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Letters • Year Dating 1847 Issue Covers • ROPEX goes International
New Issues • BUFPEX Awards

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ROPEX 2014

It is late April and the ROPEX committee is wrapping up the planning phase for this year's show and beginning to get prepared for the execution stage. The show will be smaller in both dealer count and exhibits than last year's shared show with the American Topical Association, however the quality of both will be strong and there should be ample opportunity for collectors to expand their collections and share experiences with their fellow philatelists.

ROPEX 2014 National Stamp Show Sponsored by the Rochester Philatelic Association

Friday, May 16	11 AM - 6 PM	<i>Show Theme:</i>
Saturday, May 17	10 AM - 5 PM	<i>Hot Cars, including</i>
Sunday, May 18	10 AM - 3 PM	<i>The Mustang's 50th!</i>

The Main Street Armory, 900 East Main Street, Rochester
\$2 Daily Admission (RPA Members/Youth Free), Free Parking

Off I-490 and the Inner Loop close to Village Gate Mall and the Memorial Art Gallery	• Dealers from the US and Canada
Early Bird Bourse (\$20 early entry fee) Friday, 9:30-11 AM	• Stamps, Covers, Post Cards, Supplies
	• 70 Frames of Competitive Exhibits
	• US Postal Service • Seminars/Meetings
	• Youth Area (Saturday and Sunday)
	• Special Cancels and Cachets
	• Free Stamp ID and Evaluation Services

<http://www.rpastamps.org/ropex.html> (585) 752-6178

The ROPEX awards banquet will be held at Rick's Prime Rib House, about a mile from the show hotel, on Saturday evening, May 18th. Cash bar at 6 PM, dinner at 6:30 PM. The buffet menu features carved prime rib and ham, pre-dinner cheese and crackers, crudités with dip, warm rolls, family style salad, chef's choice vegetable, pasta with broccoli aglio olio, penne with homemade marinara, and herb potatoes. The meal ends with coffee/tea and a cookie tray. Tickets are \$25 per person. Reservations must be received by May 9.

Make checks payable to "ROPEX." Send payment to Ray Stone, c/o RPA, PO Box 10206 Brighton Station, Rochester, NY 14610-0206. Questions? Call Ray at 585-266-2524.



Hand Cancel Dies, A Presentation by Larry Rausch

Many stamp collectors develop an interest for cancellations and postmarks on both stamps and envelopes. RPA member Larry Rausch takes this interest one step further. He collects the actual hand stamps and dies used to generate the cancellations when they were manually struck by postal workers. At our first club meeting in March, Larry brought many of his 50 hand stamp units to the club and presented the interesting story of the progression of hand stamps from their origination in the 19th century until their demise with machine cancellations in the middle of the 20th century.

Did you know that in 1860, U.S. Postmaster General Joseph Holt forbid the use of Circular Date Stamps (CDSs) to cancel the actual stamps. The thought was that dates and other important information on the cancellation would not be legible on the stamp such that the CDS should be beside the stamp. This led to the development of Obliterator cancels such as the oval version below and postal workers actually had to hand stamp mail twice, once with the CDS to capture date and city of origin and second to actually mark the stamp. The practice of placing the circular cancel beside the stamp was retained even after the advent of machine cancellations.



Circular Obliterators like this one were hand made by individual post offices to mark stamps as used.

(see Hand Stamps, continued on page 2)

Hand Stamps (continued from page 1)

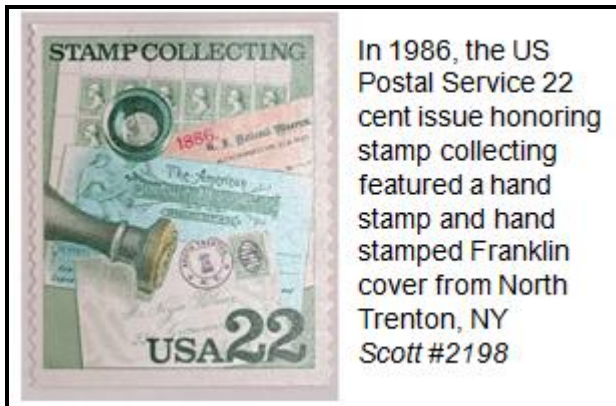
Of course, the ingenuity of those in the postal industry soon led to creative hand stamps including both the useful CDS and some version of an obliterator for the stamp itself. The Pryorsburg Rural Stn., Mayfield, KY stamp in the article header of page 1 is a duplex unit with a straight line obliterator. Killer obliterator that followed often contained identifying die numbers (below left) or even station names (below right).



