

THE STAMP FORUM NEWSLETTER

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APS Chapter 1591

April – June 2021

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THE PHILATELY OF JUSTICE



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2021 APS ARTICLE OF DISTINCTION SELECTION

THE STAMP FORUM NEWSLETTER

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Editorial and Forum staff may be contacted using the Forum's personal message (PM) system. The Editor and Forum Admin may also be contacted at stampforum.net@gmail.com.

Established in 2013, TSF is an online stamp club with a worldwide membership. The Forum is also Chapter 1591 of the American Philatelic Society. Membership is free and application is made online at <http://thestampforum.boards.net/>

The Stamp Forum (TSF) and this Newsletter are wholly member supported.

Write for Your Stamp Forum's Newsletter

We are always looking for articles of a philatelic nature for publication in the Newsletter. These can vary in length from 1 page to several and can cover any topic imaginable as long as there is a philatelic connection. Well-researched articles, tips for collectors, stamp collecting memories, stamp show and philatelic book reviews, etc., are all welcome topics. Just send us a text file with some supporting image files and we'll take care of the editing and layout. The Forum and its Newsletter need your support so please help us!

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Forum & APS Chapter 1591 Update

Spring is finally here and, as the weather improves for most of us, activities other than stamping will begin to dominate our lives. Please remember your friends on the Forum and try to drop in whenever you are able. Remember, also, that the pandemic isn’t over so please continue practicing the appropriate safety precautions.



Our numbers continue to grow and there are now over 650 on the membership roll. For any number of reasons, about 250 of those have not signed in to their account in over a year. Most of us understand how life can get in the way of our hobby so it is reasonable to expect such inactivity. Sadly, a portion of those were frequent and knowledgeable contributors and their absence has been felt. On the bright side, we typically see 3 or 4 previously inactive members sign in to their accounts after each newsletter issuance has been broadcast (if other inactive members are reading this, please sign back in!).

On the APS front, the American Philatelic Center is beginning to reopen, on a “by-appointment” basis and its online presence continues to grow. Further, planning continues for the Great American Stamp Show (subject to Covid restrictions) , to be held in the Chicago Metropolitan Area during August. If you aren’t an APS member, please consider giving it a try. You can learn more about membership benefits and services by clicking [here](#).

Let me close by yet again asking that you consider submitting material for publication in a future issue of the Forum’s Newsletter. We were fortunate for this issue but will need your [support](#) if our Newsletter is to continue as an informative philatelic publication!

Steve Tomisek
Forum Admin/APS Chapter Ambassador

Jewish National Fund: The Stamps of the Diaspora

By Michael Hide (Londonbus1)

A Diaspora, a population dispersed or exiled from their homeland, is a common tragedy throughout history. More often known today as a technical term for all the Nations outside of Eretz Israel where Jewish people made their homes. But it could equally apply to African Slaves, Assyrians, Palestinians, Armenians or Scots, among others, who have been forced, in one way or another, to leave their homes for pastures new in a foreign land. The Bible tells us:

St. John, 7:35: "Then said the Jews among themselves, Whither will he go, that we shall not find him? Will he go into the dispersed among the Gentiles, and teach the Gentiles?"

Since the founding of the Jewish National Fund at the 1901 Zionist Congress in Basle, Switzerland, and the issue of its first stamps the same year, over 5,000 different stamps and 1,000 series have been produced. This was one of many fund-raising ideas by the head of the organization in those early days, Johann Kremenezky.

The so-called 'Diaspora issue' of 1943 was born out of the tragedy that was happening to Jewish communities and Jewish Life during World War Two. The issue was meant, in part, to be a view of the lives of those communities, as well as a memorial to not only the lives lost but also the lives that were struck down during those tragic years. Subjects included: Exile, In a Storm, Nomads, A Jewish Town, The Ghettoes of Amsterdam & Frankfurt, Jewish Fishermen, A Jewish Worker and A Jewish Boy, to name but a few. In total, 40 different designs, 20 different sheets and booklets and 9 different colors for a total of 200 stamps! They were printed by the Keter Publishing Company of Jerusalem from designs by many local artists, and together with the later printings of 1954 and 1959, are widely regarded as the most outstanding issues of the Jewish National Fund to date. I will show the stamps of those latter two issues, which used the same designs but with color and value changes.

Diaspora stamps, 1954 Re-issue

This re-issue of the 1943 stamps marks the 50th Anniversary of the Death of Theodor Herzl, often regarded as the Spiritual Father of the State of Israel, Leader of the World Zionist Organization and the man whose idea to form a Jewish National Fund was accepted at the aforementioned Zionist Congress in Basle back in 1901.

The stamps were issued in sheets of 2x6 (horizontal stamps), 6x2 (vertical stamps) and in Booklets of 2x3 and 3x2 with 6 panes to a booklet. There were 2 consecutive issues: the first three were a memorial to Herzl in particular, each design printed in both slate-green and brown, perf. 11½.

Budapest Synagogue and Birthplace of Herzl

The Dohany Street or Great Synagogue is the largest in Europe, seating over 3,000 worshippers. It was built, with the help of the Jewish Community of Pest, during the 1850's, and restored after damage in WWII, during the 1990's. The



Budapest Synagogue and Birthplace of Herzl



Casino at Basle, Switzerland

Jewish Museum in the Synagogue complex was built on the site of the house where Herzl was born in 1860. Dohany Street ran alongside the border of the Budapest Ghetto.

The State Casino Concert Hall in Basle was the venue for the 1st Zionist Congress, organized by Herzl, which took place in August 1897. Herzl was elected President at the Congress which ran for 3 days and was attended by many International Journalists. The Congress had been planned to take place in Munich, Germany but was changed due to opposition from mainly local Orthodox groups.

At only 44 years old, Theodor Herzl died on July 20th, 1904 and was buried in the family grave at Dobligen, near Vienna. In his will he wrote:

*"I wish to be buried in a metal coffin near my father,
And to lie there until the Jewish people
Will transfer my body to the Land of Israel.
The coffins of my father and my sister Paulina, who was buried in Pest in 1878,
will also be transferred
And of my close family (mother and children) who will die until the transfer
Of my coffin to the Land of Israel."*

During the first Knesset (Israel Parliament), it was decided, together with the World Zionist Organization, to rebury Herzl's coffin and those of his wife and parents in the State of Israel. At a special ceremony on Mount Herzl (named after him), August 17th 1949, Theodor Herzl came home. In his speech, Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion said: "...Herzl is immortal, his tombstone is the State of Israel, which will be built and will grow in love with its sons and builders....Herzl's reburial ceremony in Jerusalem was not a procession of mourning but a journey of victory, the triumph of the vision that became reality."



Herzl's Tomb

Additional Diaspora Issue, 1954



Synagogue of Rashi at Worms

A set of 5 stamps depicts views of famous Synagogues of the Diaspora. All are single stamps in Slate Blue and perf. 11½.

The central image on this stamp shows the Yeshiva (school) which was part of the Synagogue in times past. One of the students, Salomon ben Isaak (later Rabbi) was known as Rashi and he later became famous for his writings and teaching of Western Judaism. The Synagogue (Circa 1034), which had been damaged and rebuilt or restored throughout its long history, was almost totally destroyed on the night of Kristallnacht (1938) and the days that followed. In the early 1960's, the Synagogue was rebuilt using many of the original stones that had been salvaged. There is no longer a Jewish Community in Worms and the Synagogue is administered from nearby Mainz.

Baal Shem Tov (Master of the Good Name), born in 1698 in Poland, became a teacher, Mystic and scholar and was the founder of the Hassidic Movement. He settled in the town of Medzhybizh (now in Western Ukraine) where the Synagogue was built during the early-middle part of the 18th Century. It became known as the Baal Shem Tov Synagogue or Bet Hamidrash ('house of study and interpretation'). The Synagogue was destroyed by the Nazis but an exact replica was built on the site, as a museum, between 2008 and 2010.



Bet Hamidrash of Baal Shem Tov



Synagogue at Toledo

The Santa Maria la Blanca Synagogue in Toledo might be the oldest in Europe. It is definitely one of the most beautiful and well worth a visit, if only online! Built by Islamic Architects around 1180, it was later turned into a Church and today, under a Catholic trust, a much-visited Museum. The local Jewish community has taken steps to return it to them and maybe one day, in the future, will once again be a Jewish place of worship.

The Great Synagogue of Rome rests on the edge of the River Tiber and overlooks the land where the Rome Ghetto once stood. It was built in the early years of the 20th century, in large part, as a memorial to those who suffered in the Ghetto for hundreds of years, until the fall of Rome in 1870. In 1982, during the Lebanon war, it was attacked by the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) and has been under police guard ever since. Plaques inside the Synagogue pay homage to the Jewish victims under Nazi Germany and from the PLO attack.



Synagogue at Rome



Alt-Neue Synagogue in Prague

The Old-New Synagogue in Prague's Jewish Quarter was built in 1270. It is said to contain stones from the Temple of Solomon in Jerusalem. It is the oldest Synagogue in Europe that is still in use. For a fascinating short story about the mysterious attic of the building, [click here](#).

Diaspora Herzl Stamps



An example of the shade varieties that can be found in the Budapest Synagogue issue. Also, it seems some wayward perforating!

In 1959, two of the Herzl memorial stamps were again re-issued. The 'Budapest Synagogue and Birthplace of Herzl' stamp was printed in deep blue with a value of 100. These were printed in sheets of 4x5. There are noticeable shade varieties. The 'Casino at Basle' stamp was printed in light blue, also with a value of 100. Both are perforated 10%.



Basle Casino stamp in Light Blue

The stamps shown here and those from the 1943 issue that haven't been shown all have one common and intricate connection, the Twelve Tribes.

All the stamps in these series' are inscribed 'Keren Kayemet L'Israel' along the top border. The bottom left corner has a Star of David and the right corner, the value. The other 3 border areas are divided into 4 and consist of emblems of the Twelve Tribes. Together with the central designs, which are fascinating in themselves, they make for a hugely popular and lasting memory of the Diaspora.

