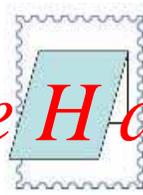




The Hamilton Hinge



APS Chapter #1095-104282

Hamilton Township Philatelic Society Newsletter

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December's Meeting

It's time for our annual Holiday get together. Members always bring a variety of goodies for our party table. Why not add your homemade specialty?

Ed Muench will give a 10-15 minute talk on his collecting interest – bicycles. We have a lot of time for the show and tell segment so bring in some items from your collection to share with fellow members.

Stamp Identification

Congratulations to Jim Cope for identifying last month's stamp as Surinam #J43. The postage due stamp was issued in 1950.

This month we have a "litho" beauty offering few clues as to its identity. Can our resourceful readers come up with the answer? First correct responder can select \$1.00 in FV from the sales box.



Source: *Linn's website*

USPS Rate Changes

Effective, January 4, 2010, selected USPS postage rates will change including:

- Flat-rate Priority Mail envelope – \$4.90 (down 5¢)
- Small Priority Mail box – \$4.95 (no change)
- Medium Priority Mail box – \$10.70 (up 35¢)
- Large Priority Mail box – \$14.50 (up 55¢)
- Flat-rate Express Mail envelope – \$18.30 (up 80¢)

See the USPS website at www.usps.com or PDF listing: pe.usps.com/PriceChange/Notice123_jan_2010.pdf.

HTPS Meetings . . .

Meetings are held on the 3rd Tuesday of the month at 7:30 PM at the Hamilton Township Library, 1 Justice Samuel A. Alito, Jr. Way (off Whitehorse Mercerville Road) in Hamilton, NJ.

In this Issue . . .

- *National Postal Museum Trip*
- *USPS Rate Changes*
- *Soaking Stamps*
- . . . and much more!

President's Message



Are you stumped on what to get someone on your Holiday list? Have you ever thought about some stamps or covers?

My brother was a career man in the US Air Force and, like most folks in our military, he is extremely proud of that fact. For a few dollars, I decided to pick up some covers related to the US Air Force and a block of Scott #3167 which commemorates the 50th anniversary of the US Air Force. The purchase of a frame from A.C. Moore, matting and some mounts made for a wonderful personalized gift, and it cost a lot less than the usual sweater that he would never wear.

My sister's gift was a frame containing some advertising covers and post cards from Pittston, PA, the small Pennsylvania town where we grew up. The post card scenes included one of the YMCA building where we learned to swim and the American Movie theatre on Main Street where we saw our first movie.

They both loved their gifts and they are both displayed in their homes. It has not gotten them into stamp or cover collecting, but they now understand part of the enjoyment of our hobby. Perhaps you can create a similar gift for family or friends.

Please join us for our Holiday party on December 15th. If you cannot make it, on behalf of all of your fellow HTPS members, I hope that you and yours have a wonderful Holiday and a very happy and healthy New Year.

November's Meeting

... by Jack Sack

All-time attendance records were broken again at our November meeting with 35 attendees. The business portion of the meeting included a discussion and first vote on the revised constitution, and plans for the trip to the National Postal Museum in Washington.

Some interesting items were displayed in the "Show & Tell" segment including an auction catalog with a FDC lot from noted cachet-maker John Ranto. Also of note was a German WW II cover, a cartoon FDC of the "Win the War" stamp (Scott #902) and a cover that was carried on the Iditarod Great Sled Race.



Our presentation was by Tony Zingale on "Postmarks & Cancels." Unfortunately, the large crowd had to endure one of the longest and least interesting talks we have had in our history. The speaker droned on and on without providing any interesting or useful information.



Who cares that the Bishops Mark (left, circa 1660's) was the first recorded postmark or that the Maltese Cross (right, GB #8, circa 1850's) was one of the



first cancels? Does it matter that early mail processing machinery included the British Round Circle Cancel Machine in the 1860's? The sections on contemporaneous cancels and the Japanese Emperor's Reign formats left most attendees befuddled.

Additionally, Mr. Zingale was corrected by the audience on almost every point he made. By the time the talk concluded, most of the audience had already left, leaving only a few sleeping members in attendance. As one member remarked, "I have had a better time watching paint dry."



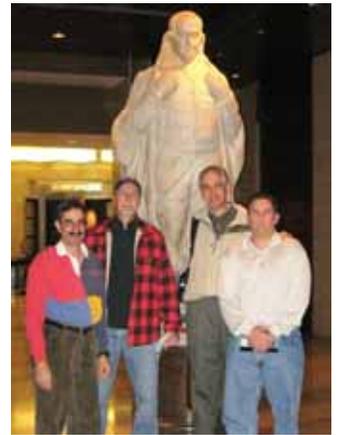
The HTPS apologizes for the poor quality of the program and will redouble our efforts to provide better speakers in the future.

