

Stamping Around

Newsletter of the Mid-Cities Stamp Club

Arlington Meetings: First Wednesday @ 7:00 p.m.

Bob Duncan Center, 2800 S. Center St.

Eules Meetings: Third Wednesday @ 7:30 p.m.

12750 S. Pipeline Rd, #1C (Central Station Marketing)

Lake Granbury Meetings: 4th Tuesday @ 7:00 p.m.

Bentwater Activities Center (adjacent to Bentwater Marina)



#891-076252



CHAPTER
MEMBER

#90



#53-3364

Volume 33, Number 8

<http://www.mid-citiesstampclub.com>

August 2020

*Been There,
Done That*

Graduation Cap

By Peter Elias



With COVID-19 and the various resulting restrictions still in force at the time that I am writing this in early June, I saw this "Mail & Go" stamp that I had bought at the Pitney Bowes stamp kiosks a few years ago that featured a "Congratulations Graduate" design. Of course for many high school seniors (as well as college graduates), 2020 was not a "usual" graduation year; as many traditional ceremonies were either cancelled or delayed as a result of the pandemic (with "social distancing" in place).

That got me thinking about my own high school graduation. June 6, 1979 was when I was supposed to have my high school graduation. At least that is what my high school diploma / certificate says.

About 10 days earlier, on May 25, 1979, an American Airlines flight (#191) crashed at the Chicago O'Hare Airport while taking off; the main cause was that one of the engines and its pylon came off the wing and due to complications that resulted, the plane crashed into a field, killing all aboard. There's more info about that crash at Wikipedia website at

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_Airlines_Flight_191

If I remember correctly, right around the time of my graduation (or perhaps a day or two after the graduation ceremony on June 6), our family was scheduled to go on a vacation to Switzerland. However, due to the engine falling off that DC-10, the FAA suspended the "flight certificates" of all DC-10 aircraft, thus also grounding our Swissair flight to Zürich.

Swissair then made changes to our flight using another aircraft (probably a 747), so that we had to fly through another airport instead. Since Swissair didn't fly to Detroit, Michigan - their flights were generally either through Chicago, New York or Boston at the time - we generally flew through either Chicago or New York, and I vaguely remember us having to fly through Boston one time (although I don't remember whether it was that particular trip) as a result.

Some of the details of all of this are vague, it was after all 41 years ago; but I do remember that I didn't get to go to my graduation as a result of that trip and the DC-10 engine problems, and that my "cap & gown" are still stored unworn in in my closet



Stamps.com offered a special
Graduation-themed PhotoStamp.



some 41 years after my graduation!

Given that I was writing this article, I figured that I'd at least get my cap out and wear it for a few seconds for the selfie shown above! The school colors were green & gold. The cap seems to have survived ok, but parts of the green gown (despite unworn), seem to be turning "brown" .. Must be some sort of "aging" (most likely oxidation of the pigments used in dyeing the fabric...).

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Stamping Around

Newsletter of the Mid-Cities Stamp Club

Peter Elias, Editor (news@mid-citiesstampclub.com)

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2019 - 2020 MID-CITIES OFFICERS & BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Immediate Past President: Ray Cartier

Membership in the Mid-Cities Stamp Club is available to anyone of good character interested in philately. Feel free to attend any of our 3 different meeting sites in the greater Dallas / Ft. Worth area! Dues are only \$12 per year (higher for mailed newsletters). For more information, the editor is reachable during business hours at (972) 671-0077 or : editor@mid-citiesstampclub.com

For a membership application write to:

Mid-Cities Stamp Club
P.O. Box 2158
Arlington, TX 76004-2158

or visit: <http://www.mid-citiesstampclub.com>

Coming Attractions

2020

—> Due to COVID-19 and city / county / state / national emergency ordinances, the following meetings and events may or may not occur (updates as of July 14):

JUL. 28 MCSC—LAKE GRANBURY Meeting

CANCELLED

AUG. 5 MCSC—ARLINGTON Meeting

Program: TBD

AUG. 19 MCSC—EULESS Meeting

Program: Extended Show & Tell and philatelic Discussions

AUG. 21-22 TSDA Stamp Dealer Bourse

CANCELLED (by City of Richardson)

AUG. 25 MCSC—LAKE GRANBURY Meeting

Program: TBD

SEP. 2 MCSC—ARLINGTON Meeting

Program: Semi-Annual Club Auction (postponed from June)

SEP. 16 MCSC—EULESS Meeting

Program: Extended Show & Tell and philatelic discussions

SEP. 22 MCSC—LAKE GRANBURY Meeting

Editor's Forum

By Peter Elias

EXPO 2020 is just around the corner, only a couple of months away. At this point, the EXPO is scheduled to go on. I have submitted my exhibits for EXPO 2020 and even managed to come up with 2 new "mini-exhibits" around the theme of COVID-19.