Larry's collection includes pre-cancel plates and auxiliary marking stamps such as those depicted below, and he is constantly on the lookout for new additions to his collection. If you want to see Larry's complete powerpoint presentation, it is accessible on the meeting page of the RPA website <http://www.rpastamps.org/>



Left: 2X5 Precancel plate for Carmen, OK
Above: MISSENTI Auxiliary marking stamp



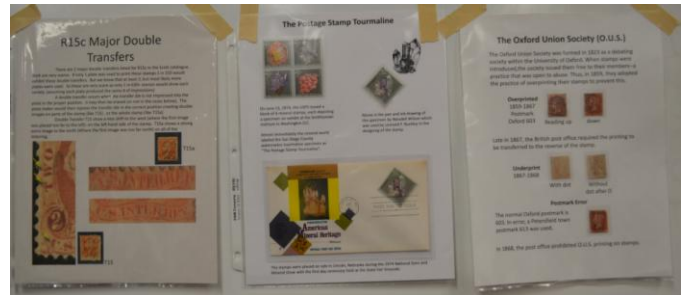
In 1986, the US Postal Service 22 cent issue honoring stamp collecting featured a hand stamp and hand stamped Franklin cover from North Trenton, NY
Scott #2198

Exhibiting Basics Re-Visited

At our first February meeting, 11 different members came with 16 separate one page exhibits to share. Tom Fortunato and Ray Stone reviewed judging forms and everyone present worked in teams to judge the one page exhibits. Everyone learned a lot about exhibiting while having fun viewing the very diverse set of single pages club members had worked to produce.



When the dust settled, and after Tom pointed out his observations on all presentations, the scores from all the new "judges" in the room were tallied and the top three one-page exhibits were identified.



From left to right above, they were Scott Martz's "R15a Major Double Transfer". Fred Haynes' The Postage Stamp Tourmaline", and Larry Rausch's "The Oxford Union Society (O.U.S.)". With these three to choose from the group voted the Tourmaline exhibit as "best in show".



Club President Rich Spinelli has everyone's rapt attention at the Feb. 13th meeting.

President's Message



My fellow RPA Members,

As we prepare for Ropex 2014 and close in on our last meetings of the 2013-2014 season, it's time to begin thinking about 2014-2015. In accordance with our constitution, we need not elect officers this year with one exception: Board member. That will occur next meeting.

A good start on preparing meeting presentations for next year will help out RPA officers over the summer. So, please, begin thinking about your presentation opportunities for next year.

Dust off you specialty, crank up your camera or your computer or, if you are not computer savvy, contact any officer to help arrange presentation assistance, and get working. Or, build your presentation around your items, no computer required. Don't hesitate on stepping forward. This year's array of presentations has been excellent. Next year's can be just as good, with your help. See you at Ropex!!!!

Your President, Rich Spinelli

It's approaching time to pay dues for the 2014-15 season as our fiscal year runs from July 1-June 30. ROPEX is a great opportunity to pay dues for the coming year. Make checks for \$20 payable to "RPA" and drop it off at the RPA Welcome Table. Mark "2014-15 Dues" on there as a reminder.



**ROPEX Hot
Cars Station
May 18, 2014
Rochester, NY 14623**



Stop by the RPA Table at ROPEX and check out our stamp offerings. We have a huge batch of 10 cent stamps to plow through as well as lots remaining from our recent auction being sold at rock bottom prices, everything from individual sets to US and worldwide collections. Something for everybody!

Upcoming RPA Meetings

Meetings are held downstairs at the Brighton Reformed Church, 805 Blossom Road beginning at 7 PM. The first half hour is reserved for silent auction viewing, show and trade among members, and general social interaction. The night's program kicks off at about 7:30 PM. An elevator is available for handicapped members.

Our spring schedule is full of interesting and varied subjects and our meetings are active and fun for all.

