



The Philatelic Communicator



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Parker, Trepel and Stets Are the Latest Added to WU Hall of Fame

Once again the committee that selects worthy philatelic writers for inclusion in the A.P.S. Writers Unit #30 Hall of Fame has made its selection of three new writers. And as in previous years, two are living and active, while the third is a previously overlooked writer from the past.

The newest to be inducted into the Hall of Fame are **Everett L. Parker**, of Glenburn, Me., the editor of several journals including *Pitcairn Log* and the author or editor of a handful of titles on the philately of Pitcairn Island; **Scott R. Trepel**, who lives in New York and is an award-winning researcher and writer of numerous articles for a variety of respected journals, as well as the president of Siegel Auction Galleries; and **Robert J. Stets, Sr.** (1916-2016), who was the author of nearly a dozen books and scores of articles on aspects of postal history, as well as the executive director of the Interphil '76 stamp show.

More details on the accomplishments of all three inductees can be found on page 5.

The Hall of Fame nominating committee is chaired by Cheryl Ganz, and includes Trish Kaufmann and Hal Vogel. It made its recommendations to the A.P.S. Writers Unit #30 Council in the spring and they were unanimously accepted at a meeting in mid-May.

To nominate someone for future consideration, write to: cheryl ganz@yahoo.com

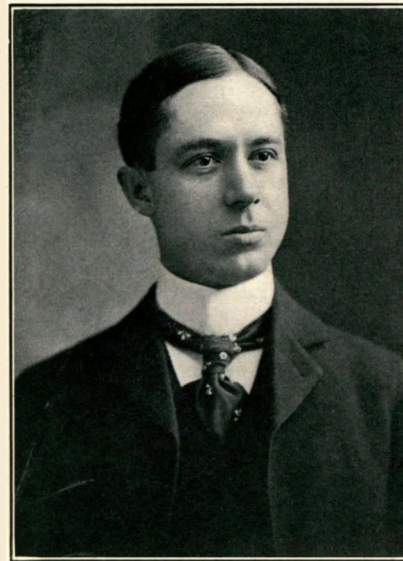
TIMES PAST

New York Times Stamp Writer Tells All

Many of our members can recall the era, now sadly more than 30 years gone, when *The New York Times* ran a weekly or bi-weekly column on stamp collecting. Several of its writers have been inducted into the A.P.S. Writers Unit #30 Hall of Fame: **Kent Stiles, David Lidman, Richard Sine, John Dunn**. But there was one stamp writer at the *Times* who preceded them all, yet whose name is probably unfamiliar to most: **Frank W. Crane**.

Crane wrote about philately in the pages of that hallowed daily during the 1920s. The reason we don't know much about him today is simple: most of his articles were published without a byline. Until it changed its ways a couple of decades ago, the *Times'* standard practice was not to give bylines to stringers who were not employed full-time as reporters or columnists. Stiles pioneered the position of regular *New York Times* stamp columnist, penning bylined pieces from 1937 to 1961; but Crane, despite having had an enthusiastic audience in his day, sadly sank into obscurity.

However, all was not lost: Harry L. Lindquist, editor of the newly-launched *Collectors Club Philatelist*, got Crane to answer some questions about himself and published a glowing profile of the young stamp writer in the July 1923 issue (Vol. 2, No. 3). For the enjoyment



Frank W. Crane was a stamp writer at *The New York Times* in the 1920s.

of our readers, **TPC** is reprinting it here. What is most striking about this profile is the timeless nature of Crane's observations and his advice on writing about stamps. Though it is over a century old, it rings as true today. (*Note: while our usual style is to put quoted text in italics, long extracts are tiring to read thus, so what follows is set in a normal font.*)

Lindquist introduced his subject:

"The splendid

philatelic articles appearing in *The New York Times* have attracted considerable attention from collectors and from the philatelic press. It has been evident that the writer was very familiar with his subject and had a keen appreciation of news values as well as of philately. His articles have been widely reprinted and are sure to be of much value in stimulating interest in our hobby.

"We believe that our readers will welcome an opportunity to become acquainted with the writer of these articles—Mr. Frank W. Crane—and after much persuasion we induced him to give us a photograph of himself together with an outline of his philatelic experience which follows:

"My interest in and acquaintance with postage stamps began, naturally, in my schoolboy days, stimulated by the collections of several of my young friends

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The Executive Committee was reconstituted at the last election. Volunteers are sought for the following positions: Historian, Publicist, Special events, AIJP liaison. Please reach out to the President if interested in helping with any of these roles.

How are our philatelic libraries doing?

Last month, the Collectors Club (on whose board I sit) reopened in its stylish new home in the heart of Manhattan. It had occupied its previous quarters, a stately townhouse on East

Matthew Healey 35th Street with a façade designed by the great Stanford White, since the 1940s.

But that glorious pile had been falling down for a long time and the burden of its upkeep was threatening to bankrupt the club—what with a boiler about to quit, a leaky rear wall and elevator-maintenance bills running to \$20,000. Something had to be done.

That something was to bid farewell to the old place and put it on the market. The Republic of Serbia, with a foreign-affairs budget that could easily afford the maintenance, happily snapped it up, and the Collectors Club packed its things and moved into a freshly built-out new home on a leased floor in a well-maintained building overlooking Bryant Park.

With its future now assured, the club can begin to turn its attention to the renewal of its library, whose move was a key part of the relocation. I don't know if you've ever tried to move a library, but it ain't simple. Even with a specialized moving firm, there is much work remaining until it's back in good order.

Now housed in modern, well-lighted quarters with state-of-the-art shelving, a scanning station, ample study spaces

and the services of a librarian who can assist researchers with essentials, the library's shortcomings are more evident than before. As a team of temporary helpers comb the stacks, righting volumes, checking order and refiling misplaced books, it becomes clear that years of past neglect—for a long time the club had no librarian—took their toll. The dust is gone, but important works are missing. The books that are present are sometimes woefully outdated, or in poor shape. Some sections are ripe for reorganizing.

