



# WASHINGTON CITY DESPATCH



NEWSLETTER OF THE WASHINGTON STAMP COLLECTORS CLUB  
VOLUME 2 NUMBER 3                      WHOLE NUMBER 9                      MAY-JUNE 2007

## The *Graf Zeppelin* 1928 America Flight Drop over Washington, D.C.

by Cheryl Ganz



Postcard dropped over Washington, D.C., and then forwarded by regular means to Switzerland, where it was taxed postage due.

In October of 1928, less than a month after its first test flight, the German LZ127 *Graf Zeppelin* flew round trip from Friedrichshafen, Germany, to Lakehurst, New Jersey, to demonstrate the feasibility and practicality of commercial transatlantic service. The round trip not only set a distance record but it was the first transatlantic dirigible flight operated as a passenger carrier for profit, the first flight for which a government had issued official zeppelin stamps, and the first westbound flight over the Atlantic Ocean with a woman onboard, journalist Lady Drummond Hay. This dramatic flight received considerable press coverage during the harrowing time crew members repaired a damaged stabilizer fin while in flight.

When the *Graf Zeppelin* approached the American coast, Commander Hugo Eckener ordered a message sent ahead to alert Washington, D.C., that they would fly overhead on their way north to New York City before landing at Lakehurst, New Jersey. The zeppelin approached the nation's capital just after noon from the south along the Potomac River and then cruised for twenty minutes over the city center on a route that included the Capitol, Navy Department, a circle around the Washington monument, the White House, and the German Embassy.

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## *President's Corner*

### Club Members Pay Visit to APS Headquarters

Stellar stamps, good food, the Victorian charm of Bellefonte, and a guided tour of the expansive new APS headquarters were among the highlights of a mid-November road trip taken by Matt Cassetta, Virginia Randolph and Eric Brown.

The rustic locale is truly charming, with a river, lots of greenery and occasional railroad cars offering a tranquil view. After exploring the impressive offices, meeting facilities and library of the former match factory, our group spent the majority of our two-day visit enjoying the kind (and exceptionally patient) hospitality of the Sales Division staff. To our delight, the entire APS staff was incredibly welcoming and helpful, even on a day's notice. We definitely appreciated the benefits of being APS members!

After a full afternoon pouring through literally hundreds of circuit books, we enjoyed a well-earned gourmet dinner at a renovated old mill before heading back to our rooms at the Colony Lodge (cheap in every sense of the word). Using the ample bedspreads as tables allowed us to browse through yet more circuit books into the wee hours. Eric was glad he brought shampoo because the motel provided none. The surprisingly comfortable mattresses offered an adequate night's rest after a long day of philatelic revelry.

The next, cold morning we bravely showered with thin army-style towels, wisely skipping the free coffee in the lobby run by the mysterious lady manager from India, who only emerged from behind a closed office door when the bell rang. Safely back in town, we enjoyed breakfast in a friendly local coffee shop not owned by Starbuck's, before heading back to APS for another drawer or two of circuit books (from which we each chose 20 to take home on approval).

To refresh our elated but bleary eyes, we headed up the hill to a nearby local eatery for wonderful homemade soups and sandwiches. We enjoyed an hour-long exploration of the old-time charms of quaint Bellefonte. These included a beautiful old post office, ice cream sodas at a Rexall Drug Store, and two old movie theaters that had been combined into a fascinating antique mall. (There's much more to do and see, so we definitely recommend a two-night stay.)

For one last time, we headed back to APS for a final look at the sales books. APS Sales Manager Tom Horn assured us that by the time of our next visit, the selection of circuit books would be completely different! Eventually the three of us gathered in the spacious library, where Eric had a great time reading H.E. Harris catalogs from the 1930s-1960s. After checking out some books, we strolled around the corner to pick up stamp insurance applications from Hugh Wood's agency.

If you've never been to APS Headquarters, you must see what you're missing.

*-- Matt Cassetta*



### *Zeppelin over D. C., continued from page 1*

Government offices emptied as enthusiastic spectators filled the streets and rooftops. Those in automobiles blew their horns. President Calvin Coolidge, surrounded by secret service guards, watched from the lawn of the legislative offices. His wife stood on the roof of the White House for a good view, and the *Graf Zeppelin* dipped in salute as it passed overhead.

