONS
Atwell Special Sunser Salad 165	Chicken Salad (white meat only) 150 Assorted Cold Cuts 115 Fresh Shrimp Salad 85 Fresh Vegetable Salad 80 Smoked Beef Tongue 85 Sugar Cured Ham 90 Tunatish Salad ®0 All Cold Dishes are Served with Parta Salad
Plasned Brown Polatoes	
Red Pitted Cherry Pie Fresh Peach Pie Stewed Fresh Rhubarb Fruit Jello Cream Horn Chilled Watermelon Sherbet Ice Cream	VEGETABLES
- Its Class	Beets in Butter 25 Fresh Whole Spinach 30 Buttered Carrots 30 Cauliflower Hollandaise 65 New Peas 35
Coffee, Tea or Milk	Fresh String Beans 35 Fresh Asparagus, Hollandaise 65 New Lima Beans 35
NO SUBSTITUTIONS PLEASE	CHEESE
Thursday, July 6, 1944	Swiss 30 Camembert 30 Brie 30 Roquefort 30
FRESH FRUITS	DESSERTS
CULTIVATED BLUEBERRIES WITH CREAM 50	Red Pitted Cherry Pie 25 Vine Ripened Cantaloupe 50 Apple Pie 25 Cilled Westernel
RED RASPBERRIES WITH CREAM 50	Cultivated Blueberries with Cream 50
STEWED PEACHES 40 CHILLED WATERMELON 40	Aice rudging, vanita Sauce 25 Choice of Ice Cream 30 Chocolate Eclair 2
CANTALOUPE 50 COMPOTE OF FRUITS 50	COFFEE, TEA, ETC.
STEWED CHERRIES50 SLICED PINEAPPLE	Coffee with Cream 15 Chocolate 20 Tea 15 Milk  Items desired which are not on menu will be prepared on request
All prices are our ceiling prices, or below. By OPA regulation, our ceilings are based on our nighest	The constitute of all and a discount of the constitution of the co
All prices are our ceiling prices, or below. By OPA regulation, our ceilings are out of superins prices from April 4 to 10, 1943. Our menus or price lists for that week are available for your inspecting	that upon occasions certain items may not be available. Your indulgence will be appreciated.

1944 menu open



1949 Photo



1949 view with draperies



1949 Bar



Luncheon Club matchbook with monogram logo

## Comment posted by Laura Gough:

Out of curiosity I Googled the Alice Cooper pic. The woman sitting with him is Ethel Kennedy, the man with his hand on his shoulder is Andy Williams. October 16, 1974.