

Stamping Around

Newsletter of the Mid-Cities Stamp Club

Arlington Meetings: First Wednesday @ 7:00 p.m.

Bob Duncan Center, 2800 S. Center St.

Eufless Meetings: Third Wednesday @ 7:30 p.m.

12750 S. Pipeline Rd, #1C (Central Station Marketing)

Lake Granbury Meetings: 4th Tuesday @ 7:00 p.m.

Bentwater Activities Center (adjacent to Bentwater Marina)



CHAPTER MEMBER

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December 2023

EXPO 2023 - Another Success

By Peter Elias

This year's EXPO has been another success. Success isn't just measured by the number of warm bodies in the room though. In the end, if the stamp dealers are happy, we get to have another show! A brief survey of just a couple of dealers showed most responses were positive (and of course there will always be someone that didn't sell as much as they had hoped to - and for that reason, I highly recommend that you ALL contact the dealers prior to the show and let them know what you are looking for - be sure to do this WAY in advance, as some of the dealers are on weeks-long road trips going to many shows in a row).

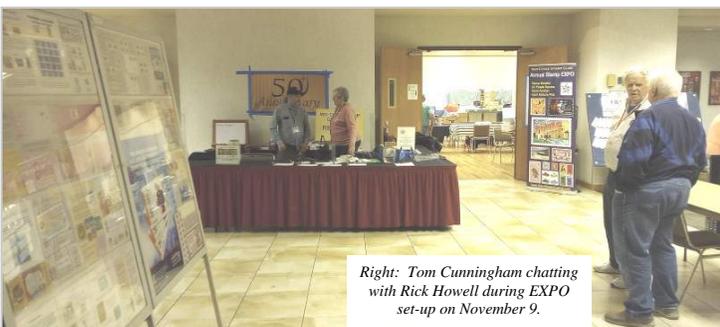
I didn't buy much as my needs are specialized (read: eclectic...), but I did find a Nigerian set & souvenir sheet of 1960's JFK stamps that a fellow collector in Nigeria wanted me to search for. And as always, I found a couple of interesting dollar cover items at John Topper's booth.

The "Beginning Collector Center" did have a couple of kids along with beginning and not-so-beginning collectors (but hey, that's ok!). Even I found some interesting items there, at least a couple of which will make it into a future "Been There - Done That" or other articles. Despite having seen thousands of USA FDC's in the boxes there, I did actually notice something different this time (more on that later...).

We did not have any regular exhibits this year. That also meant we did not have judges nor an awards dinner & ceremony. Hopefully again next year; Rich Hildebrandt has volunteered to head up exhibits for EXPO 2024. In the meantime, I had stressed that we should "exhibit" something and was able to get 4 exhibit frames for the entry area, populated mostly with "philatelic eye candy" (i.e.: 1 or 4-page mini-exhibits and a larger "Spiderman" exhibit) and hopefully people stopped and looked at this wide variety of material which you walked by either coming or leaving EXPO!

The Silent Auction was at "Ground Level" this year, but a huge banner overhead (see page 8) made it easy to spot from across the room.

Other articles regarding the EXPO will be either in this or the next issue. See ya'll next year!



Right: Tom Cunningham chatting with Rick Howell during EXPO set-up on November 9.

Photo Credit: Peter Elias

Additional photos on page 8

EXPO 2023 Stats

By Peter Elias

According to club secretary Janet Moyer, we've had **420** attendees over 2 days, breaking down as follows:

	Friday (Nov. 10)	Saturday (Nov. 11)
Walk-ins (incl. members)	177	115
Volunteers	24	24
Dealers	40	40
TOTAL:	241	179

I was told that this was great attendance! One dealer I spoke with commented that adding the dealers as attendees was "padding" the numbers, but I was also told that since the dealers buy & sell amongst themselves, technically, yes, they are "attending" the show... I'll leave it up to others to discuss the merits of this. So: **340** people if you don't count the dealers.

Reviewing the 2022 numbers, it was 348 walk-ins & volunteers, basically the same, but a bit less than the 360 in 2021. Going back to 2013, we only had 254 attendees! So by all accounts, certainly much better than a decade ago!

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Stamping Around

Newsletter of the Mid-Cities Stamp Club

Peter Elias, Editor (news@mid-citiesstampclub.com)

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2023 - 2024 MID-CITIES STAMP CLUB OFFICERS & BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

President – Ken Aldridge
First Vice-President – Rick Howell
Second Vice-President – Stanley Christmas
Secretary – Janet Moyer
Treasurer – Judy Christmas

Board of Directors (voting):

Peter Elias Ralph Poore Ken Wills
Immediate Past President: Rich Hildebrandt

Membership in the Mid-Cities Stamp Club is available to anyone of good character interested in philately. Feel free to attend any of our 3 different meeting sites in the greater Dallas / Ft. Worth area! Dues are only \$12 per year (which includes an emailed or online color newsletter, or \$22 for mailed black & white newsletters). For more information, the editor is reachable during business hours at (972) 671-0077 or : editor@mid-citiesstampclub.com

For a membership application write to:

Mid-Cities Stamp Club
P.O. Box 820784
N. Richland Hills, TX 76182-0784

or visit: <https://www.mid-citiesstampclub.com>



"Editor At Work"
LEGO™ MOC by Marcos Elias

Editor's Forum

By Peter Elias

...And we're sliding into the tail end of the year. This is the last "issue" of 2023, although you will get the January 2024 issue sometime in mid-December.

Hopefully you can use some of your spare time during the holidays to think about writing an article or three for the newsletter. After all, the APS newsletter judges seem to think that I write too much. That said, I've had about 40 articles in my backlog for at least a couple of years (meaning I've got scans of the stamps and found the photos, and just need to actually write them up...). Yet every month I seem to find other articles to write about.

Your articles don't have to be the "Been There - Done That" variety, it could be any other philatelic subject (and I do write those type as well, if you read the articles Letter Cards & Postal Cards in previous issues).

As mentioned before, just type a basic article. Don't use fancy fonts or formatting, as I'll need to format it to suit what I use for the newsletter in terms of fonts and colors. Photos & scans should be separate files. Keep them to at least 300 dpi (if not more...); I can always reduce picture quality and pixel count if needed. Most 3 to 5 MB size photos are too large (they'd make the newsletter itself too large to email), so I generally reduce them to a smaller size (but if not done right, might make the photo look pixelated).

Questions? Send them to the email address shown to the left above.

Coming Attractions

2023

NOV. 28 MCSC — LAKE GRANBURY Meeting

Program: TBD

DEC. 2 MCSC EXPO 2024 Planning Meeting

Dave's Barbeque, 2224 W. Park Row, Pantego . 11 AM

DEC. 6 MCSC — ARLINGTON Meeting

Program: Christmas Party

DEC. 8 & 9 TSDA Bourse

Bluebonnet Room, DoubleTree Hotel, 1981 N Central Ewy, Richardson, TX 75081 (SW corner of US75 & Campbell Rd)

DEC. 20 MCSC — EULESS Meeting

--> NO MEETING THIS MONTH ! See you in 2024!

