



# WASHINGTON CITY DESPATCH



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NEWSLETTER OF THE WASHINGTON STAMP COLLECTORS CLUB  
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### Don't Miss These Upcoming Meetings

January – February 2009

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|-------------|--|
| 7 January   | <i>The Great Egg Drop Experiment</i> , C. A. Stillions, speaker and Nominations for Officers |
| 21 January  | Annual Business Meeting / Election of Officers for 2009                                      |
| 4 February  | Annual Herbert Cover Contest   |
| 18 February | Member Auction   |

Also don't forget our pre-meeting get-togethers held at the Pier 7 lounge at the Channel Inn, 650 Water Street, S.W. during January and February. The Channel Inn is just a block or so from the Cantina Marina. We start at 5:30 P.M. and there is plenty to eat and lots of friendly talk. WSCC Meetings start at 7:00 P.M.

## 2009 HERBERT COVER CONTEST

### RULES AND CATEGORIES

The annual Herbert Cover Contest will be held on 4 February and all members are invited to submit entries in one or more of these categories. Winners will be decided as indicated.

#### TO BE DECIDED BY VOTE OF THOSE PRESENT:

1. Cover posted at a post office with the most tranquil name.
2. Cover with the most interesting return address.
3. The cover with the ugliest stamp issued in 2008
4. Cover with the most interesting auxiliary postal marking.
5. Cover with the most interesting semi-postal stamp.

#### TO BE DECIDED BY A PANEL OF JUDGES:

6. The largest cover with preprinted postage.
7. The earliest cover originating in the southern hemisphere.
8. The cover with two stamps issued the furthest apart in time.
9. Earliest postmarked cover with a stamp featuring a person who was not a head of state nor a monarch.
10. Most recent cover where the stamps have been cancelled in a country other than the country of issue of the stamps.

All items submitted must have been used (cancelled with a postmark or other device). Unless otherwise specified a cover can be an envelope, post card, or postal card, folded letter, postal stationery, or document that shows payment of postage and/or postal fees.

**DON'T FORGET:** A reminder to individual category winners, your newsletter editor would like a photocopy or scan of your winning entry to be published in the next edition of the newsletter. Don't know if you have a winner? Scan in your entries before the contest. Thanks from the Editors!

### NPM Seeks Missing Scott Monthly Issues

The NPM Library is lacking the following four issues of Scott Stamp Monthly magazine. If you have copies that you no longer need and are willing to donate, please contact the librarian, Paul McCutcheon, at [mccutcheonp@si.edu](mailto:mccutcheonp@si.edu).

August 2004

March 2008

May 2008

October 2008

## NPM Library: Updates to the Collection

Not only do we have more books to choose from at the **NPM Library**, but the library is open on the **Third Saturday every month from 10 A.M. to 4 P.M.** **DAN PIAZZA**, Assistant NPM Curator, has provided a list of new books in the library. Thanks to **DAN** and to the **NPM Librarian**.

Civil War newspaper maps : a cartobibliography of the Northern daily press // compiled by David Bosse. GA405.5 B67 1993 Imprint: Westport, Conn. : Greenwood Press, 1993.

Exploring the fascinating world of stamps. HE6204.S69 E97 2000z Imprint: Pretoria : Philatelic Services of the South African Post Office

Regno Lombardo Veneto : la collezione Emil Capellaro = Königreich Lombardo-Venetien : Dei Sammlung ... = Kingdom of Lombardy Venetia : the collection ... // a cura di/ von/ by Paolo Vaccari. HE6185.I83 L66 2007 Imprint: Vignola (Modena) : Vaccari, 2007.

The Italian post offices in Constantinople, 1908-1923 // Mario Chesne Dauphine & Colin Pilkington. HE6185.I8 D38 2007 Imprint: Teddington, Middx. : Italy & Colonies Study Circle, c1988.

The workbook : notes on reprints and forgeries of Colombian stamps. part 1, The classic period, 1859-1868 // by Dieter Bortfeldt. HE6855 .B67 2005 Imprint: Bogotá : COLOMPHIL, c2005.

The postmarks and postal history of the Cameroons under British administration, 1916-1961. supplement // R.J. Maddocks, M.P. Bratzel, Jr. HE6185.N6 M34 2007 Imprint: Windsor, Ont. : MPB Canada, c2007.

The postal history of the Powell Bros. Livestock Emporium : from the collection of Norman Alan Cohen / HE6185.C3 C64 2007 Imprint: Dallas, Tex. : Halifax Trading, c2007.

Document trivia of Great Britain and Ireland : official and unofficial designations on paper and parchment : circular date marks // by William A. Barber and A. Frank Brown, 1924 HE6184.C3 B27 2007 Imprint: Chesapeake, Va.

