



The Westfield Philatelist

Newsletter of the Westfield Stamp Club

American Philatelic Society Chapter #540

American Topical Association Chapter #113

Volume 4 Number 2 November/December 2010

Calendar of Events

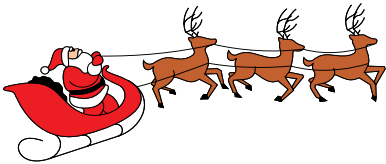
November 18 - Going Down the Tubes – Pneumatic Mail

By David L. Straight

David L. Straight comes to us from St. Louis, Missouri. He is a Vice President of the American Philatelic Society and serves the hobby as a member of numerous other organizations. He has written about and exhibited pneumatic mail for a number of years and is an expert in the field. David will trace the fascinating story of how mail was moved underground and within walls by the most advanced technology of the day.



December 16 - Annual Holiday Party



An evening of Food, Drink and Holiday Cheer! There will be a Donation Auction and 50/50 to help cover costs. Food will be available from 7:30 P.M.

Philatelic Quiz

1. On what United States postage stamp is a phthisiologist pictured?
2. *The Vanguard* by English painter John MacWhirter was the original source for a well-known United States postage stamp. Do you know which one?
3. What country has the honor of issuing the first charity stamps and what are they known as?
4. On July 26, 1988, the USPS issued a stamp for the ratification of the United States Constitution by the state of New York. What is shown in the scene on the stamp?
5. Who was the first country to join the General Postal Union?

[Answers will be available at the meeting and in the next issue of The Westfield Philatelist.]

Member Profile

A. Warren Scheller

Westfield Stamp Club Founding Member Number 1

In 1961 Warren founded the Westfield Stamp Club and now serves on the Board of Directors.

He retired in 1990 after 42 years as an Electrical Engineer and Construction Manager on international projects for oil refineries, chemical plants, fossil fuel and nuclear power plants.

He began collecting at age eleven and now, seventy-three years later, has complete collections of the United Nations and Egypt. Other collections and their degree of completeness include: Egyptian Revenue (80%), UAR (70%) and Trucial States (60%). United States philately include: postage (98%), Duck Stamps (100%), U.S. Revenues (60%), United States back-of-the-book (70%) and an extensive collection of plate blocks including Zip and Mail Early including about 3,000 covers.

In 1985 as the number of worldwide new issues became excessive he broke up his worldwide collection (80% complete) into topical collections that he organized into lectures mounted on frames of 16 pages each. These lectures have been given to School Children, Veterans Organizations, Senior Citizens, Fraternal Groups, etc.

Some of the topics are: "The Seven Wonders of the Ancient World", "Bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki", "Leather Postcards", "Meteorites", "Zodiac & Your Fortune", "The Bible Through Stamps (Old Testament)", "Masonic Presidents of U.S.", "Two Flag Raisings on Iwo Jima", "History of 5th Marine Division", (my outfit back in 1944), "Black History", "Stamp Collecting – A Family Hobby", "Egyptology", "New Jersey Turnpike Authority", "Masonic Philately", etc.

Warren finds that stamp collecting keeps his mind occupied and off health problems related to having had chemotherapy following surgery. He attends our meetings and stamp shows as often as he possibly can and says: "I hope to see all of you at one of the upcoming meetings."

He is proud to think that 2011 will be our 50th Anniversary and that he was helpful to the Board in designing the logo stamp depicted on the upper left hand corner seen on the first page of every issue of *The Westfield Philatelist*.

The Westfield Philatelist

Editor

Frederick C. Skvara
PO Box 6228
Bridgewater, NJ 08807
Tel/Fax: 908-725-0928
email: fcskvara@optonline.net

The Westfield Stamp Club

President

Nicholas Lombardi

Vice President

Edward J.J. Grabowski

Secretary

Joseph Chervenyak

Treasurer

Tom Jacks

Board of Governors

John Crout
Allan Fisk
Gary Wayne Lowe
Richard Nazar
Steven J. Rod
A. Warren Scheller
Frederick C. Skvara
K. David Steidley

Meetings are held at 8:00PM 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 website

www.westfieldstampclub.org

or call
Nick Lombardi
908-233-3045

News of Members

Robert P. Odenweller

October was a very enjoyable month for our own Robert P. Odenweller. On October 16th, at the Smithsonian Philatelic Achievement Award Gala, Bob was the recipient of the Smithsonian Philatelic Achievement Award for his lifetime achievements and contributions to philately. The Smithsonian Philatelic Achievement Award honors Americans and individuals from around the world for outstanding lifetime accomplishments in the field of philately and is presented only every two years. Earlier in the month, Bob's latest book, *The Postage Stamps of New Zealand: 1855-1873*, received an Large Gold Medal with Special Prize at Lisbon 2010, the international exhibition held in Portugal. Congratulations, Bob, on these two well deserved honors!

