



ROPEX 2020

RPA Membership Age • Upcoming Meetings/Shows
rpastamps.org • E-bay
Bark Shanty, MI • Holyland Forerunner Posts
Country Issue #1 • Orchids and Maine

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ROPEX 2020 is three months away and the planning is underway. We anticipate a full floor of dealers and we already have filled virtually all of the exhibit frames. For the 6th consecutive year our club's annual National Philatelic World Series of Philately Event will be held at the Greater Canandaigua Civic Center. The venue is perfect for such an event with great lighting, lots of room, and free, easily accessible parking. As with the past two ROPEX, the show will be a two-day event running on Friday May 15th and Saturday May 16th. Mark your calendars!

RPA has selected to honor two important anniversaries with thematic covers and cancellations at this year's show. On Friday, we will celebrate the 400th anniversary of the landing of the Mayflower in Plymouth, MA. On Saturday, the theme will be the 100th anniversary of passing the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution allowing women's suffrage.

was also honored in 1970 upon its 50th anniversary and again during the Centennial celebration stamp issues. The USPS plans to celebrate both with new stamps during 2020 also. Unfortunately it appears the new stamps will not be issued before ROPEX.



Scott #548 (1920)



Scott #3184e (2000)

New USPS stamps for 2020
Dates of release TBA



Past stamps honoring the ROPEX 2020 themes and new stamps to be issued later this year



Amy Rau has designed special cancels which have been ordered through the USPS. Cachets for each commemorative cover remain to be designed.

The United States has honored both events in the past including the Pilgrims' landing in 1920 with a tercentenary 1 cent Mayflower stamp and again on the 350th anniversary in 1970. Women's Suffrage



The silent auction table was full and busy at our meeting on January 9th.

RPA Membership Age

A few years ago, RPA canvassed its membership to determine the average age of its members. At the time the average age was just over 70 years young. Since then, we had thought that we might have gotten younger owing to new members that have joined us coupled with the unfortunate loss of a few long-term members.

But a review of our membership list reveals that this is not the case. RPA currently has 86 members, including both life-time and regular members, and the average age is 69.8 years old. I guess the explanation is that all of us who were members during the earlier survey have grown sufficiently longer in the tooth to offset the younger newer members who have joined us.

Upcoming RPA Meetings

Thurs. Feb. 27th 2019 Linn's Popularity Poll
Everyone gets to vote for the best (and worst) US stamps of the previous year. You can prepare by visiting the website link below:
<http://secure.amospublishing.com/Legacy/Poll/>

March 12th and March 26th -- TBA

April 9th and April 23rd -- TBA

May 14th and May 28th -- TBA

As you can tell from the schedule above, we have a few open dates and we are actively seeking programs to fill these slots. If you have a program that you can present, please let us know.

Meetings begin at 7 PM at the JCC in Brighton. The first half hour is for silent auction, show/trade among members, and general member interaction. The evening program begins at 7:30 PM.

Regional Stamp Shows/Bourses

February 23rd **Rochester Stamps and Coins Show**, North Greece Fireman's Field, 3666 Latta Rd.
Hrs: 10:00-4:00 PM, ~8 dealers
Contact: J. Stoltz, 585-507-3533
E-mail: jstoltz@rochester.rr.com

Feb 29th -Mar 1st **Cheektowaga** BUFPEX
VFW Leonard Post, 2450 Walden Ave.
Hours: 10-5. Bourse.
Email: gghg53@aol.com
Contact: George Gates, 716-633-8358

Visit our [online calendar](#) for even more information on area stamp shows.

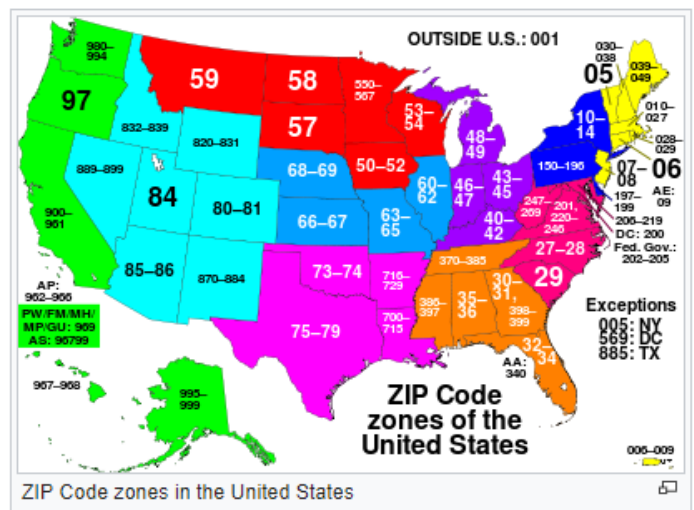
Buying Stamps on eBay

At our first meeting of 2020, Charlie Adrion reviewed the processes of bidding and buying stamps on eBay. He addressed best practices, or at least those that have worked for him, and also the pros and cons on online auction style stamp purchasing.

