

Picture 1



Florida Lighthouse Day at Ponce de Leon Inlet Lighthouse by Randall Priest

We arrived at the lighthouse on a cold and windy morning. It looks like it will rain at any time. I find my contact, Mary Wentzel, the programs manager for the Ponce de Leon Inlet Light Station [Picture 1], who showed me the tent that we were to use. It was located right next to the lighthouse, in front of the Davis Home [Picture 2]. After getting some of our things to the tent, the Post Office is also trying to set up under their tent. The wind is not letting up, and here

comes Steve and Linda Patrick to lend a hand; we sit under our tent and wonder how we will set up in the wind.

Picture 3



The Post Office has decided to move inside to the large room on the second floor [Picture 3]. It did not take us long to make the same choice. So we move upstairs out

of the cold and the wind. Now I can set up a lot more because I have the space and no wind.

While were sitting under our tent we met Mrs. Gladys Meyer Davis [Picture 4], the daughter of the last Postmistress in Ponce Park. Ponce Park was the name of the area before it was changed to Ponce Inlet. The house next to the lighthouse was where Gladys was born. I had her sign one of my covers to make the connection of lighthouse and the person [Picture 5].

Picture 2



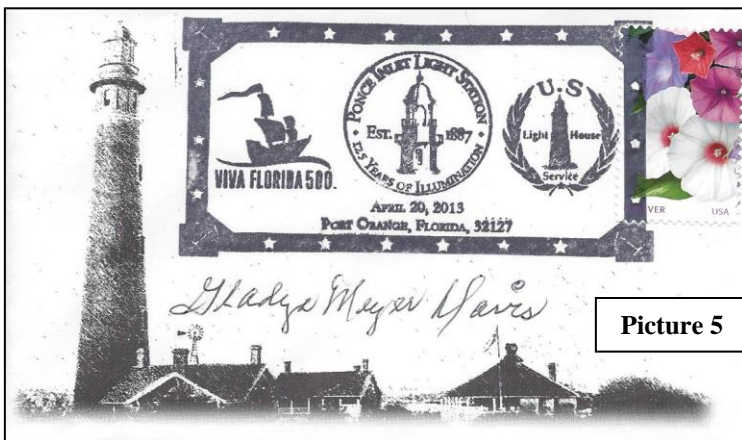
Picture 4

This event was a part of a celebration of Florida Lighthouses, held on April 20th 2013. The program was set to run from 10:00am to 2:00pm. Soon after 10:00 people started to come upstairs. Sarah looked out the window and could see many youth walking around. She could not stand to let any of them get away, so she went down stairs and started passing out packs of stamps and told them about the Post Office and our display upstairs. I had one table set up so the young people could draw a light house stamp. The other tables were showing the different ways to collect different subjects. We had about 20 to 25 young people come through.

The post office was set up on one side of the room and Steve had a table with a box of stamps for people to go through. As they found stamps Steve would inform them about the story behind the stamp.

I was able to talk to adults as well as youth and answer questions about stamp collecting. I feel like we made a great impact on the crowd as to what stamp collecting is all about. I believe that we have planted some seed that will grow in the future.

Picture 5



Reminiscences

By Michael Rogers



During my mid teens, I stood a lanky 5'10", weighing in at a scant 135 lbs or so, resembling a hyper-driven Erector Set, all frame and no meat, just a buck-toothed grin making my way. Spending money for stamps was limited to the funds earned by mowing lawns and helping out at home. I eagerly looked forward to the American Stamp Dealers Association show which was held at the National Guard Armory on Park Avenue in Manhattan.

As a high school student, perhaps 1964 or 1965, I was walking the ASDA floor at the Armory, having already spent my few lawn mowing dollars. It interested me how the dealers presented their material. Rounding the corner, I looked up and saw an amazing thing! There was a younger dealer, several booths away, looking intently at his transaction, working the numbers. I was so far away that I could only guess. He was so intense that I could imagine the wheels of his brains turning over. I stood still, gazing at him, admiringly so, for what had to be 15 minutes or so. It sure wasn't for me to speak up.

In spite of my desire to be wallpaper, the dealer suddenly realized my presence. He sharply looked in my direction and pointed me over. He asked me what I was doing. I said it was fascinating seeing him doing his computations. We chatted a bit. I had no idea what I'd want to do for a living. Be a stamp dealer? Never thought of it:) That's how I met Andy Levitt.

Perhaps seven years later, after college, I came to work for John McDaniel, in Winter Park Florida. John had an established retail office, mail order and mail sales company. John had a very fine inventory which satisfied the local clientele and mail order.

After I'd been working at John's place for a few months, he took the family back to his home town of Lexington, Kentucky. During his visit there, he met a wealthy collector of U.S. stamps who had been disabled in an automobile accident. The collector was at a stage where he needed only exceptional material. The proposi-

tion was put to John that very good U.S. material needed to be brought to Lexington by courier. The collector would inspect it, and finding it acceptable, pay in cash.

At the top of his want list were sheets of the first U.S. airmails and Zeppelin plate blocks. Problem was, John didn't have either items in stock. Very few dealers inventory these.

So John mulled over how to satisfy this almost certain sale (and profit!) before he and I talked. He twisted the problem this way and that. He sure wasn't going to ask another dealer if he could have them on consignment for fear of being denied, as hurt pride would have stung mightily. And it pained him greatly the notion of giving up a pinch of the profit.

So he took me through the deal. I rolled it over in my mind, knowing one thing for sure: if John didn't find someone to furnish the material, another dealer would do it. I also knew that asking someone to consign this material to John meant they would set a price greater than selling outright. Not a problem.

Then I thought of Andy Levitt. By reputation, I knew Andy had one of the truly great inventories of U.S. material. And I had this "connection" with him of years back. It was a place to start. As John and I were working an ASDA show in a couple of weeks where Andy was sure to be, I brashly said "I know Andy Levitt, so let me lay it out to him, see what he's looking for." John was awestruck that I knew him.

Andy enjoyed a storied philatelic career. He was the auctioneer who knocked down at auction the unique British Guiana one cent, the rarest stamp in the world, at the Robert A. Siegel Rarities of the World public auction in March 1970 (see photo above). He built a reputation for handling the finest material. During his auction career, he sold the world class classic U.S. and Hawaii collections of Ryohei Ishikawa.

At the show, I patiently waited my turn to speak with him, then just stood in front



Andy Levitt holds the Rarest Stamp in the World in this LIFE Magazine photo from 1970. He was about to auction it off for \$280,000.

of him with my big grin. He stared at me, realization coming to him, as he said "I know you." Then I reminded him. Yup, I was the kid. So I laid out the deal, my boss has a great customer...Andy was amenable, so after returning to Florida, I flew to Lexington to meet the collector and get a want list, then flew to Andy's office in Danbury, Conn.

I believe the first transaction was a set of the 1918 airmail sheets, C1-3. I carried them on board, flying to Lexington, showed them off, picked up the cash, returned to Danbury to pay Andy, returning home to John with his profits. Looking back, I'd guess I made six or seven trips. So exciting!

Andy supplied the collector with a C3 sheet missing the "TOP", a famous error. There was a set of the 1930 Graf Zeppelin plate blocks. I'll never forget the gleam in Andy's eyes, showing off his treasures in his vault at a local Danbury bank and trust company..

Sadly both John McDaniel and Andy Levitt have passed away. ☒