

Club Sponsored Event Covers

Over the years this club and its members have been involved in the preparation of numerous event covers for stamps shows and other local events. While I can't remember all the names, two of our current members, John and Steve have clearly led the pack in the design and marketing of these items. What you may not know is that other clubs have also produced similar items. Figure (1) is one of many space related covers prepared by the Titusville-Moonport Stamp Club. This cover was for the Bicentennial Expo held in 1976. NASA commemorated the Bicentennial by staging a science and technology exhibit housed in a series of geodesic domes in the parking lot of the Vehicle Assembly Building (VAB) called Third Century America. I worked at this exciting place during the Expo time period when I was a Navy Recruiter. I did not promise all the young men they could be Astronauts if they joined, but many of them did anyway – especially right after the U.S. Navy Blue Angels put on a spectacular show!

The Citrus Area Stamp Association was responsible for the item in Figure (2). This small, but active club has produced a series of low key, but attractive covers dealing with local and state topics. Stamp clubs and shows have been long running in Florida. It is quite possible, as well as fun to put together a collection of these local items.



Almost every dealer has numerous examples for sale, most ranging from twenty-five cents to a dollar. Of course, the FLOREX, SARAPEX and STAMPOREE covers are relatively easy to find – now go find a West Coast Stamp Expo or BAYPEX! Good luck in your hunt!

Reminiscences

By Michael Rogers



When I was a youngster, my dad likened me to Baron Munchhausen, as I evaded punishment with elaborate tales, one foot in reality, one on the other side. I was so excited: "I'm descended from royalty" until later on I realized the Munchhausen coat of arms that he propped up in the basement was me getting snookered. By the time I figured it out, I thought it was pretty cool.

You wouldn't know it today but I was a really quiet kid. Squeaked into college. Senior year was a revelation, here I was in Atlanta Georgia, and just didn't have the money to go home for vacation so I walked into the coin shop downtown and asked if I could have a job just for the two weeks. I was hired to do inventory of their stamp department. Their stamp man was well glad to hand off this tedious job to me.

First day on the job I went next door for a nice lunch, fish and fries. First gulp, a big old fish bone got stuck way back in my throat!

I couldn't talk. I could only whisper. And I didn't have insurance so I couldn't go to a doctor right away. I didn't take the sense to complain to the restaurant. So I went back to work and kept my mouth shut. Boy, were they impressed with me! The campus doctor returned a day before my job ended & removed the fish bone. I took the bus to the hobby shop so animated that my boss said "first you don't talk and now you won't shut up!" I accepted an afternoon job which fit in well with my senior year at college.

My generation is shaped by the Vietnam War. I had a college deferment, expecting to serve upon graduation. I took the physical and let's say they were under-impressed:) But here I was, having graduated college, prepared myself for Army call-up, and then it didn't happen. My plans were 4 year college, Vietnam, graduate school. Now a void. Weird.

So I called my family and said I was returning to Atlanta to take this position as a stamp dealer for a year. A year would tell the tale. If not, I could enroll in graduate school and become a medical social worker as I'd planned.

A stamp dealer? My dad yelled, my mom, well, you know mothers:) Let's say they worried for my good sense.

Months later, the coin company got burglarized and there went their entire stamp stock. Fortunately, I'd made a friendship with a coin dealer in Jacksonville, Florida. His name is Barry Williams.

I don't drive. I know how to but I'm the worst driver you've ever seen. No kidding. I took the driving test in Atlanta and they told me "Boy, we'd give a pig a driver's license but you'd better stay off the road". I was offered a license but declined. I just wanted to know I could do it.

Representing the company at stamp shows was really important. I hooked up with Barry, sharing a booth or each of us taking our own booths. We'd go on buying trips, him for coins, me for stamps. Remarkably, we're very good friends today 38 years later.

One time we did a show in the Palmer House in Chicago. Here we were on an upper floor on the last day of the show and the elevator broke down. The dealers were in the midst of moving out. Didn't faze Barry. He's a big strong muscular man. So he shoved both our stocks into our footlocker and hoisted onto his shoulders, saying "Clear A Path!", walking our stock down six or seven flights of stairs!

When the hobby company lost their stamp stock, my job disappeared so I reckoned that I ought to call Barry and wing it down to Jacksonville. Problem was, the only housing I could afford was free, so Barry's family put me up on the porch. Three kids so I was grateful they could squeeze me in. Accomodating as his family was, I just felt kind of restricted working in a coin shop as stamps was my passion.

Three months later, I heard Lt. Col. John W. McDaniel Jr. of Winter Park was looking for a right hand so with Barry's OK, I contacted John. Working for John was very interesting. When I started in mid 1973, he had a mammoth inventory but merchandised it in a way that prevented him from most easily selling. He'd carefully note price increases but not lower prices when warranted. When I started, John was real

pleased doing \$4,000 at one show per month. When I quit in June of 1976, we were doing 3 or 4 shows monthly grossing \$20,000 each. I learned a lot there.

I had a bit of savings when I left John's employ but most went to family needs almost immediately. I was so broke that in July of 1976 I had something like \$600. I remember selling 3 cent stamps to neighborhood kids out of my apartment. Really scratching!

I made a deal with John that I wouldn't contact any of his customers. In the stamp business, a dealer's word is as important as a signature on a contract. Sometime during 1975, a guy approached us with some really great stamps, and after checking him out, we knew it really was an inheritance. I was the guy in McDaniel's office that Tom dealt with but he "belonged" to John. So once in a while, Tom would come in with a stockbook of cool US and I'd buy it.

After I left John's employ, Tom came in with a very nice book full of stamps, but this time John handled him & it wasn't pretty.

When Tom asked where I was, John clasped his hands below his stomach, saying "Mike's no longer with us". The implication was, of course that I'd passed away. Problem was, Winter Park was still a pretty small place, and Tom hadn't noticed a bit in the paper about me.

So Tom pulled in a favor & got my unlisted phone number, calling me. When I said that I couldn't deal with him because I'd promised John that I wouldn't contact his customers, Tom pointed out that it was on his initiative that he was able to find me. So we met and he showed me a wonderful book of US.

Later on he would let me sell for him things like 10,000 sets of U.S. Famous Americans used and the same of U.S. Overrun Countries used. I'd sort each value into glassines of 100 stamps each. These would be sold to the old H. E. Harris Company. Tons of work!

Just a wonderful, generous man who is in my thoughts today. A fine friend. ☒