Charlie's full set of slides for his presentation can be viewed in the meeting section of the RPA webpage. [Here is a direct link to the pdf file.](#)



Charlie Adrion (standing) led a discussion of buying on eBay at our January 9th meeting. He started out by asking for a show of hands of all who purchased stamps on eBay. A lot of hands were raised.



Primary United States zip codes are 5-digit codes assigned to postal regions. Who knows how many of the possible 99,999 numbers are actually active zip codes today? **Look to page 6 for an answer.**

The Rochester Philatelic Association

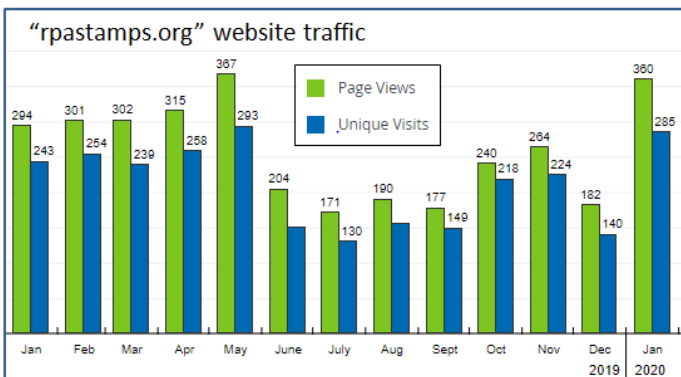
rpastamps.org

How many of you frequently visit the [RPA website](http://rpastamps.org) for philatelic and club news? Thanks to our webmaster Tom Fortunato, the site contains a virtual treasure chest of information. Did you know that you could re-read all Hinges and Tongs issues of the past 14 years and many dating back as far as 1977? Or that full programs (Powerpoint and pdf format) from many of our meetings of the past decade can be accessed from the meetings page?

Naturally, all the ROPEX news for this coming year's show is available. The full list of exhibits and exhibitors is there and many have already provided title pages and synopses that can be viewed with the click of a mouse button. In addition, you can look at exhibits and other [news from the past 20 ROPEX](#).

There are sections on RPA's illustrious 107 year history, the club's library, and our commemorative cancels and show covers over the years (lower right). Tom maintains a complete and accurate list of upcoming regional stamp shows and bourses. There are more than 100 member presentations and exhibits listed under categories including US, worldwide, thematic, and hobby interest.

You might be interested to know that we can track the usage of our website using a website analytics software package called Statcounter. One could probably predict that ROPEX leads to an increase in visits in May, but would you have predicted that statistically January is the second most visited month almost every year? This past month was particularly busy, perhaps due to interest in Larry Rausch's treatise on the [Wheel of Fortune cancellation](#), which is fully available on the site.



Rpastamps.org website usage for the past 13 months

We can also view the location of folks who visit our website. As you would expect, a majority of visitors come from western New York and the surrounding area. But we are a global organization! At least we are in terms of the reach of our webpage. A recent search indicates that the last 200 folks to visit rpastamps.org come from every continent except Antarctica. Of those 200 visits, a bit more than one third come from New York State, but 22 other US states are represented and about 25% of our site's visitors come from outside the United States.



This map highlights the locations of the last 200 visits to our club website.

Remember, the next time you are looking for philatelic news, you might start with our club website. The menu on the main page is easy to use. Surf around a bit and be surprised by what you can learn. And the next time you see Tom Fortunato, thank him for his work in developing and maintaining this site for all of us.



In the past, ROPEX has honored space, baseball, lighthouses, and yes, even handcarts with show-related cachets. See them all online.

Bark Shanty, Michigan by Larry Rausch



I acquired this old postal hand stamp on eBay in 2014. It is typically hard to date old hand stamps such as this one. However, in this case the town was renamed Port Sanilac after only three years. A hand stamp for Bark Shanty, Michigan was only used from 1854-1857.