The Collectors Club keeps one of the dozen or so philatelic libraries in North America, and while it does boast some splendid rarities, it is neither the largest nor the most up-to-date. Curious how it stacks up against others, I started to explore their web sites and even visited the Rocky Mountain Philatelic Library in Denver. The R.M.P.L. is not housed in a historic townhouse, but it has a very fine collection, and one key asset that many other libraries seem to lack: an army of enthusiastic volunteers.

Our philatelic libraries put on a brave face, but I'm curious how many of them are properly supported by, and supportive of, their collector communities.

If you have thoughts on the direction your philatelic library is going, I'd love to hear them—please email me. With your help, I'd like to put together an overview for a future issue of *TPC*.

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Make the most of your visit to GASS this year

Most of Organized Philately is getting ready for its biggest event of the year, the Great American Stamp Show. It will be held August 15-18 in Hartford, Conn. The Writers Unit #30

Lloyd A. de Vries

will share Booth 538 with Boston 2026. (Actually, we are sharing the polymathic Alan Barasch with the upcoming international show. Our Secretary-Treasurer is also speaking on “The Study of Bread on Stamps” for the Gastronomy on Stamps Unit (10 a.m. Thursday, Room 26) and on “Penguins on Stamps of the Falkland Islands” for the Falkland Islands Philatelic Study Group (2 p.m. Thursday, Room 24).

The Boston 2026/WU30 booth is at the back of the hall, about as far from the entrance as you can get. But before you complain, it faces the United States Postal Service stage, where hundreds of people will attend first-day ceremonies during the show not only for U.S. issues but for those of the United Nations, Rattlesnake Island Local Post, National Duck Stamp Collectors Society and Boston 2026. (Alan won’t have much of a walk for that one!)

The booth is also on the way to one set of restrooms. Many years ago, when I was trying to be a bourse dealer, my location at a recurring show was in the back, near the restrooms and USPS booth. One day, the promoter said because I’d been a good boy, he could move me to the front of the room. “Oh, no, please don’t! I like where I am. *Everyone* passes my booth at some point.”

You’ll find the latest schedule for the show—more up-to-date than the one in the printed program—at [www.stamps.org/Portals/0/Stampshow/GASS%202024%20Schedule%20\(Public\).pdf](http://www.stamps.org/Portals/0/Stampshow/GASS%202024%20Schedule%20(Public).pdf)

The floor plan is at www.stamps.org/great-american-stamp-show/floor-plan

One more URL of note: www.stamps.org/great-american-stamp-show/pre-registration

[org/great-american-stamp-show/pre-registration](http://www.stamps.org/great-american-stamp-show/pre-registration)

The deadline to pre-register is July 31, so you still have time. The advantages of pre-registration are two-fold: You can skip the lines to register (which you must do before entering the show floor) and your name badge will be much better looking and informative.



You can pick up organization ribbons for your badge at the American Philatelic Society, American Topical Association and American First Day Cover Society booths, but I daresay I may be the only one with this ribbon, given me many years ago by my “friends” at Americover. I plan to wear it proudly!

Speaking of what to wear, make sure your shoes during the day at GASS are comfortable. The exhibition halls (the “show floor”) containing the bourse, society booths and the USPS are on the third floor of the Connecticut Convention Center. The meeting rooms are on the sixth floor. There are escalators and elevators between floors, of course, but there is still a distance to be covered from the entrance of the halls or rooms to the elevators and escalators. Also, it is more than three hundred feet from the front of the exhibition hall to WU30 booth in the back, four hundred feet from side to side.

Most of the meeting rooms that GASS

will use are on the “cityside” of the building (Rooms 21-27) or to the right as you face the entrance to the exhibition halls. A few meetings are on the other side of the building, “Riverside,” rooms 11-17.

The Writers Unit #30 annual meeting is at 11 a.m. on Sunday in Room 21. The closed WU30 Council meeting, which precedes it, is in Boardroom B, which is on the *fourth* floor.

Take a look at the meeting and seminar schedule before your events start and see where they are located. I may even do a “familiarization tour” Wednesday to see how long it will take me to get from Boardroom B to Room 21.

I am surprised that one of the more active philatelic interest groups has a booth at the show, but no other events, not even an informal get-together. Instead, it has scheduled an event some 300 miles away. As a member myself, I am disappointed. Yes, two of the organization’s mainstays will be holding down the fort at GASS but this could have—*should* have—been an opportunity to expose other members to the diversity of philately, and other philatelists to this group’s specialty.

That said, stamp collecting is something that can be enjoyed in a group or alone, at a formal event or in your pajamas. This is much easier today than ever before in philately: We have Zoom and other online meeting aids, websites and discussion groups for every philatelic specialty. If you cannot attend an event, a video of it may be available later online. Nearly every stamp and cover you could want, and many you don’t, are offered for sale on eBay or elsewhere.

Many of the meetings and seminars at GASS are being recorded. The AFDCS, among others, will try to broadcast its public meetings live, via Zoom.

For a more user-friendly link, shorten that excessive URL

As more and more information, particularly old records, is being uploaded and stored online, philatelic research, like all research these days, is enhanced by searching the Internet.

Len McMaster

Even if referencing the original document is sufficient, it's nice for a reader to be able to look at the reference online without having to go to a library to find the original source.

Frequently the online citation is fairly simple (short) like the citation to a Wikipedia article on Clipperton Island referenced by Dan Rind in his recent article "It Is Not Our Possession (Any-more)," appearing in the third quarter issue of *Possessions*: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clipperton_Island

But what if the citation to an on-line source is lengthy, like that of Director-General Rathbone's report on Posts in Cuba cited by Octavio Cabrerias in his article "The Brief 3¢ Postcard Rate at the Start of the U.S. Administration," appearing in the fourth quarter 2018 issue of *Possessions*. For those of us who occasionally want to check on-line

Len McMaster is a Writer's Unit council member and the editor of the U.S. Possessions Philatelic Society's journal, Possessions.

reference citations, typing in a full URL address like this one would obviously be a challenge:

<https://books.google.com/books?id=BoUVAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA415&lpg=PA415&dq=%22on+March+24,+after+a+conference+with+you+and+the+Postmaster-general,+i+issued+an+order,+to+be+effective+April+1%22&source=bl&ots=ZiPFE-GQ1P&sig=e#v=onepage&q=%22on%20March%2024%2C%20after%20a%20conference%20with%20you%20and%20the%20Postmaster-general%2C%20i%20issued%20an%20order%2C%20to%20be%20effective%20April%201%22&f=false>

One little typo and you'd be done for.

