



Learning to Exhibit • Black Rock, NY 14207  
President's Message • Fun Postal Fact • Upcoming Meetings  
Thematic Topics Close Out 2013: Minerals & Medical Stamps  
Eric Lewis First Day Covers  
New US Issues and More

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Editor: Fred Haynes

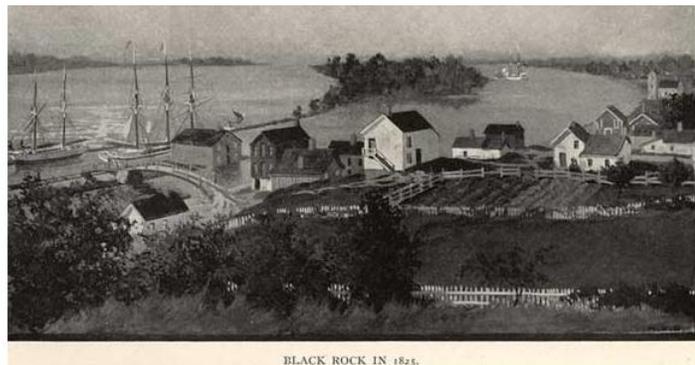
The Rochester Philatelic Association, PO Box 10206 Brighton Station, Rochester, NY 14610 <http://www.rpastamps.org>

## We are learning how to Exhibit

It is a New Year and the Rochester Philatelic Association ushered it in on January 9<sup>th</sup> by learning a bit about the art of exhibiting. Past president, and ROPEX chairman Tom Fortunato described the basics of exhibiting to a audience of 28 members.

“To first timers, exhibiting may seem like a nearly impossible task. But if you break it down into simple steps it’s a fairly easy process.” Well, that was easy for him to say, a veteran of umpteen award winning exhibits and a registered national judge for many years. The bottom line, Tom told us, was that “exhibiting is nothing more than show and tell. The exhibitor is the expert in his or her area and must convey that knowledge through their presentation.” Naturally, this is best done by introducing a variety of philatelic material to tell a progressive story that has a beginning, a middle, and an end.

The follow-up to Tom’s presentation is to have members plan and produce a **one-page philatelic exhibit** and bring it to the February 13<sup>th</sup> meeting. Tom will present a sequel on exhibiting and we’ll judge/critique the samples that members bring. I’m sure that will be fun and maybe there will be some new exhibitors born through the process.



BLACK ROCK IN 1825.

The quiet village of Black Rock, NY in 1825



After its incorporation in 1817, Black Rock, NY was a thriving town located at the westernmost end of the Erie Canal, where it met the Niagara River. The town lost its identity, however, when it was assimilated into neighboring Buffalo in 1853. That is until RPA member George Fekete, who grew up in what used to be Black Rock, decided to rediscover the locale through philately.

On January 23<sup>rd</sup> 26 RPA members braved the single digit arctic cold and listened while George lead us through the history of Black Rock, showing us historic cancellations and envelopes documenting the past two centuries of the region’s postal history. From the earliest rectangular cancellations of the 1820’s (see above) to the late 19<sup>th</sup> century circular cancellations and stamped envelopes from Black Rock Station in Buffalo, George has accumulated a formidable collection of philatelic material from his home town. Today, Black Rock, NY is characterized simply by a 5-digit number, zip code 14207. Except, that is, in George’s collection, where Black Rock lives on.



The 1826 envelope in the back is signed by Black Rock’s first postmaster, James L. Barton.

## President's Message



My fellow RPA Members,

I am very pleased to say that our meeting attendance during the first half of this season has been excellent, our discussions participative and invigorating and the quality of our presentations first class. I thank you all, attendees and contributors alike, for your efforts.

I am personally excited about our upcoming one-page and one-frame exhibit/display contests. So excited, that I actually have prepared, and will submit, TWO one-frame displays. How, you ask, can our president submit two displays? It's easy. I'm making up the rules. Seriously, if you are having difficulty selecting one subject or would like our expert judges' opinions on multiple work, feel free to submit two, or three or four or more. Let's make this, as well as one upcoming one frame contest, a huge success.

Now that we have turned the corner into the new year, our focus on the 2014 ROPEX show in May will sharpen. While our ROPEX Committee continues to do an outstanding job, they are always open to new ideas and new contributors. So, feel free to give your ROPEX suggestions and ideas to any RPA officer, or to Tom Fortunato, ROPEX Director. You will get a response. See you at the next meeting.

**Your President, Rich Spinelli**

### Fun Postal Fact



Even before the state legalized marijuana, the Leadville, Colorado post office was the highest postal center in the United States at 10,150' elevation. Denver may be the mile high city, but Leadville is just a couple Peyton Manning passes short of being two miles high !

