# Scribblings 

Sherri Soraci-Jennings, Librarian

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## CHRISTMAS VOLUNTEER DINNER 2019

As the result of a recent Board of Directors vote, this was the last RMPL Christmas volunteer dinner. Although enjoyed by everyone attending, the declining attendance due to weather and the competition from numerous other seasonal events has seen the room count drop from about 90 to 43 . The RMPL will continue to hold its annual barbeque event at the library in August.

# Scriblings 

## Newsletter of the

Rocky Mountain Philatelic Library
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Scribblings is published bimonthly by the Rocky Mountain Philatelic Library. The RMPL is a chartered Colorado nonprofit corporation and is an IRSdesignated 501(c)(3) charitable organization. Membership subscriptions over that for the contributing membership, and donations of appropriate philatelic materials, may be deductible for US income tax purposes. The Library is a volunteer organization. Financial donations, philatelic books, stamps, supplies and donations of your time are welcome.

A basic membership with the RMPL is $\$ 25$ per year and includes checkout privileges and six issues of Scribblings. Call for more information.

Knowledge is better when shared. Consider writing an article for Scribblings about your favorite philatelic topic.

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## President's Message

I would like to start by wishing all members a Happy and Healthy New Year. Hope that all your wishes come true and that 2020 will be less stressful than the past year. We lost many of our longtime members/volunteers/ friends.

Next, a big "thank you" to Paul
 Domenici and his crew for the great auction that we had. He is excited about the upcoming February auction. It is also time to start thinking about the silent auction at RMSS. As with every business, we have a steady increase in expenses and declining income due to attrition and other reasons. My hope is that members will keep participating in our auctions.

We are still looking for core volunteers who will help in much needed positions like the front desk, stamp sorting, going through donated material to see what can be used for upcoming auctions, etc. Please, please contact Dasa Metzler if you can help!

Last, but not least, Jeff Modesitt, Scribblings editor, wanted me to remind our membership that what you read in this magazine is largely the product of our members' pens and computers. If you don't want to see a steady stream of Great Britain, New Zealand, and Scandinavian articles, get busy and submit something in your areas of interest for publication!

Again, my thanks to all and have a safe and joyful holiday with family and friends.

Tonny

We need additional help in almost every area of RMPL operations, especially back-ups for publishing and stamp mart operations. If you are interested in getting more active with the RMPL, whether it be helping publish Scribblings, sorting donations for our stamp mart, or helping with library maintenance, please contact Tonny Van Loij or Dasa Metzler.

# A TALE OF TWO BOOKS 

By John H. Bloor



Recently the RMPL purchased two books telling the stories of lost or "dead" countries and the stamps that they issued. Dead countries are geopolitical entities that existed for a time then vanished as borders, governments, and alliances changed. These stamps are fun to collect because their stories are often interesting and one almost never has to deal with new issues. Also, the number of stamps needed for a "complete" collection of a dead country is clearly defined. Even if you are interested in minor varieties (lower case letters in the Scott catalogs), the extent of a collection is limited (although there is always postal history ...!). These books provide a good starting point for a collection of one or more of these countries.

## Lost Countries

The first book is Lost Countries by Stuart Laycock and Chris West (History Press, 2017, 256 pp; index). It is based on the stories "told" by the stamps found in the 1901 edition of The Lincoln Stamp Album hence the subtitle Exotic Tales from an Old Stamp Album. The book is much
more about history than stamps. It is interesting to learn about how each country came to be and how it eventually fell.

The book begins with a brief introduction which outlines the goals of the book. In it the authors also state that "This isn't a comprehensive history of every country ... that once produced stamps and no longer does ... Instead, we have set out to find some of the most fascinating of these and to investigate their past." Following the Introduction is a short discussion of terms related to stamps and definitions of these terms (e.g. philately, overprint, and postmark). The book was written and published in England and the authors usually refer the reader to the Stanley Gibbons catalogues with only a passing mention of the Scott catalogs. A Table of Contents lists the 76 countries covered in alphabetical order, making it easy to find a country in which the reader is interested. There is a detailed index but no bibliography.

The bulk of the book is the 2- to 3-page essays about each political entity, comprising 232 pages of text. Inserted between pages 96 and 97, almost as an afterthought, is a group of eight color plates showing the album cover and stamps from a few of the dead countries. It would have been much more interesting (at least to a stamp collector) if the images of the stamps had been placed with the articles about the countries that had issued them. However, if a country interests the reader, they can go to the Gibbons or Scott catalogs to learn more about the stamps.

Lost Countries is well-written and well-edited. While it is more a history book than a philatelic one, as noted above, it provides historical background for anyone who collects stamps from one of these areas. A bibliography for further investigation, as well as some maps, would have enhanced the usefulness of the book.

## Nowhere Lands: An Atlas of Vanished Countries 1840-1975

The second book is Nowhere Lands: An Atlas of Vanished Countries 1840-1975 by Bjørn Berge (Thames \& Hudson, 2017, 240 pp ; bibliography; index). The author lives in the Lista region of southern Norway, just across the North Sea from Denmark. In about 2006 he began walking along the coast of Denmark southward for a week each summer. His goal was to travel the entire coast of Europe on foot. After eleven years and about 650 miles as the crow flies, getting as far south as Valery-en-Caux, near Le Havre, France, he realized that he would not make it all the way around in his lifetime.

Berge says, in the beginning of the Foreword, "For me, knowing where you are in the world has always been the meaning of life." In the absence of his long treks, to sublimate this urge, he decided, instead, to create two collections. One is of flotsam that washes up on the beach near his house. He prefers pieces whose journey can be traced back to their origins, allowing him to vicariously
visit there and to fit these locations into his internal map of the world.

The other collection is stamps which is the subject of this book. He wants " $\ldots$ to collect a stamp from every country and every regime that has ever been active since the first Penny Black was issued in England in 1840." This is not an unusual collection but the way that he savors it is. He says that he will take out his stamps, "... sniff them and stroke them, maybe lick them; the taste is of crumbling gum Arabic, vegetable starch, and hide glue ..." This is certainly not how most of us enjoy our collections!