A few odd snippets!

- a. Stamps of the 1943 issue are not easy to find and often come with a price! But some designs in the color light blue have never been seen and a few others only in special or archive collections. It is not known why.
- b. A booklet entitled 'Lo Nishkach Ha Golah ('We will not forget the Diaspora') was published at the same time as the stamps. It describes in detail each stamp and their background. The booklet is extremely rare. This writer has never seen a copy!
- c. One stamp in light blue inscribed 'Exile by Hirschberg' was issued in a sheet of 5x3, the only such sheet produced in this format. The same stamp was issued by the New York Branch Office in a smaller sheet in 1944.



Borders of the Stamps of the Diaspora showing symbols of the Twelve Tribes

I hope to be able to show other designs from the 1st issue in a future 'Cinderella Corner'.

I will end by showing an example of a full sheet in vertical format and a non-philatelic item from another great hobby, needlecraft. The design shows emblems of the 12 Tribes of Israel inscribed in Hebrew and English.



Acknowledgements: SIP Rochlin Catalogue; Phillips JNF/KKL Catalogue; Israel Government Archive Website; Wikipedia; <http://www.jnf-kl.org>

Beginner's Tips for Trading Stamps

By Theresa (Terri) Young (*philatelia*)

Trading stamps is an excellent way to dispose of your duplicates, add new stamps to your collection and make new friends along the way. If you have been hesitant to begin trading, hopefully these tips will encourage you to give it a try.

Types of Stamp Trades

There are many ways to trade, but they generally fall into a few basic categories: 1:1, catalog value, round robins and combination trades.

1:1 Trades

The simplest type of trading is to swap one stamp for one stamp. For example, you send 100 stamps and your trading friend sends you 100 stamps in return. This is an excellent way to trade the more common stamps with catalog values of a few dollars/Euros or less.

The complexity to this method lies in the details. First, you must agree as to what types of stamps are acceptable to be included in the 100 stamps. Some of the agreed upon limits are things like:

- Condition – i.e., mint or used only, sometimes CTOs will be allowed or excluded
- Countries or topics - agree to send only specific areas
- Large (commemoratives) or small (definitive) size stamps or a mix - these types of trades are most frequently all large size as those are much more in demand.
- Zero duplication - most trades of this type agree that they will contain all different stamps.
- Want lists may or may not be used

There are many stipulations you can make with your trading friends, but the important point to remember is that you should both agree to the terms before sending anything.

Sometimes the ratio may be changed. For example, someone may offer 4 small stamps for 1 large stamp. This is a very popular way to trade common material, such as definitives, for something new.

Catalog Value Trades

More expensive material is generally traded by catalog value. Each person picks from a list of material that the other has to offer and the stamps are traded for an equal value in return. Sometimes one trader agrees to accept any quantity of material from a certain area without picking each item. In either case, both collectors agree what will be sent ahead of time.

Another option is to send a stock card or glassine of material, let the other person pick from them and then tally what they want to keep. This is similar to the approval system used by dealers.

Catalog value trades should be done using the same catalogs as different catalogs value material quite differently. A few collectors are quite content to use different systems as they feel they are both fairly

close, but that is not a very common opinion. Deciding on a catalog system up front is a must. One option is to use an online catalog like [Stampworld](#).

Another consideration for catalog value trading is **condition**. Some feel that trading MNH for used is not equitable, while others feel that is not a problem. Make sure that you both agree to the terms before sending anything. Sometimes stamps with various faults will be traded at some agreed upon reduction from the stated catalog value. A bit of advice - you should NOT accept anything faulty at full catalog value. All damaged stamps should be greatly discounted in value. I personally offer faulty at 5% to 10% of catalog depending on scarcity. This is also true of MNH vs. MH stamps. Scott catalog, for example, prices modern mint assuming NO HINGE condition. If you are sending or receiving hinged mint, there should be some reduction in value. But, some people do not feel this is necessary. The important point is that you only do so well aware of the difference in value.

Some catalog value trades are equalized with every trade. In other words, each trade is a completed deal - equal value for equal value. The other option is an ongoing balance sheet that varies with every trade.

Packet Round Robin-style Trades

Many stamp clubs create trading round robin circuits. These are a type of 1:1 trading, but with the following differences. Instead of two people trading back and forth, these usually involve a small group. You receive the packet from a member and forward to a different member.

The packet often contains about 100 stamps. You pick the ones you want and replace them with different but equivalent or better stamps. Most groups stress the point about replacing with BETTER material. That keeps the circuit from devolving into a packet of unwanted junk.

Sometimes you will be given information about the next person on the list. You might be asked to try to include stamps that fit that person's interests. If you don't have anything that they request, do your best to send nice material from closely related areas.

These circuits can be quite a bit of fun if the group has generous members with decent stocks of trading material. Conversely, the group might contain a few people who don't follow the rules or don't have anything helpful to contribute. Problems like that, if not corrected by the group leader, can make or break a round robin trading circuit. If you have wide interests, and you have a fair amount of trading stock, they are well worth trying.

The Stamp Forum recently launched a round robin style trade circuit. You can read about it [here](#) and possibly sign up to participate in the next circuit.

The International Society of Worldwide Stamp Collectors (ISWSC) runs a very popular round robin type [trading circuit](#). If you are a worldwide collector this benefit, plus many others, might make joining ISWSC a smart move.

Combination Trades

You can combine any of the above in a trade sending. For example, you send your friend \$10 of catalog value and 100 stamps for a 1:1 trade. There are many permutations on how to trade, but it all comes down to catalog value vs. piece for piece.

Universal Trading Practices

Everyone who trades stamps should be following these generally accepted best practices:

- **NO DAMAGED.** Never send faulty or damaged stamps in a stamp trade unless both have agreed to send the damaged stamp. I can't stress this strongly enough. Faulty stamps are not collectible; the only exceptions are space filler high values. Some people are happy to place space fillers in their album until they find better copies; others absolutely do not want them. Damaged stamps include: thins, tears, creases, killer cancels, scrapes, stains, short perforations, etc.
- **SEND BETTER THAN RECEIVED.** You should NEVER return lower quality than what you received. Try to send equal or better to your friend.
- **SEND ONLY WHAT WAS REQUESTED.** Don't send material that your friend did not express any interest in. This puts them in an awkward position of having to either return the stamps or keep something they do not need.
- **ALWAYS RETURN DAMAGED OR UNWANTED STAMPS.** Don't accept faulty stamps. Send them back.
- **PACKAGE TRADE CAREFULLY.** Don't just toss stamps in an envelope and mail. Sometimes the edges of envelopes can pop open. Enclose the stamps in glassines or arrange them nicely on display cards. Add stiffening to prevent creases. Please don't use an excessive amount of tape or create a tape cocoon - you don't need to tape glassines closed - there is no way they can open in transit, eh?
- **ALWAYS USE INTERESTING POSTAGE ON THE MAILING ENVELOPE.** Part of the fun of trading stamps is in getting colorful, recent commemorative stamps from all over the world. Don't disappoint your trading friends by using only old or damaged postage or, GASP! EGADS! a meter. Try to always use a few recent commemorative issues from your country, especially the issues that are more difficult to find postally used. Nowadays this is almost the only way left to acquire postally used recent issues. Imagine finding your mailbox full of covers like these.



- TRY TO GET YOUR LETTERS CANCELLED AT THE POST OFFICE. This is a corollary to the point above. Too many international letters arrive without cancels or pen cancelled or Sharpied because they were not cancelled. Make an effort to get those good cover stamps cancelled.
- ALWAYS ACKNOWLEDGE RECEIPT. Let your trading friend know if the trade arrived safely and leave them positive feedback if the group you are using has a feedback system. Here in The Stamp Forum we have a [special thread](#) for posting stamps received from other members. And you can post pics of the cool mailing covers received [here](#).
- ALWAYS KEEP THE TRADE INTACT UNTIL BOTH PARTIES ARE HAPPY. This is a very good practice. I always leave the whole trade in a folder until I know my trade has arrived and they are pleased. If there are any problems, you can offer to return everything. If you have broken it down and put it away, that option disappears.
- NEW PERSON USUALLY SENDS FIRST. If you respond to a trade, it is generally assumed that you will send first.
- RESPOND IN A TIMELY MANNER. I'm guilty of being a bit slow at times due to being a procrastinator
 - try to return trades as soon as you can.
- DON'T TAKE ON MORE TRADES THAN YOU CAN HANDLE. If you post a trade, you might be inundated with responses. It is OK to post that your offer has ended due to the number of responses. Remember that catalog value trades can be time consuming to process, so plan accordingly.
- FREEBIES CAN BE FUN! It is a delightful surprise to get a few freebies in a trade. Go ahead and delight your friends by sending a few gifts, if you feel like it, BUT remember those are GIFTS - don't expect a return "gift" from them. A gift is not a gift if you expect something in return, right?

How to Find Trading Friends

There are many great places to find good trading friends. Here are a few suggestions:

- **Your local stamp club.** There is hardly anything more fun than doing face to face swaps with another local stamp collector. You bring a bunch of your duplicates with you and meet at an agreed upon location and swap, chat and have a great time. You'll quickly find that one meeting is never enough time and you may start meeting regularly. Of course, we have to use caution right now because of Covid, but in six months or so we should be able to resume social activities such as this.
- **Your favorite forum** is a great place to start! You probably have numerous friends there who would be interested in trading. Simply post a trade offer on the forum board in the appropriate location. Also, keep watching the board for others posting trade offers. Sometimes you can simply message another member who shares an interest or who collects an area that you offer in trade and extend a trade offer to him/her. Don't be disappointed if they decline - some collectors are rather advanced and rarely trade as the material they seek is expensive and/or elusive.

