

2023 Club Officers*

President

*Brian Jones 408 300 3377
bfj39@yahoo.com

Vice President

*David Occhipinti 408 723 0122

Secretary

*Dave Gilman 408 264 1953
Sanjosegilmans@gmail.com

Treasurer

*Andy Hilton 408 3771442
Papa_hilton@yahoo.com

Webmaster/Newsletter

Jim Steinwinder 408 644 4090
callcps@aol.com

SJSC Blog

Ron Biell 408 323 8702
Rbiell-dsl@sbcglobal.net

Filatellic Fiesta 2022

Chairman

Brian Jones 408 300 3377
bfj39@yahoo.com

Bourse Chairman

Andy Hilton 408 377 1442
papa_hilton@yahoo.com

Awards Chairman

Open

Club Email

sanjosestampclub@gmail.com

Club Website

www.sanjosesclub.com

Club Blog

www.sjscblog.net

Filatellic Fiesta Website

www.filatellicfiesta.com

Correspondence:

San Jose Stamp Club
981 Shadow Brook Dr.
San Jose, CA 95120



the San Jose Stamp
Club on Facebook



An Outline of Plans for Board Action APS/ASDA Merger Not Our Best Option

In September, I outlined several significant challenges for our hobby and the APS, which I reiterated in a December column in [*The American Philatelist*](#):

1. **The changing nature of the marketplace.** As more collectors buy online, the APS should work to protect their interests. Our Code of Ethics has served the hobby well for more than 136 years, but we have to extend its reach to all channels of the philatelic marketplace.
2. **The changing nature of organized philately.** We have a maze of organizations, some doing well and others challenged by declining membership. We have to ask whether those organizations can still serve the larger collecting community or if they exist out of tradition.
3. **Our aging pool of dealers and experts.** We are fortunate to have knowledgeable philatelists who help sort through fakes and forgeries and serve to educate future generations. The reality is that time comes for us all, and dealers and experts are no exception. We should ensure that knowledge and preserve expertise for future generations.

There are several ways to meet these challenges. The proposed merger with the [American Stamp Dealers Association](#) sparked a conversation that's been long overdue. A merger presents both risks and opportunities for the APS and collectors. However, it is not worth pursuing if the risks outweigh the possibilities. After gathering more information on the ASDA, soliciting feedback from APS members, evaluating all options to achieve our challenges, and performing due diligence with the ASDA, I have outlined a plan for the APS Board of Directors.

The APS/ASDA merger is not our best option to move forward. Looking at the risks and opportunities of a merger, the scale tilts toward the risk side. We've spent years getting the APS and APRL fiscal house in order, and a merger with the ASDA will not further what we've accomplished.

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Club Blog & Website

Blog Updates No Activity

Website Updates

January 2023 Newsletter uploaded

Remember the dates!

President's Message

"Collecting in the No Stuff Age"

Our beloved hobby is going to have to buck a serious trend: "no stuff". We've experienced the loss of book, music, and antique stores. Everyone reading this grew up with buying printed books; music on records, tapes, or CDs; and perhaps a few gems of the past from a local antique store. Also, I've noticed that I'm one of last people on my street to get the morning newspaper delivered.

Traditional hobbies like stamp collecting flies in the face of this major culture trend. It is my opinion that if the doesn't do anything to keep itself relevant, it could suffer a major collapse. Far too many people outside the hobby believe the only way to collect is to get an album and spend time studying stamps for obscure details like perforations and watermarks. We know that isn't true, but as long as that perception is prevalent, our hobby will be in BIG trouble.

Of course, there are plenty of us who collect using a traditional stamp album and enjoy the

challenge of being to find minutia details. There is NOTHING wrong with that and I'm not saying what anybody is "wrong". My own collection is a Scott National album and traditional US collection and I have no plans on changing it. This includes the need to go through several stock sheets of Washington-Franklins that need to be checked for minutia details.

So, am I saying our hobby is doomed? HELL NO! Just that we as those inside the hobby need to learn to communicate to non-collectors the fun, value and great reasons to collect. As I think I've written before, the main thing to focus is many wonderful reasons to start a stamp collection. When I talk to non-collectors, plenty are completely unaware of the great reasons to collect.

What I am advocating is the hobby make a significant commitment to rebranding itself. It starts with why would one buck the "no stuff" agenda of today's culture and "do stuff"? I believe there are enough good reasons to collect that if that is effectively communicated, the hobby will have a renaissance. Collecting has lots of merits, but the hobby cannot afford to get very active about communicating it.