DEC. 26 MCSC — LAKE GRANBURY Meeting

--> NO MEETING THIS MONTH ! See you in 2024!

2024

JAN. 3 MCSC—ARLINGTON Meeting

Program: TBD

JAN. 17 MCSC—EULESS Meeting

Program: Extended Show & Tell and philatelic discussions

JAN. 23 MCSC—LAKE GRANBURY Meeting

Program: TBD

Secretary's Report

By Janet Moyer



Applications Received:

Ewan Gray (#660Y)

Bryan Young (#661)

New Members:

Ann Zimmer-Sheperd (#658)

Jackie Goodwin (#659)

Reinstatements:

Jerald Zimmerman (#639)

Resignations:

n/a

Membership Summary – November 15, 2023

Membership as of October 18, 2023	98
Applications Rec'd (counts as member next month)	2
New Members	2
Did Not Renew for 2023	(0)
Resignations	(0)
Deceased	(0)
Reinstatements	1
Membership as of November 15, 2023	101

Ellis Island

By Peter Elias



Photo Credits: Peter Elias

In late Mach 1997 (either the 22nd or 23rd), above is what I saw from the boat that took me from the New Jersey shore to Ellis Island: the Statue of Liberty with the NYC skyline in the background. I was on a work assignment with a printing ink manufacturer in Teterboro, New Jersey, and at that time, one could get better airfare if one stayed over a Saturday night (instead of flying home on Friday evening). That usually allowed me to actually check out the places I was in, not just the airport, car rental counter, hotel and client site...

The Statue of Liberty has been featured on countless stamps in the USA and worldwide. Above is USA #3967 a coil stamp issued in 2006. While the Statue was designed by French sculptor [Frédéric Auguste Bartholdi](#), the metal frame underneath was built by [Gustave Eiffel](#) (which makes sense, since he had experience with an even bigger project, the Eiffel Tower...). As usual, I refer you to Wikipedia at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Statue_of_Liberty for more detailed information.

Interestingly enough, I found this first day cover (showing Bangladesh #112) at our EXPO's Beginning Collector Table, and thought it might make a nice tie-in to this article.



Then I looked a bit closer at this stamp. Something doesn't seem right. Oh, wait! Where are the Twin Towers? If I interpret the arrow to the right with the one on my photo above correctly, the Twin Towers should be roughly about where the arrow is pointing at! The towers were completed in 1973 and this stamp was issued 3 years later. My guess is that the stamp designer was not given the most recent photo of the New York skyline!

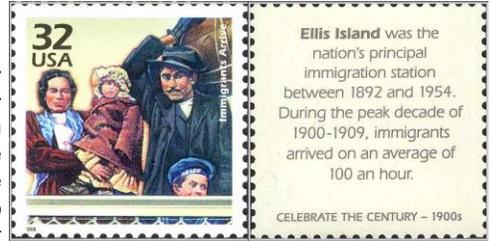


Notice anything else wrong? Compare again my photo to the stamp. In the stamp, the statue is facing you (as if you were on the New Jersey shore), not towards New York as my picture shows. Ooops.

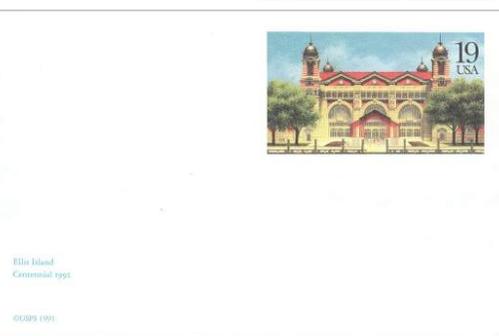
Anyway, I don't think stopped too long at the Statue of Liberty (I remember lines were way too long to get in). So on I



went to Ellis Island. Above is what I saw as we approached it. Almost 12 million immigrants were processed there between 1892 to 1954. To the right



is USA #3182i, part of the "Celebrate the Century" series for the 1900 decade. More at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ellis_Island.



Ellis Island was also the subject of a 19¢ US postal stationery card, #UX165, that was issued in 1991, although this one I had to purchase on eBay.

A thought had occurred to me

recently as to whether or not our family has any ties to Ellis Island (not directly though, as our family moved to the USA well after Ellis Island was in operation).

A couple of years ago, I remembered that my mother had told me of a cousin living in New Jersey, that had sent her "care packages" to Germany after World War II. With just some simply genealogical googling, I recently found out that this cousin was indeed listed in the 1940 US Census in New Jersey and apparently lived there her entire life until her death in the 1980's. Researching a bit further, I found out that her parents had emigrated to the USA in the late 1800's before she was born, but whether or not this cousin's parents or grand-parents immigrated through Ellis Island, I don't know yet. It might even have been prior to 1892. My mom never told me how (which branch of her family) this cousin was related to, and from what I've found out so far, I haven't been able to find this out either. Whether there are living members of that family still around, I don't know either at this point.

Below I'm seen standing near the entrance of the Ellis Island facility (wow, 26 years ago!). Go visit if you get a chance!



Been There,
Done That

Colorado Train Ride

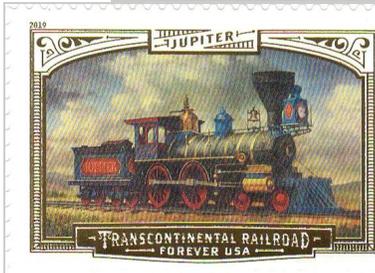
By Ken Aldridge

This summer we took the narrow gauge train with our daughter from Durango, Colorado to Silverton, Colorado. Durango was founded by the Denver and Rio Grande Railway in 1880. The railroad arrived in Durango August 5, 1881 and construction on the line to Silverton began in the fall of the same year.

By July of 1882, the tracks to Silverton were completed, and the train began hauling both freight and passengers. The line was constructed to haul silver and gold from the San Juan Mountains, but everyone soon learned it was the view that was indeed precious. This historic railway has been in continuous operation for 142 years behind various vintage steam locomotives.

The ride has been voted "The Best Scenic Train in America," and similar accolades by several travel magazines.

The train has been featured in numerous Western Films and runs daily Spring, Summer and Fall on a 5 hour round trip. In 2021,



Editor's Notes: While I wasn't planning on writing an article about this, and while I have NOT ridden this train, back on September 1, 2006, my wife and I stopped off in Silverton as part of a drive through Colorado (on our way to Mesa Verde National Park), I did manage to get a glimpse of the whole train.



In the picture above, it appears that the tracks have ended right on front of the locomotive! I figured this way you can see what the entire train looks like.



While I've not found any stamps featuring the Silverton-Durango railroad, there is a cover with a manuscript postmark from the 1880's that was sold at a 2020 Kelleher Auctions it's here: <https://stampauctionnetwork.com/V/v7366.cfm>, lot #108 and it sold for \$250.



nearly 220,000 passengers took the trip. The locomotives use between 800-900 gallons of fuel oil, and 10,000 of water for a roundtrip to Silverton.