Bruce Marsden

The Board of Trustees of the American Philatelic Research Library has elected Bruce to fill an open Trustee position. Bruce is a long-time member of the American Philatelic Society and an officer of the American Helvetica Philatelic Society and currently serves as its webmaster. He is a Governor and Library Chair of the Collectors Club of New York. His collecting interests include Switzerland, Liechtenstein, and thematic collections of Tourism and Alpine.

Unusual Stamps

On July 7, 2010, Iceland Post issued a set of three stamps for the volcanic eruption of the Eyjafjallajökull icecap that began in March 2010. Embedded in the stamps are volcanic ash from the eruption that can be felt when touching the stamp. The printing process is lithography with volcanic ash silk screen. The stamps were printed in sheets of ten.



Answers -September/October Quiz

1. Frances Perkins, Secretary of Labor. United States 1980 (*Scott* 1821)
2. b. John Wanamaker Postmaster General under Benjamin Harrison
c. Arthur E. Summerfield Postmaster General under Dwight D. Eisenhower
d. James A. Farley Postmaster General under Franklin D. Roosevelt
e. Winton M. Blount Postmaster General under Richard N. Nixon
a. J. Edward Day Postmaster General under John F. Kennedy
3. When the Mormons settled in the Salt Lake Valley, they proposed the name Deseret for their expansive state. In the Book of Mormon Deseret means "honey bee" and reflected their desire for an industrious and cooperative society. They selected the beehive as their symbol and that symbol was retained when Utah joined the Union.
4. Richard Fairbanks was appointed Postmaster of the Massachusetts Bay Colony on November 5, 1639.
5. Booker T. Washington, founder of the Tuskegee Institute in Alabama. United States 1940 (*Scott* 873)

Getting Your Five Centimes Worth

By Ed Grabowski

It is early January and I am busily engaged in preparing a ten frame exhibit for the March 6th Westfield Stamp Show. I have decided to do an exhibit on the use of the French Colonial Allegorical Group Type issue (What's new?) from the colony of Madagascar & Dependencies. This is a fairly complex undertaking, as seven other entities in the Madagascar region (Diego Suarez, Nossi-Bé, Sainte Marie de Madagascar, Mayotte, Anjouan, Grand Comoro and Moheli) received and used Group Type stamps enroute to being incorporated into the colony of Madagascar between 1894 and 1911.

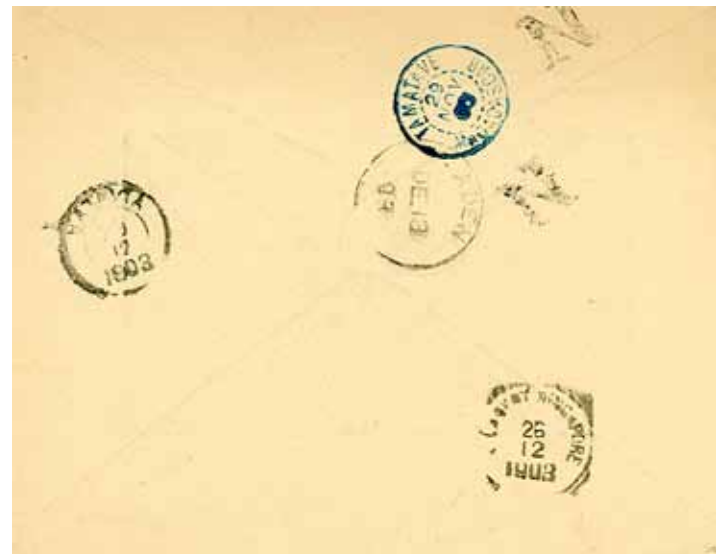
Because of its size and native population, Madagascar had more small villages than any other French Colony, and one of the challenges in collecting the Group Type is to find an item of postal history from as many of these villages as possible. Most of the native population at the turn of the twentieth century could not write, so surviving correspondence from these villages is dependent on the letters from the European residents (French, German, British and Norwegian), whose numbers could often be totaled on your fingers, possibly employing a few toes for the larger villages. Postcards from the small villages are what one most frequently encounters, but it is more challenging to go after more complex items of postal history. One of my favorites is printed matter. There was a 5 centimes rate for up to fifty grams of printed matter at the time, and such could include greeting cards, visiting cards, invitations, birth and death notices, printed advertising sheets, newspapers, small booklets, etc. The latter two items typically have not survived.