We must embrace new technologies, not shun them. While any individual may want to continue to do things "old school", let's not denigrate 21st century tools. Too many times I've heard the line: "That's not the way my grandfather taught me!". Ok, fine, you stick to the old ways, but that doesn't mean one should put down new ways to newer and younger collectors. I've often heard that people won't get off their phone long enough to do build a collection. How does one beat something so dynamic as today's cell phones/web portals? We don't "beat" it, but it make an ally. Include in the introduction how one can integrate their phone into their collection. Show people how to use the magnifier app on the phone; use the new digital

Scott catalogs; research a stamps subject; use on-line selling sites to find material.

The next trick is how to use the billions of cheap stamps to an advantage. While many existing collectors may scorn the huge hoards of minimum stamps available, but these should be seen as an enabler to get people collecting without having to spend a lot of money. Naturally, it is hoped that new collectors will migrate from collecting penny stamps to better quality material.

If we make a compelling case for it, I believe enough people will collect to keep our hobby viable. Stamp collecting needs to find balance of how to encourage people to start collecting while keeping up what serious philately contributes. We can have bright viable future for stamp collecting, so let's make it happen! I love my collection of "stuff", let's show others the many good reasons to collect in an anti-stuff age.

Brian

Important: Club Address Change

It is important that everyone stop using the PO Box we've used for years. It has been closed and mail will to it will be returned. The club will now use my home address: 981 Shadow Brook Dr, San Jose, CA 95120

Help Required: Filatelic Fiesta

Filatelic Fiesta was a success in 2022. Nevertheless, it is time for new leadership. It is just too much to lead both the club and show and make both of them the successful and engaging event we are capable of hosting. Our bourse chairman Andy Hilton is also stepping aside after several years of terrific work. He will remain as our treasurer.

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We should live by the credo of the U.S. Army, "Mission First, People Always." We will meet our mission if we take care of collectors. In our most recent member survey, 43 percent of members supported a merger, while 22 percent opposed the merger. We should not ignore the concerns of those who oppose the merger by rushing ahead. Doing so takes the focus off the critical challenges we face in this hobby and only kicks the can further down the road.

The APS already has a dealer member program, with hundreds of APS members registered as dealers and a Dealer Advisory Council established by the APS Board in 2016. Both programs should be more effective in serving collectors and dealers.

We found consensus, with 85 percent of members responding agree dealers and collectors should work together to create more ethical practices in the hobby. With that, I will present a plan to the APS Board of Directors at our Spring Board Meeting in St. Louis on March 23, 2023, to address these issues. Specifically, a reconstituted Dealer Advisory Council, appointed by the APS President and confirmed by the APS Board. With the resolution, the group will work with APS leadership to refine the dealer member program to:

Continued on next page

1. Establish clear professional standards,
2. Improve dealer benefits, and
3. Recommend programs to train future experts.

Through this revised council, we will also build a coalition of online sellers and identify best practices to allow collectors to buy with confidence online.

We are fortunate to have three professional philatelists elected to the [APS and APRL boards](#), Matt Kewriga, Michael Cortese, and Charles Epting. They have already stepped up to participate in this critical discussion. I thank them for their leadership and look forward to working with them.

This proposal is the best option to meet today's challenges in the hobby. Our collecting community and organized philately have work to do, and it's time to start doing it.

Member Survey, Member Services, and You

In December, the American Philatelic Society sent the first in a series of surveys to improve our services to members. The initial poll touched on several topics, and in my next column, I will share the survey's full results.

In our first survey, we asked some broad questions about our member services to understand better how APS members were accessing those services. Our next series of surveys will dig deeper into each service to look at the positives and negatives of each service and what we can do to increase the value of your membership. We received more than 5,000 responses to our first survey, so thanks to each of you for participating.

The percentage of members using our services is worth comparison and discussion. We've researched this subject over the years. I won't discuss *The American Philatelist*. Utilization of the journal remains above 98 percent.

Circuit Sales: The APS Circuit Sales program is one of our oldest and longest-serving programs. Starting as the exchange program, members can buy or sell stamps through sales books on circuits, going from member to member. In our most recent survey, 19 percent of members use the service today. Historically, that's consistent with past surveys predating the technology age. In 1982, 22 percent of members participated in the program; by 1996, 19 percent of APS members were still receiving and submitting stamp books. We have more questions about how to increase participation, both for buyers and sellers. For the rest of our members, I

encourage you to learn more about the circuit program. It's an affordable way to build country collections from fellow APS members. For more information, go to: <https://stamps.org/services/buy-and-sell>.