The views were spectacular and the crew very informative and the train and it's history.



Annual Club Christmas Party

By Judy Christmas

The Club will be holding its' annual Christmas Party on December 6th at the Bob Duncan Center (the usual Arlington Meeting place). We will start gathering around 6 PM with dinner being served at 6:30 PM.

The Club will provide the meat, turkey and ham. If you come to the party, please bring your favorite holiday dish to share with others.

I will be passing around a sign-up sheet at all meetings in November.

For the last two years we have just exchanged gifts instead of playing Bingo. Everyone who attends needs to bring a philatelic gift with a value of approximately \$10. Everyone who attends (guests included if they want to play) will be asked to bring some sort of philatelic gift to the party. When the gifts come in, please hand them to Stan and he will put a number on it.

Be sure to sign in, as we will mix up the numbers on the sign-in sheet like we do at every meeting for door prizes.

The person who has number "1" will choose a gift, open it, and then sit down. Number "2" will then have a choice of either taking number One's gift or pick one of

their own. Number "3" will have the same options as number "2", but a gift may only be stolen twice. We will continue in this order until all have taken a gift.

We are hoping this exchange in gift giving will bring many members back to attending the annual Christmas Party.

How Not To Collect Stamps - Paper clips

By Peter Elias



While reviewing a donation lot, I saw a box where practically all stamps were put into little bundles of 10 or so and they were ALL held together with paper clips? Why? It 1) bends or creases the stamps, 2) might cause rust spots in the future and 3) risk of scratching or tearing the stamp as you're pulling the paper clip away.



Be sure to visit the Club website on the **Internet**:

← <https://www.mid-citiesstampclub.com>

For recent online newsletters see the club website above or:

<http://BetweenThePerfs.com/MCSC> →

(for older newsletters please contact the newsletter editor)



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Letters To The Editor

Peter Elias

Below is a follow-up to my front-page article in the November 2023 issue of Stamping Around that I received from Douglas Quine, PhD via email:

35 years ago (so my recollections are cloudy), I finished a multi-year effort developing and deploying the first-generation Delivery Barcode Sorter at Martin Marietta for the USPS. Four vendors competed (including Toshiba, Chamberlain-Gard, and AEG Electrocom) in a massive side-by-side competition. In the end the contract was split between 2 vendors. Martin-Marietta built and installed 640 sorters and AEG Electrocom built and installed the same number of their competing design.

There are two kinds of mail damage that I recall seeing from these systems. First, on the backs of the mail-pieces there may be "scuff marks" from the firm vertical colored plastic drive rollers that "urge" the mail-pieces into the sortation bins (stackers). As I recall, the marks typically occur when the bin is getting full, so the mail-pieces are being pushed in but cannot move further past the roller. Second, the round notches on the bottom of envelopes you observed are extreme cases of the more common cases in which there will be a few millimeter

wide shallow opening abraded on the bottom of the envelope. I can't visualize the exact location of those **horizontally oriented (possibly spiral metal) drive rollers** that help push the tails into the sortation bins (stackers) but as I recall they were needed to prevent the leading edges of following mail-pieces from catching on the loose trailing edges of mail-pieces in front of them in the stacker. The mail moves very fast so there is not a lot of time to move the front piece out of the way before the one behind it arrives when consecutive pieces are going to the same stacker.

While "my" model of the Delivery Barcode Sorter has been retired and AEG Electrocom has build all the systems since, these components probably remain in use in subsequent generations.

[Editor comments: the **blue underlined text** above seems to explain the phenomena of the elliptical "cut-outs" at the bottom of some of the mail that I've received in the past. If it occurs on run-of-the-mill mail (i.e.: statements, advertising, etc), it doesn't really matter. But if the mail piece is a collectible cover that has been mailed and/or if it contains philatelic material that sits at the bottom of an envelope, that is a different matter! But how does this get "fixed"?]

2024 Mid-Cities Stamp Club Membership Renewal

Mr. Mrs. Ms. Miss Name: _____ Date of Birth: ____/____/____
(First) (M.I.) (Last) (Complete if under 18)

Check here if information is unchanged from 2023 and skip to the signature line below.

Home Address: _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____ - _____

Email: _____ Home Phone: _____ Mobile: _____

Collecting Interests: _____

Other Stamp Organizations with membership numbers (if applicable):

APS # _____ ATA # _____ TPA # _____ Other: _____

Permission is granted to make the information above available to other club members. Indicate anything you do NOT want shared:

Signature: _____ Date: ____/____/____

Membership Level:

____ \$12 Regular Adult (emailed or online colors newsletters) ____ \$22 Regular Adult (with mailed black & white newsletters)
____ **\$25 Sponsor Membership** ____ \$35 Sponsor (with mailed black & white newsletters)
____ \$6 Additional Adult (no separate newsletter copy) ____ \$4 Youth (under 18; add \$10 if printed newsletter is desired.)

Make check out to 'Mid-Cities Stamp Club' and mail this form with payment to:

Mid-Cities Stamp Club, PO Box 820874, N. Richland Hills, TX 76182-0784

[The Special Year Christmas](#)

By Ken Aldridge

Christmas was fast approaching for a widow and her three girls. Regular attendees at their small church, one Sunday the Pastor announced that for the next Sundays, a special offering would be taken and on Christmas eve, it would be given to one of the poor families in town.

On their way home that Sunday, the widow and her girls were excited about helping to raise some money for the poor family. The widow, already working five days a week cleaning houses, said she was going to work an extra day for the next three weeks and put the extra money in the basket for the needy family.

Her oldest daughter said she thought she could do a few more nights babysitting to earn extra money. The second daughter announced she was going to contact Readers Digest and start selling it in town.

The youngest girl said she thought she would ask the neighbors who had dogs, to walk the dogs every evening, giving the owners a break from that chore.

So it was, that the widow and her three daughters set out to each do their part to earn a little extra money over the next few weeks to put into the basket for the poor family.

At the end of the three weeks, they had accumulated \$45.33 to put in the church basket. That next Sunday, they were so excited and proud of what they had done for the less advantaged. When the special basket came around, they could see there were some coins, a few one dollar bills and several envelopes. The widow let her youngest daughter put their envelope into the basket. The widow smiled at her daughters and they each smiled back.

At the end of the service, the Pastor turned and retrieved a note from his assistant. He was beaming when he announced the total donated for the poor family, \$62.77. Everyone applauded and were nodding to each other.

Then the Pastor took the basket and stepped down from the pulpit. He started walking down the aisle and stopped by the pew with the widow and her daughters. He bent over and handed the basket to the widow and said, "Merry Christmas."



[MCSC Granbury Meeting Minutes](#) [October 24, 2023](#)

--> No meeting minutes were recorded.

[You Did Not Tell Me!](#)

By Jim Case

I did not start my interest in this stamp collecting thing at an early age, as many seemed to have done. I didn't even have an interest in the 'hobby.'

