

SYNOPSIS

The exhibit consists of hand drawn and hand painted watercolor covers by early cachet artist and Visiting Fireman of Philately (VF) founder Bruce R. McIntyre. He painted covers from the late 1920s through the late 1950s. A characteristic of his covers is that his cachets cover as much of his cover as possible. These poster-like covers are reminiscent of the poster art of the 1930s.

The covers in the exhibit are primarily of VF events and are arranged in chronological order. Being hand painted, the covers are believed to be one of a kind. No records have been found as to the number of each cover McIntyre painted, nor are any of the covers numbered. The covers are part of a collection of McIntyre covers (first days, political covers and other event covers) collected by the exhibitor over a forty year period. The covers are extremely scarce and are hard to find. Their value is in their beauty.

The exhibit starts by showing what is believed to be the earliest known McIntyre cover, April 1933, to announce the formation of the VF. Other covers announce meetings or, "conflagrations" as they were called, of various other stamp clubs that were members of the VF.

A cover commemorating the formation of the "Sprinkling Cans" is shown. The group was formed by the Firemen's wives whom were also stamp collectors. It is said that this group was formed in retaliation to the men forming the VF.

It had always been thought that McIntyre had drawn all of his covers. However, it was **discovered when putting this exhibit together** that this was not always true. Due to members asking for his Rubber City Stamp Club, Akron, Ohio, horse and rider conflagration cover, he came up with the idea to print only the horse and rider on a cover. He would then water color in the horse and rider and sketch in a background. This would allow him the time to produce more covers. Further, he came up with the ingenious idea - in my opinion - to print the rider without his head and minus his hand. By doing this he could use the horse and rider for other cachets by changing the rider's facial expressions as well as his hat. He also could add something into the riders hand to fit the occasion. The background around the horse and rider was then sketched and painted tying everything together for the theme of the cachet. All of this is shown and explained for the first time in the exhibit. McIntyre later used his "horse and rider" for his first day covers for the Presidential Series -1938-1954. No other covers have ever been found where McIntyre used any printing on his covers other than the horse and rider.

McIntyre liked to create different and unusual covers not only with his art work but also by using different stamps and special postmarks on his covers. Examples of these covers are shown and are so noted in the exhibit. There are also foreign VF covers in the exhibit.

In conclusion - McIntyre portrays himself on his covers when he was removed (October 1933) from being an officer in the VF due to dissention among its members. McIntyre never forgave his friends for this, for he again portrays himself on anniversary covers of the event which are also shown.

From the time that McIntyre was ousted as an officer he apparently quit painting conflagration covers. No such covers have ever been found. He ceased to be a member of VF sometime in 1937.

Also shown in the exhibit are a VF membership card which McIntyre had intentions of copy writing and a membership certificate designed and hand lettered by McIntyre.

REFERENCES

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The American Philatelist, October 1990, pgs, 919-920