There are, however, several websites that allow you to shorten the URL, including **Bitly**, **TinyURL** and several others. (Google used to offer a service, discontinued March 30, 2019, though previously created links continue to point to their intended destination).

All are easy to use: you visit their site or open their app, cut and paste the overly long URL you need to shorten, and it returns a short alternate URL that redirects to the real one. For example, the Bitly shortened URL for the Clip-

perton Island Wikipedia page is just: bit.ly/2Uu7M63 instead of the full address shown above.

For the lengthy citation to Rathbone's report on Posts in Cuba, the shortened URLs for Bitly, TinyURL, and Google respectively, are: bit.ly/35nBv6W, tinyurl.com/y6xgc48 and goo.gl/7joNYU—any of which is much easier to type in, and takes up far less space on the page or screen.

Note that while you do not need to type "https://" at the beginning of the address for most web browsers, the shortened URLs *are* case sensitive.

Here's a summary of a handful of the top URL shorteners:

Bitly.com—free option is limited; paid options start at \$8/mo.

TinyURL.com—can use free without signing up. Plans for heavy users start at \$9.99/mo. with a 14-day free trial.

BL.INK—a more business-oriented site with a range of more expensive plans.

Short.io—a strong free plan that includes five custom domains.

Dub.co—One of the newer services that has a free plan and a cool interface.

Many of these sites also offer services such as QR codes, hosting, broken-link monitoring and social-media features.

Call for entries to Chicagopex literature competition

It's that time of year again, when philatelic writers of all stripes should begin planning to submit their recent work to the annual philatelic literature contest at Chicagopex.



The show takes place in Itasca, Ill. from Nov. 22-24, and the deadline to submit literature entries is **Sept. 21**.

There are six classes of literature being accepted for this show: Philatelic books, compendiums and handbooks; catalogs; society journals and periodicals (including philatelic study group bulletins); monographs in excess of 8,000 words; articles under 8,000 words; and websites, digital media, blogs or message boards. Entries must be in English and generally must have been published within the last 18 or 24 months.

Entrants should send two copies of the printed work, the fee, a synopsis and a color photocopy of the cover or front page. Full details are given in the prospectus, which is available from www.chicagopex.org/pdf-documents/2024-literature-prospectus.pdf

The literature exhibition is chaired this year by Cheryl Ganz, with John Hotchner and Ken Trettin also serving on the literature jury.

Three new Hall of Famers named for 2024

Everett L. Parker

A retired former journalist, newspaper publisher, graphics and printing business owner, law enforcement executive, museum director, archeologist, tour company operator and ordained minister, Parker somehow also found time to write several books on the philately of Pitcairn Islands, edit the Pitcairn Islands Study Group's journal, *Pitcairn Log*, for over three decades—and edit more than half a dozen other philatelic journals.

His books include *The Pitcairn Anthology* (1998), *Pitcairn Islands Printed Cachets* (2005), *Pitcairn Island Postal Markings* (2005), *Calling Pitcairn* (2008) and *From Palm Trees to Antarctic Ice: the Byrd Expedition at Pitcairn Island, 1939* (2002).

Besides *Pitcairn Log*, which he has edited on-and-off from 1984 to the present, Parker edited the *South Atlantic Chronicle* (1988-2006) on St. Helena, Ascension and Tristan da Cunha; he has also edited the *British Caribbean Philatelic Journal*, served as co-editor of the *Florida Postal History Society Journal* (2012 to 2018) and others; he has written philatelic literature reviews for most North American journals. He is also president of the Maine Philatelic Society and edits its quarterly journal, *The Maine Philatelist*.

He received the Pitcairn Islands Study Group's Bounty Anchor award in 2006.

Scott R. Trepel

Trepel began his philatelic career working for Stanley Gibbons and Christie's Robson Lowe in New York. He joined Robert A. Siegel in 1992 as a partner with its founder. As president of Siegel, he has organized dozens of famous name sales and held the gavel when many records were broken—including the newest U.S. record of \$4,366,000 for the 1868 1¢ Z-grill, set on June 14, 2024.

Trepel's auction catalogs incorporate a wealth and depth of research, including



Rev. Dr. Everett L. Parker



Scott R. Trepel



Robert J. Stets Sr. (1916-2016)

census data and historical background, that has been recognized with multiple philatelic literature awards and altered the paradigm of what a sale catalog can be. He has published research articles in well-respected journals and edited the

1869 section of the USPCS *The Chronicle* for many years. He authored (with Ken Lawrence) *Rarity Revealed: The Benjamin K. Miller Collection* for the Smithsonian National Postal Museum and The New York Public Library. He has also published books on the City Despatch Post and the Pony Express.

Trepel has been awarded the Carroll Chase Cup four times (1989, 1994, 2003, 2006) for his research. He has also won the Neinken Award (1987) and Distinguished Philatelist Award (1996) and was awarded the Smithsonian Philatelic Achievement Award in 2023.

Robert J. Stets, Sr.

Bob Stets was born in Philadelphia in 1916, and died 100 years later in Walterboro, S.C. He began his career as a chemist, then moved into industrial engineering and worked briefly for the Apfelbaum stamp firm.

He wrote scores of articles on topics covering the postal history of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, North Carolina, South Carolina, New Jersey, RPO markings, post offices and postmasters, OCR spray markings, and stampless mail. His articles appeared in the USPCS *Chronicle*, the *American Philatelist*, *North Carolina Postal Historian*, *La Posta*, *Pennsylvania Postal Historian*, *Penny Post*, *New Jersey Postal History*, and the *Confederate Philatelist*.