American Philatelic Expertizing Service (APEX): Over the past three years, we've received some of the greatest numbers of requests for expertizing in more than a decade. If you're buying online or from an unknown source, APEX provides guaranteed opinions in 90 days or less. In our most recent survey, 23 percent of APS members use APEX as part of their membership package. By comparison, only 3 percent of members used APEX in 1982, and 6 percent used APEX in 1996. APEX has been around since 1903 and continues to meet the needs of APS members. We're proud to see higher program utilization, but we'd like to invite members to try the service. For more information, go to: <https://stamps.org/services/stamp-authentication>.

American Philatelic Research Library (APRL): In our most recent survey, 32 percent of members use the research library. That is a vast improvement over historical surveys, such as 5 percent in 1982 and 7 percent in 1996. As we provide more online resources, such as the [David Straight Memorial Philatelic Union Catalog and the Robert A. Mason Digital Library](#), more APS members can access the library's value no matter where they are in the world. We continue to add to those digital resources and ask you to visit our library virtually or in person this year.

Two services that did not exist back in the 1990s are **internet sales** and our [online education platform, C3a](#). In our recent survey, 31 percent of members have used internet sales. With our [HipStamp partnership](#), we will ask more questions about members using online stamp sales and how we can help. Only 14 percent of members have tried out C3a, and we'll be looking to get more information on how we can grow the use of the learning platform for members and beginners.

We will get into more details about the member survey in March, but we always welcome your thoughts and suggestions. Please do not hesitate to contact me directly at scott@stamps.org or by mail, and I will respond.

Scott English. APS Blog, Feb. 2, 2023

Promoting Stamp Collecting - Wyoming Stamp Club

1/28/2023

Shared by Ron Breznay, President of the Wyoming Valley Stamp Club

The Wyoming Valley Stamp Club has had a dedicated display case at the Hoyt Library in Kingston, Pennsylvania for several years. The displays are changed frequently. Next to the case, we place packets of stamps for the taking as well as stamp magazines and information about the club and stamp collecting.



We set it up there because we met at the library on the third Saturday of the month from 2015 until the COVID shutdown in 2020. The library has since reopened, but we have not resumed meeting there because they changed their Saturday hours. However, we left the case there and continue to maintain it as part of our mission to promote stamp collecting in the local community

Club member Tom Bowman made the case, which measures 31" x 22.5" and slopes from 5" at top to 2.5" at bottom. It is secured by a lock. The case was installed at the library in 2016. The displays are changed more or less monthly, and we place stacks of stamp packets, philatelic magazines, and information about the club and the APS by the case for members of the public to take.

Below is a list of the displays that we've had in the case. I plan on installing a new display next week, which will mark Valentine's Day.

I have photos of 34 displays, with multiple photos of some of the displays. These are shown in the Community Outreach folder on our Bublup site, which also includes information about other community outreach projects of the club. Because this site is intended as a forum only for club members and contains some sensitive club documents, we would not provide links or invitations to the general public. Perhaps we will develop a mirror site that will include most of the folders and be available to the general public, but this main site is still under construction. In the meantime, anyone interested in accessing information can visit the [Wyoming Valley Stamp Club Facebook page](#).

San Jose Stamp Club

APS Chapter 0264-025791

Founded 1927, Club show since 1928

February 2023

Hoyt Library Displays

Year	Month	Display
2016	11	Various Stamps
2017	02	Presidents Day
2017	03	St. Patrick's Day
2017	03	Baseball
2017	04	Wilkes-Barre Covers
2017	05	Spring
2017	06	Flag Day
2017	07	Canada's Sesquicentennial
2017	09	Anticipation of National Stamp Collecting Month
2017	10	National Stamp Collecting Month
2017	12	December Holidays
2018	01	Winter Sports
2018	02	Spring Flowers
2018	03	Baseball
2018	04	Scouting
2018	05	JFK
2018	06	Summer
2018	07	Battle of Wyoming
2018	08	Owney the Post Office Dog
2018	10	Halloween: Frankenstein
2019	01	Stamp Albums
2019	02	Presidents Day: Presidents Less Honored on U.S. Postage Stamps
2019	03	Baseball
2019	04	Scouting
2019	05	Spring Flowers
2019	07	Countries of the World Celebrate America's Bicentennial
2019	10	Pumpkin-Flavored Philately
2019	11	Salute to Veterans
2020	02	Presidents
2020	03	Postcrossing

In March 2020, the library closed due to the COVID 19 pandemic. The Postcrossing display remained until the Summer display was installed in July 2022.