This village was originally a lumber mill settlement on the shore of Lake Huron named "Bark Shanty." In the late 1840s and 1850s William Austin and others established a sawmill, a schoolhouse, and a general store in the small community. In 1854, Bark Shanty's first post office opened with William Van Camp as the first (and last) postmaster to use this hand stamp. In 1857, the village was renamed Port Sanilac, as it is in Sanilac Township in Sanilac County. Local legend attributes the name to a Wyandotte Indian Chief named Sanilac.



This 1934 cover used the hand stamp to add the Sanilac Centennial Postmark. It is dated July 4, 1934.



This is a view of Port Sanilac as it looks today located on the western shore of Lake Huron, 95 miles north of Detroit with an estimated 2017 population of 584 and a zip code of 48469.

The Forerunner Posts in the Holyland

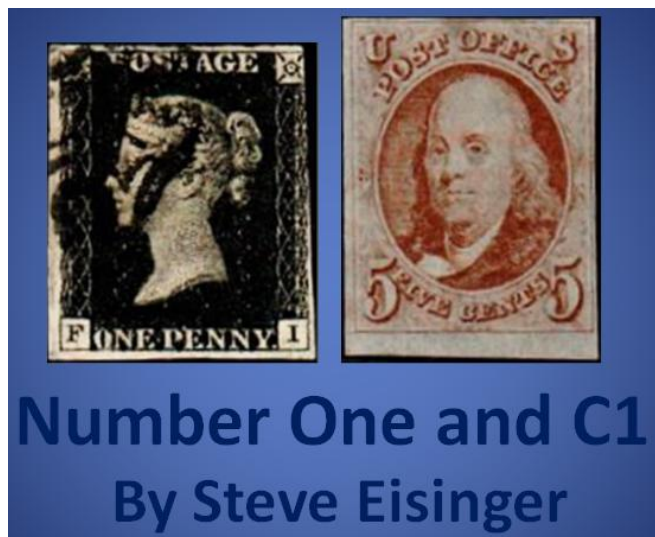
At our January 23rd meeting, RPA President Jack Rosenstein shared his knowledge and cover collection from the various postal systems that have issued stamps and delivered mail in and around the Holyland region. As you might imagine given the history of this region, the story is not simple and the philatelic material is rich with unusual and sometimes hard to interpret material.

After using maps to give a brief history lesson of the region from the time of the Ottoman Empire (pre-1800) through its gradual dissolution during the 1800s, Jack used postal covers to illustrate some of the more recent history. He showed covers from places like Acre, Beersheva, and Beni Saab, and finally from Bethlehem and Jerusalem. Many displayed markings indicating inspection or censorship causing one to wonder if these covers ever reached the intended recipient.



Both these examples from Jack's collection carry markings indicating inspection.

[Visit our webpage to see the full presentation.](#)



Steve Eisinger entertained RPA members brave enough to venture out on a winter night in early February with a review of his quest to obtain as many of the world's number one and C1 (airmail) stamp issues as possible. Steve explained that his original objective had been to obtain the oldest stamp he could find/afford for each Scott listed entity (country or colony, etc.). He would replace a stamp in this collection if he could find an older one.

However that objective slowly evolved as Steve meticulously screened Scott's six volumes to create a list of all number one regular issues and all number one air mail issues. With that list complete he truly could focus on a finite number of stamps to obtain. At the meeting he shared that list with us and his adventures to date in filling it.

During Steve's research into "Number Ones", he learned some interesting informal facts. For example, did you know that there are 617 stamp issuing countries (or colonies) that appear in the Scott Catalog and that 344 of them (58%) are defunct? Three of these defunct entities only issued one stamp: Jaskan, Jahalawar and Tonk were Indian Feudatory States. We all know that Great Britain issued the first stamp (the penny black) in 1840 and that the United States' first stamp depicting Ben Franklin was issued in 1847 (both depicted in the title graphic), but did you know that 90 countries had joined the philatelic world by 1860?

Airmail stamps, of course, had to await the invention of the airplane in the 20th century. Italy issued the first air mail stamp in 1917, followed by a host of countries, including the United States, in 1918. To date, 201 countries have issued at least one air mail stamp; Honduras has issued the most. We wondered why at the meeting, but had no answer.