Books he authored or co-authored included *An Illustrated Catalog of Philadelphia Postal Markings found on Stampless Covers 1728-1863* (1983), *Philadelphia Postal History* (1980), *Post Offices of South Carolina 1865-1980 and their First Postmasters* (2001), *South Carolina Railroad Markings* (1986), *Street Car R.P.O. Service in Philadelphia* (1978), and others.

He served as executive director of the INTERPHIL 76 exhibition. Among many awards he won the USPCS Perry Cup and Ashbrook Cup, and was its Distinguished Philatelist in 1992.

Making the best of a tough job: How to craft a better obit

Writing an obituary is never a fun job, and it's especially tough when you knew the deceased personally, or they meant something special to you. Sadly, however, it must from time

Matthew Healey

to time be done. Having watched some otherwise polished writers struggle with this challenging genre,

I thought I'd go ahead and share some general tips I picked up in my days writing the occasional freelance obituary for a certain large newspaper based in New York City. Some of the obit writers at that paper are widely recognized in the journalism world as masters of this particular craft, so I hope I'm not being immodest in channeling a bit of their know-how here.

Usually when I would write a Times obit, it was not about somebody I knew personally; in philately, the reverse is often true. The challenge is to maintain objectivity and not let personal feelings get in the way of clear writing.

As with a movie screenplay, there's a fairly strict formula for writing a good obit, and the best ones adhere to that faithfully. You still have plenty of leeway to tell the original story of someone's life and there's ample room for creative, sensitive writing, but I do believe that sticking to the formula will give the most satisfying results every time.

Keep in mind, first of all, that "obituary" for our purposes means a narrative article about the deceased person's life and accomplishments. It should not be a dry funeral-home announcement, or a glorified CV, or boil down to "they were a lovely person and we miss them so much." Those kinds of pieces properly belong on a memorial web page, or in a paid classified ad.

What we are really looking for in our article is something that reads well and serves as a permanent memorial, addressing the question: How will posterity remember this person best? What

will be a future researcher's takeaway, many years from now?

First, you need to gather all the facts. Obviously we need to respect the wishes of the bereaved and their need to grieve. But frequently, they will be our best sources of information, and we'll get the best results if we can take into account their unique insights. So, it's often worth the effort to reach out and talk to those who were closest to the deceased, rather than relying on second-hand sources, or dust-jacket blurbs, or—heaven forbid—Google.

In one recent obit, I thought I had done a pretty good draft, highlighting what I thought was an important aspect of the woman's accomplishments. After emailing and talking with her widower, however, I rewrote my draft at his request to add more emphasis on her expertise and research in an area about which I'd known very little. The result was a more balanced and accurate piece.

While you strive to be as sensitive as possible to the wishes of the next of kin, the final judgment on what details to put in or leave out of course remains yours. Try to decide wisely.

Like any bit of journalism, an obit needs to lead with the Five W's: who-what-when-where-why (and how). Who died, when and where, is the easy part. How they died is really only necessary if it's unexpected, e.g. if they were young; when someone was in their 80s or 90s, you don't need to state a cause of death. Their age normally appears in the headline or at the end of the first paragraph.

The key "W" is why—*Why should we care about this person and why is their obit appearing in this publication?* You only get half a sentence in which to address this in your opening, so poetry counts: choose your words carefully. The challenge is to sum up a lifetime of accomplishments in a couple of succinct phrases. It takes a bit of writerly skill to do it well, but it's worth the effort.

Accuracy is vital—you can generalize, but don't distort their legacy.

Next, delve a little deeper into the person's accomplishments. Certainly mention major projects or awards, for example, and get into why they were driven to achieve these things. Mention books published, shining cities built, moons shot for, et cetera.

You can expand on their legacy with more detail and insights: how they left the (philatelic) world a better place. Use a quote from someone who knew them well, if you have one—a society leader or someone in the trade would be more compelling than a next of kin, but either is fine. More than one is OK too, as long as they're not repeating the same thing.

Once you've dispensed with accomplishments and legacy, circle back to biographical details such as date/place of birth and where they grew up; their parents if it matters, where they went to school (if you must) and any formative experiences (Military? Jobs? Prior marriage?) Cool non-philatelic life stories would go here. It's fine to leave this stuff later in the obit; the goal is to write a readable article, and although these details are most likely not the most inspiring thing about the person, they can add dimension and complete the record.

Don't forget the survivors!

Conclude with something that conveys your subject's human character. What was it like to know them? What did they do for laughs? What was their stamp room like? A humorous anecdote is fine, just don't get maudlin.

Finally, resist the urge to wrap it up and put a trite bow on it. The worst thing is to end with "they will be missed" (of course they will). Just leave us with a parting thought about what they bequeathed to the world, or conclude an anecdote you started in your opening. Or simply lay it to rest.

Don't know? Don't be afraid to say so.

Sooner or later, we writers are faced with a question for which there is no clear or obtainable answer. It's tempting in that circumstance to

John M. Hotchner

provide an answer anyway. It's attractive and satisfying to be

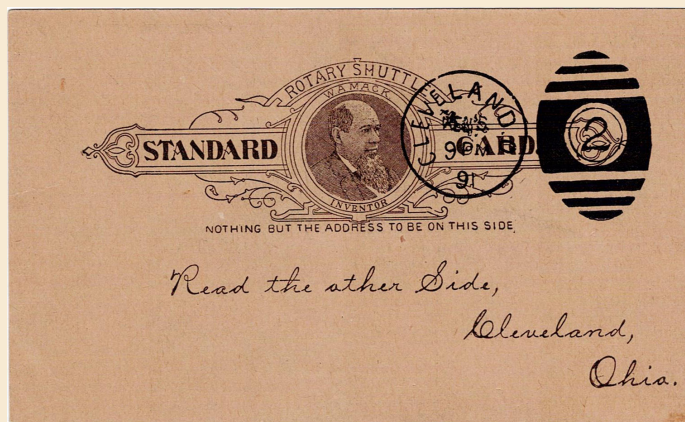
able to close the loop. After all, if we are knowledgeable enough to write the article, we are likely well qualified to make a good guess. But is that the right thing to do?

