

THE STAMP FORUM NEWSLETTER

Volume 5, Issue 4

APS Chapter 1591

July - September 2021

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MY PHILATELIC JOURNEY



THE BEAUTY OF THE FRENCH

PLUS:

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2021 APS ARTICLE OF DISTINCTION SELECTION

GREAT AMERICAN STAMP SHOW

ATA'S "MY ONE-PAGE EXHIBIT" INITIATIVE

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

Summer is upon (most of) us, and stamping is likely giving way to other activities. Please try to drop in on the Forum, whenever you are able. While many countries are experiencing a downturn in the pandemic's impact, COVID-19 remains a threat so please get vaccinated as soon as possible and continue taking appropriate safety precautions.



As the Forum begins its eighth year, membership has reached 675; although, more than 290 of those have not signed in to their accounts in over 12 months. We average 3 or 4 new applicants each week, yet the majority of them never complete the process, failing to acknowledge several key membership requirements and to validate their email addresses. Further, the majority of those who complete the process and are granted membership will see their accounts deleted for not posting their introductions. On a positive note, about 150 members have signed in to their accounts within the last 30 days, and many of them are actively participating.

The American Philatelic Center has reopened and preparations for the Great American Stamp Show are ongoing. 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](#). APS has re-launched the Chapter newsletter and website competitions, now named the Star Route Awards, and we will be participating in each area.

This issue completes the set for our Chapter's 2021 APS Article of Distinction selection so please ensure that you've made your preferences known. As always, I hope you will consider submitting material for publication in a future issue of the Forum's Newsletter. We need the [support](#) of our members so that the Newsletter may continue to be an informative philatelic publication!

Steve Tomisek
Forum Admin/APS Chapter Ambassador

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](#). Each of those has been posted and includes a link that will bring readers to our Forum.

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](#).

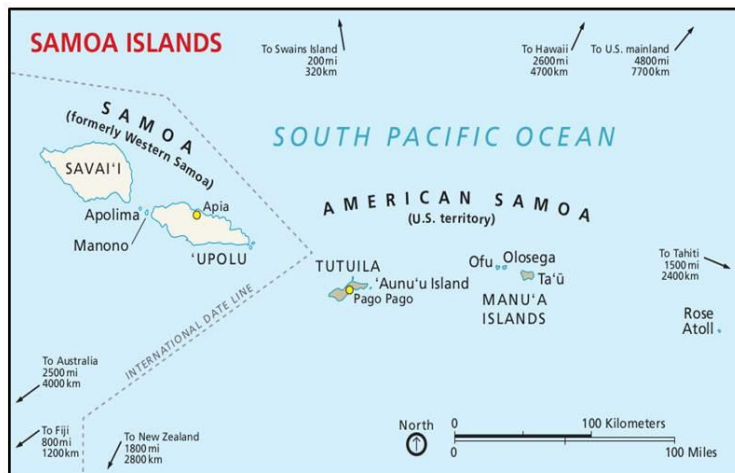
If you enjoy reading the Newsletter, please show its contributors your appreciation by making your selections known.



SAMOA, 1840-2000: Transition from Chiefly Fiefdoms to Nationhood

By Alex Walker (vikingeck)

Settled by migrating Polynesian peoples some 3000 years ago, the governance of the Archipelago was controlled by the elected holders of High Chief (Matai) titles. Possession of the 4 highest titles was not always peaceful, with occasional bloody civil wars. Only once, according to oral history, were all 4 titles in the possession of one individual, Queen Salamasina. Titles are not inherited—they are elective by groupings of minor title holders, and disputes arise.



The first Europeans, in the early 19th century, were searching for whale oil in the Southern Ocean (also known as the Antarctic Ocean or the Austral Ocean) and copra from coconut plantations. Missionaries arrived in the 1830s coincident with yet another civil war. Their arrival provided the need for the first mail service to and from the islands.

A South Pacific Archipelago of 9 inhabited islands stretching 300 miles. Since 2011 Samoa straddles the International Date Line.

The First Stamps (1877)

A newspaper launched by W. Griffiths of Fiji produced the first Samoan stamps, primarily to promote his newspaper, but also to convey mail to New South Wales, Hawaii and San Francisco. It was not a success as the European population was fewer than 200. With short production runs, the issues exist in 4 scarce successive states. They have had a bad press due to a flood of worthless philatelic reprints released when the service folded.



Ship letter from Glasgow to Sydney, then privately carried to Samoa. Addressed to "Rev. Henry Nisbet, Upolu Samoa, Care of Revd Dr Ross NSW"



Scarce 1878 State 1



Worthless 1890 Reprint

German Agency Mail (1885)

The largest European group was the employees and managers of the *Deutsche Handels und Plantagens Gesellschaft der Südsee-Inseln zu Hamburg*, mockingly referred to by the English speakers as “the Long-Handled Company.” As mail was haphazard and depended on visiting ships and traders, a German-Australian shipping line operated a service for about 15 months, from 1885, before an Imperial postal agency (**KAISERLICH DEUTSCHE POST AGENTUR**) opened in the German Consulate in 1887. German stamps referred as “**Vorlaufer**,” or forerunners, were used under UPU rules.



German Vorlaufers (forerunners)

The Samoan “Kingdom” Post Office (1886)

Samoan culture never had a “King” as such. Decisions were by consensus, but Europeans, especially the German Company, wanted to deal with a single Head of State, rather than a committee. Opinions were divided among three titled candidates and one **Malietoa Laupepa** was made “King,” with German support. In 1886, John Davis, a local photographer, got a mandate to run a Samoan Post office and issue stamps featuring palm trees & Malietoa.



Palm trees (3 perf & 3 wmk combinations) / King Malietoa

Without UPU recognition, those stamps only paid mail to Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, Hawaii & San Francisco. Onward transmission over America required extra U.S. postage.



Extra U.S. postage was required to pay the rate from San Francisco

Gunboat Diplomacy (1889 and 1899)

The 1880s was a decade of minor civil war, with three rival factions, the Tamaseses, Mata'afas and Malietoas disputing the role of "Tupu Samoa" or High Chief. Heads were taken and shots exchanged, provoking military intervention in 1889 by Germany, Britain and the U.S., who all had cruisers in Apia harbor when a hurricane hit. 155 U.S. and German sailors drowned when their ships were wrecked.



Hurricane damages ships in Apia Harbor

With the death of Malietoa in 1898, Mata'afa, who had been exiled, was brought back, but civil war broke out again. This time, more Naval intervention, threatening and occasionally shelling the rival sides in the war, involved first European casualties. A diplomatic settlement by the Great powers in Berlin, in 1899, without Samoan input, abolished the title of King, appointed a Provisional Government, and partitioned the Islands between the USA and Germany.