Suggested Forums:

- [The Stamp Forum](#), of course!
 - [Stamorama](#) (paid membership required)
 - [The Philatelic Forum](#)
 - [Stamp Bears](#)
 - [Stamp Community Family](#)
- **Linn's Stamp News and other publications** have sections for trade offers.
- **Trading Groups.** I'm currently only aware of [Trade Only Stamps](#) - but there may be others. I really enjoyed TOS and found many good trades there.
- **Colnect**, the [Cadillac of stamp trading sites](#) is a great way to find stamps to fill those gaps in your wish list. However, you will need to be willing to upload your trading stock into the website, which can be rather time consuming. BUT, once you have your stock and wish lists uploaded, you have a very powerful trading and inventory tool at your fingertips.

Possible Trading Pitfalls - Beware of these problems

It is always wise to be prepared and forewarned about potential problems. 99% of stamp traders are friendly, honest folks. There are a few out there who you might want to avoid. Here are a few tips to help you avoid these pitfalls.

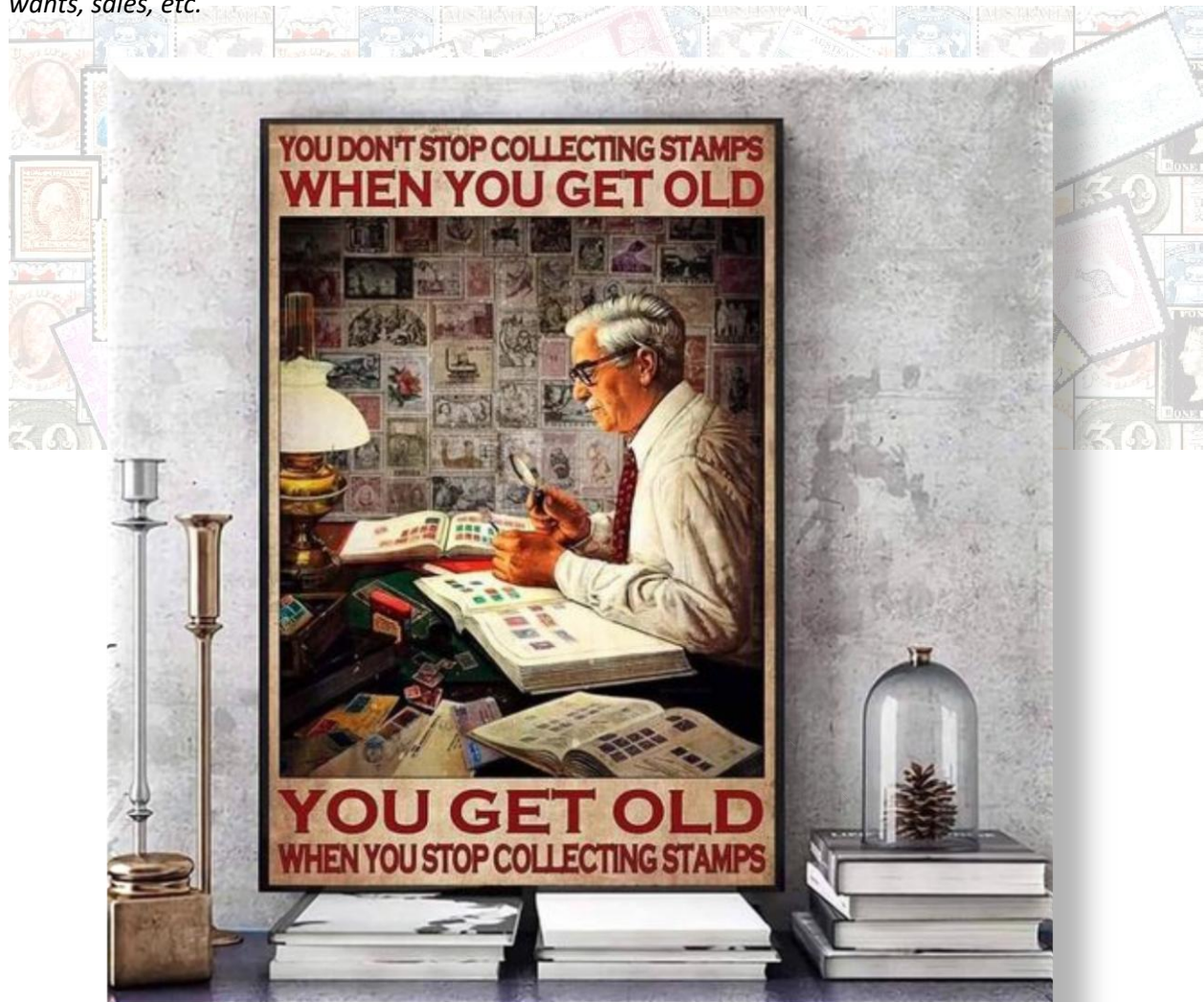
- **NEW COLLECTORS.** Very young or very new collectors will not be very knowledgeable about what are nice stamps, what are very common and so on. Be kind and patient with newbies. Sometimes it can be very rewarding to nurture beginners. But don't feel that you **MUST** send your good trading material and get junk in return. Use your best judgment, be as generous as you desire, but remember that this is voluntary. To help them get up to speed, perhaps suggest that they read this article, eh? Can't hurt!
- **A TRADING FRIEND DOES NOT RETURN WHAT WAS PROMISED.** Contact them immediately and ask what happened. You are not required to keep unwanted material.
- **LOST TRADES.** Sadly, this is happening more these days due to Covid-related shipping disruptions. It is best to come to an agreement how to handle lost trades before trading. My policy is this - if a trade I sent is lost, I send another. If the second one does not arrive, I tell them I'm done. There is a problem somewhere and I'll give it two chances. You can use registration, but it is very expensive. For low value trades, it isn't worth the cost. However, for domestic trades in the USA, you can get a tracking number for under \$4, which is worth it for higher value trades.
- **BEWARE OFFERS THAT SOUND TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE!** They are probably not true!
- **DO NOT SEND ANYTHING IF YOU HAVE DOUBTS.** If something feels shady, or you don't feel comfortable with the proposed trade, simply politely decline. Listen to your intuition.
- **REPORT SCAMS TO APPROPRIATE AUTHORITY.** If you are a part of a trading group, forum, or club and you encounter a member who is breaking the rules, sending junk, or you encounter any shady

behavior, do not stay silent. Report rule violations to the admin. Don't let the turkeys spoil the fun for others. However, it is best to ONLY report to the admin in private. There may be extenuating circumstances. Let them be the judge.

MOST IMPORTANTLY - HAVE FUN!

Stamp trading can be an absolutely wonderful way to expand your collection, make friends and learn more about the hobby. If you carefully screen potential trades, take steps to avoid scams and make an effort to offer good trading material, you will find trading to be one of the most enjoyable parts of your hobby and a great way to expand your collection for minimal cost. Watch out! Once you start getting all those wonderful envelopes full of goodies in your mailbox, you'll be hooked!

Admin Note: If you have threads posted on the Forum's [Trading Post](#), please review them. If they are no longer active, please send me a PM so they may be moved to the Ended section. The same holds for wants, sales, etc.



Per Elisa

By Roberto Molteni (ameis33)

Giovanni and Paolo hadn't met since they were in university together. But, regardless of all the time that had passed, Giovanni still had vivid memories of Paolo. He still remembered all the time they spent talking about the Red Star, the pub with Russian setting they dreamed to open together, all the discussions about vodka (strictly Russian, perhaps produced by them), on the various accompaniments that vodka deserved (from juices to fruit dishes), and on waitresses (even more strictly Russian).

He remembered Natasha, the girl Paolo met on one of his travels, who was maybe the inspiration for the Red Star. He remembered the day of Paolo's wedding. How beautiful Natasha was, and how nice they were together.

But even more, Giovanni remembered Paolo's stamp collection. It was a fabulous collection of Imperial Russia. There were all the issues, splendidly represented with top quality stamps, unique pieces that Paolo was proud of having obtained while competing with illustrious collectors. It was a collection born by chance. Paolo started collecting used stamps of little value. He studied varieties, postal uses, and cancellations. Gradually, he built up a good library, which, by his own words, was the best part of his collection. Then he moved on to more serious and demanding pieces and he began to mount all his pieces. He started exhibiting, first at the cadet championship, then at national and, subsequently, international exhibitions.

All these memories were running through his head in the car, while he was driving to their appointment. Just yesterday, Paolo had called him:

"Hi Giovanni, how are you? Listen, would you like to meet us? It's been a long time..."

As soon as they met again, a smile bloomed on their faces. It had been a long time, but it was like yesterday.

"Uhhhh, Paolo (hug)! How are you doing?" ... "Not bad, how are you?"

"So, Paolo, how have you been? What have you been doing? It's been a long time... and Natasha? What about your collection?"

"Well, I can't say things went wrong, but they could have gone better. At first, after we got married, I was the happiest man in the world. Natasha and I got along well. We laughed, we joked. We talked about the Red Star, we were a step ahead from building our dream. Natasha helped me to carry on my collection. With all the contacts she had in Russia, she was able to get me great pieces at great prices. She had very good contacts, she was of a great help for me. Not that she liked stamps. According to her, they took me a lot of time, too much time. They certainly brought me closer to her culture. We found ourselves talking about what Russia was like and then the speech turned to more topical issues, closer to her history. But she didn't like stamps... If she helped me, it was only for the love she had for me... But going further with my collection, it absorbed me more and more... more and more money to buy new pieces, more and more time to follow the collection, to mount it, to dismount and remount it again... At first, she followed me when I went to philatelic exhibitions. I was

wondering if people were looking at my collection or if they were looking at her... But it became more and more boring for her, and in the end, I went alone... Some time ago, one evening, back home, she sat close to me, and she told me 'Paolo... we have to talk, maybe we should separate...' We are still together. I think she still loves me... Now I'm trying to repair the mistakes I made... For a long time we didn't laugh together while watching TV..."

"Paolo (hug)... my best wishes... I still have good memories of Natasha... I really hope you can come back together..."

"Do you want to buy my collection?"