My answer: it is never right to present a guess as fact. But it is OK to leap from facts to a guess, so long as you identify your thoughts as a guess. It is also perfectly acceptable to simply state that you don't know the answer to something—particularly when finding that answer would likely entail elaborate and time-consuming research, or require a degree of clairvoyance about what some unknown persons were thinking a long time ago.

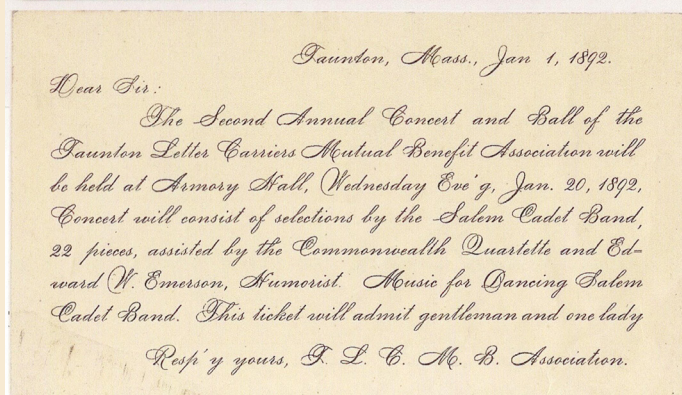
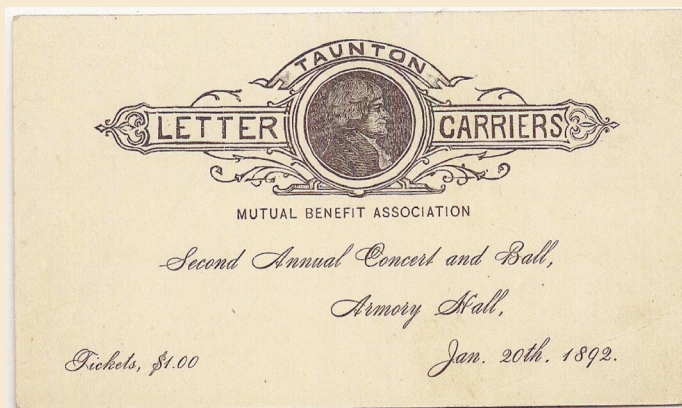
This recently came up as a result of an article I wrote for *Linn's Stamp News* on privately produced postal cards that were modeled on genuine postal cards of their time. Two examples are shown here.

Both cards seem intended to mimic contemporaneous postal cards, but without actually fooling anyone into thinking they might have been real. Nonetheless, they could be taken as meeting the technical definition of a counterfeit.

I said in the article that it



One of the fantasy postal-card replicas described.



Front and back of the other fantasy card described. These cards were evidently produced as a business promotion, not to defraud, but the question of why the U.S. Postal Inspection Service wasn't concerned remains unanswered.

seemed odd to me that the Postal Inspection Service seemed not to have been upset by these at a time when they and the Secret

Service (properly) pursued the producers of counterfeit U.S. adhesive stamps with a vengeance.

I didn't explain why,

because I don't know why. Not that I don't have some thoughts, but I preferred to let the question hang, in hopes that readers might know or have theories to share.

Putting my own thoughts in the article might have impeded reader reaction. Yet the first reader reaction I got was a complaint: "I liked your post card article in Linn's of April 15, but I was looking for you to answer your question: Did the USPOD readily accept the replication of these cards?"

Unfortunately that is the only reader reaction I've received on this subject. I told the reader that I don't have an answer. Likely the answer is lost in the mists of time. My guess would be that it is one or a combination of the following: a) the Post Office Department did not view postal cards in the same way they viewed stamps; b) these were clearly not being produced for use in the mails, and/or c) the Inspection Service probably got word from above that it would not be wise to annoy POD employees and their *de facto* union by coming down hard on what was not really a revenue-protection threat.

I'll give the question a little more time before doing a follow up for Linn's, but in the absence of contemporary information to settle the question, I'll have to identify my thoughts as opinion, not established fact.

NYT stamp writer

Continued from page 1

and encouraged by my father, who, instead of smiling at my hobby, aided me in its educational value as a help in the knowledge of geography and national rulers. Better, he occasionally slipped me an extra quarter which soon found its way to a Nassau Street dealer. There, in a small upper room, an absorbing hour or more would be spent in looking over various stock albums and I would come away with a dozen or twenty stamps, for a quarter would do a good deal for a new collection prior to 1890. Ultimately I bought the collections of one or two of my youthful friends and branching out as a small dealer, pasted my duplicates on sheets and sold them to other youngsters at prices way below catalogue ratings.

"A break down in my father's health caused him to make a long European trip and he took me along and there I really began to learn something about stamps. Having a duplicate Confederate "Ten" cents I exchanged it with the firm of Pemberton on the Strand for several times its catalogue value, then \$4, I think. Among the stamps I got for it was a good copy, but cancelled rather heavily, of the English 1 pound, with anchor watermark, but it was several years later before I appreciated the value of that watermark.

"In Europe my philatelic education was advanced by seeing more counterfeits than I had ever imagined could exist. I found a number in my own limited purchases and a careful study of them gave me a better idea of methods of printing and engraving postage stamps than I knew before. I was surprised at the quantities of stamps on sale in every city, as it indicated that stamp collecting was pursued by greater numbers in Europe than was the case in America at that time. Unconsciously, perhaps, that fact made me regard it as of real importance in the quest of life's happiness.

"My affection for stamps has never been lost and doubtless, in some

measure, it is due to the fact that I kept my collection, even though, for several years, laid aside and temporarily forgotten. It is virtually a nineteenth century collection. In more recent years my interest in the delights of collecting was revived through an old friend, Prof. Charles Peck Warren of the School of Architecture, Columbia University, who resurrected his album, long laid away and prior to his death a short time ago, had developed into no mean philatelist.