National Postal Museum

... by (see photo)

The HTPS' Nov. 21st trip to the National Postal Museum (NPM) was an enjoyable experience for all. Leaving at 6:45 AM, our driver, Todd Tucker, led us down to Washington in a bit over three hours.

The NPM is part of the Smithsonian Institution and is located in Washington, DC just across the street from Union Station. The website address is www.postalmuseum.si.edu



Ron Gonzalez, Jeff Boyarsky, Tony Zingale, Todd Tucker (with Ben Franklin's statue)



James O'Donnell, Museum Specialist, greeted us and led us on a tour through the museum. Jim told us that the museum's main focus actually honors U.S. postal operations over the last 150 years. In

fact, more than 90% of the visitors are non-philatelists! The skyhook plane, stagecoach and interactive exhibits are attractive to many families. The replica of a Railway Post Office car (above photo) included a movie with former RPO employees discussing their jobs and duties.

The philatelic exhibits were extraordinary. "Alphabetilately" consists of 26 displays covering all aspects of philately ranging from Advertising Covers to Zeppelins. The stamps, ephemera, and artifacts include – Revenues, Proofs, FDC's, Forgeries (yes!) ... on and on.

For stamp collectors, the highlight is the *Philatelic Galleries* with rotating displays of U.S. and worldwide issues. Current U.S. exhibits include an Amelia Earhart postal collection and **signed proof plates** (the Cattle in the Storm uncut sheet, Scott #292, is incredible). Temporary exhibits include FDR & Stamps of the Great Depression, Victory Mail, and Postal Inspectors. Much of this material can be viewed on the Museum's website.

We visited the NPM Library where Courtney Ann Shaw, Senior Reference Librarian, provided insight into the setup and use of the library's facilities. Our group did some research, especially Ron Gonzalez who had to be dragged from the library so we could return home.

We arrived back at 6:30 PM – tired, but already talking about a trip to the APS in Bellefonte, PA.

Soaking Stamps

. . . by Jack Sack

Soaking stamps, at first glance, seems to be a simple task. Simply remove stamps from envelopes by placing them in a bowl of water. However, one must take special care to prevent damage to your stamps. The key to soaking stamps is **patience**.

[1] The first decision to make is whether or not you should soak the stamp off the envelope. Many times, stamps are more valuable “on cover” rather than being “off-cover.” The envelope may have some special historic importance, such as the date or place where the letter was posted. For example, a stamp may be quite common, but an example of it used on cover may be rare. The use of a 7¢ stamp (such as Scott #1394D) as the correct postage for a domestic postcard from September to December 1975, a period of only four months, is difficult to find.

Another reason not to soak is that some stamps, such as many modern self-stick stamps, are extremely difficult to soak off. Also, if the stamp was canceled using red or purple ink, it may “run” during the soaking process. Many early stamps were deliberately printed with a special so-called “fugitive” ink that runs if one tried to soak them to remove the postal markings and then reuse the stamps.

[2] Before soaking the stamps, trim any excess paper from around the stamp to speed up the soaking process and prevent any contamination from the envelope ink or paper. You should separate, and soak separately, stamps on colored paper and self-adhesive stamps which may take longer to soak.



[3] Now you are ready to “float” your stamps. Place the stamps in a bowl of **warm** water. After about 10 to 15 minutes, the stamps should start to float off their paper. As they do, very gently lift them out with your finger or broad tipped stamp tongs. Then soak them for 10 minutes in a bowl of **cool** water to remove any residual gum from the back of the stamp.



[4] Place the stamps face down on a paper towel to dry. When they are semi-dry, carefully place them in a stock book with a weight on top to allow them to flatten out. If you are doing a lot of soaking, it is well worth the investment to buy a drying book. **Never** try to pull the stamp off of the paper as this will often cause damage – commonly noted as “hinge thins” – to a stamp. When soaking a quantity of stamps, change the water every few batches or so. In short, the key here is to **be patient** to prevent damage to the stamps.



[5] When soaking stamps on colored paper, use a larger bowl of **cool** water. It will take longer for these stamps to float off the paper, but it will help prevent the colored papers from running and ruining your stamps. You can check the color-fastness of paper by soaking a small piece first to see if it runs. Some experts suggest that adding a little salt to the water also helps prevent running. If there are stains on stamps from envelopes or cancels, some suggest placing them in a small dish of milk in the refrigerator overnight. The next day remove them from the milk and soak again.

[6] Self-adhesives may fall apart if you soak them a long time. You might try using **hot** rather than **warm** water to speed up the float time. If it is a valuable stamp, you may want to simply leave it on paper rather than risk damage to it, perhaps using a “perf scissor” to create a simulated perf border.