The book begins with a Table of Contents divided into six historical periods of varying length (e.g., 1840-1860, 1860-1890, and finally 1945-1975). The countries are listed more or less in the period during which they existed; some overlap two periods. This is followed by an author's Foreword in which he describes what led to his writing the book. In the back of the book there is a list of notes for each historical period, which are referred to in the vignettes in each period. There are also an extensive bibliography and a useful index.

Berge has selected fifty stamps, most but not all (notably the Channel Islands) from countries which no longer issue stamps. The bulk of the book consists of fourpage vignettes with historical narratives about these "Nowhere Lands". A map of the land and an image of the selected stamp are included with each story. The maps are very helpful as many readers will have no idea where the countries are located.

In his Foreword, the author has included suggestions for further reading ".. to enable readers to check my interpretations and to broaden their experience ..." For some countries he has also recommended films, music, and recipes.

## Comparing the books

Both books have the goal of entertaining and informing the reader about obscure stamp-issuing countries, most of which no longer exist. The stamps seem almost incidental though, serving primarily as a way to select coun-

tries about which to write. Don't read them expecting to learn about stamps. Instead, use them as a guide to interesting areas to collect or just for fun. Berge states that his book "is not intended as a guidebook," but should be considered as "a collection of bedtime stories to feed your dreams..." Laycock and West's book can be similarly characterized. Both books provide easy reading.

The countries discussed in each book are not the same; only 18 countries appear in both books. Berge's book has 32 unique countries while Laycock and West have 58 that Berge did not use. Between the two, there are vignettes for 108 countries. That seems like a lot but there are others that neither author includes. Several Canadian provinces (e.g. Newfoundland and Nova Scotia) and a number of French Overseas Post Offices immediately come to mind (probably because I collect both of these areas). There are almost certainly others. Because the books have relatively little overlap in the countries that they include, you should read both of them. Even with the duplicated countries, each author presents different facets of each country. I think that you will enjoy both books.
 lection when auctioned by the RMPL.

# A 1940 Cover from an Icelandic Stamp Exporter 

By Roger Cichorz

Editor's note: This article is the second in a series entitled "Collecting on a Shoestring," published in "The Posthorn" journal of the Scandinavian Collectors Club.


I purchased this cover (without contents) from a dealer's net-priced cover box at the 2016 Rocky Mountain Stamp Show. What immediately attracted me to it besides its modest $\$ 4$ price tag were the reproduction of Iceland's 19341 kr airmail stamp (albeit in navy blue as contrasted to the dark brown color of the issued stamp) and the fact that the sender, Sig. Helgason, was an Icelandic stamp dealer.

One could argue that because of the sender's stamprelated vocation, this cover is by definition philatelic, but to my way of thinking, it is a nice commercial cover representing a very early single use of the 1940 comb perf. 14 x $131 / 210$ a herring definitive (Scott \#221b, Facit \#245) on a printed-matter-rate cover to the U.S. Its January 29, 1940 REYKJAVIK machine cancel ties in nicely with the sender's Reykjavík business address. The 10 -aur printed-matter rate indicates this cover was posted via surface mail, not sent airmail, and most likely contained an invoice or price list rather than an order of stamps.

I was not familiar with this "Exporter of Icelandic Stamps" so my initial search on the Internet for a stamp dealer named Sig(urður) Helgason began. Sig. Helgason evidently is a relatively common Icelandic name* and many persons, both living and dead, came up among Google's 46,000 entries for "Sigurður Helgason" within quotation marks and 344 entries for "Sig. Helgason" within quotation marks. Google searches of Sigurður Helgason and Sig. Helgason without quotation marks resulted in 344.000 and 355,000 entries, respectively. However, there were no entries for either of these two names when combined with "stamp dealer" or "stamp exporter" - so my search continued. (*To demonstrate the commonality of this Icelandic name, there are 45 individuals currently posted on Facebook who have the actual name "Sigurður

Helgason" or "Sigurður" starting or within a more complex "Helgason" name!)

So, who was Sig. Helgason, "Exporter of Icelandic Stamps"? The Sigurður Helgason who best fit the timeline for this cover was a now-deceased executive of Icelandic Airlines, but I was unsure if these two were one and the same person. So, I contacted two SCC members who are longtime Iceland stamp collectors for help, which quickly arrived.

Sigurður Helgason, stamp exporter, is the same Sigurður Helgason who became Director of Loftleiðir, now Icelandair. Wikipedia provides the following details of his life:

Sigurður Helgason (July 20, 1921 - February 8, 2009) was an innovator in low-cost airlines. He is credited with pioneering Icelandair, the "hippie airline" that made lowcost air travel to Europe possible for generations of Americans. Born in Reykjavík, Sigurður came to the U.S. in his 20s and graduated with a business degree from Columbia University in New York City in 1947. He then returned to Iceland where he managed a cement company.

In 1953, Sigurður Helgason joined the board of Loftleiðir, a small airline that had been formed by three pilots nine years earlier. Sigurður Helgason managed Icelandair's American operations from 1961 to 1973, at which point he returned to Reykjavík to become CEO of Icelandair. He stepped down as chief executive in 1984, assuming the position of chairman until his retirement in 1991. He then lived in Iceland, Mustique (in the Grenadines), and New York. Sigurður Helgason died aged 87 in Mustique where he spent winters.