"My revived interest provided many agreeable surprises, for in revising my stamps, I was amazed to see that many of the British Colonials, early German States, Spain and a few other countries,

"The serious side of stamp collecting... is being better appreciated as a result of the recent Ferrary sales..."

which I had bought for cents were now quoted in dollars, sometimes at a good many dollars. It was a satisfaction to know that a few good investments had been made.

"Another surprise was the recognition that perforations, watermarks, various grades and colors of paper, to say nothing of the minute varieties and types of United States stamps, were regarded as of prime importance. In my early days the average collector knew little of this scientific phase of philately. All of these advances prove that philately is a progressive science, which all science must be to be worthy of the name. In the articles which I have written for *The New York Times* from time to time, I have endeavored, as opportunity occurred, to stress this fact in a reasonable manner...

"Stamp collecting in the past has, perhaps, been the target of more gibes and jokes than any other hobby. This, to a large extent, has been due to the frivolous treatment of the subject by newspaper writers who regarded a stamp merely as a piece of colored paper to stick upon a letter. The result has usually been that the written article has

been more foolish than that which was written about... There is no reason why, when something containing elements of news about stamps is written, it should not be treated with as much reasonable accuracy as would be shown in writing a news article about pictures, fine statuary or other art objects.

"There is, fortunately, a tendency toward a wiser treatment of philatelic interests and the articles which have appeared in many of our leading newspapers throughout the country during the past year show that an effort is being made to write both entertainingly and instructively for both the collector and non-collector. In so far as I have been able I have endeavored to describe the stamps I have had occasion to mention so that the specialist might know the correct varieties and types. In a news article on the sale or discovery of a rare stamp, the collector is entitled to know something of its condition, its peculiar variety, if any, and, now that covers are becoming so desirable, whether on the original or not...

"The serious side of stamp collecting or, rather, its worthwhile features, is being better appreciated by the general public as a result of the recent Ferrary sales in Paris and the knowledge that many of our American collectors paid high prices for some of the great rarities. When a level headed business man will pay \$34,000 for a single stamp, while such men of affairs and collectors as former Senator Frelinghuysen, Charles L. Pack, Rep. Ernest R. Ackerman, Col. E.H.R. Greene, A.H. Caspary, Alfred Lichtenstein, to say nothing of the late Henry Duveen and King George of England, have made and are continuing to make such complete and scientific studies of the postal issues and postal history of various countries, the hitherto frivolous minded and doubting Thomases are forced to take notice that stamp collecting is not only a delightful pastime but, in its final analysis, a study requiring brains fully as much as time and money."

Lindquist ended by noting that Crane continued to collect enthusiastically.

Book Review

How communications were carried across enemy lines during the War in the Pacific

This is the second monograph in a new series released by the Military Postal History Society. The first book, also published in 2023, was Harold Krische's *American Aid for German War*

Alan Warren

Prisoners that dealt with prisoner of war mail in Canada during World War II. In this new book, Louis Fiset examines the two diplomatic exchanges between the U.S. and Japan that occurred in the war using the Swedish liner *MS Gripsholm* in 1942 and again in 1943.

These exchanges focused on non-combatants such as diplomats, businessmen, journalists, missionaries, and civilian internees, including women and children. Many of them generated correspondence, creating postal history that documented the situations. By collecting and examining these postal artifacts along with studying cable communications between the U.S. State Department and Japan's Foreign Ministry and pertinent press coverage, Fiset recounts the efforts to bring about these exchanges.

The author tabulates the ports of call of the *Gripsholm* as well as the two ships used by Japan, the *Conte Verde* and

*MS Gripsholm and the
US-Japan Diplomatic Exchanges
in World War II*



A Postal History

Louis Fiset

MS Gripsholm and the U.S.-Japan Diplomatic Exchanges in World War II: A Postal History

by Louis Fiset. 88 pages, 8½ by 11 inches, perfect bound, card covers. Military Postal History Society, 2023. ISBN 979-8-9877869-1-8. \$35 postpaid in USA, from MPHS Secretary, 7554 Brooklyn Avenue NE, Seattle WA 98115-4302

the *Asama Maru* for exchanges during the summer of 1942. Similar tables are shown for the second exchange in the fall of 1943, when the Japanese vessel for diplomatic exchange was the *Teia Maru*. The tables show the arrival date at each port and the number of repatriates that embarked or disembarked.

The mail examined for this book included that carried on the exchange ships such as to repatriates at the exchange sites, to/from Allied POWs

in the far East, to/from civilian internees in the far East, to/from Japanese citizens in Japan, repatriates' mail, and crew mail. Some of the forms illustrated include American and Japan Red Cross forms, cablegrams, and customs declaration forms used for relief supply parcels. A separate chapter deals with relief supply shipments and what they were permitted to contain.

Markings on the covers include censorship handstamps and resealing tapes, return to sender, requests for delivery at specific ports of call or to particular internment camps, and double censorship due to intermediate ports. Negotiations were begun on another exchange, but the requirements stipulated by Japan and then the gradual decline of conditions due to the war prevented further shipments.

A final chapter summarizes the fate of the exchange ships. Two of the Japanese vessels were sunk during the war, but they were not engaged in exchanges at the time. The *Gripsholm* was used in four mercy voyages towards the end of the war with civilian and POW repatriates, and even in post-war exchanges. It was then returned to its owner, the Swedish American Line.

The page layout is single column text, thus permitting ample room for illustrating the covers and related documents. A bibliography and index conclude the book. Fiset records an interesting aspect of war operations. Fortunately the author has ferreted out sufficient postal history that has survived to document the storyline.

Help Wanted

Your Editor is preparing a feature on philatelic book publishing, with a survey of current pricing for print services and a comparison of various successful approaches to marketing and selling philatelic books.

