

The Cover Story

Pawing Through Covers by Francis Ferguson

Early in 2017 I attended a small local show as a collector – not as a show manager. What a concept! After an hour of wandering around the room and engaging in conversation with numerous folks, I sat down at a booth and started to go through a couple of boxes of dollar covers. In the course of 30 minutes, I had found a dozen interesting specimens and happily paid the required fee to the booth holder. When I arrived home, I tossed the covers in my acquisition box and pretty much forgot about them until recently. I had a weekend that did not require me to do other things – so I pulled out the acquisition box with the intent of filing the Transport covers in the correct locations – so they could be found in future days. That side of the project mushroomed from what should have been thirty minutes into a two-hour reorganization of all my transport covers. It was fun! As I was reaching the end of the project I handled the cover this article is about. I had no clue when I bought it, that the cover [Figure 1 on front cover] contained a letter [Figures 2 & 3, on front cover]. Surprise! The text of the enclosed letter is shown in the text box on this page.

The first mystery is “B.H.S.” – It appears from web sources that Burlington High School is the most likely candidate as it has a long history and goes back to the 1880s. The second mystery is why would the Alumni Association be located 109 miles from Burlington at Island Pond. That I have no answer for.

Memorial Day, 1943

Mrs. Esther Stevens, Sec.
B.H.S. Alumni Association
Island Pond Vermont

Dear Mrs. Stevens;

Kindly extend my congratulations to the graduation class of B.H.S. on this their graduation evening, one of the most important dates of their life.

If they have doubts as to the future tell them not to fear as the sun will rise on a more a (sic) more and better educated world after this war is over

Educators will have had a birds eye view of the workings of Science, Geography, History and Civil Government about which they teach; all of which will make not only a better U.S.A. in which to live and a better world to live in as well.

Due to censorship it is impossible to give you a detailed account of the surrounding here, but I can tell you that it is beautiful, but that there is no place like Vermont and Island Pond in particular.

With kindest regards and best wishes to all;

Sincerely member of Class of '33,

Bernard Baylan, SK2/C

P.S. We will all be with you next year.

The 1940 United States Census provided additional information. Bernard J. Baylan was born December 18, 1915. He completed 4 years of education at Burlington High School. At the time of the 1940 Census, he was living at home and was engaged in retail hardware as a clerk. He served in the U.S. Navy and was classified as a Storekeeper Second Class. No evidence of his separation date from WWII service can be found. No further information as to his occupation or marital status can be found for the period from his return from service to his death. He passed away at the age of 65, on December 1, 1981 at Island Pond, VT. Island Pond is located just 16 miles south of the border with Canada. This is cold country in the winter!



[(The) Island (in the) Pond from which the village takes its name.]

A NEW ADDITION TO MY COLLECTION (IN 2000) by Scot Cornwall

I lived in Boston from 1969-2005 while working at the Boston Public Library. When I re-entered the world of philately about 1975, having been in college and a renter, I would visit the philatelic window at the main post office in Post Office Square, downtown Boston. I visited the window every few months to purchase new issues. The window was slightly to one side of the entry to the gallery of postal windows. They carried everything there and had a very knowledgeable staff to assist when needed.

In 2000, the window seemed to be closed. The display of the currently available stamps had not been updated. No one was covering the window. I looked about the gallery of windows in the post office for the clerk who had been assigned to the philatelic window for the last several years. When I found him, he explained that philatelic windows across the country were being closed, forcing philatelists to use any window (most items were available at any window), but some services would not be continued, like providing self-adhesive coil stamps on post office provided backing. Full postal needs could be met through the Stamp Fulfillment Center in Kansas City, Missouri. The postal employee then directed me to another nearby post office where some interesting items might be found, at least for a while.

I found the nearby post office, some five short blocks away from the main post office. A very helpful clerk assisted me in my request for new stamps to fill my collection. I noticed something odd on the wall above the clerk. It was a large square item. It contained five recent souvenir sheets issued for World Stamp Expo 2000. It was a hologram press sheet. I had never seen one of these before. I sprung for it even though it cost the grand sum of \$38.50!



Now I had to carefully get the press sheet home on the subway. I was relieved that it was not rush hour! Too many people, too much jostling to make transportation of the press sheet safe. I got the press sheet home and kept it up and away from claws and teeth of various pets, children, and guests. It is the only press sheet I have ever purchased.

Subsequently I purchased stamps for my collecting needs at various post offices around the city and at the Stamp Fulfillment Center.