When my middle son was about 9 years old, he was struggling in school, had a short attention span and little interest in learning. Trying to help, and with an interest in history myself, I acquired a small postage stamp album (the real expensive type) and a few stamps, hoping to instill his interest and/or attention to detail. It didn't work for him so, I filed the album and stamps away!

After moving a number of times while working in Michigan and Texas, I retired in Granbury. One day I saw a notice in our local newspaper inviting those interested to a monthly Stamp Club meeting. I searched and finally found that little lost album and off to the meeting I went. It turned out to be super interesting, fun and a great adventure!

HOWEVER the stamp club members did not tell me that I would fill albums and boxes and shelves with this hobby while losing space in our house for clothes, etc.

They did not tell me that I would be as happily involved, while my wife believes me to be obsessed, compulsive and possibly 'lost,' when sometimes devoting more attention to these pieces of paper than to her!

They did not tell me how thankful I would be to those in our club for the knowledge I've learned, the friends I've made and the great time I'm having with these little pieces of paper!

WHAT A DEAL. YOU DID NOT TELL ME!

[Editor's Note: I apologize for not printing this earlier. Jim had sent me a PDF file with several pages, and the first one had some general info in it, so I put it on the back-burner. The second page had the article above, and I found it while reviewing my "pending" folder for articles]

[Another Ruined Stamp](#)

By Peter Elias



Why do people always insist on placing stamps right on the edges of envelopes or packages? It is the one area that will most likely have the stamps get damaged (scraped or creased).

The recent \$10 definitive stamps are really hard to find postally used. If the sender (i.e.: the APS in this case!) had applied the stamps perhaps 1" in (or more) from the edge of the box, this otherwise nice \$10 stamp would not have been ruined (despite the box being rather mangled by the USPS in that corner)!

I *never* place any stamps that close to the edges of anything that I mail, and there's no real reason (except lack of space) why you can't put the stamps further away from the edges (unless it's a REALLY small box or envelope).

EXPO 2023 Photos (by Peter Elias)



I took the above 2 photos of the EXPO hall from the same spot (a chair at the far corner) and then grafted them together best as I could given the nature of using a cell phone camera...



Skip and several other people took care of the Beginning Collector Center.

President's Message

By Ken Aldridge

The Club's EXPO was another success! Held November 10-11 at the Civic Center in Grapevine, dealers, patrons and volunteers, all seemed pleased. Please consider helping at next year's show. Talk to Ralph Poore, Stan Christmas or myself for more information and how you might be able to help out.

The next meeting in Arlington will be our annual Christmas Party, December 6. Call Judy Christmas if you plan to attend.

I've been dealing in covers lately, mostly FDC's and it seems to be covers have been given a bad rap lately. There's history, sometimes additional markings, cachets and if nothing else, a used stamp that can be soaked off and saved!

We have 3 new members, welcome them when you have a chance! They are youth member Ewan Gray of Mansfield, Bryan Young of Ft. Worth and re-instated member Jerald Zimmerman of Waxahachie.

As the holiday season approaches, be careful, cautious and have a great time shopping, eating and enjoying love ones. But let's not forget the reason for the season!

EXPO 2024 Planning Meeting

The 1st EXPO Planning Meeting for 2024 will take place on December 2, 2023 at Dave's BBQ on 2224 W. Park Row in Pantego!

Thank You

By Peter Elias

Many thanks to Byron Sandfield of Park Cities Stamps for having submitted various stamps, covers and albums to the club (these came from items that he could not purchase and asked the sellers to donate to the club instead). It was 1 box in October and 4 boxes in November.

Guinea, Guiana, Guyana, or?

By Peter Elias



I ran across this elephant stamp from Spanish Guinea while sorting through some stamps, and that made me wonder: how many countries / entities are there that have a form of "Guinea" or "Guyana" in their name?

- **French Guiana** (a part of France) in north-eastern South America.
- **Guyana** in northeastern South America (separated from **French Guiana** by Suriname). Formerly known as **British Guiana**.
- **Spanish Guinea** (formerly known as **Equatorial Guinea**) in Central Africa.
- **Guinea-Bissau** (former Portuguese colony in West Africa).
- **Papua-New Guinea** is located northeast of Australia and shares the island with parts of Indonesia (1st European visitor named it "Isles of Papuas - land of fuzzy-haired people"; later named "**New Guinea**" by a Spanish explorer as the people resemble those of **Guinea** in Africa). It was a German colony for a while (as **Deutsch Neu Guinea** in 1885-1888).

The name "Guinea" is named after a British gold coin from 1663 - 1814, the gold of which originated in the Guinea region of West Africa. Hopefully that clears things up a bit .

Wrong Again

By Peter Elias

APS 2023 Star Route Awards & Judges Notes

By Peter Elias

Remember the Bangladesh FDC with the Statue of Liberty from the article on page 3?



Here's another example of a similar goof. While the stamp designer of this Anguilla 1¢ did actually manage to show the Twin Towers in the NY skyline background, they did make the same mistake with the Statue of Liberty, as it is also facing the viewer instead of the towards the NY skyline! I suppose if you're looking at the Statue of Liberty and the background was the New Jersey skyline, it wouldn't quite look as dramatic?



On the example to the left, the British ATM stamp commemorating the World Stamp Show NY2016 sort of got it better. While Liberty isn't

quite facing the NY skyline (more liking looking down the Hudson River...), it is a bit better. And since this was in 2016, the Twin Towers are of course not there. Although the new One World Trade Center tower was completed (opened) in 2015, it was not shown on this stamp (which might possibly have been designed well prior to the show). Even then, I don't know the NY skyline well enough whether the viewpoint shown on the stamp would have One World Trade Center be visible.



To the left is the receipt for the UK ATM stamp that I bought at the show. (On the receipt, the date is in DD/MM format, so that's June 3, not March 6).

Note: European collectors like to collect the receipts that go along with the stamps from the ATM machines... (the Unit & Session #'s match!)

The APS (American Philatelic Society) has done their annual "Star Route" awards, designed to give feedback to stamp club newsletter editors and club websites. "Stamping Around" received a "Large Vermeil" medal. Several issues from earlier in 2023 were submitted. The text below is as received from the APS. Editor notes and comments are in [\[blue\]](#).

Overall Score: 79.23

Judges' Feedback

Judge information is anonymized. Please click [here](#) to view a sample rubric. [\[No clue as to where that link goes...\]](#)

Content Comments

Judge 1: Need contact links to the officers, not just the Editor. [\[Will gladly do this if the officers want their emails listed. Remember that this newsletter is available to anyone on planet Earth, not just members, so spam potential is an issue\]](#)

Judge 2: Very nice heading with lots of information. Fun, informative newsletter with variety. Consider identifying how and when would the editor like content submitted.