Sigurður Helgason's career as an exporter of Iceland stamps must have been from his teens into his mid-20s but only for a brief period, judging from the January 1941 date on the cover and timeline of his college education and post -1947 career. Magni Magnússon elaborated on this with his personal account that originally appeared in Issue 10 (September 2016) of Iceland Philatelic Magazine and is repeated here as follows:
"I knew the late Sigurður Helgason well. Before the war 1939, he was selling stamps and kept a record of all his ads in stamp magazines, and he presented that book to me about 20 years ago. He had to stop selling stamps during the war as mail was difficult to send. During the war, he and his brother Gunnar went to the U.S. to learn to be pilots. This Sigurður became the director and biggest owner in Loftleiðir, which had flights between the U.S. and Luxemburg after the war. In 1947, when the next Icelandic airmail set came out, Pan American flew via Iceland, and he got delivery of this brand new issue. Being the only and first stamp dealer to get these in New York City, he sold well down in Nassau Street and the end of Wall Street.
"He was a very active man - he had some big companies here in Iceland and was chairman of Loftleiðir. They built a Hotel here in Reykjavik and started a stopover
(Continued on page 9)

## NEW ON THIE SHELVES



## UNITED STATES

2003 Catalogue of Errors on U.S. Postage Stamps, 12th Edition, by Stephen R. Datz

Arizona Post Offices, by Alan H. Patera and John S. Gallagher

The Case of Dr. Kilmer: An Analysis of the Dr. Kilmer \& Co. Provisional Proprietary Revenue Stamps Overprinted on the 1895 Postage Stamps of the United States, by Morton Dean Joyce

Montana Post Offices \& Postmasters, by Dennis J. Lutz

Nineteenth Century Fancy Cancellations of Wisconsin, by Ray Van Handel

Pacific Northwest Doanes: A Checklist and Scarcity Index for Doane Cancel Use in Oregon, Washington, and Idaho, by Richard W. Helbock

Postmarked Washington: Jefferson, Clallam \& Mason Counties, by Guy Reed Ramsey
Post Offices of Ohio, by John S. Gallagher and Alan H. Patera

Specialized Catalog of United States First Day Covers (1980/1981, 1984, 1986), published by Washington Press

## ASIA

The French Post Office in Yokohama,
by Jun Ichi Matsumoto by Jun Ichi Matsumoto

Japanese Postage Stamp Catalogue 1987 [in Japanese]

Japanese Stamp Catalog 1968 [in Japanese]

The Postage Stamps of Nepal, by E.A. Smythies, L.E. Dawson, H.D.S. Haverbeck

## AUSTRALIA and OCEANIA

The Colour Catalogue of Australian Stamps, by David Mortimer

List of Post and Telegraph Offices (Correct to 17 November 1959), published by the New Zealand Post Office

New Zealand Railway and Revenue Stamps, by J.W. Brodie, F.H. Jackson, K.J. McNaught, and R.S. Craddock

## EUROPE

Le 25 Centimes Cérès de 1871 au Type II: Methode Pratique poir Trouver la Place d'un Timbre dans l'un des Quatre Panneaux, by Pierre Germain

Le 25 Centimes Cérès de 1871 au Type II: Methode Pratique poir Trouver la Place d'un Timbre dans l'un des Six Panneaux, by Pierre Germain

Le 25 Centimes Cérès de 1871 au Type II: Reconstitution des Planches dans l'Ordre Numérique d'après les Défauts des Clichés, by Pierre Germain

Alsace-Lorraine et la Guerre 1870/1871, by André Rupp

Les Anciens Timbres Français Expliqués 18491876, by Pierre de Lizeray

Britain's Marvelous Machins: Varieties of the Denominated Printings 1967-2017, by Steve McGill


Les Bureaux de Quartier de Paris 1852-1863: Période des Losanges (Tome II)

Les Bureaux Spéciaux du Second Empire (Tome II)
Catalogue des Cachets des Bureaux Ambulants de France de l'Origine à 1900, by Carroll Chase \& E.H. de Beaufond

Catalog Correlator for the Stamps of France, published by the France \& Colonies Philatelic Society (NY)

Catalogue des Marques et Cachets d'Entrée en France 1899-1881: Provenances d'Europe, by Gilbert Noël
Catalogue Spécialisé des Timbres de France: Tome II, published by Yvert \& Tellier

Les Chiffre-Taxe Carrés 1859-1882, by Gilbert Noël, Jack Blanc, and Jean-Claude Delwaulle

Les Chiffres-Taxe au Type Duval 1881-1900, by Jack Blanc
Code Postal, published by the French Ministere des PTT

Le Colis Postaux de France, Histoire de Leures Timbres, by Charles Gavault

Les Constances du 80 c. Napoléon Lauré, by Jacques Fromaigeat

Deutschland Spezial-Katalog für Briefmaken (1928), published by S.W. Hess

Le Dictionnaire de Types: Typographie et Taille Douce, by Pierre Marion

Les Emplois non Postaux des Timbres-Poste des Territoires Français, by Henri Janton

Fakes and Forgeries of 20th Century French Postage Stamps, by R.G. Gethin

Faux et Truques, by Jean-Francois Brun

Les Feuilles Marcophiles: Revue Française de Marcophilie et D'Histoire Postale

Der Freistempel in Österreich (1922-2000) und Seine Internationalen Vorläufer, 2. Auflage, by Reinhard K. Schneider, Johann Pelikan

An Introduction to the Posts of France in the Fran-co-German War of 1870-1871 and its Aftermath, by Victor Chanaryn

Journaux 1849-1869, Imprimés et Périodiques 1849 -1871 (Tome II)

Mémorial Philatélique: Ce que disent les Timbres: VI La France Premiéres Emissions de 1849 à 1900 , by Gustave Bertrand

Monographie des Timbres au Type Blanc de France, by J. Storch and R. Françon

Les Moyens de Recommendation Provisoires en Al-sace-Lorraine 1945-1949, by André Peine

Les Oblitérations Mécaniques Françaises, Tome I: Ain-Charente-Maritime, by Paul Bremard
Paikallispostihistoriallisen Kokoelman Laadinta [Compiling a postal History Collection] (in Finnish), by Petteri Hannula