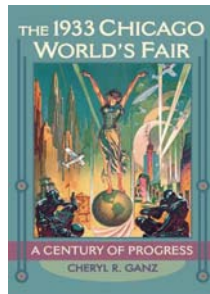
## IS “TIMBROMANIA” A 4-LETTER WORD?

In an article published on the **Oxford University Blog** and provided to us by **Dan Piazza**, stamp collectors have not always been known as ‘philatelists.’ The word *Philatelists* has Greek roots, literally meaning “lovers of tax freedom.” The word *philately* was invented by a French stamp collector named George Herpin and proposed in a French stamp collecting magazine in 1864. According to an 1876 edition of the magazine *Philatelist*, *timbromania* was the earlier word that Herpin was attempting to oust. *Timbromania* means “stamp madness” and it certainly lends a less attractive image to its practitioners than does “lover of tax freedom.” *Timbrophily* and *Timbrology* were also suggested but *philately* seems to have licked its competition and stuck with us. It only took a year before this French invention crossed the English Channel—no doubt on a mail ship—to show up as an English word in 1865. Only one question remains and that is why would stamp collectors consider themselves lovers of tax freedom? The reason is that there are two ways to have a piece of postal mail delivered. One involves having the recipient pay a COD charge; that’s “cash on delivery.” While the charge isn’t strictly a tax, the alternative is (from the recipient’s point of view) tax free. The fact that a letter has a stamp on it says to the carrier that the sender has already paid the freight and the receiver can have it without charge.

Note from **C.A. Stillions**: The essay seems to have forgotten that in the latter part of the 19th Century Governmental Postal Operations were very profitable. So much so that the excess over costs was considered a tax. Many of us, however, still suffer from **Timbromania**, a NOUN (hence a 4-letter word.)

## Successful Book Launch for Cheryl Ganz

On December 2<sup>nd</sup>, **Dr. Cheryl Ganz**, Chief Curator of Philately at the National Postal Museum and WSCC member, launched her new book, *The 1933 Chicago World's Fair - A Century of Progress*. The event was held at the NPM and was attended by many WSCC members and local philatelists. **Dr. Ganz's** book examines not only the technological advances exhibited, but also how Chicago's fair organizers used the very idea of progress to buoy national optimism during the Depression's darkest years. Orchestrated by business leaders and engineers, almost all former military men, the fair reflected a business-military-engineering model that envisioned a promising future through science and technology's application to everyday life. Congratulations to Cheryl on an enjoyable introduction to this fascinating subject.



## OOPS! Tadas Takes Us on a Tour

On December 6<sup>th</sup>, **Tadas Osmolskis**, longtime member of the WSCC began an exciting new venture. He performed his first tour of the National Postal Museum, dubbing it the "OOPS Tour." Many of us had been to the Museum before, but had never had a tour highlighting the historical oddities of the Postal Service.

One item featured was a large image of the 2 cent invert railroad stamp, mounted on the ceiling over the escalator. Next we saw a display of the pneumatic tube service. Even though this system was used until World War I, it was not always efficient. Streets had to be excavated frequently when mail got clogged in underground tubes. We heard about problems with the familiar corner mail box. Most boxes were painted with leftover military olive drab paint. An attempt to use a bright red was a failure because people thought the boxes were fire alarms. Also some of the designs of the smaller boxes became impractical when handles broke off or when larger pieces of mail were unable to be placed through the slot. Next we visited the 'EFO' section and learned what the 'real Bill Pickett' looks like on the Legends of the West stamp sheet. Finally, we visited the Miller II collection and tried to pick out the 5 cent stamps in the 2 cent sheet (without cheating!) It was a fun tour and we wish **Tadas** well on his future tours.



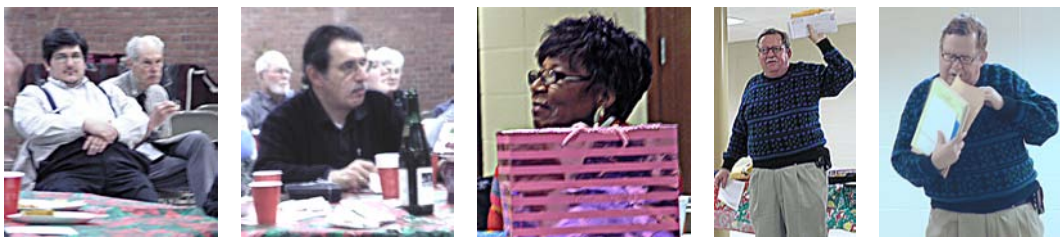


## ‘Twas A Week Before Christmas

‘Twas a week before Christmas and our members made note  
That the December auction would Club coffers promote.