Judge 3: Rather than trying to fill every inch of every page, pare down material to give each page more white space. This improves appearance and readability. [\[Would be easier to do if newsletters were only digital, and not mailed\]](#)

Judge 4: A fun read, although it seems to be mostly a one-man show with Peter Elias penning 80% or more of each issue. Fortunately, he has a wide range of things to write about, often related to his interesting worldwide travels. Nevertheless, it would be nice to see similar contributions from some other members. I also have to question how many of his fellow members share his evident passion for meter mail. [\[This is a call to the membership to write more articles!\]](#)

Judge 5: Minutes of meetings are very detailed, while helpful especially with 3 locations, means important "highlights" get lost amid the mundane.

Design Comments

Judge 1: Nice classified ads. Too many articles by the Editor. Need variety of authors. [\[There is a variety of authors, just not in every issue. Ok members, ready, get set, write!\]](#)

Judge 2: Thank you for the submission.

Judge 3: Color is overused creating a cluttered and chaotic appearance. Examples: blue, red and brick-colored headlines; blue and red bolded lines; green "don't forget" box text. [\[What exactly is a "brick-colored" headline? I use underlined blue Roman Times for headings and black Arial for body of text, except when text has an internet link embedded\]](#)

Judge 4: The layout uses a lot of small images where sometimes a single, large one would be stronger. The tight margins, especially around pictures, unfortunately give the layout a cramped, cluttered feel. Try to open things up a bit with more air running around the photos. Also, consider using a more subdued shade of blue than the basic RGB blue adopted for headlines. This is a newsletter with a lot of potential - a few tweaks will go a long way. [\[Since there are mailed newsletters, some layout issues are based on keeping pages to a minimum, or making something fit into the allotted space. Sometimes it takes several images to illustrate the article, and things need to be reduced or enlarged to fit on a page since we still mail some newsletters\]](#)

Judge 5: Two columns is good - however on pages where the center "gutter" is very small or no existent, I find it hard to read - hence clutter. [\[I only enter a center divider line if there are multiple articles on a page\]](#)

MCSC Arlington Meeting Minutes

November 1, 2023

By Janet Moyer

Call-To-Order:

- President Ken Aldridge called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM.

Attendance:

- 19 members were present and we had one guest – Stuart.

Announcements:

- Secretary Janet Moyer announced we have no new members this month. That leaves us with 100 paid memberships.
- Treasurer Judy Christmas told us all income has been received with a few bills to pay for EXPO.
- Dave Stockbridge announced that APS sales are slow.
- Skip announced that he has blank album pages available if anyone needs any.

EXPO Announcements:

- The EXPO is from November 10-11.
- EXPO Chairman Ralph Poore reported we will meet at Flip's for "Linner" Thursday, November 9 at 3:00 PM and then go to the Grapevine Convention Center for EXPO set-up.
- Everything seems to be ready to go.
- Janet reported that we need to switch a few volunteers around but all looks good.
- Stanley has finished with the EXPO mailings - 350 mailed out and only 6 returned.
- The programs are ready to print.
- Skip is ready for the Beginning Collector table.
- Patty is ready with the Chance Board.
- Tom announced we have 100 lots for the silent auction and they are adding the final touches. They are still accepting donations.
- Publicity is final.
- Security is taken care of.
- Raffle tickets are printed.
- Ken and Dave have the snacks taken care of.
- The bourse is ready to go; we have 25 tables.
- Cachet is done and will be loaded into the programs to hand out.
- Post 60 of the American Legion will be present in the foyer with some material to pass out.

Show & Tell:

- Peter had 8 things to show and tell or give:
 - Old wooden exhibition frame. If anyone can use it, get it.
 - A Patriot Challenge Board Game featuring stamps.
 - USA Bicentennial Souvenir sheets where the denominations are hard to read and had a printed cancel on them.
 - A postcard from the club's 1992 stamp show.
 - Switzerland & Netherlands "LEGO" stamps.
 - SASE envelopes
 - USPS publishes a guide for non-denomination stamps - at <http://pe.usps.com>, search for 604 service guide.
 - A list of fake postage stamps.
- Skip showed a carton of empty stamp album pages. If you need any, get them.

Gift certificates:

- Four gift certificates were issued.

Adjournment:

- The meeting was adjourned at 7:35 PM.

Eulless Meeting Minutes

November 15, 2023

By Janet Moyer

Call-To-Order:

- VP Stanley Christmas called the meeting to order at 7:24 PM.

Attendance:

- There were no guests and 13 members in attendance: Stanley Christmas, Peter Elias, Bruce Davis, Patti Poore, Judy Christmas, Janet Moyer, Rick Howell, Ralph Poore, Skip Ely, Tom Turner, Donna Howell, Ken Wills, Evan Islam.

Committee Reports:

- Vice-President - Stanley Christmas reported there was no president's report.
- Treasurer - Judy Christmas gave a breakdown of EXPO incomes.
- Secretary - Janet Moyer reported the minutes were posted in the newsletter. We have two new members: one is a youth and one reinstated member.
- Newsletter - Peter said the newsletter is almost ready to go. He won a Large Vermeil Award in the APS annual Star Route competition for the newsletter.
- Webpage / Facebook - Rick Howell announced there is activity on Facebook. Evan said the website has been updated.
- EXPO report was given by Chairman Ralph Poore:
- Thank you to all for all your help. Dealers gave positive feedback and appreciated our volunteers helping them. There were very few hiccups. Reminded all that exhibits will return next year and we need more volunteers. Consider your job and see if you could help in another role. The next planning meeting will be at Dave's Barbeque on Dec. 2, at 11:00 AM.
- We all thanked Ralph for all his hard work. Job Well Done, Ralph!

Show & Tell:

- Stanley Christmas - A letter from Canada with no stamp at all on it and some EXPO cachets.
- Tom Turner - an envelope with a Republic of Texas Cover mailed to Thomas Jefferson Rusk.
- Skip Ely - One donated lot from the Dallas Club. It has US postal cards from 1994-1995 that all have different event postmarks. There are 7 boxes of them.
- Rick Howell - A set of "event stamps" of King George the VI Coronation. They have a "common design" between countries.
- Ralph Poore - A Pakistani triangular stamp with a slogan cancel. Very rare.
- Ken Wills - Preprinted folded letters that did not require stamps. Some were also made with caricatures.
- Bruce Davis - An album from 1880 that was his grandfather's
- Peter Elias:
- An envelope addressed to him in 1977 that was returned to him.
- Statue of Liberty First Day Cover from Bangladeshi 1976
- Postal stationery cards that will inspire "Been There..." articles.
- First Day Covers that have a pictorial element in the postmark 1958-1961.

Door Prizes:

- Two certificates were awarded: Rick Howell & Tom Turner.