During its flight over Washington, D.C., an unofficial mail drop was made (Sieger Zeppelinpost Catalog # 21.I). Later that day someone on board dropped mail again over New York and Toms River, New Jersey. On October 17 the *New York Times* reported that mail had been found in D.C. and delivered to the post office:

#### **“Zeppelin Drops Wrong Mail Sack.**

Washington, Oct. 16 (AP).

Thirteen-year-old Bernard Ricker of this city doesn't think much of the *Graf Zeppelin* as a mail ship. He recovered a sack of mail dropped from the ship as it passed over Washington yesterday. None of the mail was addressed to Washington and Postmaster C.P. Mooney forwarded it. Post Office authorities believe the bag was dropped here by mistake. It fell in a school ground.”

Post office personnel expected mail dropped over Washington to be for persons living or working in Washington, but instead crew members and passengers had addressed their message to friends and relatives. They wanted a special souvenir—an unofficial or “wild drop” souvenir. The mail was dropped without postage and so postage was collected at the destination of each piece of mail. The card illustrated is addressed to Switzerland with Swiss postage due stamps attached. Sieger does not indicate the number of dropped items reported and the bags used for mail drops were often about the size of a #10 envelope with a ribbon attached. One can assume that only a handful exist of this scarce and fantastic document in zeppelin philately!

## *Editor's Corner*

Many thanks to Cheryl Ganz for responding to my plaintive call for articles for the newsletter. Editors always need “stuff” and I am no exception. The more material on hand when composing a newsletter, the easier and more enjoyable it is to do. I always like to have at least one philatelic article in every newsletter to go along with all the club news, meeting programs, and announcements that have to go into the newsletter. It is when I have to write the article that it gets tough. So, again thanks Cheryl for answering the call and remember you too can answer the call -- YOUR EDITOR NEED ARTICLES FOR THE NEWSLETTER ESPECIALLY PHILATELIC ARTICLES ABOUT WASHINGTON, DC.

## WSCC MEETING PROGRAMS MAY -- JUNE 2007

- May 2**      **Annual Album Competition** Members are to bring an album, display it to those present, who will vote for the BEST ALBUM. A cash prize of \$25.00 goes to the winner.
- May 16**      **Circuits, Swap, and Talk**
- June 5**      **NAPEX Review**
- June 19**      **Members Auction:** Auction sale of philatelic material for the benefit of the contributing member.

## COMING EVENTS

Upcoming area and regional club sponsored stamp shows and other philatelic events

**June 1-3**      **NAPEX, National Phil. Exhibitions of Washington D.C.**, McLean Hilton at Tyson's Corner, 7920 Jones Branch Dr., McLean. Contact John Warren, warren.john@epa.gov; www.napex.org; 202-564-6876.

**August 31-September 2**      **BALPEX, Baltimore Philatelic Society**, Marriott's Hunt Valley Inn, 245 Shawan Rd., I-83 Exit 20 E., Hunt Valley. Contact Robert E. Gibson, Sr., balpex@aol.com; www.balpex.org; 410-332-4741.

**September 7-9**      **Philadelphia National Stamp Exhibition, Associated Stamp Clubs of Southeastern Pennsylvania & Delaware, Inc.**, Valley Forge Convention Center, 1160 First Ave., King of Prussia. Contact Chip Blumberg, pnse@earthlink.net; http://pnse.home.att.net; 610-828-8631.

**November 9-11**      **VAPEX, Virginia Philatelic Federation, Inc.**, Holiday Inn - Patriot, 3032 Richmond Road, Williamsburg. Contact David B. Collins, rainbowx2@cox.net; http://members.aol.com/vashow/; 757-872-6264.

## EXHIBITORS WANTED

Member Pat Walker who is Exhibits Chairman for BALPEX this year is looking for stamp and postal history collections to be exhibited at BALPEX this coming Labor Day weekend. Additional information, Prospectus, and Entry Forms are available. Contact Pat Walker at email psw123@comcast.com or phone at 410-442-1034 or FAX at 410-489-5318 or writing to P. O. Box 99, Lisbon, MD 21765