Provisional Government



U.S. Territory/Eastern Samoa



German Colony/The Western Islands

German Colony (1900-1914)

A uniform key type, the "Kaiser's Yacht," for all ten newly acquired German colonies was adopted in 1901. The larger size stamps were supposed to be cancelled twice to prevent "cut and shut" fraudulent halves being used. Post offices in other villages were opened as a German Governor administered the Western Island group with a Samoan "sub King under the Kaiser," Mata'afa.



Yacht Hohenzollern

Military Occupation (1914-1920)

The outbreak of WWI brought another change in status. Unable to defend the islands, the German population surrendered to a military occupation by New Zealand. O.A.S. (on active service) mail, never officially sanctioned, was allowed for a month or two. German stamps were overprinted **G.R.I.**, and surcharged in sterling, but supplies were limited. Shilling values are very scarce and frequently forged. Minor and major errors exist, some created by the printer!



On Active Service (O.A.S.)



G.R. I.

Within a few weeks, New Zealand stamps, overprinted "SAMOA," were delivered to Apia with a new date stamp, and all mail was censored by the Military.

League of Nations Mandate (1920-1939)

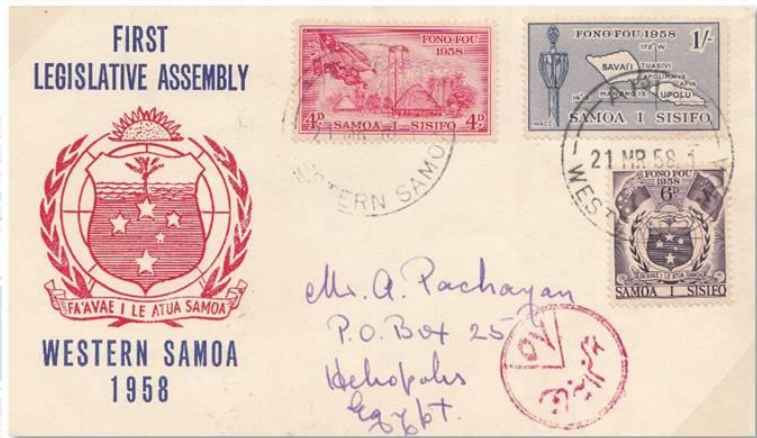
Under the Versailles Treaty of 1920, Germany was stripped of its colonies, and a mandate was granted to New Zealand to administer Samoa in the name of the League of Nations. Samoa was never a British Colony, so the Monarch's head was not appropriate, reflecting the new status of the Islands. The George V stamps of the Military Administration were replaced in 1921 by the first Samoa stamps showing a flag (incorporating a Union Flag in one quarter), a native hut or "fale" and inscribed **SAMOA**. An attractive set of pictorials for **WESTERN SAMOA** was issued in 1935.



United Nations Trusteeship (1946-1962)

The League of Nations failed as WW2 broke out. The peace of 1946 replaced it with the new United Nations. New Zealand was entrusted with continued responsibility for Samoa with a view to eventual independence.

In 1958, a Samoan Assembly, or "Fono," was elected with limited legislative powers and a new Parliament House opened at what had been the historic seat of Government until German times, Mulinu'u. The name on the stamps changed to **SAMOA I SISIFO**, the local version of Western Samoa, and a new coat of arms and flag were adopted.



Independence (1962-2000)

Independence was granted in 1962 and, for a time, stamps were inscribed Samoa I Sisifo, but date stamps still bore the old "WESTERN SAMOA" name. In the 1980s, the government in Apia decided, not without loud protests from the U.S. and American Samoa, the adjective "WESTERN" would be dropped and the official name would revert simply to "SAMOA." The final change came in December 2011, when Apia elected to align itself to Asia Pacific time and moved west of the date line. Thus, Samoa changed from the last place to see the Millennium to the first country on Earth to welcome the sunrise.



My Philatelic Journey

By Jean Ottosen (polarbear)

I received my first packet of stamps when I was ten years old. It was a bag of U.S. stamps on cover. My parents thought stamp collecting would be educational; I did too, and continue to learn a lot from stamps. But what attracted me initially was the art. As a child, my imagination ran wild on how such detailed artwork made it onto such a small piece of paper!

My first stamp album was a loose leaf album for the United States. My first trip to a stamp dealer happened in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada with my parents. The dealer was very kind and gave me a huge bag of stamps on cover to take home and select some for my album. My eyes must have been as big as saucers! Eventually, I expanded beyond my U.S. collection into worldwide collecting.

At a teenager, I had no guidance other than a general book on collecting for kids. I eventually used my babysitting money to subscribe to *Canadian Stamp News*. It was *Stamp News* that informed me of new issues and services of Canada Post. It was also where I found out about Staffa, Scotland stamps. I bought a couple of sheets of local post stamps. I also found out about the subscription service Canada Post offered through *Stamp News*. I started ordering mint singles, inscription blocks, and FDCs in the late 1970s. Enough said. That stopped when I graduated university. I was busy with life.



One day about ten years later, I was taking my grade school aged daughters to visit friends. We drove by a sign for a stamp show on the way to the friend's place and we stopped there on the way home. There I became reacquainted with the world of stamps. I met a dealer. We later visited his shop and, because the girls were fascinated by Australia, I purchased a large bag of Australian stamps on cover for them and myself. The girls were ecstatic. I showed them the ropes. We learned a lot about Australia. In fact, it was a lot of educational fun and I entered our experiences in the Learning Together Awards in *Family Fun Magazine* (September 1994). Our story won Runner Up. Afterwards, periodically, I would go through my collection, sorting and organizing it.

In 2014 I had a major health scare. I spent time recuperating with my stamps. I realized I had to get rid of some to make it easier for others to disperse should anything happen to me.

In 2015 I joined a stamp club. I met other people interested in stamps for the first time. I was able to sell parts of my collection, and build other parts of it. I found out about circuit books and decided to investigate approval services. Unfortunately, timing challenges and an impending move caused me to miss more and more time with the club.



By then I had joined the American Topical Association and the Royal Philatelic Society of Canada. Also, philately was starting to show up online. I joined several online forums and learned a lot. I was receiving mail from around the globe with beautiful images on the stamps. I realized I needed to narrow down my collection. I started selling off and giving away my worldwide collection. As I am a textile artist, I decided to keep and build a collection of worldwide

textiles stamps. I also collect worldwide Christmas. An online friend gifted me some Canadian perfin and I started that collection. Another online friend gifted me Canadian revenues, starting that collection.