## Upcoming Meetings

Meetings are held downstairs at the Brighton Reformed Church, 805 Blossom Road beginning at 7 PM. The first half hour is reserved for silent auction viewing, show and trade among members, and general social interaction. The night's program kicks off at about 7:30 PM. An elevator is available for handicapped members.

Our winter and spring schedule is just about full with lots of interesting and varied subjects

- Thursday, Feb 13.....** "Exhibiting Basics Part 2"  
by Tom Fortunato
- Thursday, Feb 27.....** "Stamp Quiz"  
by Fred Haynes
- Thursday, March 13 .....** "Hand Stamps"  
by Larry Rausch (see photo below)
- Thursday, March 27.....** "Everyone is a Dealer"
- Thursday, April 10.....** "The Catharine McKie  
Correspondence of 1847 Issue Covers (Troy  
to South Easton NY)"" by Mark Scheuer
- Saturday April 26.....** "Live Auction"  
*visit the website for details as date approaches*
- Thursday, May 8.....** "Ellsworth Civil War Patriotic  
Envelopes" by John Stoltz
- Thursday, May 22 .....** "Before Photography:  
Velazquez and Goya" by Mario Sarra
- Thursday, June 11.....** TBA
- Thursday June 25** Business meeting/Strawberries

Come join us each and every other Thursday night. Visit the RPA website for an complete list of 2014 events and meeting topics.



On March 13<sup>h</sup>, Larry Rausch's talk will focus on the use of hand stamps such as this one from Great Kills Station, Staten Island, NY.

## Thematic Talks Close out 2013

### *Minerals & Medical Stamps*

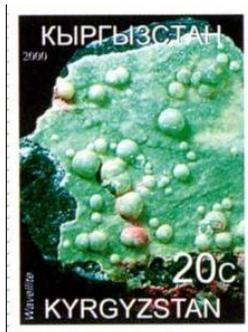
The final two club meetings of 2013 featured thematic topics where club members have combined their chosen careers with their favorite hobby. Over 30 folks attended both meetings. For those who missed the meeting, both presentations are available on the RPA website.

On November 14<sup>th</sup> the topic was “Minerals on Stamps” as Fred Haynes brought his collection of topical stamps and even some of his “real” mineral specimens to share with the group. Fred recently retired from a career in petroleum geology and when he is not organizing his stamps, he is out mineral collecting. Collecting minerals and other geology themed stamps was a natural merger of his collecting interests.

Did you know that the checklist of gems and minerals on stamps maintained by the Gems and Minerals Study Unit of the American Topical Association has over 3000 entries? Or that all 8 of the US mineral stamps depict specimens that reside in the Smithsonian? The FDC with the four 10 cent stamps issued in 1974 is depicted shown below. The mineral specimen in the bottom stamp is affectionately referred to as “The Postage Stamp Tourmaline.” It is from the pegmatite mines outside San Diego, CA.



One interesting idea for a mineral collector is to marry minerals on stamps with pieces personally collected. The Kyrgyzstan mineral set of 2000 may not be authentic postage (Scott vol. 4), but the 20c wavellite stamp fits nicely into an exhibit/collection when paired with a wavellite specimen collected this past August on a field trip to National Limestone Quarry in Mount Pleasant, Pennsylvania. The mineral specimen is most certainly authentic!



**Wavellite (stamp and mineral)** Photo by F. Haynes

In December, it was Steve Eisinger's turn to combine a professional career with a thematic stamp collection. During the day, Dr. Eisinger is the consultant in OB/GYN for the Family Medicine Residency program of the University of Rochester Medical Center. At night he collects stamps with a Medical theme. And on the evening of December 12<sup>th</sup> he shared his collecting interest with RPA.

Steve organizes his collection into topics within the medical field such as Great Doctors, Diseases, Hospitals, Nurses, Red Cross, Missionaries, and a category he called “Medical Weird”. Clara Barton's Red Cross US stamp is a favorite of his and Albert Schweitzer decorates many missionary stamps. Cancer research and a cure for tuberculosis are also featured on many stamps. We have all heard of the Mayo Brothers (Scott 1251) and their clinic, but did you know that Crawford Long (Scott 875) is credited with developing anesthesia.



One highlight of Steve's collection were the many obscure and strange stamps that fell into his "Medical Weird" category. Here are a couple of those stamps.



