

Scribblings

...from the Rocky Mountain Philatelic Library



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Ellengail Beuthel, Librarian

One Man's Philatelic Urn...

Doc Davis' 3-Cent Vermilion

by John H. Willard, RMPL Founder, as told to Sergio Lugo, Board Member



H.A. "Doc" Davis

Photo: American Philatelic Society

Years ago, the stamp collecting fraternity of Colorado and the nation was graced by the presence of an individual of consummate tastes, boundless vision, and eccentricities with no limits. Holland Archer Davis, known as "Doc" Davis among his many friends, was a nationally respected philatelist. He held the post of Secretary of the American Philatelic Society from 1916 to 1945.

John "Jack" Willard, one of the founders of the RMPL, maintained a warm friendship with Doc for nearly 10 years. Jack tells the story of one of Doc Davis' zanier endeavors, namely his attempts to corner the market of the 3-cent vermilion American Bank Note issue of 1887.

Doc Davis was 76-years-old when Jack met him in 1945. He had retired from medicine, and to pass the time he ran the stamp department at Kendrick and Bellamy's, a

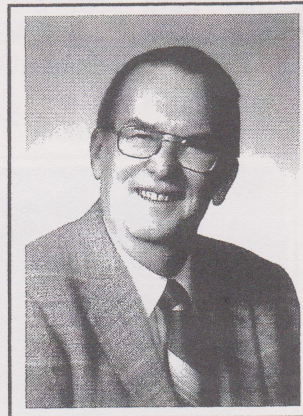
stationery store at the corner of 16th and Stout. He was an accomplished expert in U.S. stamps before the establishment of standards for exhibit judges, and he frequently served on judging panels at shows throughout the country. He was the president of the Denver Stamp Club for many years and was known as "Colorado's leading philatelist."

Doc Davis had a particular affinity for the 3-cent vermilion 1887 George Washington. Doc was consumed with accumulating this stamp, singly, in multiples, or on cover. No amount of duplication ever deterred him from securing more and more of them. But with such acquisitions came increasing refinement and growing distaste for less than perfect specimens. So increasingly, Doc set about to remove as many poorly centered, less than perfect, copies of the issue as he could lay his hands on.

At shows in which he was representing the APS (nearly every one in those days) he'd hunt out the 3-cent vermilions at every turn. Knowing his fanaticism with the stamp, friends, colleagues and acquaintances would ship him copies, both offenders and non-offenders. Furthermore, since the APS circuits at the time were always routed through the Secretary, Doc could always search through the circuit books for the fortunate few and the unfortunate many.

Collectors began to be aware that Doc was inadvertently or deliberately moving to corner the market in the 3-cent vermilion. That may sound impossible since more than 20 million were printed, but if you ask Jack and other collectors who knew what was going on, Doc's antics definitely affected the price of the stamp.

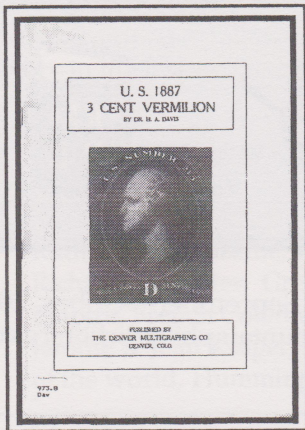
Atop his mantle at his Denver home sat a 10-inch high urn. Throughout the years, that urn was used for just one thing. It served as the final resting place for the ashes of all the imperfect 3-cent vermilions that Doc found. On numerous occasions Doc invited members of the philatelic community to soirees at his home where those "monstrosities" were committed to their everlasting resting place in the urn.



John H. "Jack" Willard



Two used examples of the 3¢ Washington vermilion of 1887. The stamps are usually found with heavy cancels because the first class rate was 2¢ and the 3¢ stamps were used in combination with other stamps as makeup postage.



Jack and other collectors of the day were convinced that the destruction of all those 3-cent vermilion's created a manmade shortage that caused the price in Scott Catalogues to go up. The truth is, Doc never succeeded in cornering the market, but he sure put a huge dent in the supply. Jack remembers that when he first met Doc the urn was only partially filled, but by the time of his death it was getting to the point of topping out.

Part of Doc Davis' legacy remains with us to this day in the form of his 1922 classic study, a pamphlet titled U.S. 1887 3-Cent Vermilion. Doc autographed a copy to Jack in 1953, and it is in the RMPL collection.

