

Scribblings

...from the Rocky Mountain Philatelic Library



Vol. 10 - No. 1

2038 So. Pontiac Way, Denver, CO 80224

January - February, 2002

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Cuba Libre! – Stamps of the War of Independence

By Ron Hill, RMPL Member

Had the postage stamp been invented 100-years earlier, in 1740 for example, instead of 1840, would U.S. Postal History begin with the British Colonies? Suppose, also, that Ben Franklin (Scott C150), Tom Paine, George Washington (Scott 2556-7), Thomas Jefferson and Sam Adams had issued "insurrection" stamps to help pay for the cost of the war. Mail would have been carried behind the lines and in rebel controlled territory, from Georgia to Vermont and through Virginia and Pennsylvania and New York. And there were letters from Europe coming in all the time to the revolutionists.

So, the moot question would be for potential collectors, would you begin your U.S. collection with the British Colonies, or the "insurrection stamps", or only with the "official stamps" issued by the Republic after Postal Service was established.

This leads to the subject of collecting Cuban stamps and the postal history of Cuba. Traditionally, many collectors begin with the Spanish issues throughout the 19th century. However the Cuban insurrectionists issued stamps as early as 1874, many years before the Republic of Cuba was formed in 1902.

Later also, and beside the point, was the period of U.S. intervention, also before the Republic was formed.

My personal preference is to begin the postal history of the Republic of Cuba with the "insurrectos" of 1874 and the later issues of 1896. These are the subject of this article.

Cuba waged a ten-year war against the Spanish from 1868 to 1878. The Treaty of Zanjón ended the fighting that year. The Spanish believed they had crushed the insurrection, but for the Cuban leadership it was only a "truce". The war erupted again in 1895 and continued until the U.S. intervention in 1898.

The 1874 stamp (Correo Insurrecto, Edifil #1; Guerra #59) was authorized by the General Revolutionary Junta, and was engraved and printed by the Continental Bank Note Company (New York?). Continental later was acquired by American Bank Note Company. This stamp is usually identified as printed by ABN.

Earlier, Cuban writer, publisher and teacher, Jose Antonio Saco (Scott 271, 279, 526) wrote an important paper titled "Parallel Between the Island of Cuba and Several English Colonies" as well as "The History of Slavery" both documents providing inspiration for the movement for independence from Spain and emancipation of slaves in Cuba, and the beginning of the ten-year war.

Another early inspiration to the revolution was the writings of poet, José María de Heredia (Scott C34 C35) imprisoned and exiled by the Spanish in 1823, later living in exile in Boston, New York and Philadelphia, and dying in Mexico in 1839. One of his

most famous poems is *Oda al Niágara*, written during a visit to Niagara Falls and illustrated on Scott C35.

On October 10, 1868, at the Yara Plantation in Oriente Province, a group of men declared Cuba independent of Spain. The Grito de Yara, became the equivalent of our Declaration of Independence. The revolution that began with only 147 men at Yara, had reached 26,000 by the end of the year. After signing the revolutionary document they next freed the slaves.

Ignacio Agramonte (Scott 269, 277, 524, 3380, 3712) drafted and signed the original Constitution of 1869 and the Emancipation Act the same year.

Carlos Manuel de Céspedes, (Scott 273, 528, 1871, 3709) considered to be the "Father of his Country", was unanimously chosen at Yara on October 10, 1868, to be the first Provisional President of the new Republic. The Mambí, as the guerilla army was called, was opposed by two important elements, the Spanish government and army known as the Peninsulars, the other group, formed by the Spanish, from Cuban supporters assigned to home guard in the cities and as a powerful spy organization, called the Voluntarios. The Voluntarios, composed only of white males, reported on subversive activities, appealed to racial prejudice, and demanded loyalty to Spain.



these days you might call ahead to see if anyone is here and how long they plan to stay before you make the trip.

