

The Cover Story by Francis Ferguson

Every trip has an end and a beginning. My recent trip had a beginning that involved an adventure into the wilds of Joshua Tree National Park in southeastern California. The proliferation of rocks, sand, dust and cactus can only be called mind numbing. After visiting many national parks over the last 30 years, there are many that have a beauty beyond words – they draw a visitor back time and time again. Yellowstone, Bryce, Zion, and Yosemite come to mind. Joshua Tree NP was a one-time visit for me. Enough said on that subject.

Two days attending the APS Winter show in Riverside was interesting – and a lot less dusty! The show was well attended with about 75 dealers, and what appeared to be pretty consistent crowds on the Friday and Saturday that I was in attendance. The venue was excellent – with enough space for the exhibits and plenty of room for the dealer’s bourse area. Even with a significant number of folks on the floor, there was always room to move. The dealers included a strong percentage of mid-west and west-coast dealers, but there was also a smattering of Florida dealers. Collectors Exchange from Altamonte Springs was represented by John and Jean, and C/R Covers from Crystal River by Vicki and Bill.

The APS team did their normal great job of producing the event. Wade, Ken, Dana, and the rest of the staff always seemed to be in motion whenever I encountered them. It was nice to meet the three young philatelists that have been nurtured by the fledgling Young Philatelist Fellowships. All three youth members seemed to be very immersed in their activities and enjoying the adventure.

The material present at the show was really not that much different than what could be found at a major east coast show – like our own FLOREX. However, the adventure of looking still was fun. I picked up a handful of Transport covers that held some interest. The real interesting find happened by total chance.

I was sitting at a dealers booth who hailed from the State of Oregon, looking through their copies of the dollar Presidentials looking for a shifty head – and I found a nice one. During the looking I was asked what else I collected and I said “Washington/Franklin material always gets my attention” The wife who was the U.S. material side of the business, immediately perked up and said “I have something for you to see – we just got it back last week.....” She goes digging in the stock material at the back of the booth and emerges with a typical APEX green form. She hands me a rather ratty looking block of nine with what appear to be roulette cuts. Now this is interesting! I asked her what she would sell it for, after a great deal of dithering she says “25”. I said “25 hundred?” Her reply of “25 dollars.” was more to my liking. I handed her two twenties and said “Thank you – for the interesting item.” Everyone was happy.

What exactly is this item? That still remains to be determined. The APEX form suggested it was an example of Wilson Roulette. This was not verified by the certification. No opinion was offered. Was this a private attempt to create perforations? The story may continue sometime in the future, when more information is obtained.

Never discount what may turn up at a show. Small or large, there always is a chance of finding something of interest. One just has to look.

Our trip ended after spending 3 nights on the Central California coastline in the small town of San Simeon, with mostly soggy weather. Oddly enough we have been happy to return to our “normal” winter and the Eastern Time Zone!



CENTRAL FLORIDA STAMP CLUB – HISTORY

By David M. Allen

Introduction

There are very few stamp clubs that start writing their history when they first form. However, when the vision in the club reaches the point to see the value of knowing their history, then much of the earlier knowledge may be lost or misplaced and difficult to obtain. Since this is the case for our club, the current attempt will have to be updated as more information is found. Thus it will be just like an ongoing collection or exhibit.

It should be noted that we do not know if this is first time our club has attempted a history. While the vision may or may not have been present sometime in the past, we do know that the vision has existed since about 2006.

In considering how to approach this project, it is easy to see how writing a history of the club mirrors the stamp collecting experience. Stamp enthusiasts come in three basic levels. On one level, the accumulator gathers material, but does not attempt to make order from it. This can be from procrastination or because the material is too incomplete to show its history. The current project has been affected in this way, unfortunately because of both causes.

On the collecting level, the stamp collector gathers the material and orders it in some manner. The collector is probably aware of the general history of the subjects of the stamps, but history associated with the specific material may or may not be considered. It is from this level that we need to consider what to collect for a history of the club. We can collect 1) recollections from current and past members who are still living, 2) minutes, membership lists, and other documents the club has produced, 3) references in other publications about the club, 4) correspondence between members and between members and the club, and 5) artifacts (covers, cachets, etc.) the club has created.

The words “philately” and “stamp collecting” are often used synonymously. While the philatelist also gathers and orders material, it is the work to learn and publish or exhibit the specific history associated with the collected material that makes one a true philatelist. Perhaps it is from true philatelists that the vision for a club history comes.

It is a bit ironic that collectors of history fail to keep a history of their club. But to be fair to the people who initiate a stamp club, the club is at its simplest at the beginning – a group of people getting together out of a common interest in stamp collecting.

The philatelist’s vision is needed to produce a meaningful history for the club. The main areas of concern are to discern the growth of the club, the changes in its vision and direction, and its successes and failures in fostering and promoting various interests. It is this high level we hope to attain in this history.

[Editor’s Note: I am very glad to see this long anticipated project starting to move forward. The objective is of course to capture as much of the history of the CFSC as possible --- before it is lost in time. I would like to acknowledge and thank David M. Allen and Phillip Fettig for their assistance and perseverance. We all look forward to learning more about our past as a club!]