EXPO Updates

I am happy to report that we now have a full slate of three APS-accredited judges for EXPO 2020. They are: Patrick Walters (one of the 2019 judges), Stephen Washburne (2016) and Colin Fraser (2012).

Members In The News

Member Rick Howell reported that he saw fellow member's name Ray Cartier mentioned in an article by Jay Bigalke (Linn's Editor) entitled Philatelic Foreword, where Jay discussed the recently shut-down "Customized Postage Program"; in it, Ray had mentioned that he had order PhotoStamps featuring a B-32 Bomber that he used for making various anniversary covers.



Secretary's Report

By Skip Ely

Applications Received

n/a

New Members

n/a

Deceased

n/a

Reinstatements

n/a

Membership Summary – July 15, 2020

Membership as of June 17, 2020	89
Applications Received	0
New Members	0
Dropped for non-payment of dues	(0)
Resignations	0
Deceased	(0)
Reinstatements	0
Membership as of July 15, 2020	89

PhotoStamps: RIP

By Peter Elias



The “photostamps.com” website screen shot above proclaims, “PhotoStamps is Now Closed”. The USPS mandated that the “Custom Postage Program” is terminated as of June 16, 2020.

“Custom Postage” started in 2004 as a “test” and became permanent in 2005. The first company to offer “custom postage” was stamps.com with its’ “PhotoStamps” product. Other companies such as “PictureItPostage” (by endicia.com) and Zazzle also obtained licenses from the USPS (at a cost of over 1/4 million dollars per year) to produce custom postage products.



I bought my first PhotoStamp in 2004. Going through my archives, and based on the serial number on the stamp, this one must have been one of my first orders, showing my son Marcos as a toddler, and pointing to some stamps in a black stock sheet! These stamps with their large colored block containing the denomination are fairly scarce, since few people knew about the first test program of these.



Later, stamps.com changed the design elements a bit, making the denomination itself in color on a white background, also with other changes such as putting the serial number underneath the denomination and changing out “PhotoStamps” for

“stamps.com”.

The last two PhotoStamps that I ordered were in early June 2020 and feature coat-of-arms relating to



our family. As you can tell from the image above, stamps.com had changed the designs some more by creating undulating die-cuts on all four sides of the stamps, making them look more like “real” stamps. I say that, since the US Postal Service specifically states that “custom postage” is NOT supposed to be referred to as “stamps”, but instead “postage”, as “stamps” is reserved for items that are issued by the US Postal Service itself, which treats “custom postage” similar to meters (albeit much more fancy ones).

Stamps.com does still sell their “NetStamps” product (but not their “Custom NetStamps”. Stamps.com bought Endicia a few years ago, and Zazzle Stamps are also gone.

Covid-19 Postal History

By Peter Elias

The COVID-19 pandemic that is making life miserable for many people on the planet has also made sending mail to & from certain places difficult.

As a result of the pandemic, many international flights were severely reduced or even cancelled to & from some countries, India being ones of those.

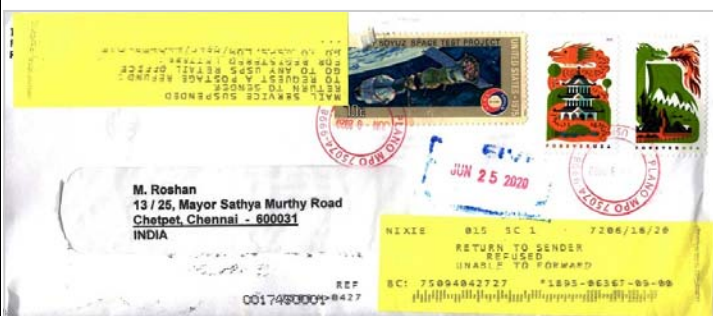
On February 28, 2020, I received an email from a young (15-year old) stamp collector in India; he asked about how to best submit postage so that I can send him the free worldwide stamps that I offer. I told him that if he doesn't have usable USA stamps, and if his country no longer sells IRC's, that a \$1 banknote would work.

