



NEWSLETTER

Vol. 54 No. 8 August 2025



August 22 and 23, 2025 **Friday and Saturday** **Dayton Stamp Club** **AIRPEX 2025**

@ Bobel Banquet and Event Center
3119 Stop 8 Rd, Dayton
Between Miller Lane and Dixie Road

Hours: Friday 12 to 6 pm

Saturday 10 am to 4 pm

FREE Admission

FREE Parking

Stamp Exhibits

Expert, Competitive, & Friendly

U.S.A. Stamp Dealers

World Stamp Dealers

Meetings / Activities

Meetings are held on 1st and 3rd Mondays (adjusted for holidays) at Christ Church 3440 Shroyer Rd Kettering OH 45429

For the Zoom invitation and link, please email daytonstampclub@gmail.com

Member's Socializing and Silent Auctions begin at 7:00 PM - Club Meeting & Programs begin at 7:30 PM Board Meetings begin at 7:00 PM.

SEPTEMBER

9/1 No Meeting Labor Day Holiday - Church Closed

9/6-7. MDSA Columbus Ohio Stamp Show. Midwest Stamp Dealers Association. Westgater Park Shelterhouse, 3271 Wicklow Rd., Columbus.

9/8 DSC Board Meeting AIRPEX Review

9/13 TUSCOPEX 2025 Stamp Show. Tuscora Stamp Club Tuscora Park Pavilion, 161 Tuscora Ave NW, New Philadelphia.

9/15 [DSC AUCTION #5 - Regular Member Auction](#)

9/19-21 INDYPEX. Indiana Stamp Club. Hendricks County Fairgrounds and Exhibition Center. 1900 E. Main St. Danville. Website: Indianastampclub.org.

9/26-7 3 Ohio Precancel Club (OPC) FALL Gathering. McKinley Fraternal Order of Eagles Aerie 2370, 5024 Monticello Ave NW, Canton HRS: Fr9am-9p Sat9am-3pm. Bill Latchie 740-260-2891 or Marty Adams

9/29*DSC 5th Monday Stamp/Cover That Illustrates an Item on My Bucket List (or would, if I had a one) Member Participation - 4-6 minutes

OCTOBER

10/6 >>Club CASH Auction PREVIEW 7:00-7:25PM<< Mineral & Fossil Stamps DSC ember Speaker - Greg Brown and Pat Westby

10/13 DSC Board Meeting

10/20 [DSC AUCTION #6 - Club CASH Auction](#)

NOVEMBER

11/1 WOOPEX. Wooster Stamp Club 2025 Annual Stamp Show. Exhibits, Multiple dealers, USPS Reps, Silent Auction & FREE admission. Ida Sue School, 266

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DSC NEWSLETTER

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CLUB OFFICERS 2024-2025



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#80083

Global U.S. Forever International Stamps

On January 28, 2013, the USPS issued the first stamp in its Global Forever Series. These stamps are used on international mail.

Up until the mid-to-late 1800s, mail sent to other countries was regulated by a number of different agreements that were binding only to signing members. Then in 1874, representatives from 22 nations met in Bern, Switzerland to discuss a better system. They founded the General Postal Union (later called the Universal Postal Union).

The Universal Postal Union revolutionized how mail was sent between countries. They decided that there should be a uniform rate to mail a letter anywhere in the world, that domestic and international mail should be treated equally, and that each country should keep all money collected for international postage. It also made sending international mail easier in another important way. Previously, people had to attach a stamp from each country their mail would pass through. This was no longer necessary. Participating countries also standardized postal rates and units of weight.

Another major development in the delivery of international mail came in 1920, with the establishment of international airmail. In the early years, airmail was flown between the US and Canada and Cuba. By late 1930, the US was delivering

airmail to nearly every country in the Western Hemisphere. Service continued to expand to Europe and other parts of the world in the coming years.

In May 1977, airmail as a separate class of domestic mail ended when the USPS announced that First Class postage would provide the same or better service. Thirty years later, international airmail ended on May 14, 2007, though airmail stamps continued to be issued into 2012.



US #4740/5956

In October 2012, the USPS filed to change international mailing prices. Additionally, following the popularity of the domestic Forever stamps, first issued in 2007, they decided to start issuing Global Forever stamps. These new stamps would simplify international mail, by offering a single stamp for all international destinations.