Shown below is a large envelope from the *Succursale de la Société Anonyme Pharmaceutique de Tamatave* (Subsidiary of the Pharmaceutical Society of Tamatave) posted at the five centimes printed matter rate from the tiny village of Andévorante, which is located on the east coast

of Madagascar about 100 kilometers south of Tamatave, Madagascar's principal port. The envelope was posted from Andévorante on November 27, 1903, and reached the post office of Tamatave two days later via a local sailing ship. It waited until December 3rd to catch the regularly scheduled Reunion-Marseille French Packet (note octagonal Packet datestamp) which brought it to Aden on December 13th. From Aden it proceeded to Singapore on a British ship arriving on December 26th, and then was brought to its destination at Batavia, Java on December 29th on a local sailing vessel, all as based on the datestamps on the front and reverse of the envelope.

Most probably the envelope contained printed sheets relating to business of the local pharmaceutical society, possibly a list of pharmaceuticals available in Madagascar. These would be significantly different from those available in other surrounding areas, as Madagascar broke off from Africa millions of years ago, and its plant life had ample time to evolve in a unique fashion. The envelope is addressed to one T.G.G. Valette, a teacher at the Gymnasium Willem III in Batavia. He had authored a book on Dutch Conversation-Grammar at the time which still can be found on the web. Possibly he had a side interest in medicinals derived from plants.

Thus, we have a piece of junk mail which was handled by three European colonial administrations (French, British and Dutch), two local sailing vessels, a French Packet and a British Packet over the course of a month to successfully get to its destination. All of this for a measly five centimes, which was equivalent to one US cent at the time. Clearly the postal systems at the turn of the twentieth century were both efficient and cost effective for the general population.



Christmas Seals: The Beginning

By Frederick C. Skvara

During the winter of 1903, Einer Holböll (1865–1927), a Danish postal employee in Copenhagen, couldn't help but notice a number of poor and ill children playing in the street below his office. While sorting through the heavy volume of Christmas mail, he thought that a small voluntary tax, in the form of a stamp, on each piece of Christmas mail could raise a considerable amount of money and provide some relief for those children. Since tuberculosis was a major killer at the turn of the century, especially among the poor and among children, his plan was to build a tuberculosis sanatorium for children from the monies collected from the sale of these 'Christmas stamps'. His plan was approved by King Christian IX who gave permission for an image of his wife, Queen Louise, to be depicted on the stamps as a sign of royal endorsement. So in December 1904 the Danish post office (as well as those of Sweden and Iceland) began selling the first Christmas Seal and by 1911 sufficient funds had been raised to build a 120 bed *Julesmaerkesanatoriet* (Christmas Seal Sanatorium).



Einer Holböll.
Belgium 1955



Queen Louise on
Denmark 1904

Living in New York City at the time was Jacob Riis (1849–1914), a Danish immigrant and well-known columnist and writer, whose holiday greetings from Denmark often bore the new Christmas stamps. Having lost six brothers to tuberculosis and intrigued by the idea of these stamps, he published "The Christmas Stamp" in the July 6, 1907, issue of *The Outlook*, a weekly magazine published in New York City between 1870 and 1935.

In 1907 Emily Bissell (1861–1948), an outstanding social and child welfare worker from Delaware, was approached by her cousin, Dr. Joseph Wales for help. He was working in a small open-air tuberculosis sanatorium on the banks



Emily Bissell. United States 1980 and first
United States Christmas Seal issued in 1907



1946 United States Christmas Seal, The Lamplighter. A central block of four seals in the pane of 100 shows the individuals most responsible for our Christmas Seal program (clockwise from the upper left): Jacob Riis, Emily Bissell, Leigh Mitchell Hodges and E.A. Van Valkenburg.

of the Brandywine River and needed to raise \$300 to keep it open. Recalling Jacob Riis's article she thought of using Christmas seals in the United States to raise money for her cousin's sanatorium. As she received no initial support, she used her own money, created a simple design herself and contracted with a local Wilmington printer. Postal employees of the Wilmington Post Office were forbidden to sell the seals that she had printed, but they did allow her to have a table in the post office building.

Under the sponsorship of the Delaware Chapter of the American Red Cross, sales began on December 9, 1907. Sales were slow until Leigh Mitchell Hodges, a crusading columnist for the *Philadelphia North American* newspaper, began a series of daily articles in the newspaper promoting the seals. And even E.A. Van Valkenburg, the newspaper's president supported the idea and told Hodges to "tell her the *North American* is hers from today". The seals were a great success raising \$3,000, over ten times the amount needed by her cousin. Since this small beginning millions of dollars have been raised in the fight not only against tuberculosis, the original purpose of the seals, but for lung diseases in general.