Sometime, in the night, Giovanni and his wife are in bed, sleeping. In the house, just silence. Outside, the same... When BOOOOMMMMMM! A painting has fallen from the wall. No way to understand why the painting stayed attached to the wall for such a long time, still, immobile, and suddenly it falls.

Paolo's question sounds exactly like the noise of the portrait which fell, during the night, while Giovanni was in bed, sleeping. BOOOOMMMMMM!

"Paolo, what are you saying? ... Yes, of course I do, but you? ... I can't... I can't afford it... and then, it's your collection..."

"Don't worry Giovanni! I could sell it or I could give it to an auction house. I could get a lot of money... Some collectors have already asked me for part of it so many times, I wouldn't have problems... The truth is that now it fell from my heart. What has happened in the last month changed me... I would like if you could have it. Give me what you can, even some each month; it's not a problem... I'm serious."

Since I accepted Paolo's proposal, my life has changed. It took almost one year to study and to fully understand his collection. It's very articulated. His bibliotheca is really the best part; books and treatises about the Russian postal system, from the pre-philatelic period up to the present. Books in the original language, some of which translated by the same Paolo. I subscribed myself to a Russian course, and I got associated with several associations. The study, the search for new pieces, the arrangement of the collection, the mounting of it... All these things have become like a kind of illness... They get the most of my free time... When I'm at work, I often pause to answer the messages from my fellow collectors. If my employees would do the same, I think I would fire them (fortunately, they don't!)... In the evening, back home, after eating, I go to my study... I have three or four branches which I'm following. One, not very followed, is about the paper varieties of the first issues. I bought a digital microscope and a micrometer to analyze the thousands of stamps I have.

Yesterday evening I called Paolo... "Hello Paolo, how are you?"... His tone was completely different from the last time we talked.

"Hello Giovanni. Do you know? Next week I'm opening the Red Star... The sale of my collection gave me the necessary funds. Natasha is very happy. Do you remember when we spoke about making our own vodka? Well, don't tell anyone, I'm not sure it's legal... But is pretty good! ... Just put it in the Absolut bottles... Swedish don't know how to make vodka... But it's just for a few... Would you like to come by to try it?"

"VERY GOOD... Paolo, I'm very happy for you... I will come for sure..."

"Bring your wife, do it, you should know what they say in Russia: Dva is better than odin..."

"Yes, thanks... Well, not sure my wife will come... To be honest, lately things are not going so well... We don't speak much, she's always upset... Your collection takes a lot of my time. I also had to give up our holidays... I think she still hasn't forgiven me... But in the beginning, I would have said she was happy with it... She helped me to put order in your classifiers. We even read your books together... Ok, they were a bit boring... But I would have said she liked it..."

"Giovanni, please, insist, bring her with you... We'll have fun..."

"Mmh... Maybe you're right, I don't know... No, she won't come..."

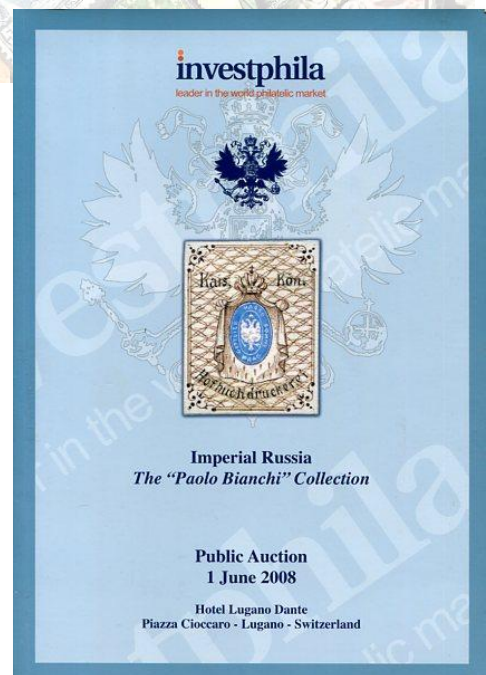
"Giovanni, go there... Speak with her..."

I couldn't stop thinking about Paolo's words. Mmh... Maybe he's right... It's something I must do; it can't go on this way... What can I say to her? Mmh... Maybe... But... There should be a solution, something I must do...

Giovanni was continuously going back and forth in his study... when, suddenly, his mind became clear!

"Yes! I have so many stamps in my collection... In the end, they're useless... I WILL SEND HER A LETTER!"

A Note from the Author: The June 1, 2008 auction held by investphila in Lugano, Switzerland sold the Paolo Bianchi collection, one of the best Imperial Russia collections ever, together with the collections of Agathon Fabergé and Mikulski.



The Philately of Justice: A Brief Introduction

By Will Ross (wilford)

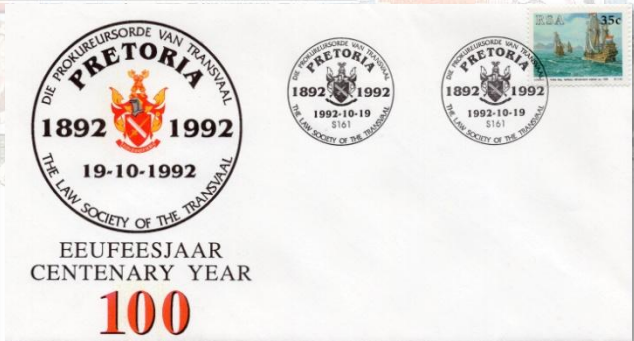
The field of justice and law in philately is vast. Accordingly, one can get overwhelmed by the topic and throw up ones' hands in frustration. However, like any thematic collection, there are more specialized topics within a topic. This article will attempt to show the depth of the field through the medium of a typical lawyer's life cycle.

Any lawyer's life begins with law school. One of my first legal-related stamps was Canada's, celebrating the centennial in 1983 of Dalhousie Law School in Halifax, Nova Scotia (right).



Among the more interesting stamps commemorating law schools is the 1977 issue from Brazil, which shows the decree from Emperor Dom Pedro establishing the school (left).

After law school, most attorneys must take a bar examination to be allowed to practice. Then a lawyer joins a bar association, which is a professional group that often works as the licensing and disciplinary arm of the legal profession. Several nations have issued stamps to commemorate anniversaries of their bar associations. In 1969, New Zealand issued a set of stamps honoring their national law society on its centennial (below left).



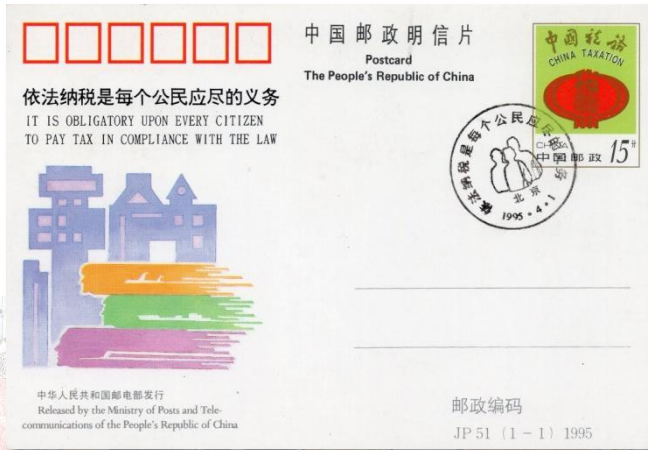
Countries also honor local bar associations or law societies. South Africa issued a date/stamp card for the 100th anniversary of The Law Society of the Transvaal in 1992 (above right).

Having passed the bar, our eager young former law student is now a lawyer. There are many stamps commemorating lawyers, almost too many to count. In order to make that field a little smaller, the collector can choose to only collect women lawyers. An even smaller sub-set is stamps commemorating a country's first woman lawyers. The United States did this by issuing a stamp in 1986 to honor Belva Ann Lockwood, who in 1879 was the first woman admitted to practice before the United States Supreme Court (right).



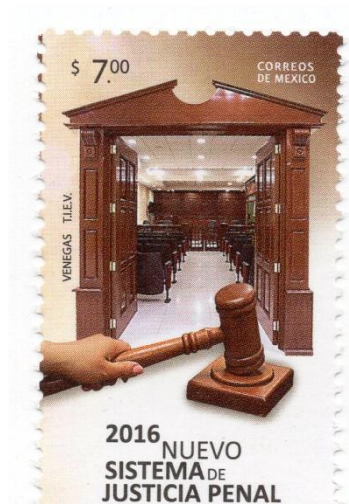
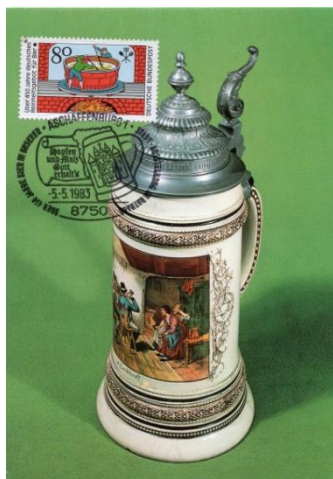
Panama issued a stamp in 2002 honoring Clara Gonzalez de Behringer. She became the first woman lawyer in that country in 1922 (*below left*). Coincidentally, both Ms. Lockwood and Ms. Behringer were also important and groundbreaking political figures.

In practicing law, an attorney must, of course, know the laws of his or her jurisdiction. Laws can be divided into two categories for collecting purposes. A general law is one that affects the community at large, for example, taxation. The People’s Republic of China emphasized this in a postal card issued in 1995 proclaiming, “It is obligatory upon every citizen to pay tax in compliance with the law” (*below right*).