Four long tables were set out and cloths festively laid  
So donated items might be neatly displayed.  
Early arrivers examined the wares, on items first-rate to decide.  
But moved to the pot-luck, ‘cause they surely knew those entrée’s had to be tried.



With everyone’s plate filled to the brim and tables of friends, new and past,  
We waited with pensive excitement for the first bid of the night to be cast.

“Do I hear One Dollar?” Tadas inquires, holding some covers up high.  
“It looks like there’s a lot of good stuff in this bunch; better not let it pass by!”  
Souvenir sheets, packets of stamps, from Ghana, Russia, and U.S.  
If the book from the circus had real stamps inside, he gave to Lorraine to assess.

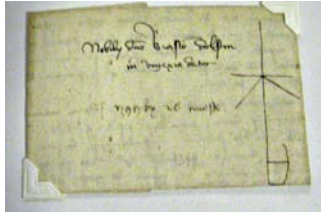


Two popular items that drew serious bids were a camel that “walked more than a mile”;  
The other a set of Supreme Cork Justices. Joel Fassler got them for ‘trial.’  
*The History of Envelopes* and *The Smallest Post Office*, books that were eagerly sought,  
A program signed from the Club de Monte-Carlo display, briskly bid and hurriedly bought.

From left side to right side, Tadas skillfully worked to describe every lot one by one.  
But unclaimed and forlorn, piled on the floor, Scotts Catalogs clearly were shunned.  
So auction bids tally! Get payments in hand! Let the ultimate numbers be found!  
The WSCC Party’s a wrap! Our finances surely are sound!

## Postal Stationary Collection Shared

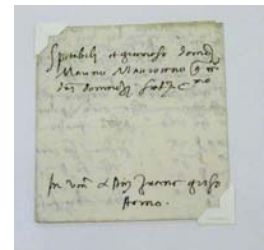
At the meeting on the 5<sup>th</sup> of November, **JOEL FASSLER**, WSCC Treasurer, was the feature speaker, showing portions of his extensive postal stationary collection. **JOEL** has been adding to his collection for over 30 years. The collection contains letters, covers, postal cards, and wrappers with a time span of over 6 centuries, from 1399 to the present. Highlights of the collection include a letter sent from Lycea to Venice in 1399 and is likely the oldest existent ship post letter, as it is the earliest example known with a sea mail



designation: Venizia de mari.

The cover is written up and illustrated in the *Postal History Journal* of May, 1973. Commercial letters of the 14<sup>th</sup> century are quite rare. Venetian vessels such as that on which this letter travelled regularly plied the waters between Venice and Apulia to supply the Republic with corn.

On the right is an early disinfected cover, from 1462, which was conveyed by courier service to Venice from Vicenza. The disinfection slits were incised at the Sanita in Venice.



**JOEL's** sense of humor is also evident in describing various items.



“Sub Prime” Grey Paper Stock for the Federal Reserve (all puns intended). A wartime paper shortage resulted in the authorizing of the use of a poorer than normal paper stock for the printing of postal cards for a short time in 1916.



The final item in his book is a *Garfield* comic strip.

In the strip Jon tells his date “Yes, Stamp collecting can be very rewarding.” Her reply is “EEEEEEEEEEK. Help! Help! My date is talking about stamps!” Another woman runs over and says “There, there, dear, you can sit at our table.” As a consolation, the waiter tells Jon “I collect bottle caps.” Jon responds, “OH SHUT UP”.

Thank you, Joel, for a fun evening and a great presentation.

## President STILLIONS' Message

2008 is now history. WSCC had a good year. Attendance at our meetings was very good, in spite of National Baseball parking restrictions. The programs have been good with a nice balance between outside speakers, inside speakers, swap and trade nights, and auctions. We have an excellent newsletter. But our finances did take a hit in 2008. The cost of producing our newsletter increased in both postage costs and printing costs. The rental on our meeting hall increased 50%. It is an area your Executives will need to look at closely in 2009. You will have an opportunity to show your support of your leaders as the second meeting in January is our annual meeting night and election of officers. Actually, nominations for 2009 officers open at the first meeting in January. Please plan to attend and make your opinions known.

## Are You Smarter Than a Fifth Grader or Professor Phil?

In the history of television, numerous versions of quiz shows have been devised. None I have found to be as personally disconcerting as the latest rendering, *Are You Smarter Than a Fifth Grader?* While we do not actually watch the show, many lists of questions purportedly answered by 10-year-olds have been printed. I am not certain if I ever would have been able to answer these questions on such a wide variety of topics when I was that age! Which leads us to the 4<sup>th</sup> in a series of WSCC quizzes, written and executed by our own **PHIL UHLMANN**, or **Professor Phil**, as we know him.