2022	07	Summer
2022	09	A Cruise Around Northeastern Pennsylvania
2022	10	Halloween: Dracula
2022	12	Happy Holidays!

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES POST OFFICE (1)

With a description of its various issues of Stamps.

BY COSMOPOLITAN

(The American Journal of Philately, Vol 4, January 20, 1871)

To the casual observer, the title of this article might prove a sign-board of warning to enquire within; but we feel assured that notwithstanding the seeming dryness of the paper, the true philatelist, one who desires every information, will find in it pleasure and profit, and mayhap something new. The intention of the article is to give, first a short summary of the various workings of the department since its organization, some statistics, and a list of the gentlemen who have controlled and guided this vast machine. It is then proposed to give a correct account and history of every stamp and stamped envelope ever issued by the post office authorities, and we think we can describe a few varieties hitherto unknown to philatelists. Although not rightly belonging to a history of United States stamps, we shall next take up the United States locals and provisionals, the Confederate stamps and give a description of many U.S. essays. This latter branch of philately has been increasing in popularity the past year, and it is believed, new impetus will be given to the collection of these beautiful objects of the engraver's art. Having unusual facilities for procuring essays, the list will be made as complete as possible.

In the English colonies, which subsequently became the United States, a postal system was inaugurated as early as 1692; but owing to the sparseness (sic) of the population, it was not fully organized till 1710. By an act of parliament of that year, the Postmaster General of the colonies was "to keep his chief letter office in New York, and other chief offices at some convenient place or places in other of Her Majesty's provinces and colonies of America." The revenues derived, were for some years very small, not paying a moiety of the expense. In 1753, Benjamin Franklin was appointed Postmaster General for the colonies, and was guaranteed (sic) the sum of £600 per annum as salary for himself and assistants. He brought his well-known executive ability to the work of remodelling and extending the operations of the office, and in a few years largely increased its revenues. He surprised the people of the colonies in 1760, by proposing to run a stage mail wagon, from Philadelphia to Boston twice a week, starting from each city on Monday morning, and reaching its destination by Saturday night. This scheme was looked upon as absurd, and much opposition was made to it; doubtless by the ancestors of those of the present generation, who opposed the lighting of streets by gas, steam transportation and the electric telegraph. In 1774, while in England, Franklin was removed from office by the British government, in consequence of his exposure of the double dealing of Governor Hutchinson of Massachusetts, and his adherence to the cause of the colonies. In 1789, the United States constitution conferred upon Congress the exclusive control of postal matters for all the states; and Congress proceeded immediately upon the adoption of the constitution, to organize the post office department, and to pass the necessary laws for the protection of the mails, etc. In 1790, there were but 75 post office in the country, and the whole amount of postage was \$37,935, yielding a net revenue of \$5,895 to the government. In 1800, the number of offices had increased to 103.

In 1816 the rates were modified as follows; a single letter carried not over 30 miles, 6¼ cents; over 30 and under 80, 10 cents; over 80 and under 150, 12½ cents; over 150 and under 400, 25 cents: and an additional rate for every additional piece of paper, and if the letter weighed an ounce, four times these rates. Newspapers under 100 miles, or within the state where published, 1 cent; over 100 and out of the state, 1½ cents; magazines and pamphlets, over 100, 2½ cents per sheet; if not periodicals, 4 and 6 cents.