And thus ends one man's (t)urn at philately.

"Doc" Davis specialized study on the 3¢ vermilion may be found in the stacks at the RMPL.

News From the RMPL...

10TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

The library's 10th anniversary celebrations were successes by any standard. There were 60 people present for the banquet on Thursday evening July 31st, and 75 for the open house at the library on Sunday, August 3rd. The same five-part program was presented at both events.

A video was shown using pictures taken during the last ten years, Bill Dunn condensed events of the RMPL's history into about a ten minute talk, Don Beuthel honored the volunteers for the 28,000 hours he estimates they have kept the doors open, Don and Ellengail Beuthel were given special honors for their service, and two major announcements were made: The mortgage on the building is paid off, and shelf space in the library will be expanded by a third.

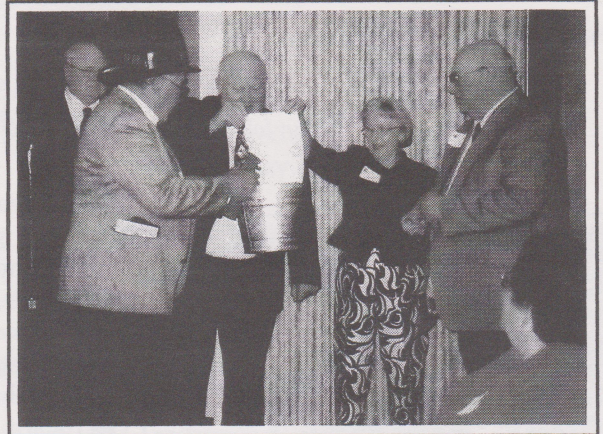


Blue and white balloons flew over the Mount Vernon Country Club during the library's 10th anniversary banquet.

THE MORTGAGE PAYOFF

Copies of the mortgage were burned (at the banquet) or torn up (at the open house) to symbolize the end of monthly payments on our 33-hundred square foot building.

There were two loans for 15 years each and board members are justifiably proud that they were paid off in just six-and-a-half years, thanks to generous donations from many members and good money management.



The mortgage was burned during our anniversary banquet. L-R: ron Mitchell, Jim Ozment, Don Beuthel, Ellengail Beuthel, and Bob Blatherwick.

SHELF EXPANSION

The board has approved the installation of compact shelving in the "back room" of the library. Compact shelving is on rails. It compresses the space needed for several rows of shelves and opens one aisle at a time. At the current rate of donations, the new bookcases should provide enough space to last four or five years.

An expansion committee chaired by Peter Laux has been looking at alternatives since last May. They considered everything from doing nothing to buying a new building, and made the recommendation for compact shelves to the board.

Committee members Lewis Bussey (at the banquet) and Ellengail Beuthel (at the open house) explained that this will give the library the equivalent of forty new bookcases, and will expand capacity by a third. At the present rate of acquisition of new material, the new shelves should fulfill the library's needs for the next four to five years.

Many of the things now stored in the back room, including the exhibit frames for CHERPEX and APEX, will be moved into a Tuff Shed which will be placed on the west side of the building.

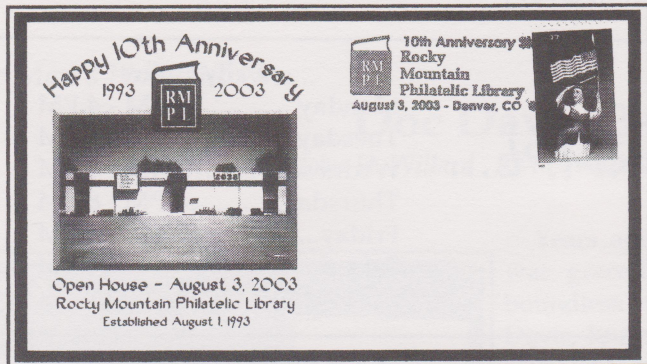
THE COMMITTEES

Our thanks to the Expansion Committee chairman Peter Laux and members Dave Capra, Ellengail Beuthel, Lewis Bussey, Bill Dunn and Ron Mitchell (ex officio). We also thank the Party Committee members who put

together the 10th anniversary celebrations, Maury Pautz, chairman, Don Beuthel, Jim Kilbane and Roger Rydberg. Roger wasn't officially on the committee, but he designed and printed the programs, tickets, and cachets. He also designed the special cancel provided by the USPS.

