

The PhilateliKid

The newsletter for Stamp Collecting Clubs for Kids (SCCFK)

www.stampcollectingclubsforkids.org

February 29, 2016

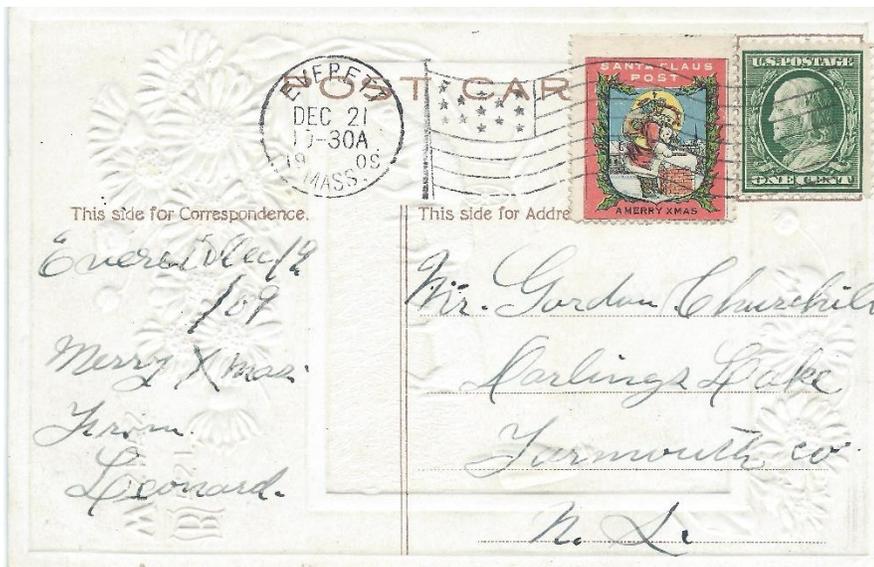
Today is Leap Year Day. A post office cancellation with a February 29th date occurs only once every 1,461 days, which is 0.068 % of all cancels. That is less than one-tenth of one percent, so cancels dated February 29th are the scarcest date on a cancel. The envelope in which you received this issue of *The PhilateliKid* has a February 29th cancel. Might be worth saving the envelope!

Deltiology

Deltiology is an area related to stamp collecting which is extremely popular, yet many people have no idea what deltiology is. **Definition:** Deltiology is the collection, study, and preservation of picture postcards for fun, recreation, relaxation, and enjoyment, and for the historical preservation of life in years past.

Deltiology is a subset of **Ephemera**, which is the collection, study and preservation of old paper items, including stock certificates, deeds, and even hand-written letters.

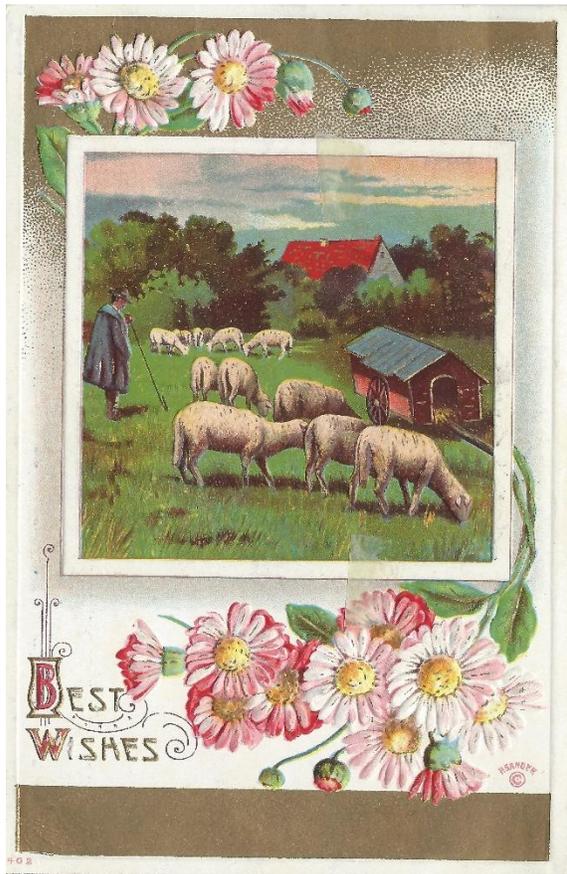
Who among us does not have a few (or many) picture postcards stashed away somewhere, perhaps in a scrapbook or file drawer? Although I do not consider myself to be very knowledgeable in the field