Le Patrimone du Timbre-Poste Français, published by Flohic Editions

Postal and Airmail Rates in France \& Colonies 1920-1945, by Robert E. Picirilli

The Postal History of the Commune Revolution, Paris 1871, by Gardner L. Brown

The Postal History of the Kingdom of Westphalia under Napoleon 1807-1814, by Carrol Chase and Henry A. Meyer

The Postal History of the Type Sage Issue of France 1876-1900, by Peter R.A. Kelly

De Poste 500 Jaar Geschiedenis in Europe=La Poste 500 ans d'Histoire en Europe, by Vincent Schouberechts


La Poste Durant la Revolution (1789-1799)
La Poste Ferroviaire de ses Débuts a 1870
La Poste Ferroviaire de 1871 a 1914, by Pierre Lux
Poste Maritime Coloniale et Mediterraneenne: Publications de Presse, 1979-1988, by Henri Tristant

La Poste en Moselle 1940-1945: Tome 1-Catalogue des Marques Postales et Obliterations, by Alain Demereaux - Stéphane Demeraux

La Poste Maritime Française, Historique et Catalogue: Tome III (Les Paquebots de L'Atlantique Sud, Brésil-Platq, Cote Occidental D'Afrique); Tome IV (les Paquebots de l'Atlantique Nord: Antilles-Amérique Centrale-et Pacifique Sud Etats-Unis); Tome V (Les Paquebots de l'Ex-trême-Orient: Saigon-Hong-Kong-Shanghai-Yokohama-Kobe); Tome VI (les Paquebots de l’Océan Indien: Réunion-Marice-AustralieNouvelle Calédonie-Bombay-OcéanieMadagascar); and Tome VII (Index Alphabétique, des Cachets Postaux et Marques Maritimes), by Raymond Salles

La Poste en Moselle 1940-1945: Tome 2, by Alain Demereaux - Stéphane Demeraux

Les Premiers Timbres Français Gravés en TailleDouce, Période de 1928 a 1934, by R. Joany

Le Radiazioni Postali: Rersonaggi ed Eventi Della Radiologia Ricordati dai Francobolli, by Nino Aquila
Les Réexpéditions dans Le Régime Intérieur des Origines á 1878, by Michèle Chauvet

Les Timbres Faux pour Tromper la Poste de France, by Jacques Grasset

Les Timbres-Poste au type Semeuse Camée de 1907, Tome 2, by Jean Storch and Robert Francon

The Woodstock Catalogue of British Elizabethan Stamps 1970-1971

## NORTH AMERICA

The Postal Districts of Mexico With Related Geographical, Statistical, and Historical Information of the Various Districts, Part I, by Abraham Odfjell

The Pre-Stamp Postal Markings of Mexico, by Otto Yag and John K. Bash

SOUTH AMERICA \& THE CARIBBEAN
Catalog of the Official Certificates/Cubiertas of Colombia, by Steve Phelps

Historia Postal de Cuba: La Intervención Norteamericana [Postal History of Cuba: US Administration] 1898-1902, by Carlos Echenagusía

The History of the Cayman Islands Post Offices, by Ivan Burges

## TOPICAL

Catalogue Lollini 1972, 12th Edition:
Conquete de l'Espace
Zoology in Postage Stamps, by W. Dennis Way and O.D. Sanden

## POSTCARDS

Pioneer Postcards, by J.R Burdick

## MISCELLANEOUS

American Air Mail Catalogue (1947 Ed. Reprint), Vols. 1 \& 2, published by the American Airmail Society

The Comprehensive Listing of Artcraft Covers: Their Varieties and Values, 1939-2015, by Martin L. Severe


A Guide Book of Philatelic Numismatic Covers<br>(1970), by Doris Walker

Postage Stamps of Modern Europe (1946), published by the H.E. Harris Co.

Glossary of English Equivalents of Terms Commonly Used in French Auctions, Catalogues, and Stamp Trade

Petit Lexique Philatelique [French, English, German, Spanish, Portuguese, Italian], published by ASCAT

The Stamp Club: Its Organization and Management, by L.W. Perkins

Stamps and Postal History of Lundy Island, 6th Edition (2019), by Jon Aitchison


#### Abstract

(Continued from page 5) plan for tourists flying between Europe and USA. It was known as the lowest air-fare airline and became very successful. When Sigurður had stopped dealing in stamps and I happened to be on the same flight as him, he made arrangements so we could sit together and talk of stamps. It is funny, but my dear friend, the late Indriði Pálsson, was also on the Board of Loftleiðir."

Although this cover lacked contents, I believe it still had an interesting story to tell once some investigating was


## RMPL Overdue Policy

Active members in good standing may now borrow materials for three weeks. Members are expected to return materials when they are due. Items may be renewed by calling or visiting the library, when another three weeks will be granted one more time. Special circumstances will be taken into consideration, such as when a judge is viewing material in preparation for a show.

If materials are not returned or renewed by the due date, the librarian will call the borrowers to encourage their return. No overdue fees will be charged at the RMPL, and borrowers are expected to return items when they are due.

If material is returned damaged, a minimum repair or rebinding fee of $\$ 30$ will be assessed. Additional fees may be assessed for extensive damage and an invoice will be sent.

Lost books will be paid for or replaced by a duplicate item in good condition at the librarian's discretion. Not fulfilling this obligation may result in a loss of library privileges.
done and answers were forthcoming. Where else, except in this wonderful hobby of ours, can a $\$ 4$ item generate such a story and prompt the participation of others willing to report relevant information and their personal recollections? And what a coincidence that a world-class collector and exhibitor of Iceland stamps (Indriði Pálsson, 19272015) was on the Board of the same airlines as a former dealer in Iceland stamps, possibly serving at the same time since they were only six years apart in age. I imagine that while crossing paths those two men no doubt enthusiastically shared their "stamp experiences" with one another but that remains a story for someone else to explore and tell!