Yet another online friend wanted my want list to sell me stamps at 10 cents each! I had come a long way without ever creating a want list. It was a monumental task! I sent it to her in sections. She was great and sent me high quality stamps.

As you can see, my collection defies being restricted. But we live in a small house and there are definite space limitations. I try and stick to set boundaries.

In 2018 I discovered “Exploring Stamps” by Graham Beck on YouTube. He makes the history part behind stamps fun and interesting. I was excited about stamping again.



(Ctrl + Click on the image will take you to the YouTube Channel for this series of videos)

In 2020, while living in a friend’s place in between houses, I casually mentioned collecting stamps as one of my hobbies. Her eyes popped open wide. She had an old stamp collection she hadn’t looked at in years. We pulled it out and poured over it. I’ve been giving her advice on what to do with it. It’s still in envelopes and tins in cardboard moving boxes. I’ve learned the rudiments of AlbumEasy and modified and printed a Barbados album for her. She gave me Newfoundland stamps, and later, St. Pierre & Miquelon stamps.

Once we settled into our new home last year, I rejoined the RPSC and picked one forum to be a part of...The Stamp Forum. I also joined the APS. I held my very first auction and my first big giveaway on The Stamp Forum. I’ve sold, traded or given away small numbers of stamps before, but never have I held auctions and large scale giveaways like recently. It’s fun to see the excitement it generates amongst other collectors.



I’m glad to be in a group of collectors who are knowledgeable and share that knowledge enthusiastically. I love threads like “[Watcha Been Stamping](#)” because it gives me a glimpse into the possibilities in philately. Thank you to all the people who work hard behind the scenes to make TSF the great place it is!

The Beauty of the French: From a Cinderella Perspective

By Michael Hide (Londonbus1)

For this, my 19th Cinderella Corner, I will be showing some items from France which I have been consolidating into an album over the last few months. As I recall, it was a philatelic resolution at the turn of the year, together with the offloading of much of my collection. I am certain I have made the right decision, having come to admire even more the designs and beauty of French Cinderellas (vignettes) and am always on the lookout for more. The cost and availability might mean one is restricted but a decent collection can be formed with little outlay and a lot of patience. A knowledge of the French language helps with research and information but, as with Cinderella collecting in general, one has to work a little harder!

I have shown some items from France in previous Newsletters, most notably in Volume 2, Issue 5, which will not be repeated here with the exception of an update. But their 'beauty' remains!

La Baule is a coastal commune in Western France in the Loire district. There, an air show took place, September 2-11, 1922, for which labels, produced by the Society for Air Propaganda, were used to carry mail to Le Bourget airport near Paris. The Society was formed after WW1 by Charles Robin (1897-1926) who some might say was a daredevil pilot. He once landed a plane illegally in a square in Bordeaux and died when his plane crashed during maneuvers at the young age of 29. The labels were produced in 6 colors and values (3 are shown) and the plates defaced to prevent future printings of the original stamps. They were printed in sheets of 5x4. But many reprints exist, without values and clearly showing the differences. These were produced, probably for collectors, on different colored papers. Simple designs but attractive nonetheless, and together with reprints, proofs and covers would make for a very interesting collection. I should add here that, like philately in general and Cinderellas in particular, there is much contradictory information around and there is, too, about this air show, the Society and the labels.



The 25c violet, 50c blue, and 75c slate green values are not shown

Staying with the Air theme.....



Circuit D'Anjou, the first Aviation Grand Prix held by 'L'Aero-Club de France' at Angers, took place June 16-17, 1912. The poster stamp produced to mark the occasion shows a very atmospheric scene of a plane taking off and in flight, the French Tricolor and the Angers City Coat-of-Arms. The site used was the former Military Grounds at Avrille, which was converted by the Aero Club for an event two years previously. Later, it was again used for training Air Force pilots as well as for civilian use.

Exposition Philatelique Internationale was held at the Grand Palace in Paris, June 21-30th, 1913. The previous year at the big International event in London, stamp-like labels were offered to the public as souvenirs, courtesy of a competition held by the event's organizers, the Junior Philatelic Society. The labels proved to be so popular that the visiting French Delegation arranged for similar labels to be printed at this event in Paris!



Examples also exist in black



There was a need for some changes to the 1912 types so they were printed 1mm larger. The sheets were smaller (12x9) and without the jubilee lines of the London sheets. The labels were imperforate. They were produced using the same 'Printex' method and the company produced advertising cards for this Paris Exhibition with imprints of the label on the cover, together with one from a new set (shown) produced by the same method (photographically produced printing plates). The image at left, one of the set of 6, shows the Printex Co, London imprint in the bottom margin.

Whilst we are in Paris, 1913, let me show a further addition to this popular Exhibition from a set of 6 depicting French President Raymond Poincare. These poster stamps also exist imperforate.



French President Raymond Poincare (1860-1934) served 1913-20

La Belle France. Most of you will have seen one or more from these series, if only in passing. Those who appreciate the postage stamps of France depicting the nations' towns, cities and countryside could not help but to admire the vignettes of 'La Belle France.' For this occasion, just a few stamps, but I am sure there will be more to come from this series. Those seen here come in 5 different colors. A number of 'shades' are known and I believe these are nearer to sepia than brown. They are from Series 27 (1930).



From left to right: Calvi, a view of the Citadel; Bonifacio, the Citadel seen from the Bonifacio Straits; and, Cannes, the Promenade de la Croisette

With 748 different 'views' and up to 5 different colors, plus overprints, this must surely be the World's longest series! Even the British Machin would have a hard time keeping up! I am sitting here wondering if it would be possible to collect them all; probably not.

The series was born out of an idea by the Touring Club of France (TCF) who wanted the postal service to show to the world the beautiful tourist destinations of France through their postage stamps. This was 1924 and it would be another 7 years before the TCF finally got their way, albeit with different designs. Paris printer Helio-Vaugirard produced the 'La Belle France' series and their imprint can be seen in the bottom margins. The sheets (5x4) were issued in booklets. There will be more to come about these beautiful vignettes at another time.

With health and other issues curtailing my stamp activities this year, the following sets (or part thereof) have yet to be studied and researched so for now, you can admire the beauty and the skill of the makers of French Vignettes/Poster Stamps!