WEATHER WARNINGS

At this time of the year we can have all sorts of weather problems. It can be nice on this side of town and absolutely horrible on the other side of town. If you are planning to make a trip to the library during inclement weather, it would be wise to call ahead to make sure that the library will be open. If road conditions are such that it would be dangerous for our volunteers to get to the library or to get home we may close. In bad weather conditions our main concern is the safety of our Volunteers, so call ahead and save a trip

RMPL AT CHERPEX

CHERPEX, the annual stamp show of the Cherrelyn Stamp Club will be held February 2nd & 3rd at the Lakeside Mall and the RMPL will be there. Stop by the library table and say hello.

SECOND SATURDAY PROGRAMS

The January 12th Second Saturday at the RMPL program starting at 9:00 AM will be given by Jack Willard on the subject of "Colorado RPO's".

The February 9th 9:00 AM Second Saturday at the RMPL program will be given by Charles McClure on the subject of "Souvenir Pages"

All members and interested collectors are urged to participate. As usual the coffee pot will be "perking" and the donut fairy is expected to make an appearance. Hopefully you will make an appearance, also. These educational meetings are proving to be quite popular so get here early so that you can find a parking space in our lot. Better yet, bring a friend and share the ride!

EXHIBIT SEMINAR

The exhibit seminar continues to be held every fourth Saturday from 10:00 AM until ? This very informal get together deals with every facet of exhibiting from how to get started and beginning principles to advanced. Led by National and International exhibitors, Greg Frantz and Tim Bartshe, it brings together advanced and beginning collectors sharing pages from collections and turning them into pages of exhibits to be shared by all. Come and join in on the fun.

ACQUISITIONS COMMITTEE

It may not be a well known fact that the RMPL has an Acquisitions Committee. Their charge is to recommend published material for purchase by the library. Funds for the purchase of the new material comes from donations made in memory of departed RMPL Friends.

The Committee would be interested in hearing from you on materials you feel should be in our library, but are not. Contact Bill Dunn, Jack Willard, or Tim Bartshe

with your recommendations.

DONATE TO THE RMPL

Most of you probably don't realize that about 99% of the material in the RMPL is there because some philatelist was generous enough to ship it to the RMPL. The material we receive ranges from an individual copy of a philatelic magazine to long runs philatelic periodicals; from a small envelope of stamps on paper (for the Kid's Club) to extensive stamp collections, and it comes from all over the world.

We accept literally anything related to the hobby of philately. Some material goes onto our library shelves for philatelic research. We try to sell the duplicate material. If it can't be sold we try to share with other philatelic libraries or donate it to interested parties. We try to find a use for all donated items.

Most of you realize by now that the RMPL has a 501 (c)(3) Public Charity status with the IRS. This means that the fair market value of the material donated may be taken as a deduction on your income taxes if you itemize your deductions. If you live out of town, ship the donation to us and the shipping cost is part of the value. If you live in the metropolitan area bring the material to the library. If you can't bring it to the library, let us know and we will try to make arrangements to pick up the donation. We would be most happy to work with you on any donations.

DONATIONS CONTINUE

We continue to receive donations of philatelic materials and money at a rate that far exceeds our original expectations. We really don't know how to thank the many generous collectors who have helped us so much over the years we have been in existence. Somehow the words THANK YOU just don't seem to fully express our gratitude for your continued support.

During the past several months we have received donations from the following persons: Mrs. F. W. Osterwald, Bonnie Braid, David Bize, Peter Bergh, Dasa Metzler, Hal Grossman, Tim Bartshe, Herman Axelrod, Roger Cichorz, Ron Hill, the U P S S, Bill Schaefer, Mrs. James Paul, Mathew Zieringer, Colin Spong, Mort Turner, Robert Ainsworth, Stephen Pacetti, Arthur Weaver, Jim Davenport, Robert Brown, Adolf Schwartz, Glenn Mallory, Jan Marie Belle, Gary Gabry, SESCAL, Bill Cox, Lester Meis, Don Beuthel, Eldon Todd, Jim Lang, George Snyder, Joyce Snavley, Robly Rhine, Eddie Hackstaff, Bob Wolf, Bill Cox, Ken Anthony, Mary Ellen Markel, Myron Hauptman, Neil Littlefield, Thomas Suprenant, Jack Dear, Ward Crowley, Mzry Ellen Markel, Katherine G. Horne, Kirby Wright, Mike Maselli, Ruth Willett, Randy Alexander, Harold Lloyd, ROMPEX, TOPical Philatelists In Colorado, Colorado Postal History Society, Richard Byne.