Almost one month later, on March 23, he emailed me again and asked if I had received his envelope. Sadly, no.



Finally, about 14 weeks later, his envelope (see above) arrived. It was postmarked on March 14, 2020.

Given COVID-19, the envelope must sat around a post office or airport in India before finally making it on a flight to the USA in late May / early June.



Figuring that if his envelope could reach me (June 5, 2020), that it would be safe to for me to send off the stamps that he requested. So, on June 8, 2020, I sent his envelope off to India.

On June 25, I received the envelope back from the USPS, with two yellow stickers, proclaiming:

- 1) RETURN TO SENDER - REFUSED - UNABLE TO FORWARD (dated June 16, 2020) (yellow NIXIE sticker on lower right of envelope)
- 2) MAIL SERVICE SUSPENDED (upside-down NIXIE sticker on upper left of envelope)

According to India Post, all international mail was suspended starting March 26, 2020 (yet the envelope above was postmarked on March 14). Some international mail resumed on May 27, which is why his envelope made it to me...

The USPS advised on April 1, 2020 that it was temporarily suspending ALL outbound mail service to India (it didn't say anything about inbound service though). Returned mail such as this one is eligible for refund of postage. I think I'll keep it though, as it makes for interesting postal history!

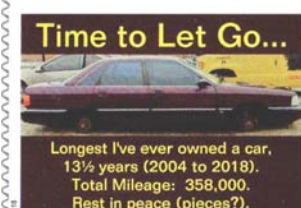
Time to Say Goodbye

By Peter Elias



There comes a time in every car owner's life when you have to say goodbye to your car. Sometimes you're glad, other times, not so much. After owning it for a bit over 11 years, I had to say goodbye to my 2003 Audi A6 Avant in early July. With only 114,000 miles, it was hardly time to get rid of it, but facing insanely expensive emissions (and some other) repair work, I cut my loses and sold the car for basically what the tires & wheels were worth ... it was otherwise a very reliable car and certainly could have lived beyond 17 years. Luckily I have a 2004 Audi A6 Sedan that I'll now press into "daily driver" service!

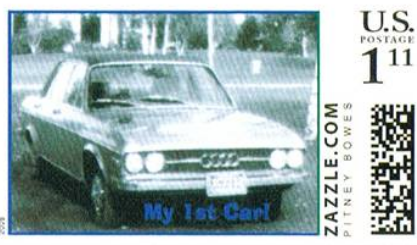
I've had to say goodbye to various cars over the years.



The previous one was my 1990 Audi 100 that managed an almost record 358,000 miles before I decided to cut it loose (at a salvage yard) in early 2018. I did keep the wheels & tires though, since they could

be emergency spares for my (other) 1990 Audi, a scarce Coupe Quattro.

The first car I ever owned was a 1973 Audi 100GL. The stamp to the right shows how it looked



when I got it in 1978 during my senior year in high school. Sadly a couple of years later, it looked like this (see left) on the day I drove it to the salvage yard. It only looked like this as I stripped it of many parts that could I use on its replacement, the green 1972 Audi 100LS seen behind the silver Audi. The reason for saying goodbye was, well, it was Michigan, and salty winter roads pretty much did in most cars in a couple of years back then.

Don't think that Audi's are all I've owned. During my 3-month internship in Germany in the Fall of 1984, I actually owned a 1977 Fiat 128-3p; a hatchback. This car is shown here to the left. I was within a week of having



to go back to the USA, and was fretting about selling the car, when I had an accident, hitting someone in front of my, while myself getting hit in the rear. My insurance paid off the guy I hit,

while the insurance of the lady that hit my backend paid for my car. Problem solved (although I did have to pay for the traffic fine).

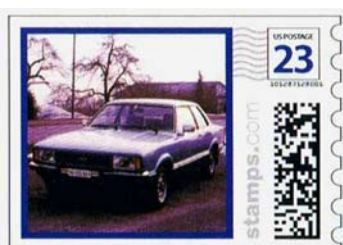
One of many other cars I've had to say goodbye to was the 1973 Ford LTD shown in the picture at right. I owned that car during my college years up until I had to go to work in Switzerland in 1986 after graduating from MSU. In December 1985, shortly before my trip, some guy slid into my car and it got totaled (I don't remember the exact details anymore), but that is me next to the car!