10TH ANNIVERSARY CACHETS

There are still a few covers left with cancels from July 31st, the night of the banquet, and August 3rd, the day of the open house. They are available postpaid for \$1.50 each. Make the check out to RMPL. **SUE'S PARTY**



Cacheted covers commemorating the library's 10th anniversary are available for just \$1.50 each, postpaid.

PUNCH FOR A BUNCH

Several members asked for Sue Dunn's recipe for punch which was served at the open house. Here 'tis:

- (2) 46 oz. cans unsweetened pineapple juice
- 6 oz. frozen lemonade concentrate (1/2 of a 12 oz. can)
- (1) 6 oz. can frozen orange juice concentrate
- (2) quarts dry ginger ale
- (1) quart club soda
- (1/2) gallon lime sherbet

This makes a great punch. Thank you Sue.

SECOND SATURDAY AT THE RMPL

Come to the library on the second saturday of any month at 9:00 AM and you will find yourself challenged, entertained and enlightened along with 15 or 20 of your fellow collectors.

Coffee and donuts will be provided to help make the time spent more enjoyable.

SEPTEMBER 13

George Wright will present "A Disney Parade on Postage of the World." George has an interesting reason for collecting Disney stamps which he plans to share.

OCTOBER 11

Sergio Lugo will present "Mysteries of the APS Match Factory Revealed". Sergio and his wife Pam have just returned from a trip to the east which included a VIP tour of the new Match Factory site.

NEW EQUIPMENT AVAILABLE

A Powerpoint computer program has been donated and the library now has access to a video projector and laptop computer, so the variety of ways programs may be presented has expanded. Which brings us to the next point...

PROGRAMS NEEDED

The addition of the new equipment means presentations have never been easier to prepare. If your excuse has been "I don't know how to take slides of my stamps and/or covers," then your problem is solved. A time can easily be arranged when you may bring your material to the library where we will scan it into a computer and help you prepare the program. This procedure is both easy and fun.

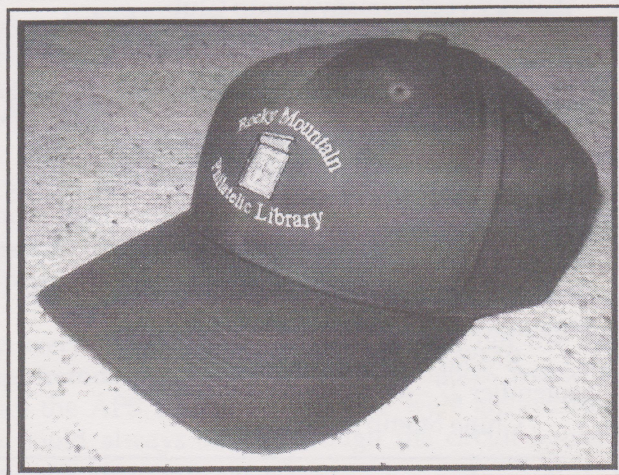
Please consider sharing some of your stamp collection with others by giving a Second Saturday Program. Call the library at 303-759-9921, or contact Ron Mitchell at (303) 984-1775.

DONATIONS

During the past several months donations have been received from Paul Albright, Dr. Enrique Alvarez, American Topical Association, Deborah Arden, Tim Bartshe, Donald G. Beuthel, Miriam Brodahl, Bob Brown, Cora Collins, Joyce Coulter, Ward Crowley, James Davenport, Donald I. Dhonau, Donald W. Glickstein, Jerome V. V. Kasper, Brian Kelly, George E. Killian, Bob Lamb, Lions Club International, Sergio Lugo, Charles McClure, Pat McNally, Harry Methner, Jim Moorman, Scandinavian Philatelic Library of Southern California, Roger P. Quinby, William F. Rapp, Jim Reichman, Richard and Julia Ruth, Roger Rydberg, Maxwell L. Saul, William C. Stickler, Canal Zone Study Group, Dr. Harvey G. Tilles, Lee and Jane Whiteley.

Keep those donations coming. It doesn't matter if they are large or small, we appreciate every one.

