



The Westfield Philatelist

Newsletter of the Westfield Stamp Club

American Philatelic Society Chapter #540

American Topical Association Chapter #113

Volume 4 Number 5 May/June 2011

Calendar of Events

May 26 - Mexican Air Mail Through 1939

By Steven Reinhard

The former President of the American Air Mail Society and an authority and judge on worldwide airmail material will trace the evolution of this airmail service in a presentation which includes Lindbergh, Earhart, and Zeppelin covers.



Mexico 1929 (Scott C13)



June 23 - Revenues in Occupied Vera Cruz – 1914 or How the Locals Paid For Their Benefits.

By Mark E. Banchik

A renowned expert in Mexican Philately will discuss this little known but very interesting subject.

A Philatelic Quiz

Q1. Why is Grover Cleveland on a 1939 Brazilian stamp?

Q2. Do you have any 'Blue Flea' stamps from _____ (name the country) ?

Q3. Winner of three gold medals in the 1932 Olympic Games with world records, she was honored on a United States commemorative for another sport. Who was this remarkable woman?

Q4. Do you know which two 1969 United States commemorative stamps would fit a topical collection on baseball?

Q5. What United States stamp shows the 'Fur Collar' painting of Benjamin Franklin?

Member Profile

Frederick C. Skvara

I started collecting stamps as a child with a sixty-nine cent six by nine inch bound stamp album purchased at a local stationery store. A highlight of those days was the arrival in the mail of an envelope from H.E. Harris or the Littleton Stamp Company filled with approvals from around the world. Military service, college and medical training forced me to suspend my collecting, but I soon returned to stamps shortly after marrying my wife.

I am essentially a worldwide collector and now use Scott International and Specialty albums. As my major interest in stamps has always been on the what is being depicted on the stamp and why a particular stamp has been issued, I naturally gravitated to topical or thematic collecting. I enjoy including some of the story behind a stamp or set on the album pages along with the stamps and thus, have begun to produce my own album pages. Major topical interests include medicine, chemistry, physics, biology, art, music and history. Stamp booklets have also intrigued me and I have collected them from all over the world.

Besides the Westfield Stamp Club, I am a member of a number of other philatelic organizations including the American Topical Association (ATA), American Philatelic Society, American Philatelic Research Library, United States Stamp Society, American AirMail Society, Scandinavian Collectors Club, APS Writers Unit #30, American Philatelic Congress and a number of study units of the American Topical Association.

I am editor and publisher of *Scalpel & Tongs: The American Journal of Medical Philately*, *Americana Philatelic News*, *The Westfield Philatelist* and author a bimonthly column in *Topical Time*. I have dabbled in cachetmaking and produced the show program for the 2010 National Topical Stamp Show and will be producing it for 2011.

I serve as ATA Director of Chapters and am a board member of the American Topical Association, the Westfield Stamp Club and the Biology Unit of the ATA.

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

Tom Jacks

Treasurer

Joseph Chervenyak

Board of Governors

John Crout

Allan Fisk

Gary Wayne Loew

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

Transatlantic Mail Delivery Expedited

By K. David Steidley

While researching the formation of the Collectors Club in the summer of 1896, I came upon the following article in *The New York Times* of Aug. 12, 1896. Perhaps this may explain an odd item or two resting in your collection.

Foreign Mails to be Expedited.

They Will No Longer Have to Go Through the Post Office.

A new method of handling foreign mails went into effect yesterday, by which the forwarding of mail matter destined for points outside New-York will be greatly expedited.

Heretofore the mail boats which meet the steamships at Quarantine have brought the mails to the city, and they have been transferred to the General Post Office for sorting.

Hereafter the mail bags will be tagged with colored labels, a different color being used for each city to which the mail in the bag is destined, thus facilitating the sorting of the bags. Mail clerks will accompany the mail boats to perform this work.

Arrangements have been made with the various steamship companies and the railroads for co-operation in carrying out the scheme. Mails going over the railroads terminating in New-Jersey will be dropped off at the railroad pier, while those for the city and the New-York Central and Hudson River Railroad will be brought to the city, only city mail being taken to the General Post Office.

It is estimated that a saving of four hours will be gained on mail for Philadelphia and twenty-four hours on mails to St. Louis and the Pacific coast.

While the arrangement went into effect yesterday, the North German Lloyd steamship *Saale*, due Monday, will be the first to have her mails thus distributed.



Alexander Hamilton (1757–1804)

Alexander Hamilton's battery is seen on the 1926 White Plains stamp described on page four of this newsletter. He was the first Secretary of the Treasury under George Washington, established the central banking system and was a strong advocate of a strong central government.

An interesting connection to Hamilton is the Hudson-Fulton Celebration stamp issued in 1909 for the Tercentenary of Discovery of Hudson River by Henry Hudson in his ship *Half Moon* and the Centenary of Robert Fulton's steamship *Clermont* (Scott 372). Hudson, working for the Dutch East India Company, claimed New Netherlands (Connecticut, New Jersey and New York) for the Dutch. Seen in the



background of the stamp are the New Jersey Palisades at Weehawkin, the southern end of fifteen miles of high cliffs that begin in New York. They sit across from the western terminus of Lincoln Tunnel in midtown Manhattan. A ledge on the Weehawkin Palisades on the property of Captain James Deas was the site of many duels and where Alexander Hamilton had his fatal duel with Aaron Burr on July 11, 1804.

Greetings from Bumba!

By Ed Grabowski

One of the perks of stamp collecting is the wonderful people one gets to know. In recent times I have gotten to know Patrick Maselis of Belgium. Patrick is the President of a Belgian company, a specialist in the stamps and postal history of Belgium and its colonies and a world-wide traveler. To document his unusual travels, Patrick sends postcards to his fellow collectors. Typically they are from very remote and unusual corners of the world. One just recently arrived from Bumba, Belgian Congo.