Phil's-a-telic Quiz Number 4 was taken by 16 WSCC members. Most of the questions tested our knowledge of philately, but also demanded knowledge of geography, history, music, comedy, and math. Some of the questions were:

“In which one of the following states is the least populated county in the U.S. located?” Texas is the right answer. However, we will be anxious to see what happens in the next census!

“Which one of the following Mediterranean Islands issues its own stamps?” Malta was the correct answer and had the most correct answers out of the group, with 14 test takers choosing this selection.

“Which one of the following states is not divided by the eastern and central time zones?” The four choices were 1) Florida 2) Indiana 3) Kentucky 4) Michigan. The wrong answer, “Florida” was chosen by 7 out of 16. The correct answer “Michigan” was the choice of only 2 people. It may be that many folks do not realize how far the Sunshine State extends westward as well as southward. The Time Zone line cuts through Florida's “panhandle” about 35 miles west of Tallahassee, beyond which a full 140 miles of the state lies in the Central Time Zone.

This WSCC quiz was a lot of fun and we congratulate **JOEL FASSLER, LORRAINE BAILEY, and VIRGINIA RANDOLPH** on being the first, second and third place winners. It surely would be interesting to see if a fifth grader would be able to as well.

## ACCOUNTS OF MEETINGS

By **Martin Fleischer**, Recording Secretary

**5 November 2008** President **C.A. STILLIONS** presiding, 17 members and 1 guest present. Main event was a presentation by **JOEL FASSLER** on Postal Stationary.

**19 November 2008** Vice-President **DON PETERSON** presiding, 21 members present. Main event was a Swap and Trade.

**3 December 2008** President **C. A. STILLIONS** presiding, 18 members present. President **STILLIONS** announced this year's Sundman Lecture for March 7, 2009 will be presented by **DAVID LANDAU**. He will speak on “Lincoln, Slavery and the Civil War.” The Sundman Lecture Series is part of the National Postal Museum program of events. The president also announced an invitation to attend a special club meeting, June 20<sup>th</sup>, at the National Postal Museum. **DAN PIAZZA**, Assistant Curator of Philately, will lead a tour of the new F.D.R. and Philately exhibit at the museum.

**VIRGINIA RANDOLPH** issued a call for help during the Annual Holiday Party. Members were needed to help set up and serve as gate-keepers on the front door. New United Stamp Society Circuit Books were available. This time the offering was special indeed. All of the books originated from the WSCC. So before **VIRGINIA** sent them along to the U.S.S. for general distribution, we got first crack! The books contained some very good material, both U.S.A. and World-wide.

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The main event was another of Professor Phil's Phils-a-telic Quiz. First place went to **JOEL FASSLER**, second place to **LORRAINE BAILEY**, and third place to **VIRGINIA RANDOLPH**.

**17 December 2008** President **C.A. STILLIONS** presiding, 41 members and guests present. President **STILLIONS** welcomed all members and guests to the annual Holiday Party. He announced that the calendar for meetings until February had been firmly established and will appear in the forthcoming newsletter. **JEFF MEADE** introduced **DAVID BYERS** who was visiting the club for the first time. **DAVID** is presently a docent at the National Postal Museum and is a lifelong collector.

This year's Holiday Auction offered something for everyone: Chinese fans, White House Christmas ornaments, boxes and containers of all kinds, Belgian chocolates, a large photo album and the ubiquitous "Mousse" cookbook. Numerous cover and postcard packets attracted attention as well as a jumbo envelope of Middle East on paper (that bidding war ended at \$21.) Smaller collections on album pages of Belgian Congo, Eastern Europe, etc., were bid up. Philatelic literature included the 2008 Congress Book, the Smallest U.S. Post Office (Ochopee, Florida), P.O.D. handbook of U.S. stamps and issues of the Journal of the Rhodesian Study Circle. Smaller lots of individual stamp items included Hawaii, Cuba, U.S., while a familiar stock book of Chile resurfaced once again. Two large volumes of the H.E. Harris U.S. plate block albums (no stamps) and a large U.S. Commemorative album were offered as well as numerous varieties of stock books. **TADAS OSMOLSKIS** was in his best form as auctioneer and over \$400.00 was added to the club coffer.

## CLASSIFIEDS

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 your copy to the Editor, Bill and Janet Hughes 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	Appraised value 38 cents and over	5 or 10
34 cents and under Low-Ends	\$ 9.00 a pound	cents a piece	
Christmas	\$ 1.00 a pound	Plate # stamps	5 cents a piece
Bulk Stamps	\$ 1.00 a pound	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.

## WASHINGTON STAMP COLLECTORS CLUB

web site: [www.dcstampclub.org](http://www.dcstampclub.org)

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**Circuits Manager:** Virginia Randolph

**Historian:** Herb Trenchard, email: [trenchardh@si.edu](mailto:trenchardh@si.edu)

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.)