Issued on January 28, 2013, the first Global Forever stamp had a face value of \$1.10. The international rate stamp could be used on one-ounce letters sent overseas and two-ounce letters to Canada. Fittingly, this first stamp pictured a three-dimensional image of the Earth. The image was created by using satellite data and centers over the blue of the Atlantic Ocean, South America, and West Africa. To set these apart from domestic Forever stamps, these international stamps are all round and have the word "GLOBAL" printed right on them. Global Forever stamps have been issued for rate increases in the years since. A few holiday themed ones were also issued at existing rates.

Pony Express Mail

By Douglas Files

The pony express serves as one of the most swashbuckling tales of 19th century U.S. history. The reality was less exciting but the express did fulfill an important function prior to transcontinental railroad and telegraph service: It transported mail as quickly as possible between the eastern and western United States.

When gold was discovered in California in 1848 large numbers of prospectors moved west – along with the merchants who supported them. Mormons and Oregon Trail participants also settled out west in the 1800s. As business increased a need developed for mail to travel swiftly between the eastern and western parts of the U. S.

The best route in the late 1840s and early 1850s was to take mail by ship from New York to Panama, then transport it overland to the Pacific coast. (The Panama Canal did not open until 1914.) Mail was then loaded

onto steamships which took it to San Francisco. When it functioned smoothly this lengthy process still took three to four

weeks. An alternate service began in 1858 when stagecoaches traveled across the nation, run by the Overland Mail Company. The stated delivery time

across the country was 24 days, although delays beyond that were common.

By 1860 nearly 500,000 people lived in the western states – 380,000 in California alone – and they wanted faster mail delivery to and from the east. For example, it had taken Los Angeles residents six weeks to learn that California had been admitted to the Union in 1850.

In the late 1850s Senator William Gwin of California found an enterprising man named William Russell to run a competitor route to the Overland Mail Company from St. Joseph, Missouri to Sacramento and San Francisco. The new “central” route across the U.S. was 800 miles

shorter than the other route in common use, though it was still nearly 2,000 miles long. These routes would be run by the Central Overland California and Pikes Peak Express Company. The government subsidized the project but most funds were raised privately.

This novel project was called the “Pony Express” because the main innovation was for riders to push ponies hard over short distances. Each pony and each rider would canter a short distance and then the mail would be handed off to another rider.

Gwin and Russell worked with William Waddell and Alexander Majors to develop the route.

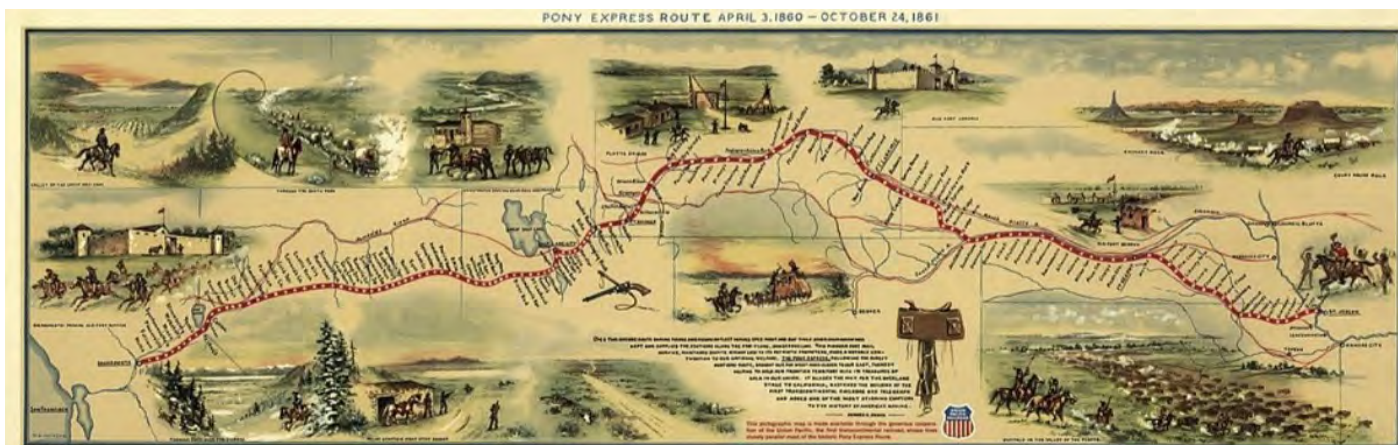
Then they purchased 400 ponies and built about 185 way stations in austere areas of the west, and arranged for them to be continually re-stocked. Relay stations were placed every 25 miles and every third station was a larger “home station” with extra ponies and food. A new rider would be waiting at each home station and they would take the mail pouch and proceed on their own fresh pony. Thus every 25 miles the rugged riders changed ponies and eve-