Another car I had to get rid of during the college years was this 1966 Chrysler Newport. The only reason I owned this car was that some guy abandoned it at the gas station where I worked. I told him he couldn't do that, so I bought the car from him for \$50. It was a POS. Only 3 out of 4 wheels had brakes and the front seat backrest would have fallen into the backseat area if it wasn't for a 2x4 keeping it upright! Luckily I sold it 3 weeks later for something like \$300 to some high school kids that wanted it for the engine. Good riddance! No regrets there.

Working in Switzerland in 1986, I had a 1979 Ford Taunus (see right), which I had to sell once I returned to the USA at the end of that year. It was a good car and took me all over Switzerland and parts of Germany, France, Italy & Austria. No problems with the car, but it did get broken into when I was in Strasbourg, France. I still don't forgive the French for that!

Arriving in Kentucky in early 1987, I found that insurance rates there were really high for driving the just-purchased 1986 Audi



1986 Audi



Coupe GT to work (see above), which I then relegated to "personal use". To work I then drove a \$500 1977 Dodge Monaco station wagon, which I sold in early 1990 before I moved to Dallas. The Audi Coupe (above) is still owned by a family member (I had to sell it in 1994 due to the fact I couldn't afford 2 cars at that time).

There are other cars I've had to say goodbye to (but don't have room to mention in this article), but these were some of the highlights of having to "say goodbye" to your car. Sometimes you feel sad about it, sometimes glad. In general, a car is more than just "point A to point B" transportation for me, and I tend to get attached to most of my cars, and that does make it hard sometimes to say goodbye...

From The President's Desk

by Richard Hildebrandt

Here we sit with several events up in the air still. The August Arlington meeting is a maybe as the city has again closed the Bob Duncan event center. We will get a notice out as soon as we know one way or the other.

The Granbury branch is planning on holding another Zoom meeting this month, so be on the lookout for that information in your e-mail.

Unfortunately, the Eules group has opted to cancel all meetings for the remainder of the year. For those of you who can only make that meeting, you have my apologies but it is the prudent decision at this time.

Our EXPO is still on as of this writing, but we are closely monitoring the situation. With it still 4 months away, anything can happen.

There have not been any shows or bourses since March, so if we get to hold the show, we will be the only game in town. Most of the regular dealers have committed to be there and we need to be ready as a club to do our usual great hosting job.

If you have been working to enter an exhibit, I want to encourage you to continue on that path. Even if our show doesn't go on, you would still be able to use the exhibit the next year so your effort would not be lost.

Elections are coming up in November and the club needs people to accept a leadership role if it is to continue. Two of our current officers have moved away and those positions need to be filled. The time commitment is minimal, usually a few board of director meetings a year. There are also openings for non-elected positions such as librarian that need filling. Please consider stepping up to help out.

If the Arlington meeting does happen in August, Ray Cartier has promised a great presentation on Apollo 13 for the 50th anniversary of that flight.

Whether we get to meet again soon or not, I wish for all of you to stay safe and enjoy your philatelic endeavors.

*Been There,
Done That*

Questelles Post Office

By Peter Elias



In 2007, as part of my "longest trip ever to a stamp club meeting", I visited the Questelles Post Office on the island of St. Vincent, along with several other members of the British Caribbean Philatelic Study Group. I'm fairly sure that somewhere I have

a postmark from the day that I visited, I just can't find it...

This post office building seems to have been there a long time! The 4¢ stamp from the 1979 St. Vincent definitive series (Scott #551) featuring postmarks shows a Questelles postmark from 1932!



Granbury Virtual Meeting Minutes

June 30, 2020

By Eugene Atkinson

The Lake Granbury Branch of the Mid-Cities Stamp Club held its second ZOOM meeting at 7 PM on June 30, hosted by Dave Stockbridge with technical support from Gary McNamee. Although the customary "freebie table" was missing and the eight members participating could not swap material, most of the usual routine was observed.

SHOW & TELL:

- Rick Howell touted the merits of the pocket size Scott catalog, while also observing that it was larger than most pockets.
- Ken Aldridge discussed a cover of the U. S. "Law and Order" commemorative and argued that it pictured a live person from Lee, Massachusetts.
- Fred Ekenstam exhibited a postal wrapper that traveled from New York to Scotland.
- Jim Myers had an unusual computer stamp misprint.
- Dave Stockbridge had a piece of "small mail" about two inches by three inches from a PNC collector (Philatelic Numismatic Collection) with a stamp showing the same bust of Lincoln as the penny coin.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Rick Howell commented on APS online offerings. The organization sponsors "chats" several times a week.