Saturday April 26. ..."Live Auction"

Auction is at 2:00 PM, viewing at 1:30 PM at the Brighton Reformed Church clubhouse (across the parking lot from our normal meeting site) *At this time, the club has 29 lots listed with minimum bids from \$5 to \$400. Check the website for details on these items. Club members who arrive before 1:30 PM can enter 5 lots each, club keeps 10% of lot sale price*

Thursday, May 8....."Ellsworth Civil War Patriotic Envelopes" by John Stoltz

Thursday, May 22"Before Photography: Velazquez and Goya" by Mario Sarra

Thursday, June 12....."How Different Hobbies and Collections Attract Different Genders" by Robert De Lena

Thursday June 26 Business meeting/Strawberries

Come join us each and every other Thursday night. Visit the RPA website for an complete list of 2014 events and meeting topics.

Fun Postal Fact



If you attended the February 27th club meeting and participated in the Stamp Quiz, you learned the significance of this post office building in Hinsdale, NH. If you missed that meeting, take a good look, give it a bit of thought, and then turn to page 6 for the answer.



In late February, the club received a card and a note from the East Rochester Library thanking us for the January exhibit in their library. Librarian Danette Weingarten wrote:

"Your stamp display for our East Rochester Public Library was outstanding. I appreciated the fact that you contacted me about the display and that you were able to do the display all by yourself. The display contained some aspects of the US Postal Service beyond stamps that caught the attention of all ages. Thank you to the Rochester Philatelic Association for a terrific exhibition."

In return, we thank the East Rochester Library for allowing us to exhibit and for posting several photographs of the exhibit on their Facebook page.



East Rochester RPA Display, January, 2014

The display is currently in the Newark, NY Public Library (April) and will be in the Pittsford Public Library in May.

And this note from one of our very active members:

Dear RPA Friends,

You are doubtless familiar with my long-time interest in trains. A couple of years ago I learned of the National Association of Railroad Passengers. Since I have often been one (a railroad passenger) and hope to be one again, I sent in my dues and became an official one!

The national organization's leadership comes from representatives chosen in each state by the general membership. Last Fall I learned that elections were coming up for these reps, and as candidates were sought, I decided to "toss my hat into the ring."

Since I joined an all-incumbent slate, I didn't imagine I would ever be elected – but I was!

So now, I join other state reps and regional ones and will attend my first meeting, scheduled just outside Washington DC at the end of April 2014. I trust I will be able to promote the advocacy for rail travel in an appropriate and productive manner. This is a two-year commitment and so I will need to curtail some of my half-dozen or more other volunteer activities.

So if I am a little slow in responding to things I should be responding to, please forgive! I will keep up as well as possible, but I am really looking forward to supporting the cause of train travel.

The words of Edna St. Vincent Millay come alive again – there isn't a train I wouldn't take, no matter where it is going – so I will board the 8:36 a.m. train at Rochester, NY later this month on my way to a new adventure!

Thanks for 'listening' and understanding.

Florence Wright



As many of you know, RPA club member Mark Scheuer has been collecting and documenting information on Covers and Postmarks from US #1 and #2 for many years and that he has presented his research results at past club meetings. For example at a May meeting in 2010, Mark reported that he has images of 3450 covers with either the 5 cent red brown Franklin or the 10 cent black Washington. Well, Mark was back at the RPA podium on April 10th (his birthday by chance), to report that he had now catalogued over 14,900 such covers with over 7,900 images and additional documentation about the specific cover. All of this can be accessed online at

<http://www.uspcs.org/resource-center/censuses/1847-cover-census/>

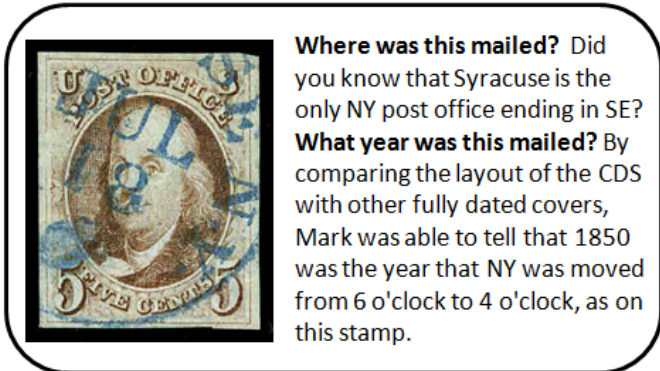
What additional information you might ask? Well, for starters what year was the cover mailed? The stamps were issued on July 1, 1847, but were discontinued as postage on June 30, 1851. However, the Circular Date Stamp (CDS) cancellation does not include a year. It only shows

See 1847 Cover Dating (continued on page 5)

1847 Cover Dating (continued from page 4)

the month, date, and post office where the cover was sent. Mark had to play detective to determine the year and in doing so he often learned much more and that was the subject of his talk in April.