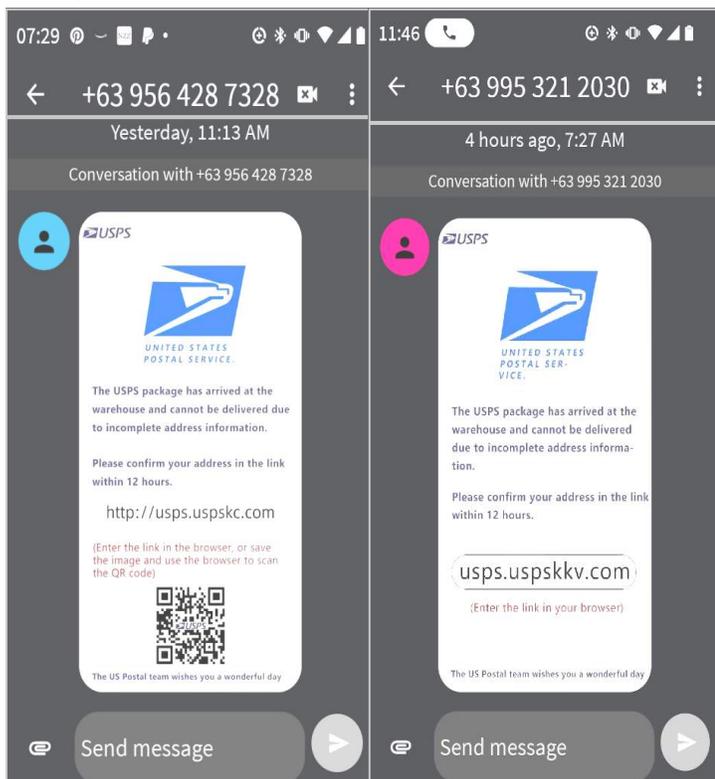
Adjournment:

- The meeting was adjourned at 8:19 PM. The next meeting will be January 17, 2024.

PSA: Fake USPS Text Messages

By Peter Elias

Have you received a text message that looks like this:



These text messages have no text, instead they just show a picture that shows the USPS logos and an image of text, and a message about the “USPS package having arrived at their “warehouse”. That smells fishy (or should that be “phishy”?) already since the USPS more than likely simply states that a package had arrived but couldn’t be delivered. And they usually don’t mention “warehouse” (rather “facility” usually...).

Generally, USPS communications don’t “wish you a wonderful day” (I mean, they should.. but I’ve never seen that..).

The QR code doesn’t make sense, since you are viewing this on a phone, how could the camera on the phone scan an image being displayed on the phone’s screen? As you can see, on a subsequent text, they removed the QR code.

That all said, the key is the link that is displayed in the middle. While it appears to go to the USPS website, it does NOT! The real website shown is uspskc.com (or uspskkv.com). The “usps” part after the “http://” (in the left image) simply indicates that it is a sub-domain of the actual domain, which is *uspskc.com*. Checking this, it appears that this domain was registered just recently, on October 19 at Alibaba Singapore (and if you didn’t know already, Alibaba itself is a Chinese company).

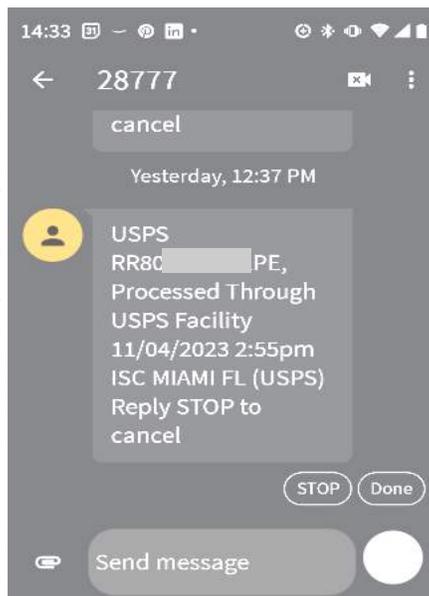
Also suspect is the phone number that appears: +63 956 428 7328 (or 956 321 2030). “+63” is the country prefix for phone numbers in the Philippines! I seriously doubt that the USPS would be sending their text messages from there...

Yes, I do receive legitimate text messages from the USPS. As I’m writing this, I’ve gotten a text message from the USPS that a registered letter being mailed to me from Peru (from a fellow collector I trade with there) has just entered the US Customs facility in Miami.

The legitimate USPS text (see top of 2nd column) shows the typical information from the USPS, in this case for a

registered envelope and its’ tracking #“RR..... PE” (with PE being the abbreviation for Peru).

The USPS uses “28777” to identify itself when it texts you, that number is called a “short code”; the USPS will not use a regular phone # to display on your phone. The screenshot to the right of the text message illustrates this. The collector told me he was sending the envelope, and the USPS sent me a text once my address was entered in the Peruvian system (since I’m signed up with the USPS’s free “Informed Delivery” service.



So what awaits you if you type that link shown in the fake USPS texts to the left? Who knows? From what I can gather, you have to manually enter the website address, and I did not (nor do I want to) “click” on that image, I certainly don’t want to find out as it will surely compromise me or my device somehow...

As I am writing this on November 13, I have received a total of 8 text similar text messages over the past few days (November 4 to 11), all from the Philippines (assuming that one can trust what is displayed) and with various phone numbers (all starting with country code +63, and then followed by 995 321 2141 935 233 8472 956 428 7608 995 327 7199 956 428 7390 956 525 3055. These texts even have variances in the website names shown in the screenshots (uspskc.com) such as uspsbaa.com, uspsbaaa.com & uspskkv.com (all registered on October 19) and uspswq.com (registered on November 4) at Alibaba. Likely there will be more. They don’t stop with this.

Why am I getting these? Who knows. Does it have something to do with me being a stamp collector? Doubtful, but as with all of us collectors, we do interact with the USPS a lot! They’re probably just phishing for information (i.e.: login credentials and/or passwords) or install malicious software on your phone or other device.

And since pretty much most people in the USA get “packages” via the USPS at some point, they figure they’ve got a good number of people that will go these websites. Technically speaking, if you send a package via the USPS, you generally have to drop it off with a clerk at the post office (or use the USPS kiosk) and have to provide the full mailing address. If that is wrong somehow, the USPS clerk will flag it as being incorrect right from the beginning (sometimes incorrectly as I’ve found out recently, telling me an address that I know is good, doesn’t seem to even exist in their system... and yet shows up on online maps - another tech fail!).

How to get rid of these? Well, simply flag that text message as “spam”. Don’t bother sending a “STOP” reply; that’ll just let “them” know that they’ve reached a valid cell number, just keep blocking them, but in theory, they could be using close to a billion different numbers from the Philippines country code alone! Kind of like playing “whack-a-mole”. Every day I have to block at least 10 different numbers from spam & scam phone calls or texts! Don’t you just love technology?

Paris Open-Air Stamp Market Fading Away

By Art von Reyn

Despite having been to Europe numerous times and even being stationed in Germany for several years while in the service, the continent's most popular tourist destination, Paris, France, always eluded my itinerary.

I remedied that situation this fall, spending five days in the City of Light during a three-week family vacation. As usual, I made it a point to include some philatelic adventures, one being to check out the Paris open-air stamp market, as featured in the 1963 comedic thriller *Charade*.

If I have a keen memory, you might recall that *Charade* included sequences filmed at the market, known in French as *Marché aux Timbres*. The film's stars are Cary Grant and Audrey Hepburn while the film's MacGuffin is \$250,000 that it turns out was spent on three rare stamps.