## John R. Weimer, 1924-2007

Dr. John Weimer approached his philatelic hobby the same way he approached everything in life--with passion, determination, and accomplishment. He served in the Navy, became an ophthalmologist, and served as a medical officer in the Air Force. His love of flying led to his pilot's license and aerophilately. He received the American Air Mail Society President's Award for his service as the coordinator of slide programs. His philatelic love, however, was postal stationery. John served as editor of *Postal Stationery*, journal of the United Postal Stationery Society, from 1988 B 1996. During that time he compiled the *Index of Postal Stationery, Volume 1 B Volume 33* and authored *Specimens of Stamped Envelopes and Wrappers of the United States*. John had also edited the bulletin of the Washington Philatelic Society and served as president of NAPEX. He volunteered at museums in Washington D.C., including the Smithsonian National Postal Museum, the National Air & Space Museum, and the National Archives. He and his wife, Ann, donated airmail covers and a V-mail Collection to the National Postal Museum, further ensuring his legacy as a scholar and generous philatelist.

## WSSC MEMBER PROFILE

by Phil Uhlmann



**MILTON HOLMES** Milton is a lifelong resident of the Washington, DC area, having been born here in 1927 -- the same year as the old Collectors Club of Washington was established. He is a WWII veteran, having served two years in the Arm Engineers. Following this service, Milt attended Howard University, was in the Federal Government Service (insurance field) for eight years, and then became the Coordinator of the Crime Scene Search Unit of the Fifth District Metropolitan Police, a position in which he served for eleven of his 25 years on the Force. Milt has always been interested in stamps, but what really propelled him philatelically was his decision of the Collectors Club of Washington. A resident of Morningside, Maryland, Milt's hobbies, in addition to stamp collecting, include trap-shooting and pipes -- the smoking kind. Now get this: he has a collection of over one thousand of them! Milt, have you ever considered opening a "National Pipe Museum"?

## CLASSIFIED

Members may place classified ads in the newsletter for free on a space available basis. The submission date for ads is the same as for other submissions, the last meeting of even numbered months. Send you copy to the Editor, C. A. Stillions at the address in the panel on the last page. Hand written or typed, mailed or hand delivered, faxed or emailed, any way is acceptable, but email is preferred.

### STAMPS FOR SALE:

37 + 39 cents Hi-Ends	\$17.00 a pound
34 cents and under Low-Ends	\$ 9.00 a pound
Christmas	\$ 1.00 a pound
Bulk Stamps	\$ 1.00 a pound
Appraised value 38 cents and over	5 or 10 cents a piece
Plate # stamps	5 cents a piece
Foreign Stamps	\$15.00 a pound

Order from Stamps for a Living Business, FO18/JHP/OT Dept., 2700 M L King Avenue, S. E., Washington, DC 20032-2601.

**WANTED:** Scott Specialty pages for Romania and Southwest Africa. Contact Bruce Kellogg at [bkellogg@cns.gov](mailto:bkellogg@cns.gov) or 202-606-6954.

**WANTED:** Gerry Marandino is looking for unused copies of Benin C457 and C461 along with Panama C366. He would appreciate any help from the membership in locating copies of these. Gerry may be contacted at [gmarandino@alum.mit.edu](mailto:gmarandino@alum.mit.edu) or 703-820-3617.

**WANTED:** Long time general collector wants to swap, trade, or otherwise dispose of world wide collection. Call Jerry Sherman at 202-362-6299 to arrange time and place to meet.

**WANTED:** Articles for the newsletter especially articles on District of Columbia Postal History. See your newsletter editor.

**WANTED:** Military or civilian used air letter sheets from Newfoundland. Top prices paid especially for sheets used in 1942 and 1943. Send scan or photocopy first to C. A. Stillions, 1435 Fourth Street, S. W., #B212, Washington, DC 20024-2227 or [castillions@hotmail.com](mailto:castillions@hotmail.com).



## ACCOUNTS OF MEETINGS

by Martin Fleischer, Recording Secretary

**7 March** Vice President, John Hardies, presided in the absence of the President. Lorraine Bailey has ready a large number of WSCC cachet covers which will be available at the WSCC table a SPRINGPEX (17-18 March). Virginia Randolph has found volunteers for the WSCC table for SPRINGPEX - but more help is always appreciated. David Jickling has communicated with Bruce Kellogg and Don Peterson. The Jicklings will be returning from Guatemala in April and looking forward to seeing WSCC members again. Bruce Kellogg has received a dealer solicitation for sale of stamp mixtures. Information should be appearing forthcoming newsletters.