WHERE IN THE WORLD?:

- Gary McNamee led the search for a country that offered its first stamps in 1859, produced a triangle shape in 1869, pictures the Magdalena River, released an air mail issue in 1919, included portraits of a leader associated with Simon Bolivar, and was almost out of clues before anyone responded "Colombia."

PROGRAM:

- Gary McNamee was program chair for the meeting and adapted an APS production titled "The Division of the Union." He provided a time line of the separation of postal service between Union and Confederacy and then showed sample stamps and covers to illustrate distinct periods when both sides attempted to provide postal services under the leadership of Montgomery Blair and John H. Reagan.

CLOSING:

- Ken Aldridge noted that the Mid-Cities Stamp Club was operating month-to-month on in-person meetings and that the future was not clear.
- Dave Stockbridge added that the same applied to the July meeting in Granbury.
- Jim Myers observed that dealer shows were likewise "to be determined," but unlikely during the pandemic.
- Not all members were able to participate in the on-line meeting because of the need for certain software, and there were occasional problems with feedback and focus. However, in a choice between no meeting whatsoever and the virtual assembly, it was a pleasant occasion to see each other and be as close to normal as these difficult days permit.

How Does A Stamp Collector Become A Philatelist?

by Rick Howell

Given the age and experience of most of our members, I hope by now that most of you know the difference between a stamp collector and a philatelist. So, just in case, I will recap. Stamp collectors collect stamps. Postage, Revenues, Officials, Cinderellas, whatever, but just the stamps. Philatelists look deeper into the stories of the stamps. How were they printed? What are the markings on the envelope (cover) the stamp was attached to? Was it a proper usage for the stamp? Is there any historical significance to the cover? Is it worth anything if George Washington signed it?

I think you get my point. I have been a philatelist for some time now, even though I still collect stamps. Recently, I decided to put together a collection of "Liberty Series" stamps produced in the United States (although not exclusively) from 1954 to 1968. These stamps are readily available, and a stamp collector would be able to spend an hour at any dealer's table or online and come away with a decent Liberty Series collection without spending an exorbitant amount of money. But, like I said, I am a philatelist. Therein lies the problem.

The first stamp in the series is the 1/2 ¢ red orange Benjamin Franklin. The 2020 Scott Specialized Catalogue assigns the number 1030 to this stamp. The description reads "1/2 ¢ red orange, wet printing, Oct. 20, 1955". Further down in the description there is an "a." variety of the same stamp and the description reads, "1/2 ¢ red orange, dry printing, May 1958". So, it seems they decided to utilize a new method of printing in 1958, which actually created a different variety of the same stamp design. So, what is the difference between "Wet" and "Dry" printing? Here's where the philatelist side of me took over.

I started doing research in my philatelic library and discovered that a gentleman named George W. Brett wrote a series of articles in the *Bureau Specialist*, a publication of the former Bureau Issues Association starting way back in 1954, and continuing through 1962 about the new method of dry printing which was being implemented by the Bureau of Engraving and Printing. In the old (wet) method, the paper had a moisture content of approximately 18%. After about four years of experimentation, the bureau developed a new method, utilizing quicker drying ink and a much drier paper with only about a 5% moisture content. This new (dry) printing method, along with different presses, could produce stamp sheets about three times faster than the old (wet) method.

The wet printing method produced stamps which had a greater amount of shrinkage after they completely dried, meaning that the designs on the wet printed stamps were actually a bit smaller than the designs printed by the dry method. Also, the paper used in the dry method was a little thinner (.0032" vs. .0045") without the gum. In a later article in the *Bureau Specialist*, a gentleman named Walter C. Taylor penned an article summarizing Mr. Brett's research and further describing a total of about 25

differences between the wet and dry printing processes which could be used to determine the printing method utilized by examination of the stamps. Further research reveals that the Bureau of Engraving and Printing printed a total of thirty different United States stamps which utilized both methods of printing, thereby creating varieties for each of the stamps printed by both methods.

For the #1030 1/2 ¢ Franklin, up until 2015 Scott listed the 1030 as "dry" printing, and the 1030a as "wet" printing. In 2015, Scott revised most of the dual method printed stamps and made the later, dry printed stamps the "a." variety. So, if you guys mounted your stamps in an album prior to 2015, you might want to take a look at the new numbers. The Durland Plate Number Catalog lists plate numbers by printing method, so if you want to examine the stamps more closely to see the differences, I suggest getting the plate blocks to see for yourself.