Pony Express Rider Statue in St. Joseph, Missouri



1869 Pony Express Stamp, Sc.#113



Pony Express Route Map by William Henry Jackson

(Continued on page 4)

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ry 75 miles the mail was transferred to a new rider. The intrepid ponies ran their route day and night, with a 165-pound load (including the weight of the rider). But each pony only travelled 25 miles. For this duty the riders were paid handsomely. Their pay of \$125 a month represented about 5 times the unskilled working wage.

Each of the 80 riders was a young man – mostly teenagers - who had sworn to not drink, swear or fight with other em-



ployees. They were not permitted to weigh more than 125 pounds, so as not to overtax the cantering ponies. Riders carried the mail in a saddlebag called a mochila, surrounded by oiled silk to protect the letters from rain damage. And the pouch was locked to protect the mail from thieves. After all a registered letter might contain a gold nugget. And only precious or important letters were carried this way because the postage cost 200 times that of regular mail. The original price for pony express mail was \$5.00, which was a lot of money in those years. See below for more information about postal rates for the service.

Over ten days the young men ran an extensive relay system

from St. Joseph to San Francisco, each rider traveling 75 miles out and then returning. Mail was carried on both legs of their relay trips. The media began to report on the dashing young men who carried the mail so it appeared they were heroes.

The Civil War broke out in April 1861- one year after the pony express began – and the war plays into our story. Wells Fargo took over the routes from Sacramento, California to Salt Lake City. It became important for federal officials to communicate

expeditiously with California political and military leaders in wartime. Also, ordinary Californians were eager for news of family and

friends in combat regions out east.

Interestingly, the Civil War was not the only war to impact pony express mail delivery. An Indian war also interrupted the service.



From May to June 1860 the Paiute tribe of Nevada attacked settlers in their region. They went out of their way to damage pony express stations. Sixteen

express personnel were killed and 150 ponies were stolen. In June American soldiers intervened to protect the mail and the attacks stopped.

Even so, the pony express was short-lived overall. Less than three months after it began operating Congress appropriated money to build a telegraph line from Missouri to California. During construction of the line the pony riders continued to relay their mail. But on October 26, 1861 the telegraph line connected New York City to San Francisco. With instant communication possible, the Pony Express became much less useful.

Since its financial prospects were severely limited after this point, the pony express service was halted almost immediately. The last eastbound pony left San Francisco on October 23rd and the last westbound pony left St. Joseph, Missouri the following day.

In fact the service had never generated a profit, since the infrastructure required to pay the riders and keep up all the ponies was so expensive. In a year and a half the service lost over \$100,000 for its owners.

The entrepreneurs running the pony express probably expected short-term losses but they had inaugurated the service for publicity and in the hopes of procuring long-term government contracts to carry mail. Once telegraph lines connected the two coasts, their

plans turned to dust. The pony express had only run for 18 months but it captured the imaginations of American both then and still.

(Continued on page 6)

Place your Duck Stamp Order 2025-2026 Federal Duck Stamp Scott # RW92

I know there are a few other members that collect the duck stamps including new ones. I was going to place an order and wondered if any one else would want to order together.

This is for my fellow duck stamp hunters. A few of you already know that you can custom order the new federal and junior duck stamps through Amplex.

I've been procrastinating but want get some stamps before GASS. There is a base processing fee per order so we can save a few bucks by spreading it over a group order (\$9 last year).

Please send me your wish list: the PSA stamp as a single, plate single, or plate block. The dollar bill sized sheetlet, and which year. I believe they have this year and last year available.

Similarly you can order last year and this year's junior duck stamp as singles, plate singles, or plate block.