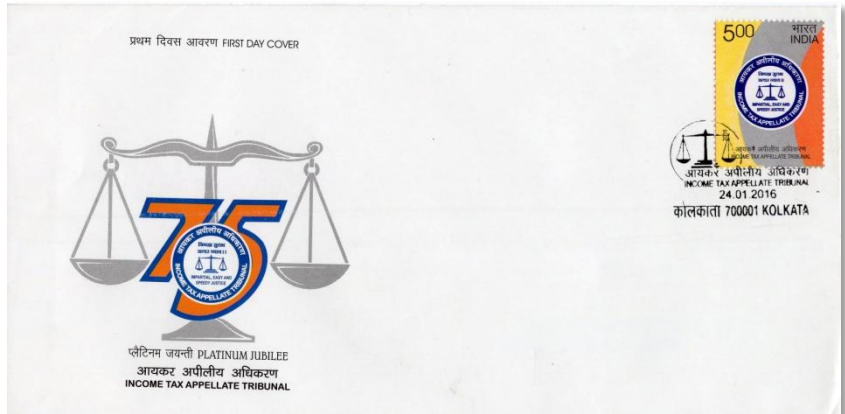


Opposed to general laws are special laws that affect only a particular class. An example, and one of my own favorite stamps, is the 1983 stamp from Germany honoring the 450th anniversary of the Reinheitsgebot für Bier (Beer Purity Law) shown on a German maxi-card (*below left*). The law said that only barley, water, and hops could be used in brewing beer.

When there is a legal issue that cannot be resolved by the parties it usually winds up in court. There can be several different court systems, depending on the country. Some court systems affect everyone in the country, such as those that try criminal cases. Mexico honored the introduction of a new criminal justice system in 2016 (*below right*). This stamp also showed the interior of a courtroom and a judge’s gavel. Both of these items can be a sub-topic of the general legal topic.

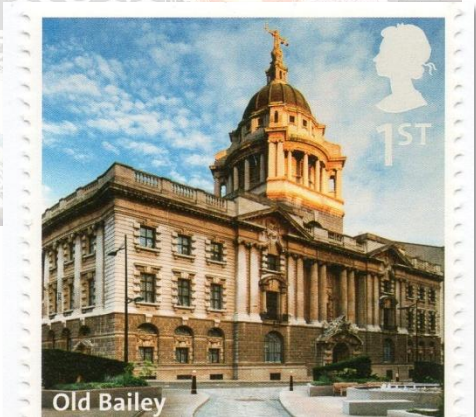


On the other hand, there are specialized courts, which are limited to a particular kind of case. One such court is India's Income Tax Appellate Tribunal. A stamp commemorating the 75th anniversary of the tribunal was issued in 2016, as shown in the Indian first day cover (right). Their motto is, "Impartial, easy, and speedy justice."



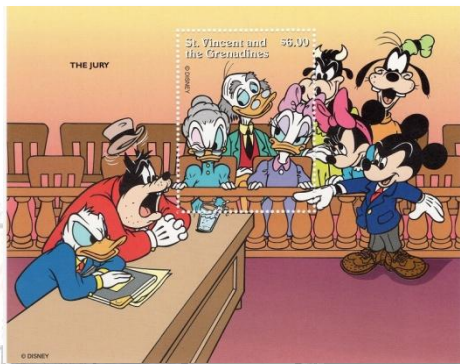
Most trials are held in courthouses. Many postal entities have issued stamps or other postal commemoratives for courthouses. And here I got lucky. In the 1980s I practiced civil law in Los Angeles and often appeared at the US Courthouse in downtown LA. I was able to acquire a special cover with two cachets in honor of the opening of that beautiful courthouse in 1939 (left).

Perhaps the most famous trial court in the world is the Central Criminal Court in London, also known as the Old Bailey. It was pictured on a 2012 stamp from the United Kingdom (right).



At the other end of the scale we have St. Helena's stamp from 2011 showing the courthouse in the capital, Jamestown (left). The island of St. Helena only has 6,000 people, and there are no lawyers on the island. The magistrate and the advocates for the parties have some legal training but they are lay people.

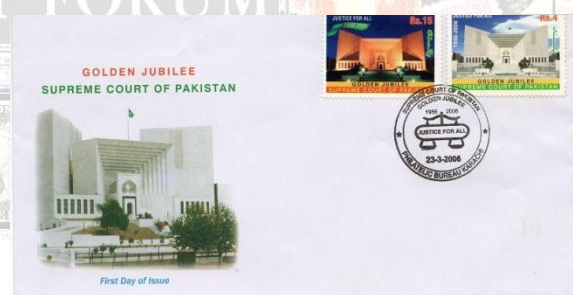
As we have discussed, there are many stamps showing courthouses. There are a few that show empty courtrooms. Interestingly enough, there are very few stamps portraying an actual trial. My research has come up with one actual trial portrayed on stamps. In 1933 the German capital, the Reichstag, caught fire. Among the people accused of the crime was Georgi Dimitrov, a native Bulgarian who was a major Communist agitator. He was tried and acquitted. A 1960 semi-postal from East Germany shows Dimitrov and his lawyer (*above right*). The trial is also commemorated on other stamps from East Germany, as well as Bulgaria, Viet Nam, and Guinea.



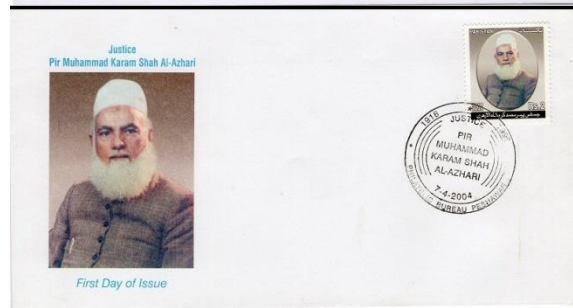
A different sort of trial is portrayed on stamps from Saint Vincent & The Grenadines in a 1996 set called "Mickey's Law & Order: Disney Characters at Work." The souvenir sheet shows a dramatic moment in a trial (*left*). Two other stamps on the accompanying sheet show other trial scenes.

My research has also discovered a 2012 Law Day stamp from Mauritius illustrating a courtroom in use, but not identifying any particular case. These are the only ones I have been able to find. I suspect there are more. If anyone knows of others, please let me know.

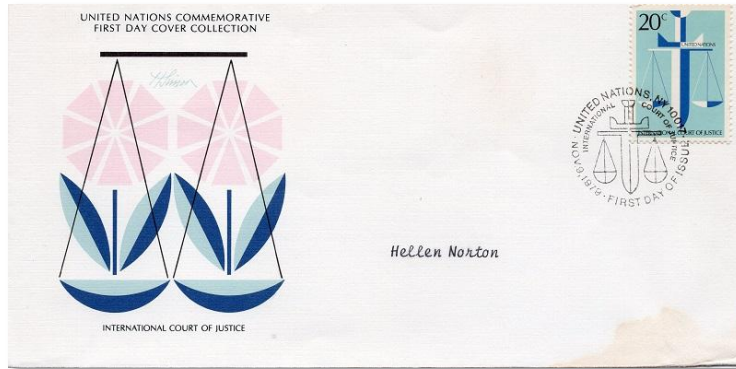
The court of last resort in many countries is known as the Supreme Court or the High Court. Many countries have honored those courts and the justices who sit on them. Pakistan, for instance, issued a beautiful set to honor the golden anniversary of their Supreme Court in 2006 (*upper right*). In 2004 they honored one of the justices on that court, Justice Pir Muhammad Karam Shah Al-Azhari (*lower right*).



Australia, in 2003, honored the centenary of its High Court and its first chief justice, Sir Samuel Griffith. The mini-sheet of two stamps is quite dramatic (*below*).



I end with a truism. At its heart the purpose of the law is not some abstract concept. It is to provide equal justice to all people. Such equality before the law is portrayed most vividly by the scales of justice that has been portrayed on many stamps including this 1979 United Nations stamp commemorating the International Court of Justice (*below*).



I hope you have enjoyed this brief sojourn into the wonderful world of legal stamp collecting. Please let me have your thoughts, comments, and suggestions. You can send me a personal message through The Stamp Forum, or directly at wilfordross@yahoo.com.

About the Author: Wilford (Will) Ross is an administrative judge with the United States Department of Defense. His stamp collecting interests include the law, the South African Homelands, and the Cinderella stamps of the artist Rockwell Kent. He has had stamp-related articles published in LUREN (Scandinavian Philatelic Library of Southern California) and FORERUNNERS (Philatelic Society for Greater Southern Africa). Will and his Australian-born wife Joanne live in Los Angeles.

**It's Time
for a Stamp
Club Meeting**

Join us!

- Would you like to join a stamp club but you either can't find one or its meeting time doesn't fit your schedule?
- Would you like to discuss stamps with other collectors at any time you choose, day or night?
- Do you have questions about your stamp collection that you'd like to have help in answering?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, we can help! The Stamp Forum, Chapter 1591 of the American Philatelic Society, meets online, 24/7 at thestampforum.boards.net. Feel free to check us out. If you have questions, please send them to us at stampforum.net@gmail.com.

Going Big: USPS Large Format Cancellations

By Vince Chermishnok (stanley64)

Unless you have been asleep for the past twenty years, or at minimum, simply not paying attention, you would have noticed the further advancement of machine postmarks in the form of inkjet spray-on cancellations. These cancels, whether you love them, hate them or are indifferent, continue to expand their coverage in terms of the number of countries which have adopted the technology. Recent developments have made these cancels more acceptable to the philatelic and collecting community. For now though, let us not focus on the known and instead take a look at the less common, albeit similar spray-on postmark, that being the larger format cancel used in processing larger envelopes or flat mail.

Shortly after the United States Postal Service (USPS) began furthering its automation efforts, including the use of spray-on inkjet cancels for regular-sized letters, the service would introduce similar machinery and handling efforts for large-flat mail. In fact, by July 2002 the Postal Service had completed national deployment of 534 Automated Flat Sorting Machines (AFSM 100) with the goal of improving efficiency for its handling of large-flat mail. In keeping with the larger format of the mail itself, the spray-on cancellations of the packages would also be large and up-scaled.

Prior to full deployment and to determine the range of mail pieces compatible with the AFSM 100, the Postal Service conducted controlled tests using a variety of physical mail piece characteristics. Three mail characteristic studies were performed: a preliminary test in Baltimore, Maryland, from February 26, 2001, to March 13, 2001; a test in Denver, Colorado, from July 9, 2001, to August 1, 2001; and a study to determine maximum weight conducted in Palatine, Illinois, from February 25, 2002, to March 12, 2002.