To further exacerbate my situation with a simple 1/2 ¢ stamp, Scott has a fine-print note at the bottom of the listing, "Counterfeits exist of No. 1030. See the Postal Counterfeits section of this catalog." It seems the North Koreans produced some counterfeit versions of US postage stamps during the Korean War and used them for distributing propaganda in South Korea. This opens up a whole new problem.....hmmm.

Attend Stampex In London.....for FREE!

By Rick Howell



Free??? If anything will get a stamp collector's attention, it is the word FREE!

This year, because of concerns about the coronavirus, the Philatelic Traders' Society, organizers of Stampex International, have decided to postpone the largest stamp show in Europe until February of 2021. They have, however, decided to continue with the show in a virtual environment on the original show dates of September 30 – October 3, 2020. This show annually draws 12,000 attendees and is co-sponsored by Stanley Gibbons. The Philatelic Traders' Society promises online sales, online chats with dealers and exhibitors, and a complete show experience in a virtual environment through your computer or smartphone. There is no cost to try it out online, and I encourage you all to just give it a try. For further details, log on to the Stampex website at: <https://www.stampexinternational.co.uk/>

CLASSIFIED BOURSE

Announcements

All club members that are current with their dues payments are entitled to FREE ads in this space! Please send ad to: Peter Elias, P.O. Box 940427, Plano, TX 75094-0427, give it to me at a meeting, or e-mail me at: peter@pcelias.com

For Sale

US POSTAGE – from our huge surplus: 1c – 20c : 70% of FV; 21c – 50c : 80% of FV. Send any amount (min \$10), specify group (70%, 80%), and receive mix of values back in FV as indicated above. Clean, F/VF only. Plate or Zip block included for every \$10 remitted. Remit (check or MO) to: J. Myers, P. O. Box 2047, Coppell, TX 75019. TX orders, add 8% sales tax. We cover return postage, S/H charges. Can also take PayPal (same terms). jasdmyers@earthlink.net 5/15

Recalled Legends of the West (Scott 2870), pane of twenty inside original mailing envelope, Scott 2017 value \$125 with note that panes in original envelope (blue bordered) "sell for somewhat more." I will sell for \$80 plus any mailing costs. Ken Aldridge, KAldridge@aol.com 12/18

Wanted to Trade

I have general (unsorted) worldwide & used USA stamps (mostly beginning collector material) available to trade for your items such as worldwide revenue stamps & Framas. Contact Peter Elias at peter@pcelias.com 9/16

Wanted

Postally used "ATM" stamps (i.e.: machine vended), such as Framas, from around the world; would prefer on cover or postcard if possible. Contact Peter Elias at info@stvincentstamps.com 8/14

For Sale

I now have a new website in which I have listed all my used **duplicates (many thousands)**. They are arranged in Scott number sequence within country. Do take a look, and select any that you want. I charge 1/3 catalogue value, post paid. The URL is www.kenwills.net Contact me at wills@airmail.net. Happy hunting! 3/19

Philatelic Reference CD's. The following self-running, philatelic reference CD's, each containing hundreds of scans, are now available:

- **APC Conversions 2012-2014 (NY2016 Vermeil Award!!)**
- **Usage of British Empire War Tax Issues** (exhibit)
- **Airport Philately** (800+ scans of Airports on Stamps)
- **4 Rings—The History of Audi (Great for any car lover!)**
- **My Life on Wheels** (autobiography via USA personalized postage)
- **St. Vincent Philatelic Reference Scans (1,700 items!!)**
- **St. Vincent Postcards** (300+ postcards from 1900 to 2007)
- **Vintage Swiss Postcards 1898-1959 (900+ postcards !!)**

Special MCSC Member price is only \$ 9.95 each. Non-member price is \$19.95 (+ \$3.45 domestic or \$6.00 international postage) each. PayPal to peter@pcelias.com are accepted. Peter Elias, PO Box 940427, Plano, TX 75094 6/16

MOVED, BUT SALE CONTINUES! Special discounts to MCSC members for Swiss, Austria, Liechtenstein issues, @ 1/3 and LESS of catalog values. Also will accept US postage (any values) @ 50% of catalog. All orders postpaid! I also accept PayPal if you wish! John Barrett, Ph.D. Contact info: jstrubel-boy@aol.com 12/14