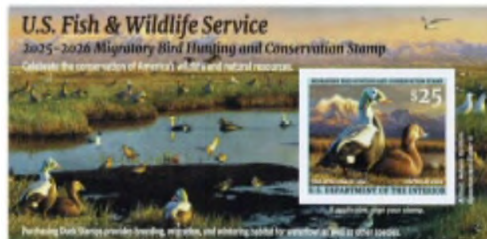
Sorry for short notice but I need your list by Wednesday July 30th.

Pattieface153@aol.com or
text 937-475-1427.

Thank you, Pat Westby, DSC
member



2025 US Junior Duck Stamp
Scott #JDS33-



Spectacled Eiders 2025-2026 souvenir
sheet



Spectacled Eiders 2025-2026
commemorative Card

Meetings / Activities

(Continued from page 1)

Oldman Rd, Wooster OH. HRS: 9am
-5pm.

11/3 *****SILENT AUCTION 7:00-7:20PM***** Round-Table Discussions
on Buying & Selling via APS, eBay,
& HipStamp

11/10 DSC Board Meeting Set 2025
calendar & budget review

11/17 Club Election for 2025 & How
to Evaluate (or Research) a US Cov-
er DSC Member Speakers - Dennis
Callison & Doug File

DECEMBER

12/1 DSC HolidayPEX Party Starts
at 6:30 pm at Church Dinner Party at
Church

12/8** 2nd Monday **AUCTION #7 -
Auction** - Type TBD

12/15** 3rd Monday Board Meeting
Revised: 7/15/2025

"Consider the postage
stamp. Its usefulness con-
sists in the ability to stick to
one thing till it gets there."



Humorist
Writer
Lecturer
1818-85

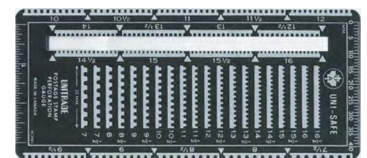
— Josh Billings

A QUICK GUIDE TO PERFORATION GAUGE AND HOW TO USE THEM IN STAMP COLLECTING

A perforation gauge is a tool used to measure the number of perforation holes along the edge of a stamp within a space of 2 centimeters. It provides a precise measurement of a stamp's perforations, which can differ between issues and even between varieties of the same stamp.

The perforation measurement is expressed as a number, such as "Perf 10" or "Perf 12." This number tells you how many perforation holes fit into the 2 cm length. Different stamps have different perforation counts, and identifying these correctly can make all the difference in assessing a stamp's authenticity and value.

Using a perforation gauge is an essential skill for any stamp collector. It helps you identify and authenticate stamps based on their perforations, making it easier to classify them and assess their value.



Postal History and Philately

It is estimated that 35,000 mail items travelled by pony express. But today only 250 of those items are known and most are east-bound covers. Only one cover exists which made the inaugural westbound trip from St. Joseph to Sacramento April 3rd to April 14th 1860. Two covers are known from the first eastbound pony express trip.

Rate periods of the pony express:

- 1) April to July 1860 The Central Overland California and Pikes Peak Express Company charged \$5.00 per half ounce letter.
- 2) As of July 31, 1860 (westbound) and August 15, 1860 (eastbound) the price was reduced to \$2.50 per quarter ounce letter. The company was attempting to increase the volume of mail by decreasing the charge.
- 3) Beginning on April 1, 1861 (westbound) and April 15, 1861 (eastbound) Wells Fargo took over the route and charged \$2.00 per half ounce.

4) Hoping to further increase the amount of mail on July 1, 1861 Wells Fargo decreased the price to \$1.00 per half ounce.

As stated above, despite the various pricing schemes, the service never turned a profit.



Wells Fargo Stamps

During the third and fourth rate periods Wells Fargo issued stamps and franked envelopes to encourage pre-payment of Pony Express fees. Stamps issued for letter

weights above a half ounce are very scarce on cover. Specifically there were \$2 red and \$4 green Wells Fargo stamps for west-bound mail. In the

last rate period Wells Fargo issued a \$1 red, a \$2 green and a \$4 black pony express stamp

Postal markings

Eight major types of Pony Express markings were used over the 18 months of service. These included San Francisco's 'Running Pony' and Central Overland California and Pikes Peak Express Company (COCPP) markings; Sacramento's 'Pony Express' marking; St. Joseph's 'Running Pony' and 'oval in circle' markings; and New York's two varieties of 'California Pony Express' markings. These auxiliary markings occurred in at least four colors, including black, blue, red, and green.