The sequences in *Charade* show the *Marché aux Timbres* as jammed packed with collectors. That may have been a bit over the top, but old photos and postcards verify that the market was an extremely popular venue.

France's first postage stamps were issued in 1849 and by the 1860, schoolboys began to meet in the gardens of the Palais-Royal to exchange stamps. This popular market attracted some undesirable elements, and was banned in 1864. The collectors simply moved to the gardens of Luxembourg Palace, where they were eventually evicted as well. In 1887, a wealthy collector of stamps bequeathed what is now Marigny Square Park to the City of Paris on the condition that a full open-air stamp market be permitted.

The market still exists today, located on a small lane called Carré Marigny that runs alongside Avenue Gabriel on the north side of the park. The park is on the north side of Champs de Élysées, about halfway between the Louvre Museum and the Arc de Triomphe.

My expectations were low, having previously learned the market was a shell of its former self, with there being less than 20 licensed dealers these days, far below the 40 to 50 during the market's heyday.

However, it being a beautiful Saturday with a predicted high in the low 70s, I was hoping to experience a day with heightened philatelic activity.

While approaching the chestnut tree bordered Carré Marigny, I spotted on the grounds of Théâtre Marigny a small folding table piled with albums and stamps, with two folding chairs on either side, one occupied by what ap-



*The 1963 film Charade features two sequences filmed at Paris' outdoor stamp market, known as *Marché aux Timbres*. The normal crowd size was probably enhanced for the film.*

peared to be a vest-pocket dealer and the other by a collector. This was obviously outside the officially sanctioned area, so my other half and I proceeded to Carré Marigny.

We walked halfway down the lane before we encountered the first of only two stalls.

Both dealers had tables with piles of albums on them, the collections being offered intact at set prices. Most of the collections were of French stamps, of which I have enough where I don't need an entire collection. I did spot on one of the dealers' tables a Portuguese collection that included stamps from those long commemorative stamp sets issued from 1923 to 1928; the sets being postally used, instead of mint as you usually see here in the states. The dealer's asking price of €595 was far beyond my philatelic budget for the trip.

Also piled on the tables were stamp packets, covers and assorted sets, mostly French or French colonials. One dealer had a box of loose stamps with a price of 10¢ each. Hanging from the side of stalls were more covers, souvenir sheets, stamps sets, plus postcards and other philatelic miscellany. Missing were the ubiquitous red boxes of stamps one sees at American stamp shows.

Upon questioning about the paucity of vendors, the second dealer I talked to said only a couple show up on any given day, assuming the weather is decent. He attributed the stamp market's decline to a considerable amount of philatelic activity having moved to the internet.

Should you ever visit Paris, you will find the open-air market open from 9 AM to 6 PM on Thursdays, Saturdays, Sundays and national holidays, assuming the weather is cooperative. Hopefully, there will be some dealers there!



The weather extremely pleasant for the last day of September. The first dealer encountered offered numerous album collections, sets and miscellaneous lots.



The second and last dealer present at the Paris outdoor stamp market set up two sheds instead of one. The stock wasn't much different than the first, with plenty of French material on hand. The word "ACHAT" on the awning of the first shed means "Buying."

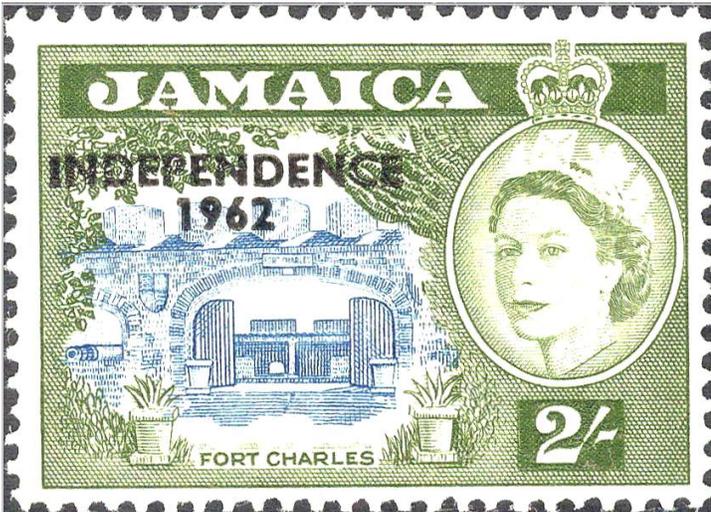
Fort Charles

By Peter Elias



Fort Charles (located at the tip of the arrow on Jamaica Scott #221 from 1964) is situated in Port Royal, Jamaica and was built to protect Kingston Harbor.

In 1654, Jamaica was under Spanish control and the fort was completed in 1655 after England gained control of the island.

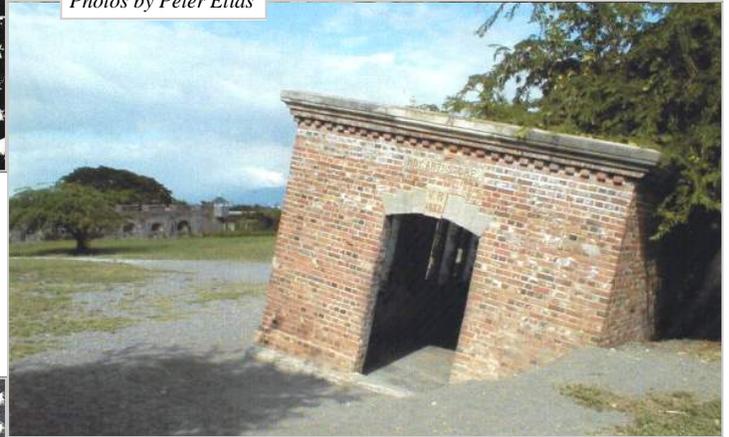


The entrance to the fort is shown on Jamaica #193, shown enlarged. It has survived the earthquake of 1692 and various hurricanes.

From December 10 - 18, 1999, I found myself in Kingston, Jamaica on a business trip. At the time I was selling, servicing & training people in the "process manufacturing industries" in manufacturing & accounting software for their business. My boss at the time (I didn't become independent until early 2001) sent me to Jamaica to help a client with the "Y2K" (Year 2000) project for upgrading their software. Remember that many software packages at that time worked with a 2-digits year, and generally "00" meant "1900", not the upcoming "2000"! Some people thought that if your software didn't support the year 2000+ properly, that the world would come to a standstill!



Photos by Peter Elias



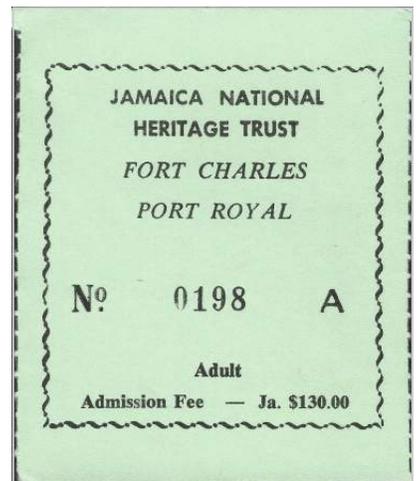
That said, as with many of my business trips during those years, I made sure I could stay the weekend and see some of the sights, such as Fort Charles (top photo)!