Nancy 1909. Exists in at least 3 colors and 3 different colored papers



Lyon 1935, World Miniatures Exhibition. Other colors & designs are seen



'Fides' religious stamps, printed by the Gravure Institute, Paris, depicting scenes from various nations including Africa, China and Colombia



Beaugny Philatelic Exhibition, 1933. Bottom image depicted might be the Hostel Dieu Beaugny. Sheet exists imperf on white paper

Earlier I promised an update from a previous article. One of the most unusual and interesting pages from my collection of France is that of the 'Commune de Montmartre' (Vol2.5). Not too much information was found after much searching. However, some more items have been found since Volume 2; namely, a number of items from the hard-to-find first series, plus some hitherto unknown imperforate examples. In general, this limited series still remains as scarce and not often seen. But I am always on the lookout for more, including covers. In the meantime, here are a few additions.....



At left, the first series (1923) on pink paper. At right, the first series on pink paper with lined 'cancelled' overprint. This was done on the order of the French Postal Authorities



First series strip of 4 on white paper with 'cancelled' overprint

Second Series 'La Muse', imperf proof



I hope you enjoyed your little journey into the world of French Cinderellas. Until next time, stay safe and well and above all else.....Happy Collecting.

Philatelic Travelogue: Four Sunny Days in London

By Chris Dorn (*Beryllium Guy*)

As I have been living in the UK for more than a year and a half, one would have thought that I would have written something before now about my experiences here, both stamp-related and otherwise. Owing to the pandemic, most of my time in the UK has been under lockdown conditions, and travel has not been possible. OK, enough about that!

But now, here in the UK, with distribution of the vaccine, restrictions are relaxing, and some semblance of what we used to know as normal is now possible again. London is only a 1-hour train journey from Oxford, but due to the circumstances, we had not visited in 15 months. We were ready to try again.

London: The Roads (Slightly) Less Travelled

My wife Amy has been visiting London for more than 30 years, and I have been visiting it for more than 35 years. Despite a couple of dozen visits between us, and some of them fairly extended in duration, we realized recently that there are lots of interesting places that we have never visited. So, we decided to do something about that.

As a result, this article will cover a day spent primarily on stamp activities, but also the two-and-a-half other days spent seeing some historical sights that we had never actually visited before. Where possible, I will try to make philatelic connections to those sights, too.

Charing Cross Collectors Market

Promoters of the Charing Cross Market call it a hidden gem, and I suppose it legitimately qualifies as such, since all of the real activity is literally underground and completely out of sight from the street above. Despite having looked for stamps in London since trips there in the 1990s, I never knew about the Collectors Market until I heard about it on TSF in the last few years. How lucky I am to be living near enough now to be able to visit when I want to.

History-wise, the Collectors Market has been operating in its current location since 1974, but it seems that markets of other types have been operating in the area since 1690, a long tradition indeed. The venue is actually an indoor parking garage, having the advantage of being generally protected from the weather, although it can be a bit chilly in there during the winter. As the name implies, all sorts of collectibles are traded at the Market, including coins, stamps, military items, and other sorts of memorabilia.

The Market normally runs every Saturday from 07:00-15:00. I try to get there on the early side, usually by 08:00-08:30, and I often stay until 13:00 or later, by which time I am ready for a break. My visit this time was my first in over a year, and also my first since the onset of the pandemic.



Figure 1: Although it may not look it from the perspective of this photo, the Collectors Market entrance is easy to miss, tucked into a corner between two coffee shops.

My Day at the Market

I went on the last Saturday in May, and it was a mild day outside, so the temperature in the Market was quite comfortable. There were probably 6-8 dealers there, but the pandemic has definitely taken its toll. I would estimate that there were twice as many dealers on my last visit in February 2020.



Figure 2: A view of the Market on Saturday, 29 May 2021. Dealer attendance was lower than before the pandemic, but there was still a healthy number of participants, and all done with COVID protocols in place, such as mask-wearing and a one-way flow system.

Undaunted, I was still able to find plenty of stamps to look through and buy. This time, I spent my time with a seller offering old album pages with mounted stamps on them, mainly organized by country, although not universally. I especially liked this, as it is a way to indulge my treasure-hunting spirit without needing to take on large mixtures or collections to do it. I found some pages on which I would have been willing to pay the page price to get just one of the stamps on it (*Figure 3*). What's not to like about that?

As so often happens on these occasions, I didn't necessarily find what I had hoped or expected to find, but of course, that's OK. Just in case any of you were wondering, I post my country collection pages on TSF for two reasons: number one is to share with all of you, but

number two is so that I have access to them whenever I can make an internet connection. It is a very handy feature of the smart phone these days.

One limitation of the subterranean parking garage as the Market venue is that there is no mobile phone or internet signal available. Knowing this from previous experience, I made a point to upload scans of my collection pages from Cape of Good Hope, Danish West Indies, Denmark, Germany, and Hong Kong onto my smart phone ahead of time, so that I would have them available while I was in the Market and might need to consult them.

I also made a couple of new friends at the Market, one of whom seems to be a bit of a luminary in philatelic circles in his own right. His name is Simon Goldblatt, already in his 90s, but sharp as a whip! Fate stationed him next to me while I was browsing through the old album pages, and he would look over the ones I was interested in and offer his opinion on whether they were really worth the asking price or not.

As postmarks are his specialty, he was able to make some interesting observations about some of the lots that I had not been able to discern. After my time at the Market, I had a cup of coffee with Simon, and he encouraged me to join the British West Indies (BWI) Study Circle, based in London, which I have now done. He told me that it is a first-rate group, and that if I stick around for a bit, I could learn loads. As the membership dues were a modest £8/year, I figured it was worth a try.



Figure 3: Photos of some of the myriad of pages that I bought at the Market that day. I don't think that I found anything extraordinary, but I did find plenty of classic-era stamps at very reasonable prices.

Next Stop: The Strand & Stanley Gibbons

As it happens, the Collectors Market is not far from the long-established SG shop on The Strand. I made my way there next, with the primary aim of getting supplies: I needed more Hagner-type stock sheets, which I have lately been using to organize my collection. I was also aware that the SG shop had gone through a major remodel in the past year, and I wanted to see what that entailed.



Figure 4: The exterior of the Stanley Gibbons shop taken before the pandemic, and then in May 2021, after the major changes. Note that the storefront signage is now dominated by Baldwin's, a coin dealer. Above the ground level, through the plate-glass windows is the SG Museum.

I learned that the remodel was more than just redecorating and re-arranging the furniture. As explained to me by a very polite and helpful young man named Dean, SG not only changed the physical appearance of their shop, they have changed the focus of their business. In former times, SG had a stock of worldwide stamps available. Customers could name any country or era, and SG had a stock book with stamps, catalogued and ready for purchase.