Commemorative pony express stamps

All U.S. stamps up until 1869 had featured portraits of national leaders. The first time other topics were chosen to appear on a stamp, the pony express was depicted. Although some collectors have expected that this stamp was used on pony express mail, in actuality it was only issued many years after the express service ceased. Later on, U.S. commemoratives were issued on the 80th and 100th anniversaries of the pony express. In the 1950s a

well-researched book entitled *The Story of the Pony Express* was published by Raymond and Mary Settle. In 1992 the American government declared the pony express route to be a national historic trail. Currently several non-profits help to preserve the original trail in conjunction with the National Park Service.

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SUMMER AUGUST 2025 USPS NEW ISSUES



August 1, SpongeBob Squarepants, commemorative, Forever (78c) sheet of 16.



August 16, Luna Moth, non-machinable, (\$1.27) pane of 20.

ATTENTION Dayton Stamp Club MEMBERS



**DUES
FOR
2025-26
ARE
NOW
DUE**



August 14, Boston World Show, commemorative, Forever (78c) 2-designs in sheet of 20.

August Dayton Stamp Club Meetings

August 4 My Other Hobby - Member Participation - 4-6 minutes

August 11 Board Meeting AIRPEX Preview

August 18 Panel of DSC Members Discuss What and Why
They Collect Foreign Stamps by DSC Member Carol Costa

August 22-23 (Fri-Sat) Dayton Stamp Club. AIRPEX 2025

**@ Bobel Banquet and Event Center, 3119 Stop 8 Rd, Dayton
Between Miller Lane and Dixie. HRS: F:12-6pm; Sa:10am-4pm**

A Special Offer from the Military Postal History Society

The Military Postal History Society, APS Affiliate #19, has announced a special promotion running from now until the end of 2025. New MPHS members paying dues for one year (for printed Journal: US \$25, Canada \$30, rest of world \$40; digital Journal: \$15 worldwide) will receive all 2025 issues of the quarterly MPHS Journal in digital format, PLUS the 2026 MPHS Journal AND all 2026 MPHS monographs (2 to 4 planned, in print or digital form according to the dues level selected), PLUS the new member's choice of one MPHS monograph from the five published in 2023-25. To take advantage of this very special offer, request an application from editormphs@militaryphs.org.

Current MPHS monographs available to choose from are:

Harold Krische, *American Aid for German War Prisoners*

Louis Fiset, *MS Gripsholm and the Two US-Japan Diplomatic Exchanges in World War II*

Richard G. Lomax, *Preparing for the Great War: West Point Cadet Henry Henley Chapma*

John Hardies and Bill Broderick, *U.S. Postal Censorship during World War I*

Robert Gray, *The Ahmednagar Prisoners of War Camps, India 1914-1920*

Is your APS Chapter or Affiliate running a special membership promotion? Send us the details by emailing newsletter@stamps.org and they will promote it in their newsletter!



Precancel Stamp Society (PSS).

104th PSS Convention: Albuquerque, NM
Sheraton Albuquerque Airport Hotel
adjacent to the Albuquerque Airport
August 4-9, 2025



Why I Like Stamp Collecting?

By Ayn Rand



Perspective on stamp collecting by best-selling author Ayn Rand published in the Minkus Stamp Journal, Vol. VI, No. 2 - 1971. The U.S. Postal Service issued a stamp in her honor in 1999, Scott #3308.

I started collecting stamps when I was ten years old, but had to give it up by the time I was twelve. In all the years since, I never thought of resuming the hobby. It left only one after-effect: I was unable to throw away an interesting-looking stamp. So, I kept saving odd stamps, all these years. I put them into random envelopes and never looked at them again.

Then, about a year-and-a-half ago, I met a bright little girl named Tammy, who asked me ... somewhat timidly, but very resolutely ... whether I received letters from foreign countries and, if I did, would I give her the stamps. I promised to send her my duplicates. She was eleven years old, and so intensely serious about her collection that she reminded me of myself at that age.

Once I started sorting out the stamps I had accumulated, I was hooked.

It was an astonishing experience to find my enthusiasm returning after more than fifty years, as if there had been no interruption. Only now the feeling had the eagerness of childhood combined with the full awareness, confidence and freedom of age.