Over the span of several years, the USPS transformed its flat sorting machine inventories with its deployment of AFSM 100s. Beginning in 2000, 107 machines were installed by 2001. The number for the installed base rose to 355 and was completed with the final deployment of 534 operational AFSMs completed in

March 2002. The cancels themselves were first introduced in March 2004 as an experimental cancellation in Richmond, Virginia. General usage began in February 2008.

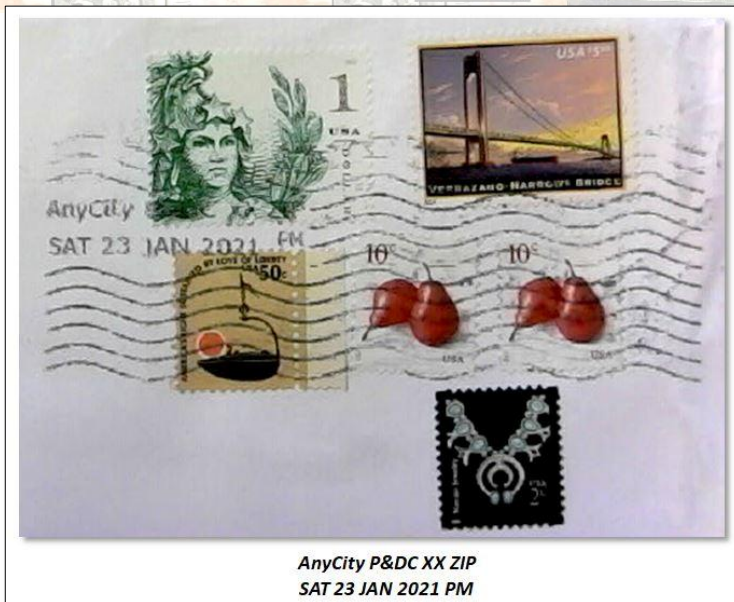
These machines are used for processing larger mail pieces with a minimum size of 15,25 cm x 0,002 cm x 12,7 cm (6 in. x 0,009 in. x 5 in.) and a maximum size of 38,10 cm x 30,48 cm x 1,91 cm (15 in. x 0,75 in. x 12 in.) based on LxWxH measurements. Similarly, the postmark and cancel are also a reflection of this larger scale. The spray-on postmark for regular sized mailings with their six wavy lines measure 116 mm x 23 mm whereas the large-format cancels measure in at 118 mm x 45 mm and have 15 wavy lines to their credit.

As these mail pieces are processed by one of the USPS Sectional Center Facilities (SCF) located throughout the country, a listing of all SCFs provides for a ready-made checklist. In fact, with no fewer than 195 SCFs, a complete collection of individual locations would be, in itself, quite the accomplishment. At the same time, given the larger format, the postage required for their mailing does offer the opportunity for a variety of high-value stamps to be used and different postal rates reflected.



*Metroplex MI 480 ZIP
THU 17 DEC 2020 ??*

An addition to the different time stamps and locations, along with the rates paid offered by these large format mailings and their spray-on cancels, there does occur the odd error for collectors to keep their eyes open for as in this recent example shown below.



*AnyCity P&DC XX ZIP
SAT 23 JAN 2021 PM*

With these large-format cancellations, size does matter and even with saving just the cancels and stamps themselves, ample space will need to be set aside for displaying them properly. However, given a ready-made checklist and a broad field of opportunity, building a collection of these large-scale postmarks could prove both interesting and challenging.

Happy collecting!

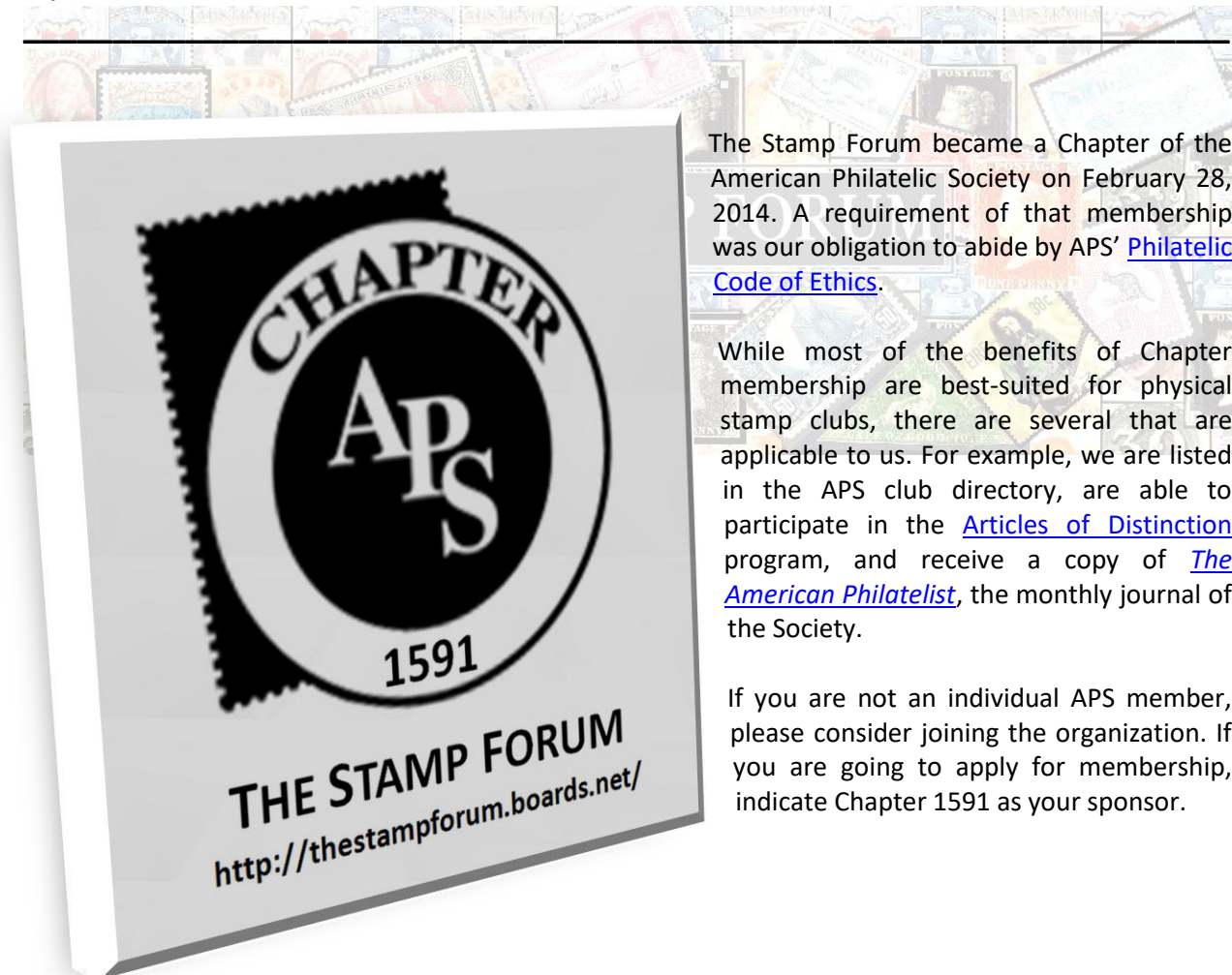
Acknowledgments: I wish to thank both Frankie Sutera of The International Machine Cancel Society (IMCS) and Bill German of the Post Mark Collectors Club (PMCC) for responding to an information request regarding these postmarks and cancels. At the same time, I wish to thank the aforementioned organizations for maintaining their respective websites and promoting this aspect of philately; it is appreciated!

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The Stamp Forum became a Chapter of the American Philatelic Society on February 28, 2014. A requirement of that membership was our obligation to abide by APS' [Philatelic Code of Ethics](#).

While most of the benefits of Chapter membership are best-suited for physical stamp clubs, there are several that are applicable to us. For example, we are listed in the APS club directory, are able to participate in the [Articles of Distinction](#) program, and receive a copy of [The American Philatelist](#), the monthly journal of the Society.

If you are not an individual APS member, please consider joining the organization. If you are going to apply for membership, indicate Chapter 1591 as your sponsor.

With or Without Stamps: Developing Philatelic Expertise in the Digital Age

By Chris Dorn (*Beryllium Guy*)

Human existence is full of irony. As an example, when I was young, I aspired to do great things in my life and become known as an expert in some field. As I gained in age, knowledge, and experience (and hopefully in wisdom and understanding too!), I realized that expertise takes time. But I decided early on that I was willing to pay my dues, and to put in the time and effort over the long haul to achieve objectively recognizable expertise in some area.

So, I went out and got myself an education, and I eventually parlayed that into getting a position in industry. Once I got into the job I wanted, I learned even more. I studied books, attended specialized courses, and learned everything I could from those with more experience than me. I made it my vocation, and I continued at it until, almost imperceptibly, I became the one who was helping others to do the same thing.

OK, so here's finally the ironic part: even after 30 years of working in the same field and progressing into the position of training others and developing their knowledge and skill sets, I still didn't feel comfortable being called an expert. I have long felt that the proverb "learning never ends" is absolutely true, and as a result, despite developing substantial knowledge in a very specific field, I have still considered myself more student than teacher.

While I think that this is generally a healthy approach to take to life, with the idea that it helps to keep one's perspective and not get too full of oneself, the truth is that it's probably not entirely correct. The more I think about it, the more I am convinced that we all have expertise for which we don't give ourselves enough credit, and maybe it's time for me to start changing how I look at it.

Stamping & Expertise

By now, you are probably asking yourself, what's all of this got to do with stamps? If you are wondering that, it's a fair observation, so I will get to the point. What I have described above in my preamble (it may be that I love preambles more than I should) applies to philately as well as it does to engineering and business.