Canadian Collection housed in Scott Specialty Single Country Album. Starts with Scott#18 through 1970. Mostly mint, some used. 2013 Scott catalog value is \$4,100, now reduced to \$775 OBO!. Will accept US postage at face value as part payment. Contact Dave Linn, (903) 785-7864 or at dklgonefishing@yahoo.com 8/19

Comic Strip - Doonesbury (Jurist That Is A Stamp Collector)

By Peter Elias



in this case, as it doesn't really paint a flattering picture of philatelists. Some people say that "any publicity is good publicity", but I would disagree in this case. In this strip, there is a jury selection process going on and they are looking for jurors that are acceptable to both sides. The juror candidate in question seems to have no interest in life other than "stamps, stamps, stamps and a special lady" ... and thus is seen as being oblivious to the issue (tobacco industry & Congress) at hand, which is just what they're looking for. I realize that Doonesbury cartoons are satirical & poking fun at politics and the establishment (and in this series, the tobacco trials), it's too bad that Trudeau has to paint philatelists as being a bit obsessive, single-minded and oblivious to the world around them. If you have a rebuttal (or agree), feel free to "write a letter/email to the editor" (something which I don't see very often...).

Lately the Dallas Morning News has been running reprints of a series of Doonesbury comic strips that date back to when the tobacco industry was on trial (1994 is the copyright shown between the 1st & 2nd panels); this reprinted comic strip ran on June 13, 2020.

While I like it when comic strips mention stamp collectors & philatelist, I don't

Arlington Meeting Minutes

June 1, 2020

By Skip Ely

Attendance:

- We had 17 masked members attend the meeting.

Officer Reports:

- President - The first order of business was to present retiring Bob Abbott of the Bob Duncan Center a gift card in appreciation for all he's done for our club meetings over the years. We will miss him.
- Secretary - Skip Ely said our membership stood at 89 with the addition of one new member in May.
- Treasury - Judy Christmas gave the treasury amount.

Committee Reports:

- EXPO:
 - Ralph Poore said everything was still go for EXPO in November.
 - Tom Cunningham said we had deposits from 18 dealers so far, with four others giving verbal commitments. He said three dealers will not be returning.
 - Ray Cartier said we are not overwhelmed with exhibits yet, but it's still early.
 - Stanley Christmas passed around the new floor plan. The highlight is moving exhibits to a separate room, which will allow more spacing for dealer operations.
- Sales - Skip Ely said that Gene Pfretzschner had created club sales books for covers. They will cost the same as the regular books, fifty cents. Gene said there is room for 16 covers in each book.

Announcements:

- Rich Hildebrandt said that auction lots needed to be turned in at the next meeting in preparation for the September auction.

Show and Tell:

- Stanley Christmas and Ray Cartier had a couple of items to show.

Program:

- Each member gave a brief account of their philatelic activities the past three months.

Gift Certificates:

- ...were awarded to Roy Davis, Bob Weidman, Judy Christmas, Jim Taylor and Marty Conner.

Adjournment:

- The meeting adjourned about 8:20 P.M.

*Been There,
Done That*

Hottest Spot

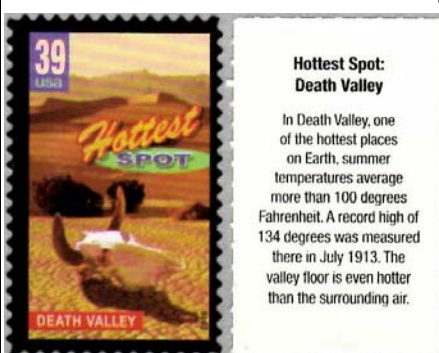
By Peter Elias



The picture of me above was taken on July 4, 2001 during a trip to Las Vegas, during which we took a "side-trip" to Death Valley. While it is hard to tell the exact temperature on the thermometer on the wall above my head, it is around 118°F (47.8°C). Definitely one of THE hottest places I have ever been.

The place is the aptly name "Furnace Creek", which is right in the middle of Death Valley. Nearby is a US Post Office (which I didn't get to visit that day, well, it was July 4!). Annie & I had lunch shortly after in a restaurant nearby (with soothing A/C), and it was the first time ever that I had a "veggie" burger, made with a yummy portabella mushroom.