Figure 5: The old interior of the Stanley Gibbons shop in London. Note the signage above the bookcases labelled Great Britain, World, and British Commonwealth.

Dean went on to tell me that SG has decided to focus their business on GB and Commonwealth stamps, having sold off all of their other worldwide stock during a series of auctions in 2020. To that end, in addition to selling off a significant portion of their stamp inventory, SG has apparently consolidated their album and catalogue series down to their focus areas only. As I had been hoping to ask them about availability of individual classic stamps from Germany, all of this news was a bit disappointing, but I soon rallied to an alternative.



Figure 6: The current interior of the Stanley Gibbons shop. There are way fewer bookcases with stamp stock books these days, but the space is well lit and now equipped with chairs for customers to have a seat while they peruse the GB and Commonwealth stamp inventory.

So, I asked instead about Hong Kong, as I still need a few KEVII and KGV definitive issues that are not too pricey, but their stock of that material was very depleted. Inspiration struck, and I was able to do better with GB Offices in China overprints on KGV definitive issues.



Figure 7: Filling a few holes in my collection: Top Row: Hong Kong SG107, 20c KGV Wmk. Multiple Crown & CA; Postage dues: SG D4, 6c Yellow & SG D6, 2c Grey on Ordinary Paper. Bottom Row: Hong Kong British Post Offices in China, 1922 KGV issues: SG19 2c, SG21 6c, SG22 8c & SG24 20c, all Wmk. Multiple Crown & Script CA.

One level up from the ground floor, SG now has a museum-type display of interesting old stamp-related items. According to what I heard an SG staff member tell another customer, the display area may have actually been closed at the time I was there, but I just walked up and had a good look at everything. I especially enjoyed seeing the old catalogues, traditional accessories, and even a couple of old board games based on stamp collecting.



Figure 8: Display case in the SG Museum showing board games that were based on stamp collecting. Time period looks to be from the 1970s or so.

All in all, I had a very nice visit to SG. It was not very crowded, and I was able to select a few nice quality individual stamps for my collection.

As SG sells individual stamps from their stock books at their current catalogue values, I tried to choose carefully and not buy anything too expensive. It was the most satisfying visit to SG that I have ever had.



Figure 9: The now-abandoned Stamp Centre was the other retail shop in London, right on The Strand and directly across the street from SG. Since the pandemic, they have permanently closed the London shop and moved to the Hertfordshire-Essex border, and seem to be operating primarily on eBay under the name of "strandstampcentre".

A Visit to the Royal Albert Hall

After the “high” of my stampy Saturday in London, I was ready to devote some time to other tourist pursuits, and my wife Amy had put together a nice plan encompassing some places that neither of us had managed to visit before.

The first such place, which would ultimately become the highlight of all the other sights, was the Royal Albert Hall (RAH). Prior to our visit, the only thing that I thought I knew about the RAH was that it was the place where, during the Beatles’ first performance there, John Lennon made his famous remark about people in the cheap seats clapping their hands, and everyone else rattling their jewelry. Ironically, I found out later that the quote was actually made in another venue (The Prince of Wales Theatre) in November 1963, while the Beatles’ first show at the RAH was more than six months earlier on 18th April 1963. Despite my misattribution in this case, there has, of course, been a lot of great pop music history made at the Hall by the Beatles and many other performers.

The history of the RAH begins with its namesake, Prince Albert, the Prince Consort and husband of Queen Victoria of England. Prince Albert was responsible for organizing the Great Exhibition of 1851 in Hyde Park in London, which is primarily remembered for its innovative steel-and-glass exhibition hall that became known as the Crystal Palace. The 6-month Exhibition was so successful that it led Prince Albert to propose the building of some permanent public structures near the site, but sadly little had happened by the time of Albert’s death in 1861. Queen Victoria wanted to see Albert’s legacy fulfilled, and eventually construction on the RAH started in 1867 and was completed in 1871.



Figure 10: Left: The Royal Albert Hall was depicted on a British stamp in 2019 as part of the celebration of the 200th Anniversary of the birth of Queen Victoria. Right: The Hall as it appeared on the day of our visit in May.

Today, the RAH is considered one of London’s most iconic buildings, and it is certainly its most famous and prestigious event venue. As luck would have it, our visit to the RAH was the first public tour held in 2021, the year marking its 150th anniversary, since the Hall was closed for more than a year due to the outbreak of the pandemic early in 2020. We had an excellent guide for our small group tour, and thanks to his extensive knowledge of the RAH’s history, we learned many interesting things about it.

For example, the proceeds from the Great Exhibition were used to acquire the land, but the funds needed to build the Hall were raised by selling the rights to the seats. In some cases, the seat rights have been passed down through the generations and have remained in the same families for the past 150 years. This practice reminds me of the “seat license” concept that is used by U.S. professional sports teams, which I first encountered in the 1990s, but I realize now that it was hardly a new idea!

Although my wife and I had always thought of the RAH as a concert hall for musical performances, it has actually hosted many other types of events, including tennis and boxing matches, automobile shows, ice skating shows, theatrical productions, lectures, beauty pageants, awards ceremonies, and much more. It is an amazingly versatile venue. In addition, we learned that it is truly a “hall for hire”, meaning that anyone who can afford to pay the fees can book the Hall for an event.

Fun facts about the RAH:

- Seating capacity of the Hall is listed as 5,272.
- The original acoustics were poor, which is why the interior has been modified more than once over the years to minimize the echo and improve sound quality. The current interior is equipped with acoustic diffusers, commonly referred to as “mushrooms” due to their shape, suspended from the ceiling. These are made from fiberglass and were installed in the 1960s.
- It was the largest brick structure in Europe when it was built.
- The Hall houses the second largest pipe organ in the British Isles, with 9,999 pipes. Liverpool Cathedral has the largest, with 10,268 pipes.
- The original exterior color was an orange-brown red, comprised principally of brick with terracotta trim, but when the building was sandblasted to clean those surfaces during its restoration in the 1940s, the treatment completely removed the dark color from the terra cotta portions of the structure, resulting in the two-tone look seen today.
- Prince Albert’s initial “A” appears in the building more than 13,000 times.
- Queen Elizabeth II allows her staff to use the event tickets allocated for the Royal Box when she is not in attendance.
- What is now the main entrance to the RAH was built as an addition to the structure in 2004 and is located where a much less prominent rear door used to be.