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As the facilities for transportation of the mails by steamboats, railroads, etc., increased, these high rates occasioned much dissatisfaction, and the law was being continually evaded in various ways, thus reducing the postal revenue. For several years large quantities of mail matter was carried between the different cities of the Union by express companies, at a much lower rate than the Post Office charges. The revenue reaches its highest point in 1840 and 1842, being, in the former year, \$4,539,265; and in the latter, \$4,546,246. From this point it receded. Even with this revenue the establishment did not pay expenses, there being a deficiency every year subsequent to 1837. The subject of a reduction of rates was continually broached in congress, and measures for that purpose were proposed by Mr. Edward Everett in 1836; but no well digested plan was brought forward. In 1843 the general discontent of the people on the subject was expressed in the form of resolutions by the legislature of several States, instructing their Senators and requesting their representatives in congress to take some measures for a reduction. Mr. C.A. Wickliffe, at that time Postmaster General, made some investigations in regard to the English system, and in an elaborate report advocated some reduction, but not a radical one, on the ground that the department would become a heavy charge upon the government if a large reduction was made. A bill was drafted reducing the rates to 5, 10, and 15 cents, for different distances; this bill passed the Senate, but was lost in the House; the next year it was again brought forward, but again failed. In the next congress a new bill was presented which became a law March 3d, 1845. Its rates were: - for a letter not exceeding $\frac{1}{2}$ an ounce in weight, whether of one or more pieces of paper, under 300 miles, 5 cents; over 300, 10 cents; and additional rate for every additional $\frac{1}{2}$ ounce or fraction of $\frac{1}{2}$ ounce. Advertised letters 2 cents additional; drop letters, 2 cents; circulars unsealed, 2 cents; pamphlets, magazines, &c., per ounce, $2\frac{1}{2}$ cents; and each additional ounce 1 cent. Newspapers, under 30 miles, free; over 30 and under 100, or any distance within the state where published, 1 cent; over 100 and out of the state, $1\frac{1}{2}$ cents. Carriage by express was prohibited, unless the postage was previously paid. In the next congress an effort was made to raise these rates, as the postal revenue did not defray expenses; it was unsuccessful in regard to letter postage; but transient newspapers were charged 3 cents, and prepayment required; the postage on circulars was raised to 3 cents; newspaper postage to Oregon and California, was figured at $4\frac{1}{2}$ cents, and letter postage to the Pacific territories, via Chagres and Panama, at 40 cents.

In 1849 the postage in transient newspapers was reduced to ordinary newspaper rates, but prepayment still required. In 1851 another effort was made to raise the postage, which proved unsuccessful; but a law was passed establishing the following rates: for a single letter, if $\frac{1}{2}$ ounce weight, under 3000 miles, if prepaid, 3 cts.; or if not prepaid, 5 cts.; over 3000 miles or under 6000, 12 cts.; to foreign countries not over 2,500 miles, except where postal arrangements have been made, 10 cents; over 2,500, 20 cents; drop letters, 1 cent; ship letters, 2 cents; or if delivered where deposited, 6 cents; if sent through the mails the ordinary postage is added. Weekly newspapers to actual subscribers in the county where published, free; under 50 miles and out of the county 5 cents per quarter, over 50 and under 300, 10 cents; over 300 and under a thousand, 15 cents; over 1,000 and under 2,000, 20 cents; over 2,000 and under 4,000, 25 cents; over 4,000, 30 cents. Monthly papers, quarter, and semi-monthly half these rates; semi-weekly, double; tri-weekly, treble; and oftener than tri-weekly, five times these rates; newspapers under 300 square miles, quarter these rates, if paid quarterly in advance, a deduction of one half these rates to be made

TO BE CONTINUED....

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Club Member/Dealers

Richard Clever

Asia Philatelics, P.O. Box 730993, San Jose, CA 95173-0993
Phone: (408) 238-0893 Fax: (408) 238-2539 Email: richard@asiaphilatelics.com
Web Site: www.asiaphilatelics.com
(China, Asia, Ireland, Japan)

Ron Biell

Euro-Asian Stamps, P.O. Box 20562, San Jose, CA 95160
Phone: (408) 323-8702 Fax: (408) 323-8702 Email: rbiell-dsl@sbcglobal.net
Web Site: www.eurasiastamps.com
(China, Japan, Baltics, Russia, W. Europe, Covers Worldwide)

Doug Gary

Douglas Gary, P.O. Box 457, Campbell, CA 95009
Phone: (408) 274-3939 Email: doug_gary@hotmail.com
(USA & Worldwide Postal History, Stamps, Autographs, Postcards)

Deepak Jaiswal

Stampbay, Inc, PO Box 50848, Palo Alto, CA 94303
Phone: (650) 387-3885 Fax: (650) 561-4044 Email: info@stampbay.com
Web site: www.stampbay.com
(India including India used abroad)

Walt Kransky

Walts Postcards
Web Site: www.thepostcard.com Email: wrsky@att.net
(philatelic material, covers, postcards)

Gary Morris

Pacific Midwest Co., PO Box 730818, San Jose, CA 95173
Phone: (408) 532-7100 Email: garyucb@aol.com
www.ebay.com, Seller Name: garyucb
(Hawaii Stamps & Covers, Other Worldwide Stamps, Linder and Lighthouse Stamp Supplies)

Denis Norrington

Arrow Stamp Company, San Francisco, California.
Phone: [415-425-6683](tel:415-425-6683) Email: denis@arrowstamp.co Web site: www.arrowstamp.com
(Worldwide Stamps and collections)