

Our editor Francis Ferguson is taking a break after many years with no vacation. This is to fill the gap for now. Thank you for your support of the stamp club. We hope to re-start in person meetings soon. Steve Patrick

February Meetings

We had 27 in attendance at our February 4 meeting on ZOOM. Richard Blanchard won the door prize. Jim Cooney led a discussion about how members store their collections. Several sent photos of stamp rooms, albums, and how collections were organized. Mike Smith shared how his better U.S. stamps are in Show Guard mounts and are backed by certificates with a good inventory system.

Josh Furman showed his labeling system to keep albums in order. Dave Zambon showed his use of Vario albums for his British, and how he also makes his own pages using Power Point. Mel Borofsky recommends Stamp Manager as a good system for inventory. Henry Jehan uses Open Office for his inventory.

The February 18 meeting had about 25 members joining the conversation led by Jim Cooney on the subject of stamp insurance. Most of our members use Hugh Wood as recommended by the APS. A few still have Collectors Insurance Agency (CIA). The main advice is don't trust your homeowner's policy to pay for stamp losses unless they are on schedule. The riders are very expensive and stamp insurance is preferred. If you have stamps that you value, say more than \$10,000, you need to be able to document what you have in case of loss. The more valuable, the better your documentation should be. Take photos of the albums, the title page, and some example pages. Copy certs and store them separately. A good inventory program is a smart strategy. Remember, "the more you pay, the more it's worth." Premiums are based on declared value! How much do you have to protect? This is one bill my wife doesn't fuss at, as she sees this protection as good practice against loss.

The April 3 Maitland Show

First the good news, it is happening. You will probably get a post card in the mail soon. Be prepared for temperature checks, mask wearing, and other safety protocols. We suspect that there is a lot of pent-up stamp trading that will take place. Our club will staff the welcome table, but we need volunteers. E-mail Fergie (fergapk@gmail.com).

One Last Note

As president I get inquiries from the public about selling collections. Many of these have been deferred, but recently a friend asked me to look at her father's collection. He had collected plate blocks from 1951 to the 1990's There was over \$2,000 in just face value postage! However, here is the caveat. The early blocks were in a Minkus album in Crystal mounts. The gum was glazed and not suitable as a collectable. Next if he had multiples of the plate block, he put them in the same mount! All were partially stuck together with some having as many as seven blocks in the same holder. When it comes to blocks of 20, he had bought multiples and some were in glassine folders, but I suspect the humidity of an attic or garage had compromised that

protection. After clearing over \$1500 for unstuck postage at maybe 35 to 40%, I had an equal stack of “bricks” with as many as 10 to 15 panes stuck together. These often take an hour to slowly separate by soaking. I may get 20% for this which is a sad result. The man was a stamp club member in Oklahoma the 1980s and should have known better. I suspect most of the damage happened after his death and poor storage by a daughter being part of the problem.

So here is some advice. Get all your mint stamps out of Crystal mounts. If you store sheets in glassines, occasionally let the panes breathe. This goes for your albums too. Every year shuffle through the pages and check conditions. Store your collection in air-conditioned rooms. Hot garages are like cemeteries for stamps. Store vertically. If you stack your albums or sheets under their own weight, you are asking for trouble.

Missing dues

We will soon be dropping the following members for non-payment of dues. If you want to continue with door prizes and participation in the bourse, please remit \$25 to Jim Archbold. Roy Anderson, Jim Corrigan, Trevor Delafield, Elizabeth Horstmann, Robert Miller, Phil Miner, Jim and Allison Moore, Don Orser, Greg Prieu, and John Ryan.

Better Days are Coming

Linda and I got our first COVID shot on February 15. We think better times are coming. The APS board will meet soon to decide if the August show in Chicago is still a go. The March Party in Cleveland seems to be happening this month. Johnson and Johnson’s new one-shot vaccine will be a Godsend. Keep safe as we look forward to normality and face to face meetings.

Steve Patrick