Just as I aspired to expertise in some career field, I have also wanted to attain expertise in the hobby that I love. When I joined TSF in November 2016, despite the fact that I had been a stamp collector for almost 50 years at that point, it pretty quickly became apparent that there were many areas of philately that I never even knew existed, let alone had any expertise in them.

At first, I started to explore all sorts of previously untried areas, and I started to look for things in my accumulations that would allow me to participate in trending areas on the Forum. This was a good and probably necessary step for me, but after a while, I started to feel a bit overwhelmed by the sheer vastness of all the areas of the hobby. I began to think that if I had wanted to specialize and become an expert or an authority in some aspect of philately, the time to do that had long since passed. I should have started on something years ago.

But what would I have chosen? I didn't even know where to begin. An adaptation of a quote from a famous British comedian named Tommy Cooper goes like this: "I used to be indecisive, but now I'm not so sure." For me, that about sums up my relationship with our hobby. I have been plagued by

indecision and false starts in my collecting. So, if I can't even make up my mind about what I want to focus on, how can I ever become expert at anything?

Fate & Inspiration

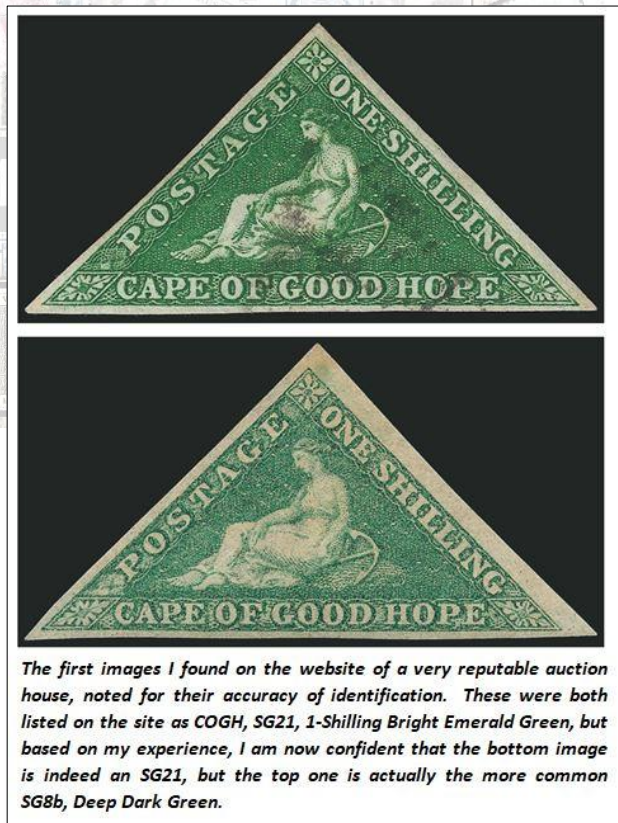
Have you ever seen the 1998 feature film *Sliding Doors*? It is one of my personal favorites, as it illustrates the point that small, seemingly insignificant incidents in daily life, can sometimes result in major changes to the course of our lives. For me, agreeing to become a member of the TSF Moderator Team in 2020 has turned out to be a more important decision than I had imagined at the time.

After becoming a moderator, I decided to take on the task of replacing images on TSF that had been deleted by members who had quit the Forum. As things have turned out, there have been more such deletions than I would have imagined, but I decided to begin with one of the areas that meant something to me: triangular stamps of the Cape of Good Hope (COGH).

Although I had only a couple of stamps myself and not much experience in this area when I was regularly following the main COGH thread on the Forum in the spring of 2020, the design of the early triangles really captured my interest, and I was fascinated by the in-depth knowledge and excellent images posted by one of the members at that time. While I really loved what I was seeing, I was intimidated by it, too.

The COGH triangles really looked great, but catalogue values for individual stamps are very high, mainly in the hundreds and thousands of dollars. And even if I wanted to start spending serious money to improve my collection, like so many of the high-value classics, the COGH triangles were extensively forged. As I am cautious by nature, acquisition seemed like a pretty risky undertaking to me, so I sat on the sidelines and tried to figure out how to move forward without squandering my precious stamp money on a bunch of worthless material.

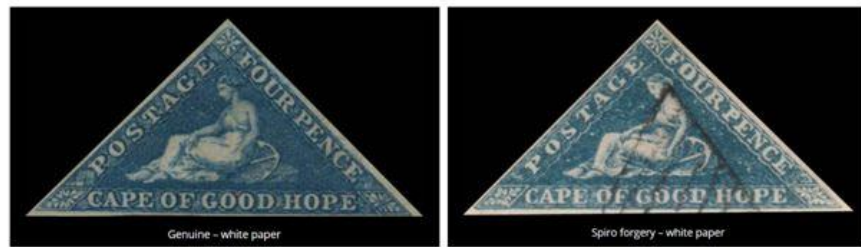
In the end, I learned by doing. When the reference images were deleted from the thread, if I wanted to replace them, I needed to find new ones myself, but where to look? In addition to his own images, the erstwhile member had mentioned the name of an auction house that he thought reliably identified Cape triangles, so I started there. I went to their website and found a couple of images that I could use.



The first images I found on the website of a very reputable auction house, noted for their accuracy of identification. These were both listed on the site as COGH, SG21, 1-Shilling Bright Emerald Green, but based on my experience, I am now confident that the bottom image is indeed an SG21, but the top one is actually the more common SG8b, Deep Dark Green.

Then I began to look at other stamp dealer and auction sites, including not only major philatelic houses, but also eBay, Hip Stamp, and Delcampe. I also found that there were other sites set up by private individuals, but with varying degrees of reliability, as I would later discover.

One of the best sites for forgery identification of classic-era stamps is [Stamp Forgeries of the World](#), authored and run by TSF member, Morten Munck ([classicalstamps](#)). As I got deeper into my search for suitable images, I talked with Morten, and I learned that in order to establish his website, he began by first collecting high-resolution images and now has his own huge reference library.



On Morten's Stamp Forgeries website, high-quality images of genuine COGH triangles are shown on the same page with examples of forgeries, enabling the collector who is researching his/her own holdings or items on offer, to determine what they are seeing.

So, Lady Hope inspired my initial interest in the Cape triangles, then fate necessitated the image replacement project and put me in a position to take it on. Then, inspiration came again in the form of some excellent advice from my friend Morten, just when I needed it. I was on my way.

Becoming Your Own Expert

At this writing, I have now been studying the Cape triangles for about 9 months. During that time, I have looked at many thousands of images of stamps, and I have created a reference library of several hundred mostly high-resolution images.

Just as I have spent more than 30 years in my chosen profession, and I have achieved a certain level of expertise there, due in part to my long tenure, I certainly respect philatelists who have done the same thing. In my Cape triangle endeavors, I have come across one man who is considered an expert in the area, having begun his specialization in 1969, only a couple of years after I started collecting.

But I have learned over the past 9 months that decades of hands-on experience with stamps are not the only way to develop expertise. That is certainly the traditional path, but it takes a long time, and in some cases, can require a substantial financial investment in reference books and stamps. Years ago, it was really the only option, but thanks to the Internet, we now have a world full of resources available to us, many of which can be accessed at very little cost.

I would argue that by taking advantage of information available on the Internet, and with the application of regular research (i.e. daily or on some other frequent basis), it is now possible to compress the amount of time it takes to become really competent in a given area. I won't pretend that I know as much as someone who has spent 50 years in a specialized field, but I have surprised even myself at how much I have been able to learn in less than a year.

It's Never Too Late

In direct contradiction to my own earlier thinking, I have learned that it's not too late to start something new after all, even at my stage in life and in collecting. All it takes is a real interest in the subject (the stronger, the better), and the willingness to commit some time and effort to learning about it. If you want to pursue a new philatelic area, here's a way to do it:

- If you already have some stamps from the area, begin with those. Scan some high-resolution images (at least 600dpi) and organize them using an established catalogue or other relevant reference book.

- Seek out images for stamps from the area that you don't already have, but also for those that you do. In the latter case, compare identification from authoritative sources with your own, and look for differences. Explore further as needed.
- For image sources, I suggest beginning with more widely known and recognized sites, such as those from major auction houses or large philatelic organizations, like the American Philatelic Society (APS), Royal Philatelic Society, etc. If there is a study group or society specialized in your area, consider joining it, but at the very least look into the reference materials they offer. You may also be able to find the names of established specialists in the field, and even ways to contact them.
- Spend some time reviewing published literature and refer back to it when looking at your stamps or at your reference images. I suggest updating image info as you learn. Don't be afraid to change your mind about an identification as you move forward, but document how you figured it out. That could be a very useful refresher at some point down the line, and it may pave the way for others if you choose to share it.
- Look for images of stamps that include expertizing certificates whenever possible. In my experience, these don't come up that often, so I make a point of taking a copy whenever I find one. As an APS member, I learned that I could access their database of expertizing certificates, which was a great find. Unfortunately, image quality in the database is inconsistent, so this is not as useful of a resource as it might have been.
- Branch out to more general sources for images, such as buying sites like eBay, Hip Stamp, Delcampe, etc. Image quality on these sites will be highly variable and seller identifications much less accurate, so you will get to start applying your knowledge. Look for sellers who seem to offer high-quality images, as well as those who identify their offerings accurately. Register your areas of interest so that you will be notified when new items are being offered.

- Once you feel comfortable in what you have learned, you could consider buying a couple of lots to see how that works out. Then again, you could just decide to keep a virtual collection of the images, and not bother with buying the actual stamps. That's totally up to you!



Image quality on general sales/auction sites can be highly variable, and some sellers post photos rather than scans, which have their own drawbacks. Above are a couple of images for similar items recently found on eBay. Left: what I imagine to be a really poorly executed scan with no cropping or effort to enhance the image. Right: I think this is a photo rather than a scan, but at least the focus and resolution are good enough to justify keeping for reference, if desired. I generally prefer scans, as photos tend to have issues with lighting and colors.