My first step was to acquire a Minkus Master Global Stamp Album. In a year and a half, it has grown to four volumes, plus four special albums ... and my collection is still growing, at an accelerating rate. No, I have not forgotten Tammy: I send her piles of duplicates every few months, and I feel very grateful to her.

In all those years, I had never found a remedy for mental fatigue. Now, if I feel tired after a whole day of writing, I spend an hour with my stamp albums and it makes me able to resume writing for the rest of the evening. A stamp album is a miraculous brain-restorer.

I am often asked why people like stamp collecting. So widespread a hobby can obviously have many dif-

ferent motives. I can answer only in regard to my own motives, which I have observed also in some of the stamp collectors I have met.

The pleasure lies in a certain special way of using one's mind. Stamp collecting is a hobby for busy, purposeful, ambitious people ... because, it has the essential elements of a career.

A career requires the ability to sustain a purpose over a long period of time, through many separate steps, choices, decisions, adding up to a steady progression toward a goal. Purposeful people cannot rest by doing nothing nor can they feel at home in the role of passive spectators. They seldom find pleasure in single occasions, such as a party or a show or even a vacation, a pleasure that ends right then and there, with no further consequences.

The minds of such people require continuity, integration, a sense of moving forward. They are accustomed to working long-range; to them, the present is part of and a means to the future; a short-range event or activity that leads nowhere is an unnatural strain on them, an irritating interruption or a source of painful boredom.

Yet they need relaxation and rest from their constant, single-tracked drive. What they need is another track, but for the same train ... that is, a change of subject, but using part of the same method of mental functioning.

Stamp collecting fulfills that need. It establishes a wide context of its own, interesting enough to hold one's attention and to switch one's mind temporarily away from exhausting problems or burdens.

In the course of a career, every achievement is an end in itself and, simultaneously, a step toward further achievements. In collecting, every new stamp is an event, a pleasure in itself and, simultaneously, a step toward the growth of one's collection. A collector is not a passive spectator, but an active, purposeful agent in a cumulative drive. He cannot stand still: an album page without fresh additions becomes a reproach, an almost irresistible call to embark on a new quest.

In a career, there is no such thing as achieving too much: the more one does, the more one loves one's work. In collecting, there is no such thing as

too many stamps: the more one gets, the more one wants. The sense of action, of movement, of progression is wonderful ... and habit-forming.

There are also certain differences.

Stamp collecting is an adjunct of, not a substitute for, a career. A career requires problem-solving ... creative problems, technical problems, business problems, etc. Stamp collecting requires a full, focused attention, but no problem-solving; it is a process of cashing in on the given and known. If one makes it a substitute for productive work, it becomes an empty escape; an unproductive mind does not need rest.

The course of a career depends on one's own action predominantly, but not exclusively. A career requires a struggle; it involves tension, disappointments, obstacles which are challenging, at times, but are often ugly, painful, senseless ... particularly, in an age like the present, when one has to fight too frequently against the dishonesty, the evasions, the irrationality of the people one deals with. In stamp collecting, one experiences the rare pleasure of independent action without irrelevant burdens or impositions. Nobody can interfere with one's collection, nobody need be considered or questioned or worried about. The choices, the work, the responsibility ... and the enjoyment ... are one's own. So is the great sense of freedom and privacy.

For this very reason, when one deals with people as a stamp collector, it is on a cheerful, benevolent basis. People cannot interfere, but they can be very helpful and generous. There is a sense of "brotherhood" among stamp collectors, of a kind which is very unusual today; the brotherhood of holding the same values, one seldom meets a person with whom one has any interest in common; most people today do not actually value or enjoy anything. Stamp collectors have a wide latitude of individual preferences, but the basic principles of the hobby are objective and clear-cut. A stamp collector would not reject the one-cent British Guiana on the grounds that it is unique ... and he would not exchange it for a dozen German Inflation stamps on the grounds that these were more fashionable since more people used them.

(Continued on page 10)

(Continued from page 9)

The pursuit of the unique, the unusual, the different, the rare is the motive power of stamp collecting. It endows the hobby with the suspense and excitement of a treasure hunt ... even on the more modest levels of collecting, where the treasure may be simply an unexpected gift from a friend, which fills the one blank spot, completing a set.