## THE RMPL IS YOUR LIBRARY!

Are there books that we don't have that you would like to see in the Library? We will try to buy any philatelic book that you need. Tell us the title, author and, if possible, a source where we can purchase it. Send the information to John Bloor at aerophi159@yahoo.com. Put "book purchase suggestion" in the subject line. You can also send your suggestions to Sherri-SoraciJennings,our librarian, at: rmpllibrarian1@gmail.com.
We'll try to get the book for you.

# DOES HAND WRITING'S DECLINE HURTSTAMP COLLECTING? 

By Jack Van Ens

Browsing through a folder in which some firstgrade elementary school report cards were stored, I noticed receiving an " A " for an activity seldom offered today: Penmanship. Teachers instilled pride in students whose fingertips held ink pens. Students practiced cursive writing for hours by penning appreciative notes to friends and family.

Students' ink-stained fingertips served as academic badges of honor. Penmanship classes required a fountain pen and an ink well. Young scholars frequently spilled ink trying to fill their pens. Students’ trial and error at penmanship resulted in stained fingertips, dark cuticles and discolored desks.

Why not revive this skill of penmanship by writing notes tucked in envelopes that are posted to people we admire?
"Feeling grati-
 tude, and not expressing it, is like wrapping a present and not giving it," observed William Arthur Ward. Buck this trend of not mailing thank-you notes. Don't treat them as artifacts of a by-gone era. Is it a hassle to spend a few moments writing a note and mailing it? Really?

Because penmanship skills and cursive handwriting have gone the way of the dinosaur, we send and receive fewer holiday greetings in longhand. Do you feel abandoned by friends who for decades exchanged cards with you, with envelopes addressed in their familiar handwriting?

It's easier for them to text, tweet or dash off an email to express friendly greetings. Still, reaching out with hand written notes creates personal connections electronic media lack.

Stamp collectors are part of this trend that avoids handwritten notes. Some devout philatelists who treat stamps as sacred relics, mounting them in goldembossed lettered albums, rarely affix stamps on letters. Instead, they opt for electronic communication. They are unlike the Christian apostle who expressed convictions to residents of Corinth, "I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand" (I Corinthians 16:21).

Authorities are panicking because the quantity of first-class mail delivered by the Postal Service has declined by 50 percent of its volume 20 years ago.

Informal surveys show the stamp hobby is part of
this non-usage problem. Writing in The American Philatelist, a monthly journal packed with stamp collecting information, Larry Oliver reports grim results of a four-month experiment, which tracked how many collectors used stamps on correspondence.

Evidently, collectors mimic a baseball player who doesn't use a mitt. Philatelists collect stamps but neglect adhering them to letters. "Of 120 mailings counted, 55 ( $46 \%$ ) used stamps," reports Oliver. "Out of 57 mailings from auction houses, only 18 ( $32 \%$ ) used stamps. Dealers fared the best at $68 \%$ and [stamp collecting] societies were second at $48 \%$. Of 37 individual sources, 21 (57\%) were never used stamps on any mailing" (Letters to the Editor, September 2019, p. 794).

United States government-issued postage stamps first appeared on letters in July 1847. Consequently, Thomas Jefferson did not affix adhesives to his missives, having died on July 4, 1826. But as third president, he did perfect the art of handwriting. Fingertips holding a quill, Jefferson wrote over 20,000 letters that have survived.
"The making of policy throughout Jefferson's presidency was essentially an editorial process," reports colonial historian Joseph J. Ellis. "This approach played to his acknowledged brilliance as a prose stylist, yet also sidestepped his notorious weakness as an orator and his inveterate shyness in public forums. As far as we can tell, Jefferson made only two public speeches during his eight years in officehis first and second inaugural addresses" (To the Best of My Ability, James M. McPherson, editor, Agincourt Press, 2000, p. 29). Jefferson let letters do his talking.

A few months ago, I worshipped in a Protestant church where a preacher invited young children to join her on the sanctuary's front steps. This preacher asked the kids how Jesus' grateful spirit prompted them to share their skills with family and friends.

"I teach kids younger than me how to write thankyou notes to people who need a lift!" exclaimed a mature $5^{\text {th }}$ grade girl.

An admirable gift! Spread contagious goodwill at your fingertips. Handwritten notes create personal connections that raise recipients' gratitude.

# The Gregory Frantz Gold Medal Collection of Spitzbergen at Postiljonen Auction 

By Roger Cichorz

Gregory Frantz, who resides with his wife Anna in Parker, Colorado, is a longtime member of the RMPL, an accredited philatelic judge, and prolific collector and exhibitor, specializing in postal history of steamship companies of the world. Greg is also a member of the Scandinavian Collectors Club and SCC's Colorado Chapter 27, Collectors Club of Denver, and one of the four SCC Library Committee members who administer SCC's Library within the RMPL.

The "Gregory Frantz Gold Medal Collection of Spitzbergen" (Svalbard in Norwegian) was offered for sale by the Postiljonen International Auction House in its \#226 auction held in Malmø, Sweden, September 27, 2019. Greg's collection was described in 35 individual item lots, with a photograph of every item accompanying each lot description. The $36^{\text {th }}$ and final lot was the remainder collection comprising " 40 cards/covers as well as some loose stamps covering most issues neatly described on exhibit pages, nearly all the cards with Spitzbergen stamps." Only one item from this lot was pictured in the catalogue, but a note at the end of the lot description indicated "all scanned on our website."

The individual item lots comprised three lots of steamship company stamps and 32 lots of postal cards, primarily Norwegian brev korts with printed postage stamp indicia or post cards with affixed Norwegian postage stamp frankings. All had additional Spitzbergen local stamps and/or steamship company labels that were cancelled with various ship company postmarks, generally circular datestamps as well as some with place post office postmarks.

Besides the most common Norwegian stamp frankings, two cards were franked with stamps of Germany and two with French stamps, and one with an Austrian stamp. Several cards had both Spitzbergen and steamship labels and most had additional post office transit and receipt markings, reflecting their routing and delivery. Most of the cards were posted to Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Norway, and Sweden), but several were addressed to other European destinations (Germany, Austria, and Romania). One card was described as the "only recorded item to Australia," which, surprisingly, did not sell.