Here is an interesting example. Not a cover, but where was this stamp mailed and in what year?



But Mark went much further with that by researching other groups of covers in search of information that would help ascertain the year of the cover. For example he learned that 54 covers mailed from St. Louis to a Miss E.E. Turner at different Boston addresses were mailed by her fiancé Charles Bailey Sawyer, a grocer in St. Louis. With St. Louis becoming Saint Louis on CDS after Nov, 1850, and tracking address changes, he was able to order the covers from 1849 through 1851. He later learned the two married and moved to St. Louis. Wonder what both would think to know that these covers, which later survived the Chicago fire of 1871, were now catalogued as important philatelic material?

If you want to learn more about Mark's detective work with these 160 year old covers, his full presentation is available on the RPA website.



One of 10 covers mailed from Boston to Miss Julia Fuller in Monson, MA early 1849. Several 1849-1850 covers are addressed to Mrs. Julia Damon. She married on Jan. 23, 1849 and died on April 1, 1850.

An International Exhibit at ROPEX

This year ROPEX will feature an exhibit from practically the opposite side of the planet. Charles Lawlor of Melbourne, Australia is sending his three frame exhibit entitled "Western Australia: Use & Abuse of the Post, 1831-1912". The exhibit was recently featured in an article in the Collie Times (a regional newspaper of Western Australia) when Mr. Lawlor presented the program at the Western Australia Study Unit, the philatelic club headquartered in Perth. In that article, Laura Newey notes that the exhibit will be "next shown at the 2014 ROPEX Exhibition and show in Rochester, NY to compete in a national stamp exhibition as part of the American Philatelic Society's world series of philately exhibitions."

Mr Lawlor's exhibit focuses on Australian examples of postage evasion, counter-intuitive routing, redirection, advertised and unclaimed, paid in cash, reply paid, re-routing, undeliverable, resealing, prohibited Tattersall's mail and disallowed franking. The exhibit was awarded the Best Post History Exhibit at the recent philatelic show at the University of Western Australia. And you thought ROPEX was just a North American event!

If you wish to get a preview of the other exhibits, including their title pages and synopsis, visit the ROPEX webpage linked to the club page. Just scroll down and check out the 16 exhibits planned in this year's show.



**Mark your calendar
May 16-18, 2014**

<http://www.rpastamps.org/ropex.html>



ROPEX 2014 will feature a new medal for exhibit winners. The handsome medallion is 2.5" in diameter and 3 mm thick.

Two New US Issues

Two famous Americans have been honored by recent stamps. On March 13th, World War II African-American aviator C. Alfred “Chief” Anderson was featured on a 70 cent (2-ounce rate) commemorative in the Distinguished Americans series. On April 11th, the 18th stamp in the Legends of Hollywood series featured Charlton Heston, an actor noted for heroic roles in epic movies. An image of Heston from the 1959 movie Ben-Hur decorates the selva.



Fun Postal Fact –Answer

The Hinsdale, NH post office was built in 1816 and is the oldest post office building still in use as a post office (see page 3).

Canadian New Issues Are Out of This World



2014 is the International Year of Astronomy and on April 2nd Canada released two stamps depicting important Canadian observatories and highly studied nebula. On the left is the joint Canadian-France-Hawaii Telescope (CFHT) and the Eagle Nebula in the constellation Serpens. The second stamp depicts the Horseheads Nebula in the constellation Orion atop the Dominion Astrophysical Observatory in Saanich, British Columbia. Both nebulae were photographed by Jean-Charles Cuillandre with the CFHT.

Congratulations - BUFPEX Gold

Two RPA members won gold medals for their exhibits in March in the Buffalo Stamp Show (BUFPEX). Ada Prill actually was awarded gold for each of her 3 exhibitions..

Gold Awards:

Alice Johnson - A Multitude of Angels
Ada Prill – Star Cancels of Delaware County, NY

Ada Prill – UH-OH! Mistakes in US Auxiliary Markings

Ada Prill – What’s a Telephone Good For

Ada’s exhibit entitled :What’s a Telephone Good For” was further honored as best in show.



Watch for the 10 songbird stamp booklets later this summer