

# A.T. A. Members Share Their Interests

A. Stephen Patrick

The CFSC has at least seven who are members of the American Topical Association, and several shared their hobby at the April 18<sup>th</sup> meeting. Newt Kulp is an ambassador for the ATA and started the presentation with a brief history. He ended the evening with some samples from his extensive holdings on fire related material.



Joe Montpelier shared his interest of Ships on Stamps. He is a model maker and has provided museum quality models for several museums. Rick Cohen shared his collection of Bicycles on Stamps. Neil Lewis-Levine told of his shell collection but on stamps that started with his Miami upbringing. Shell stamps are common, even to the King George V definitive that have the values placed on a scallop shell.

Dave Zambon related how the ATA helps him keep up with his Machin head collection. Steve Patrick shared some pages from his collection of Dogs and Cats, Black Heritage, JFK and Railroads. Members could view album and stamps at the close of the evening on the back tables.

The CFSC plans to become an affiliate of the ATA to broaden the cooperation between both groups.  
[[www.AmericanTopicalAssn.org](http://www.AmericanTopicalAssn.org)]



## “Preservation Week” at the Orlando Library

Michael Schumacher

Sunday, April 14<sup>th</sup> while some of you may have been scrambling to finish your taxes before the deadline, I had the opportunity to promote stamp collecting and the Central Florida Stamp Club. The downtown Orlando Library was holding its annual “Preservation Week” event.



They invite collectors of all sorts to come and have a table and inform attendees about their special collecting interest and how to best preserve your collectables. My table was located next to the folks who collect model railroads and railroad history and across the aisle from coin collectors and teapot collectors. I brought along some albums, books and stamp collecting supplies and had some interesting conversations with a number of individuals about the joys of stamp collecting. Some have collected but never quite figured out how to organize their material, so I was able to share some ideas with them and encouraged them to stop by and check out the Central Florida Stamp Club and the stamp shows that we host.

So, it was an enjoyable Sunday afternoon being involved and participating in my favorite hobby - stamp collecting! And who knows maybe we'll see some new faces at club meetings and stamp shows.



## My Nickel People

Most every Tuesday, I bring to the Hollywood Stamp Club a carton or two of stamps on album pages. Regardless of catalog value, nothing costs more or less than a nickel. Souvenir sheets that illustrate more than one stamp are counted pro-rata. German 19th-century to Nicaragua newer issues, Tonga gold foils to Turkey officials, Russia and Poland CTOs – it's all a nickel. I'm filling a niche and preparing the cartons keeps me busy.

We have a routine. Club members sign in and get a raffle ticket for the door prize, then make a bee line for the coffee pot and cake. My "Nickel People," coffee in hand, will seat themselves along a 16-foot table. I will ladle out the pages. Some I will have segregated per requests – Leo (Europe), Earl (British), Spencer (pre-1950) and so on – others simply go through the stacks. A half-hour later nothing is in order. Want China or Russia? I might have had them segregated at the beginning of the meeting, surely not by the end. ("Oh, you're buying \$10 worth and you want a discount? I'll tell you what: instead of a nickel a piece, I'll sell to you for 5¢ each.")

And, God bless them, most of these guys are older than me, but they dive into the pages, buying with zeal. How they are able to remember their needs would make a schoolteacher burst with pride.

Myself, I never got the memo that collecting the whole world was impossible or impractical. I have read that it's a fool's errand. Well, color me stupid because I'm having a ball!

I go into the marketplace, buying collections that vary from single-country albums to multi-volume *Master Global* or *Scott Internationals*. I bid by mail or attend in person at public auctions. Even what is described as a general worldwide collection may be more useful if the collector made a point to find socked-on-the-nose cancellations or specialized material. Auction describers often whiz through a general collection, leaving surprises untouched. That said, after I glean my purchases for my needs, there's lots left for the Nickel People.

This past July, I was in Wilmington, Del., attending Dutch Country Auctions' No. 317 public auction. The company's owner, Russell Eggert, has a warm and efficient staff. With 650 large lots, it's imperative that the staff seamlessly show material and keep order. I clocked two days going through the hundreds of collections and box lots – plus many more single lots – that would be auctioned off. Come Friday, July 20, the auction started at 4 p.m. Dealers tended to take the back seats to figure out who they were bidding against. I can't do that because my voice doesn't project and I don't hear all that well, so I sit midway. Bidders came and went, but most sessions averaged 60 attendees.



It turned out I knew some folks, and more recognized me. "You're bidding for Kelleher." No, I assured them, I'm here for myself. "Oh, I'm a collector." "What are you going to bid on?" I spread my arms, saying "I collect everything!" And with that, I sat against the wall, stretching my bad knee out, opening my briefcase for the well-marked auction catalog, bags of snacks and water bottle, prepared for battle.

I fear I didn't win any friends with my aggressive bidding. If I didn't win what I was gunning for, I probably forced another bidder into paying more than anticipated.

As I was viewing, I marked the lots in my auction catalog "A," "B" and "C," according to my passion for a lot. "A" meant I really wanted it, "B" said to me it was a good/decent lot and "C," buy it only if cheap, and bid only if I had viewed it. After all, that's why I was there. Very few lots were cataloged, so floor bidders had a distinct advantage.

I ended up buying a great many lots. Stamps, covers, stationery and more. Surprisingly, everything fit into the Nissan Rogue we rented. We're going to Dutch Country Auctions in September and we're bringing a van!

On returning home, I knew I could separate the 1960-to-date stamps for the countries that I don't collect past that date. There's a loaded Spain collection on the floor in my office. I want the used stamps up to 1999 but don't collect mint stamps that are hinged. When I have transferred the used stamps to my Scott pages, almost all the post-1946 mint hinged stamps and souvenir sheets will go for a nickel each.

Bidding online, I purchased from Rasdale Auctions in the Chicago area a lot of 50,000 mostly different worldwide stamps on album pages, touted to be of much interest for a postmark collector.

If the Nickel People were a business, buying the Rasdale collection would not make much sense. What makes it worthwhile is the fact I am the first collector to pick through it. The more labor intensive, the more pleased I am. Retirement is all about keeping busy, engaging one's mind and the lack of stress. ☐

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