Greg's 36 Spitzbergen lots were offered at cumulative starting bids (SBs) of $€ 9350(\sim \$ 10,292)$, but only 24 lots at cumulative SBs of $€ 6700(\sim \$ 7375)$ sold. However, these 24 lots realized $€ 9600(\sim \$ 10,567)$ for $43.3 \%$ greater than their SBs. 12 of these lots sold for more than their SBs, nine for less than their SBs, and three right at their SBs.

There were two better performers in this sale. The first was a lot comprising three cards, a front, and two loose stamps of the Hamburg American Line issue of 1913 on exhibit pages. Despite the mention of "mixed quality" in the description, this lot realized $€ 1150 / \sim \$ 1266$ against its SB of $€ 750 / \sim \$ 826$. The second was the aforementioned collection remainder of " 40 cards...," which realized

$€ 4400 / \sim \$ 4843$, or more than double its SB of $€ 2000$ / ~\$2201.

A favorable postscript to this auction is that, according to Greg, all but one of his 12 unsold Spitzbergen lots were sold by Postiljonen, purchased as after-sale items, and total realizations for these 35 sold lots exceeded $€ 13,000 /$ $\sim \$ 14,309$, even after the consignor's commission of $10 \%$ was deducted from the prices realized.

Five reference books on Spitzbergen-related stamps, postal history, and postcards are on the shelves of the SCC Library and available for loan to SCC members:

NOR B44NGE = Svalbard Filatelien, by Arne J. Bay, author-published, Oslo, 1979, 136 pp .

NOR B114G = Handbuch Spitzbergen, by R. Kardel and G. Trögel, Philatelia, Leverkusen, Germany, 1984, 224 pp , ISBN 3-923388-02-0.

NOR B307E = Greetings from Spitzbergen, Tourists at the Eternal Ice 1827-1915, by John T. Reilly, Tapir Academic Press, Trondheim, Norway, 2009, 207pp, ISBN 978-82-519-2460-3.

NOR B331E = Spitsbergen's Early Postcards, An Annotated Catalogue 1891-1914, by John T. Reilly, Svalbard Press Limited, Sheffield, U.K., 2014, vii + 390pp, ISBN 978-0-9928657-0-2.

NOR B350E = Spitzbergen Cruise Mail 1890-1914, by Pat Adams, Alan Totten, and Peter Williams, Scandinavian Philatelic Society, Northwich, Cheshire, England, Third Edition (2011, updated 2015), iv +86 pp , ISBN 0 95235323

## RMPL Video Productions Soon to Reach 30 Titles

It has been a banner year for RMPL's video production efforts. Led by Joe Lanotte and Sergio Lugo, the total expanded rapidly with the filming of the Rocky Mountain Stamp Show's Thursday Latin America Seminars. The latest non-seminar video production, Beyond Mourning Covers, can be viewed on YouTube at https://youtu.be/ XeGiXjk7fEw.


If your computer does not open the video at the link above, right click on the address and select "Open In a New Window." That should get you to the video in YouTube. Alternatively, you can go directly to YouTube and do a search for RMPL-DENVER. That search will get you to all the videos produced and thus far uploaded from the RMPL.

## Upcoming Releases

The video crew anticipates the release, in the next month, of three final videos from the Philately in Latin America Seminar held at RMSS in May 2019. These have required extensive editing prior to release, accounting for their delay. They include: (1) Mexico - the 1870 Great Postal Fraud; (2) The Postal History of Lima, Peru , and (3) The Postmarks of British Guiana. Each of these videos
 was produced by Joe LaNotte and Sergio Lugo. A new RMPL volunteer has joined their team as a back-up videographer namely Gary Withrow. Joe and Sergio are hoping to in-
troduce another volunteer as a writer backup. The presenters of each of the three videos are the stars of each video-Follansbee, Grace, and Kordich (Mexico); Marquez (Peru), and Mahoney (British Guiana).

Two additional videos are under development consideration: a music video tentatively titled Bagpipes on Stamps, and the postal history of Mount Everest expeditions.

## Current Listing of RMPL's Videos

* Mourning Covers
* Beyond Mourning Covers
* James Downing US Naval Post Clerk USS West Virginia WW II
* WW I Social Welfare for American Expeditionary Forces
* Mother's Day on Stamps and Postcards
* The Greco-Turk War 1919-1922
* The Elements of Postal Security Part 1
* The Elements of Postal Security Part 2
* Under The Big Top
* US National Parks - Postal Materials
* Scouts on Stamps Part 1
* Scouts on Stamps Part 2
* Dragons on Stamps
* JNF - Labels With A Purpose
* US - German Seapost 1891-1939
* Tasmania Pictorial Stamps Part 1
* Tasmania Pictorial Stamps Part 2


## Club Videos

* The Lost Lodges of Rocky Mountain National Park
* French Indochina Participation in Fairs and Colonial Expositions
* The Yellowstone Highway 1915
* Postage Stamp Forgeries and Fakes
* RMPL Denver Youth Club


## 2019 Rocky Mountain Stamp Show Latin American Seminars

* The Postmarks of British Guiana
* What Happened to the Great Overstock of Seebeck Postal Stationery?
* The Postal History of Lima Peru from 1821 to 1884
* Guatemala Forged Stamps and the Guatemala International Society of Guatemala Collectors
* Peru's 1874 to 1908 Postage Due Issues


## Coming Soon

* Military Censorship of Mail in Costa Rica 1948 to 1955
* Mexico - The Great Postal Fraud
* The Postal History of Lima Peru from 1821 to 1834 (Spanish Version)
* The Postmarks of British Guiana (Spanish Version)
* Metaphors on Stamps


## SECOND SATURDAY PROGRAMS AT THE LIBRARY

Second Saturday programs are sponsored by the RMPL and attract a friendly group of folks who are interested in a specific subject, or who are interested in learning more about an area of philately that may be new to them.