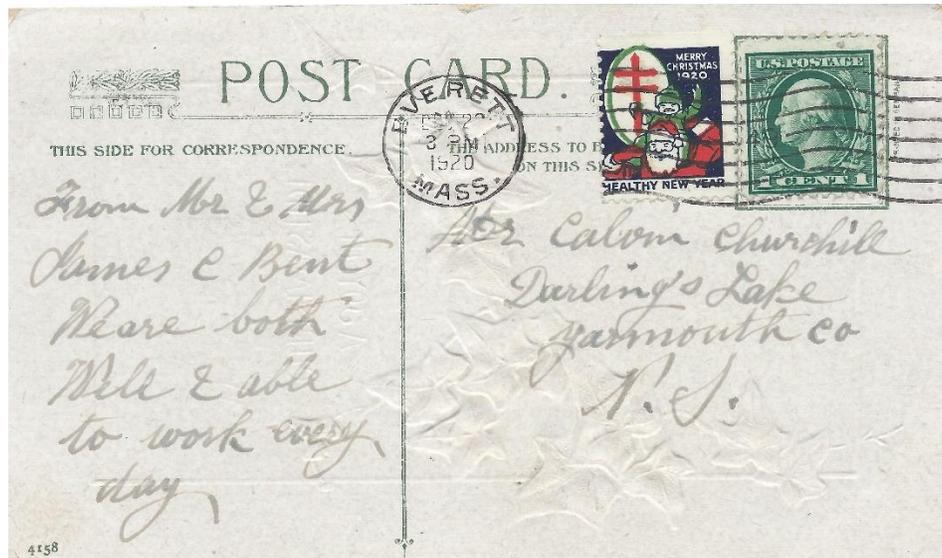
of Deltiology, I have benefitted from seeing some excellent exhibits at philatelic shows featuring picture postcards. I am also aware that for many years, and maybe even today, there are some “purist” stamp collectors who disdain picture post cards. How do you feel? Here are two Christmas postcards recently donated to SCCFK which are a real throwback to the early part of the 20th century. Each of them was mailed from the US to Canada, at the then prevailing rate of one cent for

postage. Note the Christmas seal, as well as the “flag cancel” for this postcard mailed on December 21, 1909, and the Christmas seal on the postcard dated December 20, 1920

Below, on the left is the front, or picture side of the above postcard. Below on the right is the picture side of the postcard mailed in 1920. Note, both cards have vertical pictures, while the address side has horizontal text (rotated 90 degrees.)



Note that the postcard on the left is about ½ inch shorter than the one on the right.



Exhibiting by Stamp Collectors

Definition: Exhibit: Something being shown to others

It is amazing how we humans endeavor to make every human activity competitive. In many ways it is easy to tell in a competition who has won. When a game is over, whoever has the most points is the

winner. Well, not always. In golf, whoever has the most strokes is the loser. And in races, whoever has the most minutes or seconds is in last place. In many cases, it is not apparent once the event is over who the winner is because it is up to a judge, or panel of judges to decide. Ever watch a dog show? In the couple I have seen, the judge just goes up to one of the dogs and says, "This one is the winner." There are also many events where there are multiple first place winners. Then the competition often has a further category, the First of the Firsts. And then those First of the Firsts often go on to some sort of Champion of Champions contest.

If you have ever been to a competitive stamp exhibition, you too may have wondered what caused a certain exhibit to be awarded first place. Don't feel too bad about your ignorance, because nobody knows, except possibly the judge(s) involved, and maybe the exhibitor himself, or herself, and they only learn why by reading a written explanation.

There are rules, of course, that are supposedly used in determining what level of award, if any, an exhibit will receive. Exhibits are not judged against other exhibits. They are judged against a "standard" which to put it mildly, is extremely complex. I have been to many exhibitions over the past 20 years, and I still am often baffled why a certain wonderful exhibit did not win a Gold, or why some boring exhibit did. After talking with other exhibitors, I am not too sure if they know either. Here are a few of the reasons I have deduced, put into layman's words, of some of the criteria used in making the determinations:

How good is the story telling? (I think this means how thorough is the story, and how compelling it is, and much the story stays on subject.) Obviously, this is a very subjective decision by a judge. This is very confusing to some people, like myself, who have nice stories to tell, and have been advised to write about them, not to exhibit them.

How complete are the examples? Is something obvious missing? Well, to most observers, unless something is glaringly missing, you will never know without researching the subject, something most viewers do not do.

How redundant are the examples? From my perspective it appears that sometimes a subject is beaten to death, but gets a big trophy. After a couple of frames in a ten-frame exhibit, I normally glance down the aisle. If all I see is just more of the same, I may just go on to the next exhibit. I've seen many others doing the same. Good thing I am not a judge, because they are not supposed to do that, and they have to look, if even ever so briefly, at the entire exhibit. Well, isn't the general viewing public (almost all of whom are stamp collectors) the REAL judges of whether an exhibit is good? If almost nobody is bothering to look at the whole exhibit, then of what value is the exhibit? Couldn't the exhibitor just have photocopied his exhibit and mailed it to the judges?

Certain "rules" are not really rules, but they are included in the decision making process anyway. Somewhere along the line, somebody decided the acceptable color of the paper upon which the exhibit is mounted makes a difference. "Prettiness" counts.

There are countless other rules, so if you are having trouble falling asleep, start reading the Manual of Philatelic Judging, affectionately known as the MOJ. Fun reading! Well, maybe not so much fun. (My subjective evaluation, so try reading it yourself and then make your own decision.)

Look it up at: stamps.org/userfiles/file/judging/JudgesManual.pdf.