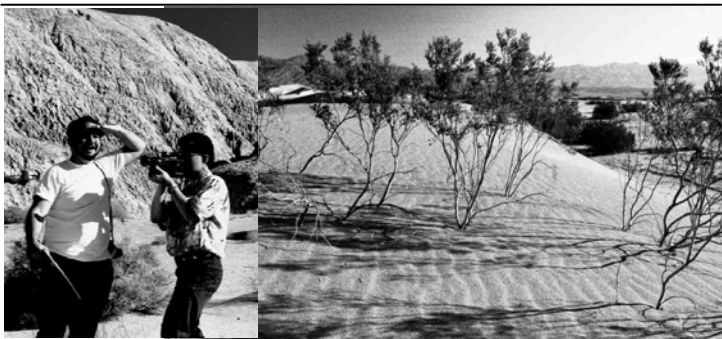
I have been to Death Valley at least once before, but it was during early spring in 1990, so the temperatures were a bit more normal during that time of year.



USA Scott #4070 was issued on may 27, 2006 as part of a sheet of 50 "Wonders of America" stamps, and features Death Valley. Good thing I wasn't there in 1913 when it was 134°F! 118°F is quite enough, thank you...

In reviewing the other 49 stamps in this series, I see another 6 that I can write about!

In any case, Death Valley is a very interesting place to visit. The pictures on the left I took during that 1990 trip with a friend, and all photos on that trip were taken with black & white 35mm film (I had no digital camera at that time, but did have a video camera!).



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Exp. 12/19



Censors With No Sense (of Humor)

By Peter Elias



So a couple of years ago (in 2012), I wanted to order a stamp with this design (as shown to the left), but the added text of

"There Is No ..." (at the top left corner).

It shouldn't take a genius to figure out that the picture shows a computer keyboard with a missing "ESC" (Escape) key, and thus the inscription simply means "There Is No Escape [Key]".

But the censors (I mean "approvers of designs") at Zazzle would have none of that. I got the third degree about "what does this mean or imply", "what is there no escape from", etc. I told them exactly what it means, that there is "no escape 'key'", and that this is simply a "play on words", just to see if people would "get it".

All I wanted was to have a bit of harmless fun with words, but they read into it WAY too much... I did end up with what you see above, but what fun is that?



Be sure to visit the Club website on the Internet:

← <http://www.mid-citiesstampclub.com>

For online newsletters see

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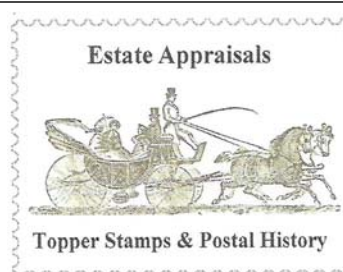
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Jonathan Topper
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MEET & EAT for

August, 2020

by Judy & Stanley Christmas

"Meet & Eats" are held before our club meetings. All club members and their guests are welcome. We will gather at 5:00 PM and start ordering at that time. However, latecomers can order when they arrive or just come by for a visit. Meals should be over around 6:15 to 6:30 PM with the Arlington new meeting start time now being at 7:00 PM rather than 7:30 PM.

Meet & Eat locations will be included the club's broadcast messages. NOTE: All locations are subject to change.

Meet & Eat get-togethers are cancelled until further notice due to COVID-19 restrictions.

ARLINGTON

Cancelled until further notice

EULESS

Cancelled until further notice

GRANBURY

Cancelled until further notice

Wanted to Buy

Texas Precancel Stamps. Contact Rick Howell at Rick.howell1@tx.rr.com

5/19

Wanted to buy or trade for: Worldwide unusual EFOs, postal counterfeits. Odd US 20th century auxiliary markings, US 1934 and 1935 Christmas Seals on and off cover and publicity material, Korean War postal history from US and other UN contingents, and any other US philatelic material with an interesting story. John Hotchner, PO Box 1125, Falls Church, VA 22041, or jmhstamp@verizon.net

2 /15

For Sale

I have over 10,000 auctions on delcampe.com @ 35% of Scott or less. Worldwide & US stamps, covers and FDCs. For more info contact Denny Ludlow @ (713) 898-1872

10/15

FREE 111-page or 26-page album of Spanish ATM stamps (provided as a PDF file) with purchase of at least \$3.00 in Spanish ATM stamps! Contact Peter Elias at peter@pcelias.com

6/17

Complete set of 10 MNH Celebrate the Century, #3182-3191, CV 123.00, Face 48.90, sell \$50.

Ken Aldridge, KAldridge@aol.com, 817-528-7979

4/20

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(for MCSC club members only)

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No in-person club meetings until
further notice, see email notices
regarding virtual meetings