Contact Jim Kilbane if you would like to present a program.
His email address is: aurora_80017@yahoo.com
January 11, 2020--9:00 a.m.
BEYOND MOURNING COVERS
Presenter: Sergio Lugo
Sergio will show auxiliary materials that expands on the subject of mourning covers. Additionally, there will be a five-minute discussion on what mourning covers tell us about postal history.


An RMPL and TOPIC Presentation
For those of you able to make it, a useful preparation on the subject can be gained by reviewing the two mourning cover related videos that can be found on YouTube under the RMPL-Denver account. The first is entitled Mourning Covers, while the second is entitled Beyond Mourning Covers. Each is about 30 minutes, and together provide a fairly in-depth overview of the subject. Additionally, the library has a full run of the periodical Mourning Notes. All are recommended in the event that other engagements necessitate your absence, or alternatively to really prepare for discussing the subject at the session.

February 8, 2020--9:00 a.m. 1901 PAN-AMERICAN EXPOSITION Presenter: Charlie Freise

Take a trip around the Exposition, visit some of the buildings and learn about the thousands of exhibits, and see a number of advertising covers and souvenir post cards from the Exposition.


## RMPL Board of Directors Meeting—December 5, 2019 ( Summarized)

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. All board members were present except for John Bloor. Paul Domenici was the only guest. The minutes of the September meeting were approved. The next board meeting is scheduled for Thursday, January 16, 2020 at 5:00 p.m. The president will remind the heads of various committees that they should submit an annual report at this meeting.

## Financial Reports

Treasurer Tim Heins discussed several financial reports that were included in the meeting handouts.

The individual reports were:

- Transaction List by Vendor through October 2019
- Balance Sheet as of October 31, 2019
- Revenue and Expenses September through October 2019
- Revenue and Expenses January through October 2019

Tim noted that the net income to date is less than half of that for the previous year. If this trend continues, it could become problematic. The idea of developing a program where people could include the library in their wills was discussed. David Weisberg said that he would prepare an article on this for the next issue of Scribblings.

- Librarian Time and Expenses
- UBS Account

Tim reported that the Finance Committee met a few weeks ago. The committee recommended that we stay with the current firm and ask them to do the Form 990 and a compilation of our 2019 financials. The firm has quoted a price of $\$ 1,200$ for the compilation and $\$ 900$ for the Form 990.

It was moved and seconded that we accept the Finance Committee's recommendation. The motion passed.

Tim also reported that he had looked into four different Directors and Officers Liability Insurance companies. So far, none of them completely meet our needs for both direct and indirect coverage, and things like copyright protection. The board agreed that Tim should keep looking and report back at the next meeting.

The Finance Committee also discussed whether we should consider exploring the feasibility of selling the vacant lot. It was moved and seconded that the president appoint a committee to determine what the lot is worth. The motion passed. Tim reminded everyone that they should submit any items to be included in the 2020 budget by the end of December.

## Old Business

## Roof for 2048

Since the last meeting Rich Palestro has looked further into the roof issue for the 2048 building. After having several new companies examine the roof, it was determined that it does not need to be replaced. Tonny stated that we will re-examine any roof maintenance needs in the spring.

## Volunteer Appreciation Meal

Dasa reported that only about 50 people will be attending the volunteer recognition lunch at the Blue Bonnet this
coming Saturday. This is about half the number attending previous events held during the Christmas season.

It was moved and seconded that the Christmas season volunteer event be cancelled for next year, and that a volunteer recognition picnic be held in the summer instead. The motion passed.

## Fire Inspection

Tonny reported that we passed a recent fire inspection, although it was noted that the rear door to 2048 should be unlocked when anyone is in the building. Rich Palestro will look into options to do this.

## Youth Group Auction Items

Don Dhonau, Charlie Freise and Dan Neiuwlandt have asked permission to place a small number of lots of their material in our various auctions with the proceeds going to the youth program. It was moved and seconded to allow this, and the motion passed.

## Western Philatelic Library Request

The board agreed not to send more money to this library to support payment of their facility. We will continue to periodically donate surplus copies of library material.

## Auction Report

Paul Domenici reported that the recent auction made a little over $\$ 10,800$, and all lots were sold. The main expenses were about $\$ 1,200$ for printing and $\$ 60$ for shipping. The auction received a number of compliments. There was one problem with shipping via Media Mail, and it was suggested that we should change all auction shipping to Priority Mail.

## Librarian's Report

Sherri distributed a draft Overdue Policy for items checked out of the library. Board members suggested several changes to the draft. Sherri will submit a revised document at the next meeting.

Sherri reported that donations continue to pour in. She has begun gathering the Exhibit books that will be catalogued together. A large box of duplicate periodicals has been sent to The Greene Foundation at the Harry Sutherland Philatelic Library in Toronto.

Sherri has started a librarian's column for Scribblings.
Stamp Sales Policy for Non-Members
There is some confusion and disagreement regarding the cost of purchasing stamps by RMPL members and non-members. Further discussion and clarification of this matter will occur at the next meeting.

## Great Britain Collectors Club

Steve McGill announced that the GBCC has officially closed. The club has merged with the Great Britain Collectors Society of GB. All of the books, periodicals, etc. stored in the lower level of 2048 are being donated to RMPL. To make it official, Steve will write a donation letter to the library.

## Book Donation

Steve also donated a copy of the German philatelic book that he wrote. The book, which is printed in German, was signed by Steve.

The meeting adjourned at 6:25 p.m.
Paul Lee. Recording Secretary

## DONATIONS

The library thrives on the enthusiasm and generosity of its members. The following people made donations to the library during the last two months. We thank every one who has contributed (not alphabetized). N.B.: donations can be directed to specific programs.