In addition to the fort, I also had a chance to see the "Giddy House" shown above. This house was constructed in 1888, as an Artillery House near Fort Charles. An earthquake in 1907 almost leveled Kingston and Port Royal. 800 people died and several hundred feet of coast line had sunk, as did many of the cannons and guns at the fort. The Giddy House ended up at a tilt as a result.

Kingston is the "business" end of Jamaica; most tourists stick to the northern coast, in towns such as Ocho Rios and Montego Bay, as well as Negril on the western coast.

When I got to Kingston, they gave me a rental car and said to meet them at the plant. While it wasn't that far from the hotel, it certainly wasn't exactly a walkable area!

The admission to Fort Charles was very reasonable: In 1999, Jamaica \$130 was about US \$3, today that would only be \$1. -->



CLASSIFIED BOURSE

Announcements

All club members that are current with their dues payments are entitled to FREE ads in this space! Please send ad to: Peter Elias, P.O. Box 940427, Plano, TX 75094-0427, give it to me at a meeting, or e-mail me at: peter@pcelias.com

For Sale

US POSTAGE – from our huge surplus: 1c – 20c : 70% of FV; 21c – 50c : 80% of FV. Send any amount (min \$10), specify group (70%, 80%), and receive mix of values back in FV as indicated above. Clean, F/VF only. Plate or Zip block included for every \$10 remitted. Remit (check or MO) to: J. Myers, P. O. Box 2047, Coppell, TX 75019. TX orders, add 8% sales tax. We cover return postage, S/H charges. Can also take PayPal (same terms). iasdmyers@earthlink.net 5/15

Wanted to Trade

I have general (unsorted) worldwide & used USA stamps (mostly beginning collector material) available to trade for your items such as worldwide revenue stamps & Framas. Contact Peter Elias at peter@pcelias.com 9/16

Wanted

Postally used "ATM" stamps (i.e.: machine vended), such as Framas, from around the world; would prefer on cover or postcard if possible. Contact Peter Elias at info@stvincentstamps.com 8/14

To My Friends

Submitted by Ken Aldridge

A Christmas greeting card put into mail boxes by William Rose, rural mail carrier, at the turn of the [previous] century (i.e.: 1900):

The seasons round their brief career,
Again the Christmas-tide is here.

So with "Good Will" I gladly send,
A Christmas greeting to my friend.

How arduous my work would be,
But for kind words from friends to me.

And too, how often 'tis I find,
The strong arm of some neighbor kind.

When long the way or rough the road,
To help me onward with my load.

My wealth is more than can be told,
But 'tis my friends, and not my gold.

For Sale

I now have a new website in which I have listed all my used **duplicates (many thousands)**. They are arranged in Scott number sequence within country. Do take a look, and select any that you want. I charge 1/3 catalogue value, post paid. The URL is www.kenwills.net Contact me at wills@airmail.net. Happy hunting! 3/19

Philatelic Reference CD's. The following self-running, philatelic reference CD's, each containing hundreds of scans, are now available:

- [APC Conversions 2012-2014](#) (NY2016 Vermeil Award!)
- [Usage of British Empire War Tax Issues](#) (exhibit)
- [Airport Philately](#) (800+ scans of Airports on Stamps)
- [4 Rings—The History of Audi](#) (Great for any car lover!)
- [St. Vincent Philatelic Reference Scans](#) (1,700 items!!)
- [St. Vincent Postcards](#) (300+ postcards from 1900 to 2007)
- [Vintage Swiss Postcards 1898-1959](#) (900+ postcards !!)

Special MCSC Member price is only \$ 6.95 each (Regular price is \$14.95 to \$19.95).. Contact peter@pcelias.com 7/23

MOVED, BUT SALE CONTINUES! Special discounts to MCSC members for Swiss, Austria, Liechtenstein issues, 25% and LESS of catalog values. All orders postpaid! I also accept PayPal if you wish! John Barrett, Ph.D. Contact info: jstrubel-boy@aol.com 12/14

I have over **10,000 auctions** on delcampe.com @ 35% of Scott or less. Worldwide & US stamps, covers and FDCs. For more info contact Denny Ludlow @ (713) 898-1872 10/15



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Topper Stamps & Postal History

Jonathan Topper
13100 Wortham Center
Dr. 3rd Floor, Ste 45
Houston, TX 77065
832.518.6558

jonathan@topperstamps.com
www.topperstamps.com

I can't with gold their love off-set,
Friendship alone must pay the debt.

And so my prayer, what else God sends,
He make me worthy of my friends.





MEET & EAT for December 2023

by Judy & Stanley Christmas

"Meet & Eats" are held before our club meetings. All club members and their guests are welcome. We will gather at 5:00 PM and start ordering at that time. However, latecomers can order when they arrive or just come by for a visit. Meals should be over around 6:15 to 6:30 PM with the Arlington new meeting start time now being at 7:00 PM rather than 7:30 PM.

Meet & Eat locations will be included the club's broadcast messages. NOTE: All locations are subject to change.

ARLINGTON

December 6 Christmas party at the Bob Duncan Center!

EULESS

NONE -> See you in 2024!

GRANBURY

NONE -> See you in 2024!

Mid-Cities Stamp Club "Stamping Around" Newsletter
c/o Peter Elias
PO Box 940427
Plano, TX 75094-0427

Don't Forget:
EXPO Planning Mtg - December 2
Club X-mas Party - December 6

Wanted to Buy

Texas Precancel Stamps. Contact Rick Howell at
Rick.howell1@tx.rr.com

5/19

Wanted to buy or trade for: Worldwide unusual EFOs, postal counterfeits. Odd US 20th century auxiliary markings, US 1934 and 1935 Christmas Seals on and off cover and publicity material, Korean War postal history from US and other UN contingents, and any other US philatelic material with an interesting story. John Hotchner, PO Box 1125, Falls Church, VA 22041, or jmhstamp@verizon.net 2/15

Various USA Scott #C2 & C3 on covers & cards are needed for my U.S Air Mail collection. Please forward scans of the covers / cards along with asking price(s) to Don Jones at adjaams@aol.com Thank you. 2/21

For Sale

FREE 111-page (all varieties) or 26-page album (basic version) of Spanish ATM stamps (provided as a PDF file) with purchase of at least \$4.00 in Spanish ATM stamps (which are only 15¢ each!) Contact Peter Elias at peter@pcelias.com 1/21

United States Booklets. large selection of unexploded booklets for sale at just above face value. Starting with booklet #BK104 to #BK259. Identify booklet number desired and send an email to Dave Stockbridge at stockdave44@yahoo.com .

Dave will send you a price, if booklet is available and payment instructions. 4/23