Bumba is in the northern portion of the Congo, about 1000 km from Kinshasa. It has 150,000 inhabitants, but no electricity or running water. Its main attraction is the mighty Congo River which is 27 km wide at this point. Despite its size, Bumba no longer has a post office. Patrick's previous attempts to send postcards from the Congo to his philatelic friends throughout the world generally resulted in failure. He estimates that only 1 in 20 of his earlier post cards made it back to Europe.

So for his 2011 trip, he decided to take matters into his own hands. First, he created his own postcards using photos from earlier journeys to the Congo. The photo side of the card (see below) shows some typical native scenes of Bumba, a picture of his missionary cousin who is the last non-African still living in Bumba, a photo of the Bumba airport (such as it is), and a photo of Patrick (third one in the boat) and his fellow travelers heading out onto the Congo River. For local air travel amongst cities in the Congo, Patrick and his associates had to charter a Czech-built 14-seater. To me this had to have been a fantastic and maybe dangerous trip, as my idea of camping out is a room without a private bath.

The postcards were franked with two Congo stamps and a Congo souvenir sheet, and a Belgian stamp celebrating the independence of the Congo (see second image). They were brought to the Kinshasa post office and two of the Congo stamps were cancelled with the Kinshasa datestamp of Feb. 7, 2011, thus confirming that the cards had been in the Congo. On return to Belgium, the cards were taken to the local post office at Mechelen, the souvenir sheets and the Belgian stamps cancelled and they were placed in the mails. Now traveling in the western mails, their delivery was pretty



much assured. Yes the card has significant philatelic inspirations, but how else does one get a card out of the deepest Congo to addressee's around the world today? As a final point, the Mechelen cancel has a magnifying glass and stamp tongs in it, so the card would be of interest to thematic collectors.



Answers – March/April Philatelic Quiz

Q1. *Who is Winthrop Sargent and on what United States commemorative is he depicted?*

Ans. **Winthrop Sargent (1753–1820) was the first governor of the Mississippi Territory and is seen on the 1948 stamp (Scott 955) issued for the 150th anniversary of the establishment of the Mississippi Territory.**

Born in Gloucester, Massachusetts in 1753 Sargent graduated from Harvard in 1771 and joined the Revolutionary army in 1775 eventually reaching the rank of major. He took part in the siege of Boston as well as the battles of Long Island, White Plains, Trenton, Brandywine, Germantown and Monmouth.



The Mississippi Territory was organized in 1798 and included the land between the Chattahoochee and Mississippi Rivers. A territorial government was set up with Winthrop Sargent as governor, who at the time was secretary of both the Ohio and Northwest Territories. Natchez became the first territorial capital.

He was a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and the Philosophical Society and when he left the governorship in 1801 he pursued his interest in science and history.

Q2. *The first Thanksgiving Day in Canada after Confederation was observed on April 15, 1872. Why that Date?*

Ans. **It was to celebrate the recovery of the Prince of Wales from typhoid fever.**

Albert Edward (1841–1910) became King Edward VII on January 22, 1901 and reigned until his death in 1910. He was the first British monarch of what was eventually called the House of Windsor.



Canada 1903 (Scott 94)

The current date for Canadian Thanksgiving Day was set in 1957 as the second Monday of October.

Q3. *A 1926 United States commemorative shows a statue of Swedish engineer and inventor John Ericsson (Scott 628). Why is he being honored on a United States stamp?*

Ans. **John Ericsson (1803–1889) designed the USS Monitor which played a key role in the Battle of Hampton Roads during the Civil War.**

John Ericsson became a United States citizen and designed a new type of engine that used hot air instead of steam and the first screw propeller for steamships. On

August 3, 1861, President Lincoln signed into law a bill authorizing \$1.5 million for the construction of ironclads and a contract was awarded to Ericsson. The Battle of Hampton Roads, Virginia, was fought between the Union *Monitor* and Confederate *Merrimack* on March 8-9, 1862. It ended indecisively.



Q4. *In 1776 the New York Provisional Congress raised an artillery company to defend the colony. That company was commanded by one of the Founding Fathers of the United States. What United States commemorative postage stamp depicts a scene of that artillery company?*

Ans. **The 2¢ Battle of White Plains postage stamp depicting Alexander Hamilton's Battery.**

Alexander Hamilton was born in 1757 in the West Indies, came to New York at the age of fifteen and attended King's College (now Columbia University) where he studied artillery tactics and military maneuvers. In 1776 he was given command of the Provincial Company of the Artillery of New York. On July 12, 1776, his company fired on the British at Fort George on Manhattan Island. His artillery skills protected Washington's Army as it retreated to New Jersey and was instrumental in Washington's first victory in the Revolutionary War when his army surprised and defeated the Hessians in Trenton on December 26, 1776.



The Battle of White Plains was fought on October 28, 1776 near White Plains, New York when British General William Howe attempted to cut off Washington's retreat from New York. The stamp was issued in 1926 on the 150th anniversary of that battle and shows a four-man gun crew and cannon from Hamilton's artillery company. The Stars and Stripes and the White Plains Battle flags are seen at the bottom of the stamp. (Scott 629)

Q5. *What is the first stamp in the world to feature a dog?*

Ans. **The 1887 1/2¢ Newfoundland stamp showing a Newfoundland dog (Scott 56)**

The stamp was issued to meet the new lower postal rate for newspapers. In 1894 it was reprinted in black, the dog's natural color (Scott 58) and that is the stamp shown here. The design is based on a painting by Sir Edwin Henry Landseer (1802–1873), an English painter and sculptor who is best known for his sculpture of the four lions around the base of Admiral Nelson's column in Trafalgar Square in London.