## Philatelic Material

Robert Hansen
Donald Campbell
Magda Hunter
Thomas Pollard
Tom Ragland
Nolan Flowers
Frank Leitz
Norman Leshol
Martin Sevora
India Wood
Herman Axelrod
Estate Inventory
Services
Dasa Metzler
David Vanderhoop
Bob Bergin
John Thorne
Charlotte Minor
Richard Gibson
Matthew Sandy
John Bloor
Ann Hards
John Peters
Lewis Bussey
Joe Neri
Mark Anderson
Carol Roy
Ken Bailey
Ernesto Cuesta

Erik Benson
Kirsten Benson
John Sharp
Aaron Wilkinson
Robert Teklets
Erling Fossum
Charles Walter
Thomas Altherr
Tonny Van Loij

## Cash Donations

General Fund
Roger Cichorz
Glenn F. Mallory
Robert E. Wordell
Art Barber
Severt L. Kvamme
Fred C. Bauer

## Library fund

Severt L. Kvamme

## Capitol Improvement

Fred C. Bauer
In memory of
Doug Crowe
Simi Valley Stamp
Club

## NEW MEMBERS

The RMPL is pleased to welcome the following new member who joined the library during the past two months.

- Richard M. Spire, Aurora, CO - Collects U.S. and Worldwide - Stamp Dealer, Mountain Stamp Co.


## Librarian's Notes

By Sherri-Soraci Jennings

Donations continue to pour in. The Luft donation of 27 boxes is now down to three boxes. We've received a nice donation of reference books about Revenue stamps
 from member Mike Buck. There's also a donation of Mexican and western philately from Herman Axelrod. Tonny Van Loij has also made a donation of books.
I've started to gather the Exhibits books, so that they may be catalogued to their own special area. We own more than 100 of these. This section will have an ' $E$ ' before the Dewey number, similar to the way we shelve the Topical books now with a ' $T$ '. We're looking at the bookshelf at the end of the Topicals for housing this new collection.

We are sending a large box of duplicate periodicals to The Greene Foundation at the Harry Sutherland Philatelic Library in Toronto. This is part of a swap and trade with other philatelic libraries. They'll let us know what they have available.

Paul Albright's illness has
 left us scrambling to deal with incoming periodicals and vertical file articles. Mike Milam has started to work hard on the periodicals, but we're still looking for a vertical file maven. Paul expects to return in a few months when he recovers. We wish him a speedy and full recovery.

The overdue policy has been completed and can be read on page 9 .


Hours: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, Saturday 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Thursday 2-8 p.m. Closed Sundays and Holidays. Phone: (303) 759-9921
Meeting times and places sometimes change. It is best to call the library or the club to confirm the place and time. A calendar of reserved club times is kept at the library by the Operations Manager, Dasa Metzler. Clubs should check the calendar regularly and notify Dasa at (303) 322-1231 of any changes or updates. All requests to reserve meeting time and space for philatelically related meetings other than those listed here must be approved and scheduled with Dasa well in advance.

## ****January 2020****

Jan 1 Wed-New Year's Day RMPL CLOSED
Jan 4 Sat-Meeting 10:00 a.m.
Scandinavian Collectors Club
Jan 4 Sat-Meeting 1:00 p.m. TOpical Philatelists In Colorado (TOPIC)

Jan 8 Wed-Meeting 2:00 p.m. New Date for Jan Only Aurora Stamp Club
Jan 8 Wed-Meeting 7:00 p.m.
Denver Germany Stamp Club-Joint Meeting with Austria-Hungary Stamp Club

Jan 9 Thu-Meeting 2:00 p.m. Cherrelyn Stamp Club
Second Saturday at the RMPL
Jan 11 - Sat 9:00 a.m.
Program by Sergio Lugo
"Beyond Mourning Covers"
Jan 11 Sat-Meeting 10:00 a.m.
Mexico/Latin America Club
Jan 12 Sun-Meeting 1:00 p.m.
Denver Postcard Club
Jan 16 Thu-5:00 p.m. RMPL Board Meeting Open to all
Jan 18 Sat-Meeting 9:30 a.m.
Denver Young Collectors
Jan 19 Sun-Meeting 1:00 p.m.
Great Britain and Commonwealth Collectors Club
Jan 22 Wed-Meeting 11:00 a.m.
Denver Stamp Club
Jan 28 Tue-Meeting 7:00 p.m. New Time Rocky Mountain Stamp Show Committee

> Happy New Year! May ALL Your Philatelic Dreams Come True!
****February 2020****

Feb 1 Sat-Meeting 10:00 a.m.
Scandinavian Collectors Club
Feb 1 Sat-Meeting 1:00 p.m.
TOpical Philatelists In Colorado (TOPIC)
Feb 5 Wed-Meeting 2:00 p.m.
Aurora Stamp Club
Second Saturday at the RMPL
Feb 8-9:00 a.m.
Program by Charlie Freise "1901 Pan American Exposition"

Feb 8 Sat-Meeting 10:00 a.m.
Mexico/Latin America Club
Feb 9 Sun-1:00 p.m.
Denver Postcard Club
Feb 12 Wed-Meeting 7:00 p.m.
Denver Germany Stamp Club-Joint Meeting with Austria-Hungary Stamp Club
Feb 13 Thu-Meeting 2:00 p.m.
Cherrelyn Stamp Club
Feb 15 Sat-Meeting 9:30 a.m.
Denver Young Collectors
Feb 16 Sun-Meeting 1:00 p.m.
Great Britain \& Commonwealth Collectors Club
Feb 25 Tue-Meeting 7:00 p.m. New Time
Rocky Mountain Stamp Show Committee
Feb 26 Wed-Meeting 11:00 a.m.
Denver Stamp Club
Feb 29 Sat-Meeting 11:00 a.m.
Colorado Postal History Society (Can't meet on 22nd due to conflict with RMPL Auction. Check with club officers to confirm date.)

> Country \& Cover Lots Auction Saturday, February 22, 2020
> Starting at 9:30 a.m. in meeting room