HATS ... WE HAVE HATS



Hats embroidered with the library's logo and name are available for \$10.00 each.

Our Corresponding Secretary, Bob Brown, has donated blue baseball caps with the library's logo and name embroidered on the front. These are very nice looking hats which any member should be proud to wear. They are adjustable to fit anyone.

They are for sale for \$10 each, available at the library. Same price for out-of-town members, and we'll even pay the postage.

NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the following people who have joined the library in the last two months:

Catherine Fechner, Maywood, NJ (Topical)
Robert J. Mather, Waukesha, WI (Donkeys, Ducks)
Jerome D. Husak, Sun City West, AZ (Topical, Stamps on stamps)
Ruth Caswell, Seattle, WA (Topical)
Richard D. Miler, Greeley, CO (U.S., Canada, British Empire, French Colonies, Poland, Philippines)
Jerome & Jean Kasper, Los Angeles, CA (Aerogrammes of the world, Hummingbirds)

NEW MEMBERS, Cont

Dorothy Smith, Flower Mound, TX (Castles)
John McFee, Denver, CO (U.S., British Commonwealth, West Europe, Mexico)
Don Griffin, Lakewood, CO (U.S. - Foreign)
Jean Blackledge, Denver, CO (U.S., U.N.)
Frances, Hammond, Cortez, CO (Butterflies)
Bobbie Histerkamp, Denver, CO (Postcards, RMPC)
Lee Whiteley, Centennial, CO (Postcards - National Parks, early highways)

What's happening at the RMPL...

"Come and enjoy the activities."

Daily Hours

Monday.....10 AM - 4 PM
Tuesday..... 10 AM - 4 PM
Wednesday.....10 AM - 4 PM
Thursday..... 2 PM - 8 PM
Friday.....10 AM - 4 PM
Saturday..... 10 AM - 4 PM
Closed Sundays and Holidays.

September, 2003

September 1 - Library Closed for Labor Day Holiday
September 3 - Meeting
Aurora Stamp Club
6:30 PM Trading 7:30 PM meeting and program
September 6 - Meeting - 10:00 AM
Scandinavian Collector's Club
September 6 - Meeting - 2:00 PM
Topical Philatelists In Colorado
September 10 - Meeting - 7:00 PM
Denver Germany Stamp Club
September 13 - Second Saturday at the RMPL - 9:00 AM
Program by George Wright
"A Disney Parade on Postage of the World"
September 13 - Meeting - 10:00 AM
Mexico/Latin America Study Group
September 20 - Meeting - 1:00 PM
Russia Study Group
September 23 - Meeting - 7:30 PM
Rocky Mountain Stamp Show Committee
September 27 - Meeting - 10:00 AM
RMSS/RMPL Exhibiting Workshop
September 27 - Meeting - 1:00 PM
China Stamp Society

Do you have extra postage? Please consider donating it to the RMPL. It takes a lot of postage to mail *Scribblings* every month.

October, 2003

October 1 - Meeting
Aurora Stamp Club
6:30 PM Trading 7:30 PM meeting and program
October 4 - Meeting - 10 AM
Scandinavian Collector's Club
October 4 - Meeting - 2:00 PM
Topical Philatelists in Colorado
October 8 - Meeting - 7:00 PM
Denver Germany Stamp Club
October 11 - Second Saturday at the RMPL - 9:00 AM
Program by Sergio Lugo
"Mysteries of the APS Match Factory Revealed"
October 11 - Meeting - 10:00 AM
Mexico/Latin America Study Group
October 11 - Meeting - 11:00 AM
Rocky Mountain Aerophilatelists
October 11 - Meeting - 2:00 PM
Universal Ship Cancel Society
U. S. S. Colorado Chapter
October 18 - Meeting - 1:00 PM
Russia Study Group
October 25 - Meeting - 10:00 AM
RMSS/RMPL Exhibiting Workshop
October 25 - Meeting - 1:00 PM
China Stamp Society
October 28 - Meeting - 7PM
Rocky Mountain Stamp Show Committee

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

President: Ron Mitchell - Operations Manager: Don Beuthel - Vice-President: Bill Dunn - Secretary: Robert Brown - Treasurer: Robert Blatherwick - Members at Large: Jim Kilbane - Sergio Lugo - James L. Ozment - Maury Pautz - Steve Schweighofer - Jack Willard (Emeritus)