[7] Ken Stewart (see his webpage http://www.junior-philatelists.com/soaking_stamps.htm) has many other suggestions. For example, what if you wish remove a stamp but save the postcard it is on? Wet two pieces of coffee filter paper that are slightly larger than the stamp, place them on top of the stamp, and cover with a small inverted dish. The stamp should slip off after about 30 minutes.

Do you use any special techniques when soaking stamps? We welcome all comments and suggestions.

Editor's Note: *This is the first of a multi-part series on stamp collecting techniques. The series, when completed, will be made available as a separate booklet. Although the advice contained in this article is based on the author's experience, HTPS can not accept liability for any loss or damage to your stamps.*

HTPS Notices

Member Award: Belated congratulations to Sid Morginstin for receiving a Silver Award at the Pittsburgh APS StampShow in August. His exhibit, in the Handbooks & Special Studies category, was titled *The Maximum Cards Stamp Information Folders & Stamp Information Bulletins of Israel*.

New Member: We welcome Robert Stutz as the latest HTPS member. Bob's primary collecting interest is U.S. mint singles.

Support Team: Jerry McNew has agreed to serve as the HTPS Parliamentarian. Jerry has been the unofficial "voice of the rules" for some time, so this just formalizes the process. Our thanks to Jerry for volunteering.

Membership Dues . . .

HTPS dues of \$10.00 are payable by January 1st. You can pay at the December meeting with cash or check (payable to HTPS), or send payment to Ron Gonzalez at P.O. Box 3443, Mercerville, NJ 08619.

Upcoming Stamp Events

- 12/3 – MSC Meeting – Temple Lutheran Church – 5600 Route 130 North (at Merchantville Ave) – Pennsauken, NJ – 7 PM.
- 12/5 – MSC Saturday Stamp Bourse – 9 AM to 4 PM – [See 12/3 MSC Meeting for location].

- 12/6 – Garden St. Coin & Stamp Show – PAL Building – 33 Baldwin Rd – Parsippany, NJ – 10 to 4 PM.
- 12/11-13 – MetroExpo – Holiday Inn – 440 W. 57th St. – NYC – Fri. 12 to 6 PM – Sat. 10 to 6 PM – Sun. 10 to 4 PM – www.metroexpos.com.
- 12/12 – 2nd Saturday Bourse – American Legion Post – Rtes. 130 North & 33 East – Hightstown, NJ – 9:30 AM to 4 PM.
- 12/13 – 2nd Sunday Stamp Bourse – Holiday Inn – Rt. 70 – Cherry Hill, NJ – 10 AM to 4 PM.
- 12/15 – HTPS MEETING – Hamilton Township Public Library – Hamilton, NJ – 7 PM.**
- 12/16 – MSC Meeting (See 12/3 MSC Meeting info).
- 12/20 – NESS 3rd Sunday Stamp & Coin Show – Wyndham Garden Hotel – 50 Kenney Place – Saddle Brook, NJ – 9 AM to 3 PM.
- 12/27 – Coin, Stamp & Postcard Show – Ramada Inn – 1083 Route 206 North (NJ Tpke Exit 7) – Bordentown, NJ – 9 AM to 3 PM.
- 12/27 – Tri-State Coin & Stamp Show (4th Sunday) – Holiday Inn – PA Tpke (Exit 339) & Rt. 309 – Ft. Washington, PA – 10 AM to 4 PM.
- 1/2 – MSC Saturday Stamp Bourse – 9 AM to 4 PM – [See 12/3 MSC Meeting for location].
- NOTE:** See www.stampshows.com for additional or updated information on shows.

The objective of this Newsletter is to promote philately, educate and inform our members and to encourage other like-minded individuals to join the Hamilton Township Philatelic Society.

----- HTPS Officers -----

President Ed Murtha
Vice President Jeff Boyarsky
Treasurer / Publicity Ron Gonzalez
Secretary Bob Stolarz

----- HTPS Support Team -----

APS Representative Jon Madsen
Membership Chairman Jack Sack
Newsletter Editor Tony Zingale
NOJEX Contact Andrew Boyajian
Parliamentarian Jerry McNew
Stamp Donations Sherm Britton
50/50 Handlers Jim Cope, Ed Murray

----- HTPS Meeting Program -----

- ⇒ Dec. 15 – Holiday Party / Show & Tell
- ⇒ Jan. 19 – Society Auction
- ⇒ Feb. 16 – Tom DeLuca Presentation: TBA
- ⇒ Mar. 16 – "Gambian Philately" (by Gary Loew)
- ⇒ April 20 – Presentation or Slide Show: TBD
- ⇒ May 18 – "The ABC's of Philatelic Exhibiting (by Dr. Edwin Andrews)
- ⇒ June 15 – Society Auction
- ⇒ July 20 – Informal Meeting: Swap & Trade
- ⇒ Aug. 17 – Informal Meeting: HAMPEX '10

**Looking for Speakers
for the 2010 – 2011 Season.**