Thank you to each and every one. Unfortunately some material just seems to show up and we do not know who donated it. We thank those anonymous donors, also.

In 1869 President Céspedes, at the invitation of the Spanish, sent an envoy, Agustín Arango, under safe conduct, to meet with the Spanish at Puerto Principe (now Camaguey). The Voluntarios, refusing to honor the safe conduct, murdered Arango along the way and the meeting never took place. Spain then tried to get the United States to intervene toward discussing terms of peace. The US declined to take part. The Spanish minister in Washington then sent a representative, Juan Clemente Zenea, under safe conduct to Cuba to travel freely to discuss peace terms and disband the Voluntarios. He was captured in Havana by the Voluntarios, imprisoned in defiance of Spanish orders, and then executed. These actions caused thousands more Cubans to join the army of Cuba Libre and the new Republic.

In 1871 a group of students were accused of making derogatory remarks about the Voluntarios and 43 of them were arrested and tried but all were acquitted. A new trial was forced and all were convicted this time, eight were shot, the rest imprisoned at hard labor. (Scott 490-97, 1657) There is a monument today in Havana dedicated to the memory of the eight medical students.

President Céspedes later resigned over differences with political enemies within the revolution, and retired to his farm at San Lorenzo in January 1874. Within a month, a force of over 1000 Spainards captured and killed him, undefended as he was, on his farm.

By this time, Vicente Mora Pera (Scott 1693) had been appointed Director de Correos de Cuba en Armas (Cuba Postal Director) and steps were taken to organize postal service throughout the island, and to print and distribute a new stamp to raise money internally as well as to publicize the new Republic among friends and sympathizers in the US and overseas. Postal service now extended throughout the eastern 3/4 of the island from Santiago de Cuba to Colon.

The new stamp, with a value of 10 centavos, featured the shield of the coat-of-arms, with the sun rising over a key, the link commanding the entrance to the Gulf of Mexico. At lower left are the stripes from the flag and at lower right a mountain scene with a Royal Palm, the national tree. 100,000 copies were printed by the Continental Bank Note Company.

To be continued...

News From the RMPL...

STATE OF THE LIBRARY

by Don Beuthel - RMPL President

At the beginning of a new year it is customary to take a look at where you have been and try to peek into the future. I will try to do this briefly.

I am pleased to report that the RMPL continues to operate on a very stable and sound basis. Our financial condition is strong and we make our mortgage payments each month and our bills are paid promptly. Our membership continues to grow slowly and we are seeing a trend by the members to select a level higher than the \$15 minimum. The size and quality of our library collection continues to grow. As you will read later we have made great progress in computerizing the Reference Card Catalog. Our staff of hard working volunteers remains steady and the library continues to be open and available to interested stamp collectors 6 days per week, 6 hours per day - all of this on an all Volunteer basis. Out of town visitors marvel at what we have done. One said, "I can't believe you have done this and continue to do this and no one gets paid."

We continue to grow because of the donations we receive from all over the world. Several generous philatelists have even made monetary contributions specifically to prepay the mortgage and we thank them for their help. The members of our RMPL Board take this opportunity to thank each and every person who has made a contribution, whether it be large or

small.

The future is full of hope -- The RMPL Board hopes to continue to add to our library holdings both in quantity and quality. We hope to continue to be financially sound and it appears that we may need to start a building fund, looking toward that time when we outgrow our present location and must expand. We hope to continue to provide meeting space for the 8 to 10 groups that meet at the library on a regular basis. We hope that our membership will grow and hope that use of the research materials in the library will continue to increase. We hope to be able to continue to help the non-collector determine an appropriate means of disposing of philatelic material. We hope to increase our educational programs, both adult and youth.

And last, but not least, the Board hopes that all of our members have a Happy, Healthy, and Prosperous New Year.

