



The Westfield Philatelist

Newsletter of the Westfield Stamp Club

American Philatelic Society Chapter #540

American Topical Association Chapter #113

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Westfield Stamp Show 2009

Photographs courtesy of Gary Lowe and Richard Nazar



Above, a busy bourse; Gary Lowe (left) and John Crout (below) at their exhibits.

Steve Rod and his students (below)



Upcoming Programs

March 26, 2009 - "Ceremony Programs - The Good, The Rare, The Beautiful". Dr. Scott Pelcyger, author of *Mellone's specialized Catalog of First Day Ceremony Programs & Events* will discuss and illustrate this area of philately.

April 23, 2009 - Robert P. Odenweller will present "New Zealand: New Discoveries among the first issues of 1855 to 1872". In 1980 he received the F.I.P. Grand Prix d'Honneur for his exhibit of the first issues of New Zealand. He is a Champion of Champions winner, a national and international judge and author of *The Stamps and Postal History of Nineteenth Century Samoa*.

First Day of Sale



In 2008 the USPS began a new postmark program to promote the first day of issue for new United States postage stamps. Local postmasters can request the first day of cancel postmark thus allowing collectors to obtain first-day-of-sale postmarks from cities other than the designated official first-day-city. The USPS allows 90 days from each official issue date to request the postmark.

I am aware of three post offices in New Jersey that offer this service: Berkeley Heights, NJ 07922-9998, Kingston, NJ 08528-9998 and Rocky Hill, NJ 08553-9998.

To obtain the postmark send an envelope franked with the new stamp within 90 days of the official issue date to FIRST DAY OF SALE CANCELLATION, POSTMASTER, Post Office Box 9998, to one of the above cities.

Quiz Answers

Answers to last issue's quiz: Harriet Tubman (E), Martin Luther King (F), Benjamin Banneker (H), Jackie Robinson (J), Scott Joplin (A), Carter Woodson (I), Mary Bethune (C), Sojourner Truth (D), Jean Baptiste Pointe du Sable (G), Jan Matzelinger (B).

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Editor

Frederick C. Skvara
PO Box 6228
Bridgewater, NJ 08807

email: fcskvara@optonline.net

The Westfield Stamp Club

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Meetings are held at 8:00 PM on the fourth Thursday of the month except for November (third Thursday) and July and August (summer recess). The club meets in the Community Room of the Westfield Town Hall located in the center of Westfield at 425 East Broad Street.

Dues are \$8.00 per membership year which runs from September 1 to August 31.

The club newsletter will be published every two months from September to June.

For information visit our
web site:

www.westfieldstampclub.org



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Parcel Post Stamps – A Good Idea Poorly Implemented

On May 1, 1879, a fourth class mail category was established to handle merchandise and all items not covered by first-, second- or third-classes of mail. There was a single flat rate of one cent per ounce that remained in effect until the inauguration of the parcel post system on January 1, 1913. Authorized by the Parcel Post Act of August 24, 1912, the service was in response to a demand from the public for an efficient way to send small packages. Fourth class mail, now called Parcel Post, included all matter not included in the other mail classes, could not exceed eleven pounds in weight (although that limit was raised later that year) or seventy-two inches in combined length and girth. The rate was one-cent per ounce for packages weighing less than 4 ounces irrespective of domestic destination. Packages over four ounces were rated by the pound, and since transportation costs money eight parcel post zones plus a local zone (i.e. parcels mailed and delivered from the same post office) were created with the rate reflecting the zone to which a parcel was being delivered.

The act authorized the issuance of special stamps for this service and beginning in November 27, 1912, a series of twelve stamps ranging in value from one-cent to one dollar were produced in the same color and size and in sheets of forty-five. The stamps were released in three groups of four stamps each with the central vignette illustrating postal personnel in the first group, modes of transportation in the second group and manufacturing and agricultural designs in the third group. The stamps were placed on sale January 1, 1913, along with a series of five parcel post postage due stamps, all in green with a central denomination, that were to be used on any fourth class mail not having the new parcel post stamps.

From the beginning the new stamps were confusing to the postal clerks and the public, were inconvenient to handle and account for (i.e. sheets of forty-five were not what postal clerks were used to dealing with) and were expensive to produce. On June 26, 1913, Postmaster General Albert Bursleson, who was only appointed on March 5th of that year, issued order No. 7241, effective July 1, 1913, that authorized the use of ordinary postage stamps for parcel post service and in addition authorized the use of parcel post stamps "for all purposes for which ordinary stamps are valid".



Picture post card mailed from Bergenfield, NJ to New York on July 17, 1913, using a one-cent parcel post stamp (Scott Q1) issued on November 27, 1912 and used exclusively for parcel post service from January 1, 1913 to June 30, 1913, but valid for general postage use on July 1, 1913. The vignette shows a post office clerk. [One-cent post card rate in effect from July 1, 1898 to November 2, 1917]