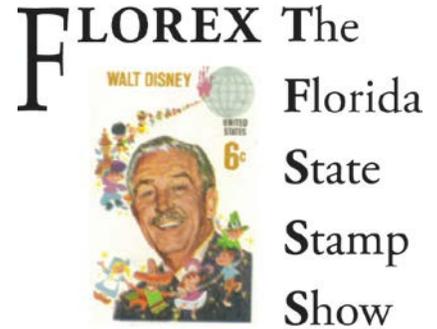


# A Question

Francis Ferguson

I joined the membership of the CFSC during March of 2000. It has been an all-consuming relationship almost from the start and one that brought me a great deal of satisfaction.

For the sake of clarity – FLOREX since 2000 has been sponsored by the Florida Stamp Dealers' Association and hosted by the Central Florida Stamp Club. After the year 2000 the title of "FLOREX – The Florida State Stamp Show" has been used. The FSDA assumes all financial liability for the show and empowers the General Chairman to manage the event in total. The General Chairman answers to the Board of Directors of the FSDA and serves at their pleasure.



My first attendance at FLOREX was in November of 2000 – this was my first “big” show that I had ever attended – and I was in heaven as a collector. The FLOREX of 2001, rolled around and I watched as the show manager (Phil Fetting) juggled many things at once – obviously on very little sleep. This caused me to beg the question “Can I assist you in any way?” Phil’s answer of “Yes” – changed my life. I never dreamed that seemingly innocuous question would lead to serving the greater philatelic community.

Phil and I shared the mantle of Chairman for the show of 2002. A lot of things were happening in quick succession, as the old guard was fading away and the paradigm was shifting. The major issue was the loss of the World Series of Philately status which is of course important – in different ways -- to exhibitors and dealers. This was compounded two years later by the loss of the longtime venue of the Expo Center Downtown and the move to the Central Florida Fairgrounds. This was a tumultuous time to say the very least.

Some experience was in my background --- I had been repeatedly involved with running booth related community events – all of which had been single day happenings with hundreds or even thousands of people passing through. That experience while minor in retrospect, helped to prepare me for the rigors of a four-day show – remember there is always one day of setup and 3 days of show. Thankfully my ability to use project management technics helped greatly to make my life at least manageable during the hectic four days.

The first 4 years were troublesome at times, as I simply did not have volunteers to count on beyond staffing the greeting table. Attempts to find individuals willing and able to perform at a higher level simply failed. FLOREX 2005 was a watershed event for me, as a longtime friend (since 1987) joined the small team to setup and breakdown the show. Herb Long has been my right hand and I trust him with my life. I can’t even imagine trying to run FLOREX without Herb.

Slowly the volunteers came on the scene; without their assistance FLOREX would be a very different show to try and run. I extend a blanket “thank you” to one and all from the CFSC who give freely of their time, energy and talent.

FLOREX is a stable show with a continued bright future because of all the folks that have come together to make it happen. Where does the next generation of volunteers come from?

I have agreed to serve as the General Chairman through FLOREX of 2021, assuming the BoD of the FSDA agrees. After that I am retired. So -- who is waiting in the wings?

That is exactly the question that this piece of writing is begging to have answered. Are you involved? Can you be involved more? Do you want to be involved? These are all great questions.

Will you ever ask the question I did?

I would hope so.

# A Question

Phil Fettig

I joined the membership of the CFSC mid-1978. I started out awed by the wide degree of activities, and while philately was already a major influence in my life, a whole new world opened before me. I already knew what a great event FLOREX was, however joining a club introduced me to how it happens – people doing things!

By 1985 I had progressed to the point of joining the Florida Stamp Dealer's Association (FSDA) and I was the show manager of a small two-day stamp bourse held four times a year. Early that year I was asked to be the Bourse Chairman for SUNPEX, the club show and I accepted. In many ways, this was a major step up in responsibility, at least in philatelic matters.

Some other experiences in my background helped. By then I was serving in my third period of active duty in the Navy and was a Chief Petty Officer. I had supervised groups from 1 (me!) up to approximately 200, gave formal talks to audiences of 600 – 700 and managed retirement seminars with as many as 1,100 attendees. The latter was almost like a stamp show. Of course, running the smaller shows introduced me to the outline of what needed to happen just in larger efforts.

SUNPEX 85 was held in the old Expo Centre attached to the Omni (later Marriott) Hotel. The club President and Show Manager arranged for the hall and everything else sort of landed on my plate. The club also had a major lack of volunteers for much other than the registration table. The night before the show I stopped off on the way home to check the set-up. There was very little similarity between the floor plan and what was actually on the floor. I had a pocket full of quarters so got on the pay phone to look for help, to no avail. There was little else to do but reset the room by myself.

In many respects, this show was a great training experience for FLOREX – except I was still just the Assistant Exhibition Chairman....little did I know.

On the second day of the show I was called out to the hall by the President of the Florida Federation of Stamp Clubs, Henry Gobie and the VP, Bill Bomar of the CFSC. They told me FLOREX was moving to Orlando in 1986 and asked me to be a Co-Chairman. I was shocked, however quickly agreed. A few weeks later I travelled to Tampa and met with the other prospective co-chairman. We already knew each other and had no problems, however quickly agreed that one person needed to be in charge and live near the show site.

One major point became clear real fast – I needed help in managing the different parts of this show, one that is a National level APS Champion entry event. Some chairpersons were handed to me by FFSC Officers, others volunteered and others I sought out. It took a few years of shows to settle on a working group that was best for all concerned.

FLOREX is a long running great show. It almost came to an end in 1999, but a few of us did not want that to happen. It survived because some of us volunteered and some of us asked for volunteers!

Can you become involved? – Do you want to become involved? That is the only way FLOREX is going to keep going – and you need to get started now! I'm getting old & I found my replacement, Francis, because he volunteered. Now he is not getting any younger and who is going to replace him or the other committee members?

What is your answer going to be?