If you have published a philatelic book, either paper or digital, within the last two or three years and would be willing to share your experiences and details of quantities, production/print costs, pricing, sales strategies and methods of distribution, please contact: wu30editor@gmail.com

There is no need to publicly identify you; we are seeking to compile a cross-section of typical numbers for typical projects, as an aid to those writers and prospective publishers looking to assess the parameters of such a project before diving in. Any information you can share will help.

OBITUARY

Michael Dixon, literature judge and stalwart of organized philately, 86

Michael Dixon died March 9, 2024 at age 86. He was an accredited A.P.S. chief judge for philatelic and literature exhibits, an F.I.P. judge, and a member of the F.I.P. Literature Commission. He exhibited nationally and internationally beginning in the 1970s. He held many responsible positions in organized philately but was best known as President and Board chairman of the Washington 2006 international exhibition.

Michael was a Fellow of the Royal Philatelic Society, London, served on its Council from 1980 to 1983, and was a consultant to their expertizing committee. He held several positions on the board of the NAEPEX show including show chairman. He was past president of the Latin American Collectors Club, and a vice president of the American Philatelic Congress. Michael served on several A.P.S. committees including CANEJ, Technology, International, a consultant to Expertizing, and also on the Board as director-at-large. He was Commissioner for the U.S. to exhi-



Michael Dixon (1937-2024)

bitions in Germany and the United Kingdom.

His collecting interests included the GB King Edward VIII and Wilding issues, British Forces air mail letter cards and air letters of World War II, and Paris pneumatic mails among other subjects. Show attendees will also recall his fanciful displays of Upper and Lower Bongoland! His articles have appeared in the *London Philatelist*, *American*

Philatelist, the Great Britain Philatelic Society's *Chronicle*, *Mainsheet*, *Filatelía Peruana*, and the American Philatelic Congress Book. Following the Washington 2006 exhibition, Michael relocated to Portland, Ore. where he overhauled the A.P.S. World Series of Philately show PIPEX and served as its general manager.

Michael Dixon was awarded the London Medal for service to the Royal Philatelic Society, London. He was honored with the Northwest Federation's distinguished philatelist award in 2015. In 2012 he received the A.P.S. John N. Luff award for exceptional contributions to philately.

He was born in London, obtained advanced degrees and worked for a scientific abstracting and indexing firm. He and his family moved to Maryland in 1982 to head the firm's U.S. subsidiary, and he later served as a consultant to the U.S. government. Dixon is survived by his wife Carolyn, a sister, and two sons and their families.

—Alan Warren

Letters

wu30editor@gmail.com

Ben Franklin Stamp Clubs were not a failure

Matthew, I am responding to Dane Claussen's piece, "Ben Franklin Clubs at 50: What Went Wrong?" (TPC no. 223, March 2024).

What he does not seem to "get" is that there is no way to reach those predisposed to collecting without addressing the masses, as the Ben Franklin Stamp Clubs did.

Potential collectors don't identify themselves to us, and any effort by us to try to identify them and speak to them

to the exclusion of others would be both scientifically invalid and exclusionary.

Short of a scientifically valid study, there is no way gauge the long term effects of the BFSCs. Claussen's declaration that they were a failure is not justified. It may be that the results did not justify the money poured into them (the USPS view when they killed them), but that is a different thing. I'm of course biased, as the writer of *Stamp Fun* and *Leader Feature* for the last ten years of the BFSCs, but to the extent the BFSCs sensitized kids to stamp collecting in an era when it was beginning to lose market share, I think they were a success.

John Hotchner
Falls Church, Va.

Secretary-Treasurer's Quarterly Report

Since the time of the last issue of TPC for the first quarter of 2024, we have signed up two new members.

New Members

2093 Frederick Lutt

2094 Edward D. Cahoon

A warm welcome to both of them. We have collected dues and a few donations so our bank balance is now \$4,982.63.

Respectfully,
Alan Barasch, Secretary-Treasurer
Secretary@WU30.org



The Slusser philatelic library in Tucson, Ariz. had closed temporarily in the spring.

Tucson philatelic library is reopening

The Postal History Foundation's Peggy J. Slusser Memorial philatelic library in Tucson, Ariz. says it will be reopening soon under the care of a new librarian who is due to start on July 1st.

The library did not immediately disclose the name or background of its new hire, but said an announcement would be forthcoming.

Since April, a notice had been posted on the foundation's web page for the library, postalhistoryfoundation.org/slusser-library/ stating that the library was temporarily closed while it sought to fill the vacancy.

The Slusser library is one of 14 in North America and the U.K. that belong to the Global Philatelic Library, a net-

work of organizations tied together by the David Straight Memorial Philatelic Union Catalog, which allows researchers to seek out materials across any or all of the participating institutions.

The Slusser Library is also accessible through the Pima County library system in Arizona. In addition to strictly philatelic books, catalogs, journals and other items, it holds a range of materials relating to Arizona history and transportation. It also keeps an archive of manuscripts, photographs, Post Office documents and a Civil War collection.

For more information, visit the web site or call the library at 520-623-6652, extension 107.

Writers Unit #30 at GASS in Hartford

The Writers Unit #30 will again have a table at this summer's Great American Stamp Show, sharing (as last year) with the Boston 2026 organizing committee.

The show travels this year to Hartford, Conn. where it takes place in Hall AB of the Connecticut Convention Center.

The table will be staffed primarily by your editor, Matthew Healey, and your Secretary-Treasurer, Alan Barasch—who is also addressing the Gastronomy on Stamps and Falkland Islands groups.

Any member in attendance is welcome to park themselves in one of our chairs and sing the Unit's praises to interested passers-by.

Feel free to stop by and share ideas, pitch an article you'd like to write, seek feedback on a work in progress, or shoot the breeze on the state of philatelic publishing in the 21st century. We expect to have a few hard copies of this newsletter in case you'd like to pass one along to a friend—with a friendly solicitation to join WU30, of course.

Meeting up with friends old and new is one of the surpassing joys of any philatelic gathering, and we look forward to seeing you in Hartford!