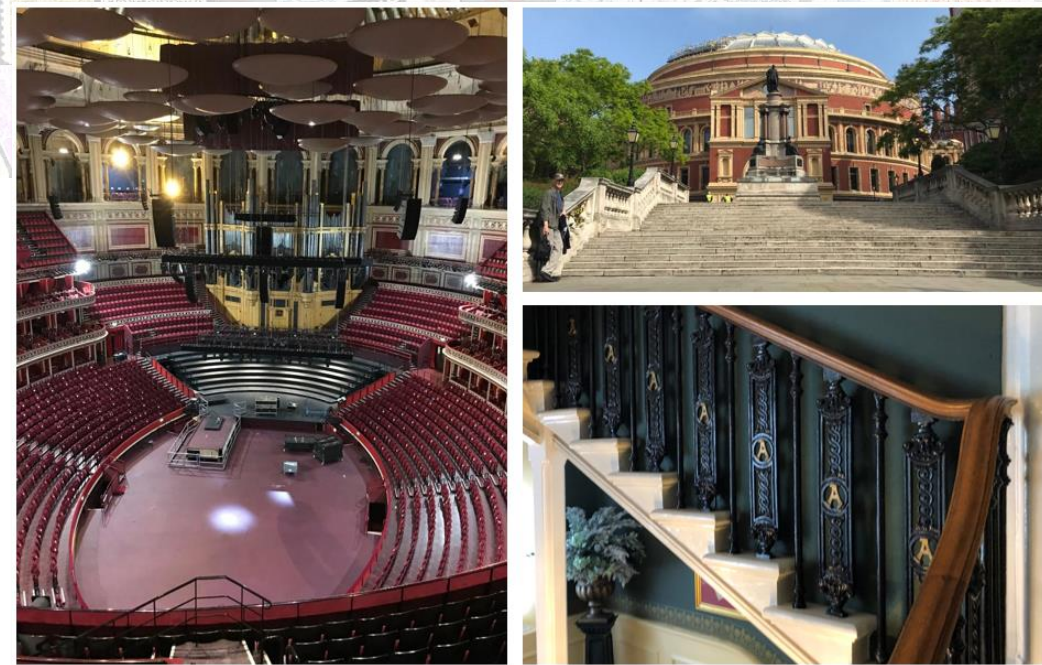
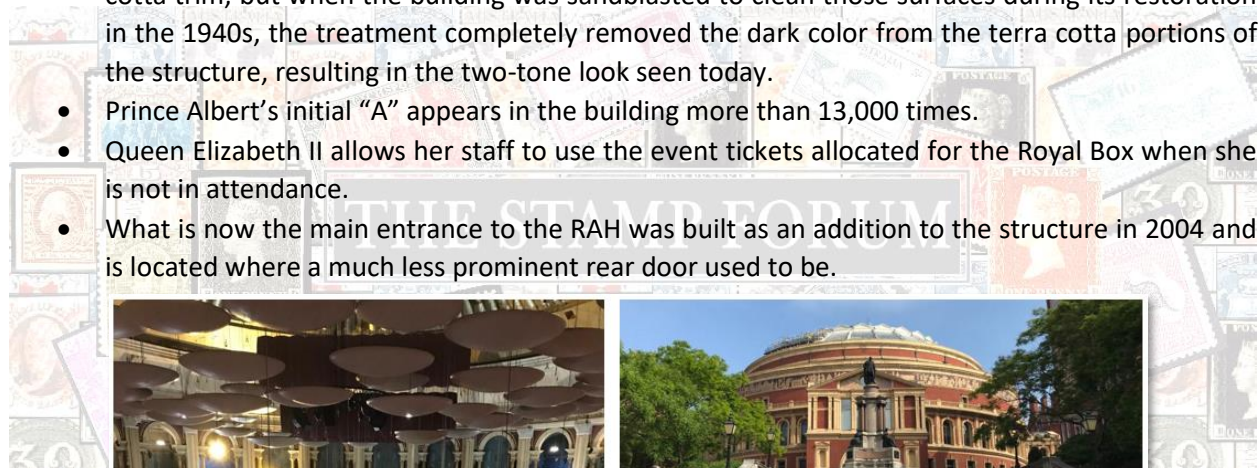


Figure 11: Left: The spacious interior of the Royal Albert Hall. Note the oval shape of the central floor, the prominent location of the pipe organ, and the acoustic diffusers hanging from the ceiling. Top Right: The Hall’s new main entrance, built to match the existing structure. Bottom Right: Stairwell ornamentation featuring the letter “A” as lasting tribute to Victoria’s devotion to the memory of Prince Albert.

More “New” Sights around London

From my personal perspective as a lover of history, there was no topping our experience at the Royal Albert Hall, but we did see some other great sights, which were also new to us on this trip. These included the Albert Memorial, seeing a play at the Globe Theatre, touring the Tower Bridge, visiting the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich, and exploring the new developments in the area around the old Battersea Power Station.

Figure 12: Left: The Albert Memorial, located just across the street from the RAH in the Kensington Gardens area of Hyde Park near the site of the 1851 Exhibition, was depicted on a stamp in 1980 (Great Britain, SG1121). Right: The Memorial as it appeared on the day of our visit in May.