RMPL CLOSED

Please notice that during January and February the RMPL will be officially closed on January 1 for New Years, January 21st for Martin Luther King Day, and February 18th for Presidents' Day. There is always a possibility that some of the Volunteers may show up to get some work done, even though we are officially closed. Should you really need to use the library on any of

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

We are sorry to have to report the death of David Glover, one of our overseas members from England. David had been a member of the RMPL since June of 1997. We extend our sympathy to his wife Carol.

During the past two months the following persons have made the wise decision to join the Rocky Mountain Philatelic Library:

David Bize	William E Crabbs
J. Hogbin	Charles Klein
Leonardo Svarzbein, M.D.	

Some of you will be receiving a first, second, or third renewal notice with this issue of the Scribblings. After the third notice members are moved to the inactive list and will no longer receive Scribblings and other membership benefits.

As you renew, remember that anything above the basic minimum membership rate of \$15 per year is considered a contribution by the IRS and may be used as a deduction when figuring your income tax. We urge that you respond promptly and generously.

...What's Happening at the RMPL...

"Come and enjoy the activities"

JANUARY, 2002

Daily Hours

Mondays.....Open 10-4
 Tuesdays.....Open 10-4
 Wednesdays.....Open 10-4
 Thursdays.....Open 2-8
 Fridays.....Open 10-4
 Saturdays.....Open 10-4

January 1 - RMPL Closed for New Years

January 5 - Meeting - 10:00 AM

Scandinavian Collector's Club

January 5 - Meeting - 2:00 PM

Topical Philatelists In Colorado

January 9 - Meeting - 7:00 PM

Denver Germany Stamp Club

January 10 - RMPL Board Annual Meeting
 7:00 PM

January 12 - Second Saturday at the RMPL

9:00 AM - Program by Jack Willard

"Colorado RPO's"

January 12 - Meeting - 10:00 AM

Mexico/Latin America Philatelic Group

January 12 - Meeting - 2:00 PM

Universal Ship Cancel Society U.S.S. Colorado
 Chapter

January 19 - Meeting - 1:00 PM

RMPL Kid's Stamp Club

January 21 - RMPL Closed M L K Day

January 22 - Meeting - 7:30 PM

ROMPEX Committee

January 26 - 10:00 AM

ROMPEX/RMPL Exhibiting Workshop

January 26 - Meeting - 2:00 PM

China Stamp Society

FEBRUARY, 2002

Daily Hours

Mondays.....Open 10-4
 Tuesdays.....Open 10-4
 Wednesdays.....Open 10-4
 Thursdays.....Open 2-8
 Fridays.....Open 10-4
 Saturdays.....Open 10-4

February 2 - Meeting - 10:00 AM

Scandinavian Collectors Club

February 2 - Meeting - 2:00 PM

Topical Philatelists In Colorado (TOPIC)

February 6 - Meeting - Aurora Stamp Club

6:30 Trading - 7:30 Meeting and Program

February 9 - Second Saturday at the RMPL

9:00 AM - Program by Charles Mc Clure

"Souvenir Pages"

February 9 - Meeting - 10:00 AM

Mexico/Latin America Philatelic Group

February 9 - Meeting - 11:00 AM

Rocky Mountain Aerophilatelists

February 9 - Meeting - 2:00 PM

Universal Ship Cancellation Society

USS Colorado Chapter

February 13 - Meeting - 7:00 PM

Denver Germany Stamp Club

February 16 - Meeting - 1:00 PM

RMPL Kid's Stamp Club

February 18 - RMPL Closed - Presidents' Day

February 23 - Meeting - 10:00 AM

ROMPEX/RMPL Exhibiting Workshop

February 23 - Meeting - 2:00 PM

China Stamp Society

February 26 - Meeting - 7:30 PM

ROMPEX Committee

Scribblings is published bi-monthly by the Rocky Mountain Philatelic Library, 2038 So. Pontiac Way, Denver, CO 80224.

Donald G. Beuthel, Editor

The Rocky Mountain Philatelic Library is a chartered Colorado non-profit corporation. Membership subscriptions over that for the annual regular membership, and donations of appropriate philatelic materials, are deductible for U.S. income tax purposes. The RMPL is an Internal Revenue Service designated 501 (c)(3) charitable organization.

RMPL Board of Directors

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