Calendar of philatelic literature exhibitions, 2024

July 26-28: Mare Balticum 2024, Tartu, Estonia. *The latest incarnation of this traveling show has FEPA/FIP recognition and includes a literature exhibition. More info about the show at marebalticum.ee*

August 15-18: Great American Stamp Show, Hartford, Conn. *The big, annual, national U.S. show. Deadline for litera-*

ture entries has passed. There will be a table at the show where many of the book entries can be perused or bought.

October 17-20: Hafnia24, Copenhagen, Denmark. *International show with FEPA patronage marks the 400th anniversary of the Danish Post. The literature entries are now closed and posted online: www.hafnia24.com*

November 22-24: Chicagopex, Itasca, Ill. *The nation's oldest literature competition is now accepting entries in six categories; deadline is Sept. 21. Visit chicagopex.org/pdf-documents/2024-literature-prospectus.pdf or email the coordinator, Ken Trettin, at ChicagopexLiterature@gmail.com if you have further questions.*

EFIRO: Four Large Golds, but no Grand Award

This year will see three important philatelic exhibitions in Europe, all of which will include a literature component: EFIRO, which took place in Bucharest from April 16-19; Mare Balticum, taking place in Tartu, Estonia from July 26-28; and HAFNIA24, which is happening in Copenhagen on Oct. 17-20.

The entries at EFIRO were organized into three sub-classes: Books and Research papers [Monographs], Magazines and Periodicals, and Catalogs.

No Grand Award (or any other special award) was given for literature at EFIRO. Four literature entries won Large Gold, with a further seven taking Gold. The winners of Large Gold, Gold and Large Vermeil medal levels are given here; the full Palmares can be found at www.efiro.ro as well as at fepanews.com/efiro-2024-results/

BOOKS & MONOGRAPHS

LARGE GOLD:

Lars Engelbrecht, *Postal Stationery of Denmark: The Bi-Coloured Issue 1871-1905* (96 points)

Pedro Vaz Pereira, *The Portuguese Post 1853-1900; In the 500 Years of the Portuguese Post* (96)

Yadav Tsachor, *The Doar Ivri Issue of Israel* (95)

GOLD:

Eugenio De Quesada, *The Mail without Post in Spain, 15th to 19th Centuries: Fraud Letters out of the Bag* (91)

Dan-Simion Grecu, *The Years 1919-1921: Greater Romania, An Ideal that Came True* (91)

Dan-Simion Grecu, *Repression and*

Population Movements in Romania, 1921-1964: Vol. 1 and Vol. 2 (91)

Ute and Elmar Dorr, *Hungarian Post Office in Foreign Letter Services from 1900 to the Outbreak of World War I* (90)

Mircea Dragoteanu, *The History of Paltinis—Vols. 1-3* (90)

Slovak Post/Postal Museum, *Postal History in Slovakia* (90)

LARGE VERMEIL:

Corinphila Auktionen, *The Austrian Post in the Levant—200 Years of Habsburg Interests in the Orient* (88)

Oral Avci, *Postal History of Ottoman Iraq during the British Occupation 1914-1923* (88)

Jaromir Petrik, *Mauritius Post Paid Letters of the 1848 Issue* (88)

Jazad N. Ali, *The Stamp Cancelling Machine Slogan Postmarks of Trinidad and Tobago, 1923-2023* (87)

Vasile Braia, *Study/Is It a Philatelic Fake?* (87)

Madhukar Deogawanka, *Indian Stamp Booklets* (87)

Gheorghe Stanescu, *Mamaia and the Beaches of Constanta—An Illustrated History* (87)

Association of Singapore Philatelists, *Airmail from, through and to Singapore and Malaya, Vol. 1* (86)

Brian Callan, *Graf Zeppelin LZ-127 South America Airmail 1930-1937* (85)

Ioan Dejugan, *Sibiu/Hermannstadt Illustrated History—Collection of Postcards 1896-1947, Vol. 1 Intra Muros and Vol. II Extra Muros* (85)

Hsu Yih-Tzong, *Elaborating on the Code of Life in Tigers, Leopards, Lions and Elephants, Updated Edition* (85)

Johann Olchowik, *Contributions to the History of the Railway Junction and Post Office in the Upper Silesian Village of Morgenroth/Chebzie/Ruda Slaska-Chebzie* (85)

Henry Ong, *Malayan Meter Marks 1927-1945* (85)

Giuseppe Razza, *The Treasure of the Eagles: Documented History and Postal History of Ottoman Albania and its Relations with Foreign Empires, Kingdoms and States from 1540 to 1870, 3 Vols.* (85)

Françoise Valette, *A Stroll in the Aluminium Postcard* (85)

MAGAZINES & PERIODICALS

LARGE VERMEIL:

Asociation Filatelica Peruana, *Filatelia Peruana* (88 points)

Ho Huei-Ching, *2022 Seminars and Activities Proceedings No. 31* (88)

Hsu Te-Shan, *Chinese Taipei Philatelic Federation Journal No. 26* (87)

Ian McMahon, *Postal Stationery Collector* (87)

Chen Wen-Shiang, *Collectors' Philatelic Annual Report 2023* (86)

Marek Jedziniak, *FILATEL.PL Monthly Electronic Magazine* (86)

Hsiao Shih-Cheng, *Chinese Taipei Philatelic Magazine No. 100* (85)

CATALOGUES

LARGE GOLD:

M. Bulent Papuccuoglu, *Post Offices of the Ottoman Empire* (95 points)

GOLD:

Japan Philatelic Society, *Japanese Stamps Specialized Catalogue, 1871-1876; 1876-1908; 1948-1965* (90)

LARGE VERMEIL:

Gunnar Lithen, *Facit Special Classic 2024* (88)

Yoshiyuki Yamazaki, *Specialized Catalogue of the Showa Definitives Issue 1950-1965* (88)

Massoud Novin Farahbakhsh, *Catalogue of the Stamps of Iran 2024* (87)

Sergei Sereda, *The History of Moldova in the Philately of the USSR* (87)