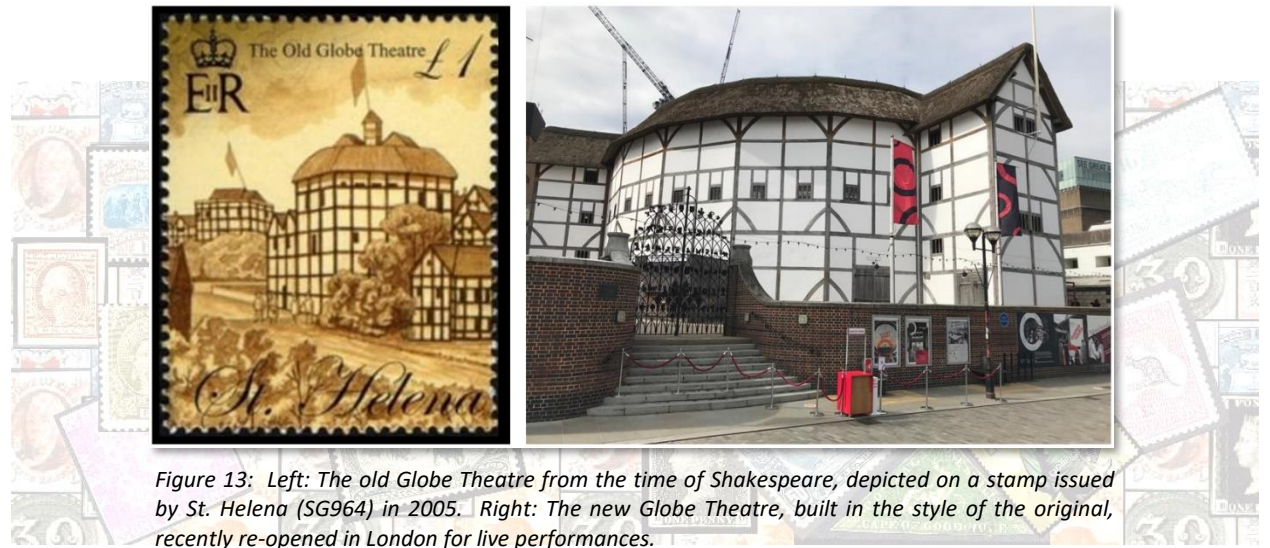


Figure 13: Left: The old Globe Theatre from the time of Shakespeare, depicted on a stamp issued by St. Helena (SG964) in 2005. Right: The new Globe Theatre, built in the style of the original, recently re-opened in London for live performances.

While we very much enjoyed our visits to Greenwich and Battersea, the photos we collected from those two destinations were limited compared to the other places. Greenwich is known primarily as the home of the Royal Observatory and location of the Prime Meridian, but due to heavy crowds on the day of our visit, we only had time to see the National Maritime Museum, which was interesting in its own right, but we didn't get much in the way of photos worth sharing.

Figure 14: Left: An historical artist's depiction of Tower Bridge shown here on Great Britain, SG2310 issued in 2002. Right: Photo of Tower Bridge taken from aboard a ferry on the River Thames.



Battersea, home to a large, beautiful park and a former electrical power station, is clearly an up-and-coming area, but it is still largely under development. The old power station, with its iconic four smokestacks, is now being renovated and adapted to its new purpose as a combination of museum, workspace and offices, retail shops, and living quarters. The station is situated very close to the River Thames, where some pedestrian walkways have already been built, but with more still under construction.



Figure 15: Photo taken from a portion of the finished walkway along the River Thames with a view of the old Battersea Power Station. Note the many cranes in the skyline as construction work is underway on many new buildings that will become part of the development. Inset Lower Right: Vintage image of the Battersea Power Station.

Overall, we had a great long weekend in London, and I am happy to have the chance to share some of my experiences with everyone on TSF. Let's hope that progress continues so that the Autumn Stampex Show will still be able to happen in London in September-October 2021.

Acknowledgements

I would like to gratefully acknowledge the contribution of my lovely wife Amy, who took some of the photos and helped with proofreading the draft article. I would also like to thank Mr. Andrew (Andi) Hall who, in addition to being our excellent RAH tour guide, also volunteered to fact-check this article in its draft form to ensure that everything I stated about the Royal Albert Hall is accurate.

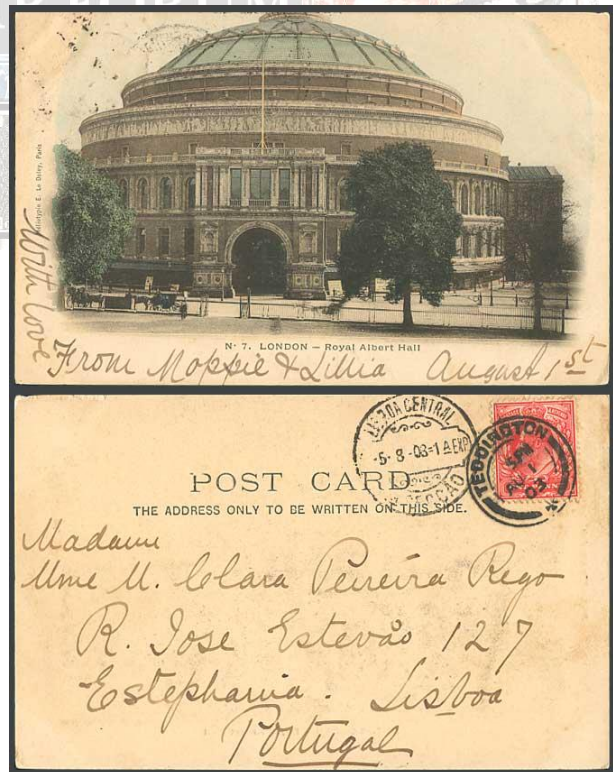


Figure 16: Vintage, hand-tinted postcard of the Royal Albert Hall, sent from the London suburb of Teddington to Lisbon, Portugal and postmarked on 1st August 1903.

**GREAT AMERICAN
STAMP SHOW**

AUGUST 12-15, 2021
**LOCATION: * DONALD E. STEPHENS
 CONVENTION CENTER**
5555 N RIVER RD • ROSEMONT, IL 60018

*All health and safety guidelines will be observed.

Great American Stamp Show: Chicago 2021

The Great American Stamp Show brings together stamp collectors from all over the world to share their ideas on the future of the hobby, the chance to reconnect with old friends and make new ones!

The FREE event is co-sponsored by the United States Postal Service. It will be held in the Donald E. Stephens Convention Center in Rosemont, Illinois.

The United States Postal Service will join the American Philatelic Society, American Topical Association, and the American First Day Cover Society at the Great American Stamp Show (GASS) for the first day of issue for the Backyard Games forever stamp. The event will take place on Thursday, August 12 as the dedication event to kick off the show. In addition to having the new issue available for purchase, the USPS will offer both a show pictorial cancellation and a first day of issue postmark.

Show highlights include:

- 75+ Dealers
- Cachetmakers Bourse
- 700+ Frames of Exhibits
- 3 of America's Rarest Postal Items
- Meetings & Seminar
- Youth Area and More

The show is family-friendly and free to the public. [Pre-registration](#) is recommended to save time and avoid on-site registration lines.

For more information on the show, [click here](#).

My One-Page Exhibit!

“My One-Page Exhibit!” is an American Topical Association (ATA) initiative to encourage new and experienced exhibitors to create single-page presentations of philatelic material that especially interests them. It is an opportunity to be creative and, most of all, share interests with the philatelic family. This is all about telling a story in one page!

Whether you are just thinking about becoming a philatelic exhibitor or want to test the waters on a new exhibiting idea, this is a program just for YOU. This will not be a judged exhibition or one where viewers can vote on a most favorite. It is a wide-open opportunity to show your stamps. The “My One-Page Exhibit!” site will be public in August as part of ATA’s participation in the Great American Stamp Show.