Summary & Conclusion

For me, this whole experience of learning about Cape triangles came about unexpectedly, due to circumstances that I neither planned nor foresaw. It's taught me some important lessons, and for that, I am truly grateful:

- It is really never too late to start learning a new area.
- Internet resources can accelerate learning compared to traditional methods.
- There is a wealth of opportunities for philatelic learning.

When it comes to stamp collecting, I think that indecision is neither fatal, nor even necessarily bad. What's important is to be open-minded enough to try something new on occasion, and then see where it may lead you. And if you're anything like me, it may just lead you to your next great collecting passion, as it has done for me, or into uncharted waters, where you could be the one to lead the way for the rest of us as you explore new areas.

I have now gotten to where I wanted to go with Cape triangles. I can reliably tell forgeries from genuine examples, as well as differentiate between the early and late printings which was something that totally confused me before I started this process. I will continue to work with my Cape triangles and try to round out my collection with another issue or two, but the main effort is now finished.



In the category of strange-but-true discoveries made along the way, I present this example. Left: this stamp has been expertized as a genuine example of COGH Sc3 (SG5a) on Certificate No. 228223, found in the APS database. Right: Spiro forgery image found on Morten's website. In my opinion, the APS Certificate is incorrect, as this example is surely a forgery. While I am not afraid to tell all of you about this, I haven't had the courage to try to tackle this one with the APS, but I am convinced that I have it right.

So now the question is, what next? I am still undecided about my next area of research (some things never change), but I am actively considering some possibilities, while trying to remain open to opportunities which may come my way. So, how about you? Has my story given you any food for thought? I hope so!

Acknowledgements: I would like to thank those who played key roles in making this article possible: To Steve Tomisek ([tomiseksj](#)) for inviting me to join the TSF Moderator Team this past year and to Michael Hide ([Londonbus1](#)) for your friendship and encouragement along the way. I have appreciated your confidence in me very much—it was clearly more than I had in myself.

I also want to thank Vince Chermishnok ([stanley64](#)) for setting up the TSF Zoom Meeting program last October, which led to my discussion with Morten ([classicalstamps](#)) and enabled me to get into personal contact with a noted expert in the field of Cape triangles.

And I want to thank Morten for your great website and for allowing me to use images from that site for my article. I also sincerely appreciate the resources and guidance you have given me, which have been indispensable to my progress in this field.

Support Your Forum by Writing for Its Newsletter

The simple truth is: since all of the Newsletter material is written by members, the survival of this Newsletter is entirely dependent upon member contributions.

We welcome articles written on any area of philately, as long as they are original works.

For instance:

- How did you come to be a stamp collector? Tell us about it...
- Did you attend an interesting philatelic exhibition or stamp venue? Tell us about it...
- Do you have expertise in a particular area? Tell us about it...
- Have you had a positive or negative online buying or selling experience? Tell us about it...
- Do you belong to an interesting stamp club? Tell us about it...
- Do you have a favorite stamp? Tell us about it...

If you are able to make posts on the Forum, you have the ability to prepare articles for this publication.

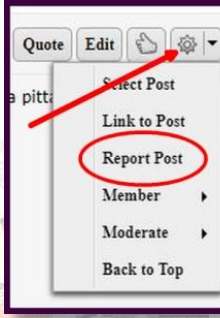
In addition to supporting the Forum, submitting material provides the opportunity for recognition by the American Philatelic Society through its Articles of Distinction program.

Submitting an article is easy—all we need is the file containing the article's text, annotated with suggested image locations, and the images sent as separate files.



Navigating Our Forum

Techniques, Tips and Reminders

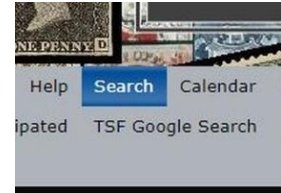
- Remember – civility is a required virtue on The Stamp Forum; ***treat all members with courtesy and respect.***
- The [Frequently Asked Questions about Using the Forum](#) board in the General Information category contains a wealth of information that should prove useful to members – consider checking it out.
- Conduct one-on-one conversations using **Forum Personal Messages (PM)**. One-on-one conversations via posts in threads can be disruptive and detract from the intended subject matter.
- The most expeditious way to gain the attention of Admin, or a Forum Moderator, is to use the **Report Post** function. Select this function from the pull-down menu found at the cog-wheel to the upper right of the post being reported.
 
- If your thread(s) in the Buy, Sell, Trade category have ended, please notify the Forum Staff using the “report post” function (see above) so that it may be moved to an “Ended” board. As an alternative, edit the subject to include the word “ENDED.”
- Do not use the **Quote** function if you are reading the Forum using the [Recent Posts](#) function. Rather, navigate to the thread in which the post resides to see if your reply can be posted without having to use a quote. The [Vol. 3, Issue 3 Newsletter](#) has an article on quoting posts.
- If a quote is needed for understanding, edit out any unnecessary text and/or images from the quote and take the time to ensure that your response is outside of the quote box.
- To use the Forum’s image host plug-in (the **Upload images** button), **you must have an account**. To get an account, send a request to stampforum.net@gmail.com that includes your Forum user ID and full name. This is the Forum’s preferred image host.
- The **Add image to post** button is a plug-in that uses imgbb.com as the host. An ImgBB account is not needed to use this method but one can be requested through that host. Unlike the TSF Image Host, imgbb.com is not associated with the Forum and the Moderator team will likely be unable to assist you with any problems.
- The Forum’s **Google Language plug-in** helps members, whose primary or second language is not English, to understand posts and take part in discussions. To use this tool, select the desired



language from the pull down menu to the left of the screen below the Navigation bar. Once a language has been selected, all posts will appear to the viewer in that language.

- When creating a thread, please clearly describe the thread’s subject matter so members don’t have to open the thread to determine what it is about.

- Before creating a new thread, use one of the two search options from the Navigation bar to see if a similar thread already exists; if one does, add to it rather than creating a new one.



- A listing of countries that don’t yet have boards on the Forum can be viewed [here](#). If you want to start a thread on a country not yet listed, either send a request via PM to @Admin or create the thread in that geographic regions “Other” sub-board. Making the request in a post risks it not being noticed and acted upon.

- If you are willing to share your mailing address with other like-minded members, request being added to the **Mailing Address** group; include your full name, user ID and complete mailing address.

- You can either add your own avatar by editing your profile or use the Forum’s default, which has been changed from the previous default (the Proboards alien).



- If you have a question or encounter a problem, reach out to Admin or a Moderator via PM.

- Right-click **Help** in the navigation menu and select an open option from the displayed menu. The ProBoards’ [help guide](#) provides a wealth of “how to” information.

Forum Help Guide

Please click any of the listed topics below for a detailed explanation of that topic. If you still have unanswered questions or need additional assistance, please visit the ProBoards Support Board.

Search Term Search

<h4>User Guide</h4> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Account Creation and Logging In • Threads, Posts, Polls, and Attachments • Bookmarks • Post Options • Search • Calendar • The Members List • Avatars • Viewing Profiles • Your Profile Information • Social Websites • Profile Preferences • Profile Privacy • Notification Options • Keyboard Shortcuts • Glossary 	<h4>Admins and Moderators</h4> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Forum Settings • Boards and Threads • Moderation Options • Login and Registration Settings • Themes and Styles • Custom Pages • Plugins • Headers and Footers • Member Groups and Rankings • Managing Members • Security • Upgrading Your Forum • Theme and Plugin Libraries
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Membership is free; apply online.

Use our image host or one of your own choosing.

Once you have made your introduction, staff will add you to the ****Members**** group. You will then be able to post in all of the boards except the Buy Sell and Trade (for this you will need 50 quality posts and membership for at least two weeks).

We are a Chapter of the American Philatelic Society.

Send information requests to stampforum.net@gmail.com

TSF's APS Articles of Distinction

By Editorial Staff

To date, our Forum, APS Chapter 1591, has submitted four articles for publication on the American Philatelic Society's [website](#). All four articles have been posted and each of those has a link that will bring readers to our Forum. Further, our 2020 submission has been featured on the APS News webpage.

In addition to the recognition afforded The Stamp Forum, the articles' authors receive a certificate of achievement from APS.

The articles chosen to represent our Forum in each of the annual competitions conducted thus far are shown below, and each may be viewed by clicking on their respective link.

2017 [The 1926 Madrid-Manila Flight – A Pioneering Journey](#)

2018 [Visiting Stamp Shops Around the World](#)

2019 [USS Constitution – America's Ship of State](#)

2020 [Philatelic Travelogue: Paris and Its Stamp Market](#)



The 2021 selection will be made during September and your participation is essential in helping to identify the best of the best. Four articles will be competing for the distinction of being selected as The Stamp Forum's 2021 APS Article of Distinction – one from each issue published this year.

Please make your selection from this Volume 5 issue before life gets in the way. The individual issue polls will close on August 31, 2021 at Midnight, New York time. You may make your selection(s) by clicking [here](#).

If you enjoy reading the Newsletter, please show its contributors your appreciation by making your selections known.



In Closing...

As with our last issue, six different members contributed a wide-ranging assortment of interesting material for this issue of the Forum's Newsletter. We are grateful for those who have contributed content and hope that all find something of interest within these pages.

Please consider trying your hand at writing something for publication. If you aren't sure how to go about it, contact one of the editorial staff and we'll be happy to assist.

Member support is essential if we are to continue publishing a Newsletter. Any contributions of a philatelic nature will be considered for inclusion in a forthcoming issue (e.g., a catalog or book review, what I collect and why, a stamp show or bourse review, an intro to my local club, etc.).

We missed our goal of getting back on schedule, but only slightly, and hope to have the next issue, covering the period July - September 2021, completed by the middle of June. In order to meet that target, we'd like to receive your submissions by the last week of May at the very latest.

When contributing material, Microsoft Word files are preferred, with images submitted as separate files. Although we can work with PDF files with embedded images, it makes for a more tedious process.

Thanks for your continued support! Please remain vigilant. Get vaccinated, keep washing your hands, maintaining social distance, wearing a mask when you can't maintain social distance, and staying at home with your loved ones and stamps, whenever possible!