Members had their 8 minutes of glory during a "The Floor in Yours" session. We heard nostalgic stories of earliest attempts at exhibiting, stories of old time dealers, first philatelic club meetings. Also a "new" International Reply Coupon was circulated as well as a late 1930's flown cover and more.

**21 March** President Matt Cassetta presided. C. A. Stillions brought the sad news of the death of John Weimer on March 14. A long standing member of the Washington Philatelic Society, John and his wife Ann, avidly and loyally attended almost all meetings of the merged WSCC. A condolence card was signed by all club members in attendance, to be sent to Ann.

The WSCC table at SPRINGPEX was very popular. Virginia Randolph reported about \$1300.00 in sales.

Members shared stories about Post office experiences. We heard about South African, Botswanan and Congolese P.O.s. Also about postal service in Kabul, Afghanistan. Far flung U.S.P.S. P.O.s were highlighted as well as makeshift service resumption after hurricane Andrew smashed through Homestead, Florida. The trials and tribulations of obtaining a personal canceler were narrated to everyone's amazement and enjoyment. Contrary to the supposed wisdom gained by the P.O.D. in the "inverted Jenny" incident, it nice to know that the USPS can still delight collectors to issuing "errors" - just ask Milton Holmes!

**4 April** Executive Secretary Gerry Marandino presided. Gerry placed into discussion the venue for the WSCC Annual Awards Banquet. Although the Orleans House Restaurant was the site last year, enough members were of the opinion that a change would be welcomed. Tadas Osmolskis moved that submissions for change of venue should be made before 1 May -- seconded and so moved by the membership this will mean that no alternative choice (including price agreement with a prospective restaurant) would automatically keep the Orleans venue. Any other Choices -- if offered -- would of course be voted on by the membership.

The program for the May 2nd meeting will be the "Best Stamp Album" contest. An award of \$25.00 goes to the winner. Other programs are in the works. Ideas for

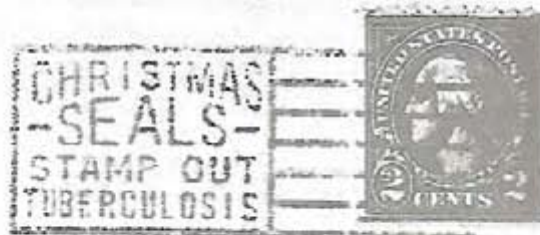
meetings are always welcome.

The Scavenger Hunt, "a-e-l-o-u" was the night's program. The voted winner was C. A. Stillions with a presentation of D. C. Machine slogan cancels each one beginning with one of the letters. Phil Uhlmann was second with a series of elegant envelopes cachet (letter e) and some fascinating types of cancellations. Virginia Randolph offered a series of stamps - some equating letters to country names and some to subjects on the stamps. Congratulations to all!

**18 April** President Matt Cassetta reported that several restaurants were being considered for our awards banquet venue. More on this subject next meeting. Don Peterson announced that a donation of an old world wide stamp collection has been received and is in this evening auction.

The highlight of the evening was the donation auction. All recollections attest this auction to have broken the club record for a donation auction taking in \$281.20. Every item put up for auction sold. All in all, this auction really perked up the membership and had many wide eyed. As auctioneer, Tadas Osmolskis, performed his task with his usual competency and good humor.

## ANYONE SEEN THIS SLOGAN USED IN WASHINGTON, DC?



Robert Payne in his book *United States Promotional Cancellations 1899 - 1940* reports it used in Washington, DC zones 5 and 10 in December 1923. He rates it as very scarce. Your editor would like to obtain a copy for the listing of DC Machine Slogan Cancellations he is preparing.

**WASHINGTON STAMP COLLECTORS CLUB**

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Membership information may be obtained from the Executive Secretary. Dues are due June 30th and are \$16.00 a year for resident members, \$8.00 a year for non-resident members, and \$8.00 a year for junior members.

Meeting are held the First and Third Wednesdays of the month at Christ United Methodist Church, 900 Fourth Street, S. W., Washington, DC starting at 7:00 PM. (Enter Church Education wing from I Street, S.W.)

**POSTMASTER**

**THIS NEWSLETTER CONTAINS DATED MATERIAL**

**PLEASE DO NOT DELAY DELIVERY!**

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