This mood of lighthearted benevolence is particularly important to people whose careers deal with grim, crucial issues ... as, for instance, a writer who studies the trends of the modern world, or a surgeon who faces the constant question of life or death. It is not an accident that a great many doctors are stamp collectors.

Careers of that kind require such a ruthless discipline of total dedication that one can become almost depersonalized. This is why an hour spent on an activity whose sole purpose is one's own pleasure, becomes such a restoring, invigorating life line.

When one turns to stamps, one enters a special world by a process resembling a response to art: one deals with an isolated and stressed aspect of existence ... and one experiences the sense of a clean, orderly, peaceful, sunlit world. Its rules and boundaries are strictly delimited ... the rest is up to one's individual choice. But one does not choose blindly, one deals with firm, intelligible, changeless things. There is constant change in the world of stamps, and constant motion, and a brilliant flow of color, and a spectacular display of human imagination ... but there is no change in the nature and purpose of stamps. Nobody tries to claim ... as people do in other fields ... that a wilted scrap of lettuce from his garbage can is a superior kind of stamp. It is not the place for whims, it is not a world for those who like the chaos of undefinable, shifting, whirling, drippy emotions. It is a world for orderly, rational minds.

But ... it is asked ... why not collect cigar bands, or coins, or old porcelain? Why stamps?

Because stamps are the concrete, visible symbols of an enormous ab-

straction: of the communications net embracing the world.

An inextricable part of even a casual glance at stamps is the awareness of what a magnificent achievement they represent: for a few pennies, you can send a letter to any place on earth, to the farthest, most desolate corner where human beings might live ... to Greenland or to the Cocos (Keeling) Islands (population 1000). Those bright little pieces of paper will carry your words across oceans, over mountains, over deserts, and still more difficult: over savage frontiers (the most savage of which are not on the underdeveloped continents).



Stamps as a postal institution are only 130 years old. Think of the human ingenuity, the technological development, the large-scale synchronization of effort that were required to create a worldwide postal system. (You may curse the inefficiency of your local post offices ... and the ones abroad may be worse ... but look at the total picture of what they are accomplishing.)

While the world politicians are doing their best to split the globe apart by means of iron curtains and brute force, the world postal services are demonstrating ... in their quiet, unobtrusive way ... what is required to bring mankind closer together: a specific purpose cooperatively carried out, serving individual goals and needs. It is the voices of individual men that stamps carry around the globe; it is individual men that need a postal service; kings, dictators and other rulers do not work by mail. In this sense, stamps are the world's ambassadors of good will.

Stamp collecting gives one a large-scale view of the world ... and a very

benevolent view. One feels: no matter how dreadful some of mankind's activities might be, here is a field in which men are functioning reasonably, efficiently and successfully. (I do not mean the political set-up involved, I mean the technical aspects and skills required to deliver the world's gigantic tonnage of mail.)

When I hear in the news the name of some country that I discovered only through my stamp album ... such as Tonga or Niue ... I feel a touch of personal recognition, like an affectionate greeting. Stamps give one a personal value-stake, a kind of proprietary interest in distant lands which, otherwise,

would remain mere names and empty abstractions.

(Some countries are abusing this and putting out an unconscionable amount of philatelic waste, more stamps than could possibly be used for legitimate postal needs. But collectors are free to ignore them.) A stamp album is like a world tour, with the advantage of focusing selectively on the best aspects of various cultures, and without the bitter disadvantages.

Speaking aesthetically, I should like to mention the enormous amount of talent displayed on stamps ... more

than one can find in today's art galleries. Ignoring the mug shots of some of the world's ugliest faces (a sin of which the stamps of most countries are guilty), one finds real little masterpieces of the art of painting. In this respect, the stamps of Japan are consistently the best. But my personal favorites are two smaller countries whose stamps are less well known: Ryukyu Islands and Iceland. If this were a competition, I would give first prize, for beauty of design, to two stamps of Iceland that feature stylized drawings of trees.

In conclusion, I want to say a personal "thank you" to a man whose extremely generous interest and guidance have helped me to find my way in a very complex field: Mr. Jacques Minkus. The infectiously irresistible enthusiasm he projects for the world of stamps, and the glamor of the philatelic establishment he has created give him an unusual position in today's cheerless world: the head of an empire dedicated to human enjoyment.