The MOJ is 123 pages long. To get a little flavor of what to expect, may I suggest you try reading page 57. Especially note: “There are no established rules about...” and “relative importance is the primary consideration” and “creativity...increases importance.” If you can figure out what these things mean, and how they interface, please phone me and let me know. (Try to keep your explanation under an hour per page because I want to get back to fun stuff like my stamp collecting activities.)

There is no such thing as perfection, and there have been exhibitions with many near perfect exhibits, and some where nobody has a super great exhibit. Nevertheless, one exhibit has to be judged the best of the show, and therefore is deemed the “winner.” Sometimes this is akin to watching a horse race where all the horses are slow. But one horse DOES cross the finish line first, and is the winner.

All this may sound a little discouraging, but in reality looking at exhibits is often quite interesting, very informative, and to me the most interesting part of a stamp show. It is where a person can view items that will never appear anywhere else, along with explanations. Unfortunately, the nature of the exhibiting requires the owner of the exhibit to not be identified with the exhibit, so if you have an interest in a particular exhibit, it requires a little effort to find who the person is. Contacting that person is often not very easy. With a little diligence, however, this can often be accomplished.

Personally, I have never collected stamps with the idea of accumulating trophies to put onto my fireplace mantle. But I have exhibited, with the goal of sharing what I think is fun and interesting to others, especially to others who may be beginning in the hobby. I particularly want my exhibits to be attractive to youth, ages 5 to 12, where a lifelong love of stamp collecting often begins.

So, putting aside thoughts of large gold trophies and blue ribbons, I want my exhibits to be colorful, readable, and tell a story that kids (and beginners and intermediate collectors of any age) can relate to. That means I exclude anything I deem “flyspecking” (examining tiny differences in the same stamp), and obscure details about printing, paper, watermarks, inks, and other technicalities. Colorful first day covers with a nice cachet, often obtainable inexpensively for about a dollar or two, very popular and collected by thousands are items most people can relate to.

Exhibits today are loaded with covers (stamps on envelopes.) Many years ago, some exhibits were primarily just pages of stamps that a collector removed from his album. Today it actually is infrequent to see an entire exhibit of just stamps. For a person who has interesting stamps to share with others by exhibiting, it behooves that person to spend some money and purchase a bunch of covers.

The American Association of Philatelic Exhibitors, founded in 1986, is a great organization to support those who desire to exhibit. They have a great web site at [www. aape.org](http://www.aape.org). Check it out.

These words of Henry M Goodkind say a lot:

Philately Can Do Without:-

1. The exaggerated (and untrue) reports in newspapers of new discoveries of rare varieties, which are nothing but printer’s waste.
2. Reporting every stamp show or convention as a great success.
3. Exhibitionists (mug hunters) calling themselves top philatelic scholars.
4. Reporting only the names of the prizewinners at stamp shows but not the material they exhibited.

5. Omitting the names of hard-working judges at stamp shows.
6. Stamp organizations' and editors' overuse of superlatives. (This year we read seven stamp groups calling themselves "the best." Which one is right?)
7. Use of the word "unique."
8. Use of the word "superb."
9. Calling a book or a catalogue "a must." (You *must* eat and breathe, but you must not read a book.)
10. Seeing the same person's picture in practically every number of the same stamp periodical.
11. Mail auction sales.
12. Stamp dealers advertising: "We pay the highest prices." What's your experience?
13. Topical collectors in self-defense constantly referring to philatelic scholarship as "fly-specking."
14. Glowing editorial comments on an auction sale in the same stamp paper where a dealer or auction house is an advertiser.
15. Book reviews by people who have never read the book.
16. Specialists from believing theirs is the only one field in philately, and who only have eyes for their specialty.
17. Finding fault with designs on new stamps. (One need not have one iota of philatelic knowledge to do this.)
18. Professional philatelic investment advisors. Their guesses are no better than yours.
19. Making philatelic awards to non-philatelists, such as post office people. "Philately for philatelists," should be our slogan.
20. Thinking that there are no honest stamp dealers. There are all types of people both collecting or dealing in stamps.
21. Dispensing favoritism at the expense of recognition of philatelic achievement.
22. Regarding philately as a battlefield or a racket rather than the pleasure and wonderful leisure-time pursuit it has been for nearly 120 years.

... Written 48 years ago, December 1967, in *The Collectors Club Philatelist*,
Vol. 47 Number 1, page 12.

Some things have changed, and some have not.

Additional new domain names: yumystampcollecting.org, yumystampcollecting.com, and stampcollectingclubsforkids.com. Each of those redirects you to our main website at stampcollectingclubsforkids.org.

If you have something relating to stamp collecting that you think might be appropriate for this newsletter, please feel free to send it to Robert W. Martin at the address listed below. Got a scan of a page you would like to share? Send it in, and if space is available, we will put it in this newsletter.

Comments? Write Robert W. Martin, P.O. Box 1809, Kihei, HI 96753 (Try to use a nice stamp on your letter.)

Stamp Collecting Clubs for Kids is a 501 C (3) organization. All donations of \$10 or more are provided written receipts.

www.stampcollectingclubsforkids.org