How to Create and Submit Your "One-Page" Exhibit

Create your exhibit

1. Title your exhibit and add your name. If you wish to communicate with others about your exhibit, add your email.
 2. Scan a page of a physical exhibit at 300 dpi and save as a pdf.
- or
1. Create your text in a program such as Publisher or Word.
 2. Images should be scanned at 300 dpi.
 3. Your principal philatelic images should be shown at full size (100%), but add cropped enlargements to show details or reductions of large items, such as covers, as needed to tell your story.
 4. Insert your images into your text file and save the page as a pdf.

Submit your exhibit

Email your exhibit to ataonepage@americantopical.org

The deadline to receive exhibits is July 15, 2021

One-Page Exhibit Examples: Three examples of one-page exhibits may be viewed [here](#).



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.

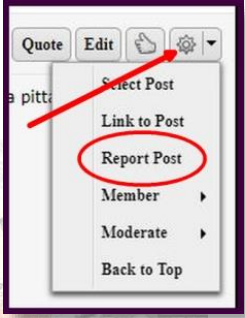
In addition to supporting the Forum, submitting material provides the opportunity for recognition by the American Philatelic Society through its Articles of Distinction program.

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

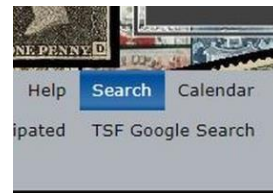
- Remember – civility is a required virtue on The Stamp Forum; ***treat all members with courtesy and respect.***
- The [Frequently Asked Questions about Using the Forum](#) board in the General Information category contains a wealth of information that should prove useful to members – consider checking 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, who’s 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

User Guide

- Account Creation and Logging In
- Threads, Posts, Polls, and Attachments
- Bookmarks
- Post Options
- Search
- Calendar
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- Viewing Profiles
- Your Profile Information
- Social Websites
- Profile Preferences
- Profile Privacy
- Notification Options
- Keyboard Shortcuts
- Glossary

Admins and Moderators

- 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



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

In Closing...

Four 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 for this and previous issues and hope that all find something of interest within these pages.

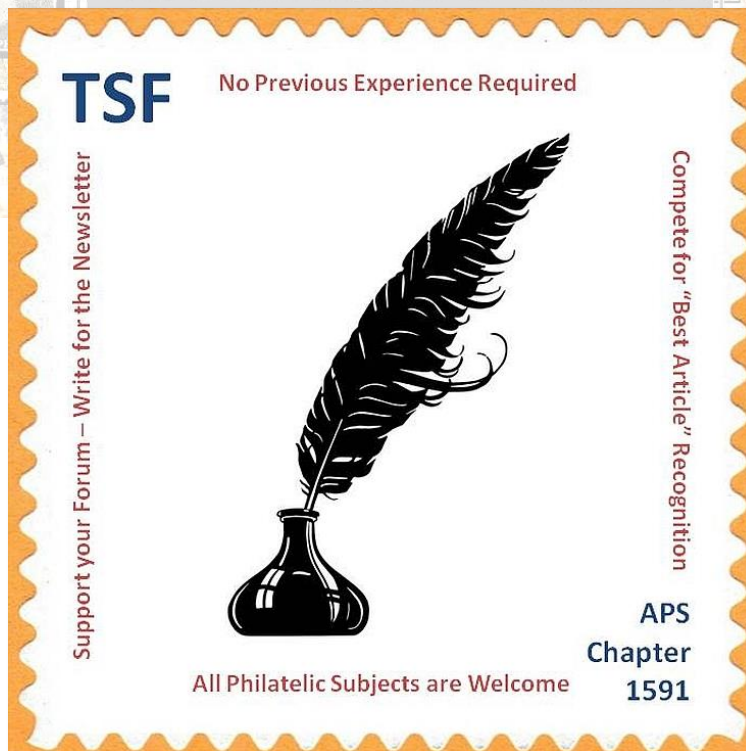
Please consider trying your hand at writing something for publication. If you aren't sure how to go about it, contact one of the editorial staff and we'll be happy to assist.

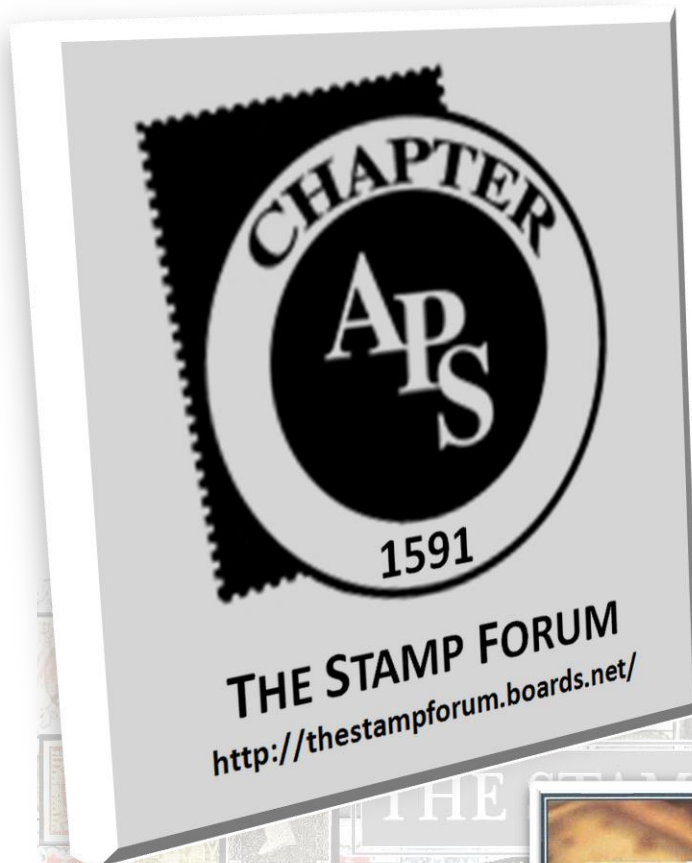
[Member support](#) is essential if we are to continue publishing a Newsletter. Any contributions of a philatelic nature will be considered for inclusion in a forthcoming issue (e.g., a catalog or book review, what I collect and why, a stamp show or bourse review, an intro to my local club, etc.).

We met our goal of getting back on schedule and hope to have the next issue, covering the period October - December 2021, completed by the third week of September. In order to meet that target, we'd like to receive your submissions by the first week of September 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!





The Stamp Forum became a Chapter of the American Philatelic Society on February 28, 2014, just 7 months after its inception. A key requirement for that distinction 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. We are again able to participate in the Chapter website and newsletter competitions.

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.

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.