Steve showed and discussed many of the world's number one issues that he owns. Many of the older 19th century issues depict monarchs or coat of arms and some are common issues among many states (i.e. the French or Portugal colonies). Overprints of earlier stamps are common as new countries struggle to quickly produce a stamp for their fledgling nation. Naturally, newer 20th century countries have more colorful, and in some cases, commemorative themes on their first stamp.



Two of Steve's favorites for content and expression: Ghana's first stamps in 1957 depicted a map of Africa, a palm-nut vulture and the leader of the new country, Kwame Nkrumah. Newfoundland's first air-mail stamp depicts Alcock and Brown leaving St. John's, Newfoundland in 1919 on the first airplane to cross the Atlantic non-stop.

If you owned all 617 Number Ones in mint condition your collection would have a catalog value of over 2.8 million dollars. Of course more than 78% of that value would be tied up in the stamps from Mauritius (\$1.25 million), Hawaii (\$600K) and British Guiana (\$275K). Those are three that still elude Steve. However, he does have 211, or just over one third, of the world's number one issues. He is doing a bit better with the C1 stamps, with copies of 97 (48%) of those listed in Scott.

Steve closed the evening by saying he will buy #1 and C1 issues that he lacks. His last slide read "show me a stamp or make me an offer". You can see his full RPA presentation on the meeting page of our website:

<http://www.rpastamps.org/presentations/number1.pdf>



New Stamp Releases in the Next Month



Exotic Orchids – Release Date February 21, 2020.

John Kellas has been telling us about the upcoming set of US orchid stamps for some time now. Well, it is about to happen. This month, the USPS is releasing a set of ten colorful orchid stamps which will “celebrate the exotic beauty of orchids.” Each stamp features a photograph of one of the nine species that grow wild in the US. It will be up to you to figure out which orchid gets featured twice! The stamps will be issued in booklets of 20, or for those with a need for large quantities, in coils of 3,000 or 10,000. You will have to go Florida to attend the First Day of Issue celebration. The event will be in Coral Gables on February 21st.



Maine Statehood – Release date is March 14, 2020.

On March 15th, 1820, Maine became the 23rd state in the Union. On March 14th, 2020 the bicentennial of Maine’s entry to the union will be marked by a Maine Statehood postage stamp. The stamp will depict the rugged beauty of the Maine coastline as captured by American painter Edward Hopper. Although a New Yorker, Hopper often sought the tranquility of the Atlantic coastline during the summer. His 1914 painting is entitled “Sea at Ogunquit”, a small community in southern-most Maine. The first day event will be held in the capital city of Augusta.

**Join us for the
ROPEX 2020
Stamp Show**

**Fri. – Sat.
May 15 – 16
Hours 10-6, 10-3**

**Canandaigua
Civic Center
250 North
Bloomfield Rd**

ROPEX 2020

Forever USA

Mayflower 1620

ROPEX 2020

**Passage
of the
Susan B.
Anthony
19th
Amendment
1920**

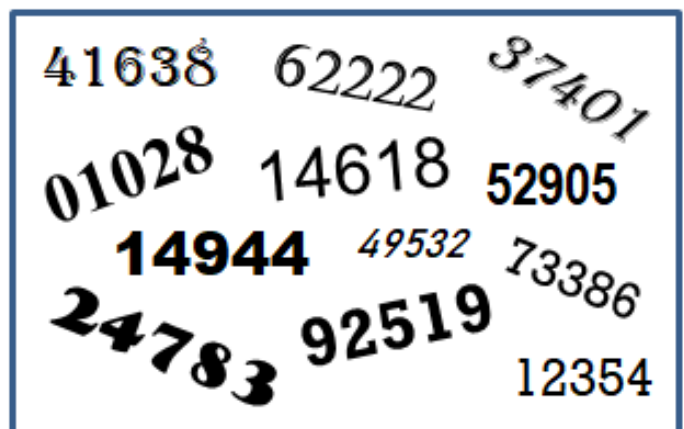
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of 125 competitive
frames. Apply early!**

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2-7 @ \$15/Frame
8-10 @ \$100**

**Dealers: Tables
starting at \$225**

**See info and
apply online at
rpastamps.org
585-752-6178
stampmf@gmail.com**



from Page 2: Of the 99,999 available numbers for zip codes across the United States, a total of 41,702 (or less than half of the available numbers) were in use as of October, 2019. Interestingly, numbers 00001 to 00500 are not used. The lowest number zip code in use is 00501 and it belongs to the IRS processing center in Holtsville, New York