Both presentations highlighted two important aspects of topical or thematic stamp collecting. First, you are only limited by your imagination. Snowflakes are technically minerals and therefore collectible as minerals, at least on stamps where they will not melt (like this 12kr Sweden 2011 issue). Rinderpest, featured on this 1sh6p Nigerian stamp, was an infectious disease in cattle. When eradicated world-wide, it became only the second disease in history to be completely wiped out. Smallpox was the first. Certainly this world accomplishment is worthy of the honor bestowed by this 1967 Nigerian issue, and also makes it a warranted addition to a collection of Medical Stamps.



And second, many, if not most, topical stamps are common and inexpensive. Whether they are commemoratives or definitives, it is relatively easy to start and grow a collection on a limited budget. It can be challenging to find stamps that fit a selected topic, but the internet does help there, and the satisfaction after a successful search is rewarding.

Did you know that there are now 590 topical checklists in the American Topical Association's library. It would be challenging, but not impossible, to find a topic for which there is no list.



Just one letter received this quarter, but it came with an interesting and potentially useful idea. Don Osborne wrote:

*"I think that the Rochester club is missing a great opportunity by not providing a mechanism for collectors of certain countries or subject to get together for information and to exchange stamps. As a result of this I have for many years spent time and money in other organizations in NY, PA, and Canada with great pleasure and profit. I would like to join others in RPA with similar interests, maybe form sub groups which would enhance membership, dues and growth and purpose."*

Sounds like a really good idea and one that I am going to personally follow up on at a future club meeting. We should be able to capture and circulate the interests of our very diverse group of philatelists. Who knows what common interests are hiding out there.



**Mark your calendar  
May 16-18, 2014**

<http://www.rpastamps.org/ropex.html>

It's time to take a hard look at your favorite collection and think about whether you would like to share it with others. ROPEX is actively accepting exhibits and hopes to have as varied a set of framed exhibits as possible at this year's show. We have a submission from as far away as Australia insuring that this year's show will be an international event! Remember if all you need is a little help planning an exhibit there are folks in the club eager to offer advice and help. Come to our February 13<sup>th</sup> meeting with a thought to exhibiting your stamps. Better yet, prepare a one page exhibit to share with the group.

In late 2013 a number of first day covers were for sale on the internet with cachets credited to Eric Lewis of Rochester, NY. One sale item carried some information on Mr. Lewis and a contact name. When contacted, Mr. Lynn Culkowski sent us his full AFDCS article on Mr. Lewis and allowed us to reprint a portion of his original story. Inquiries of current RPA members have not yet located anyone in Rochester familiar with Mr. Lewis or his First Day Cover cachets.

## Eric Lewis (1907-2001)

By Lynn Culkowski (AFDCS #23901)

Some years ago, I purchased some beautiful silk screen FDC's selling some to two collectors. Most were pencil addressed to Eric Lewis. I was told at the time that they were fairly scarce but I had no idea how really scarce they were.

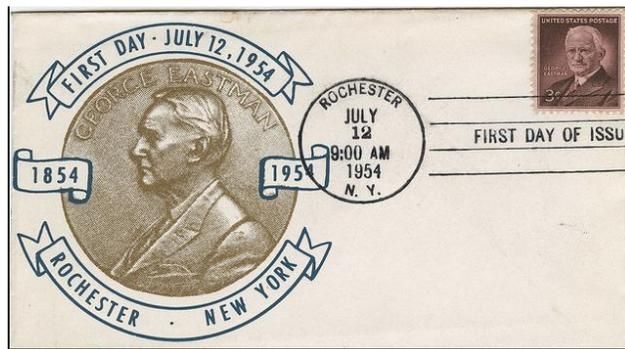
Eric Lewis went to work for Eastman Kodak, in Rochester, NY, in the Camera Works section in 1927. He also worked in the research lab, and then was manager of emulsion testing, and retired 46 years later. Mr. Lewis had an interest in First Day Covers and started having uncacheted and other makers cacheted covers serviced in 1936. On February 11th, 1947, Eric Lewis serviced his first "home-made" photo cachet, Scott # 945, the Thomas Edison issue with 4 known covers. Most of his covers were pencil addressed to his relatives, friends or to himself.

He continued making photo cachets for most Scott numbers through the George Eastman issue, Scott # 1062, for which he made both photo and silk screen cachets. The George Eastman covers have the most varieties known for Lewis cachets. For most of the photo cacheted issues, it appears that Eric drew the cachet design, photographed it, combined the photo with a photo outline of an unfolded envelope and photo printed the results. Lewis' covers were "uniquely" treated with chemicals on the right hand side of the envelope to provide a good bond for the stamps and to prevent smearing of the ink used for the cancels. The consistency of his design characteristics, photo-paper envelopes, and long run of issues make the Lewis photo cachets an important addition to First Day Cover collecting.

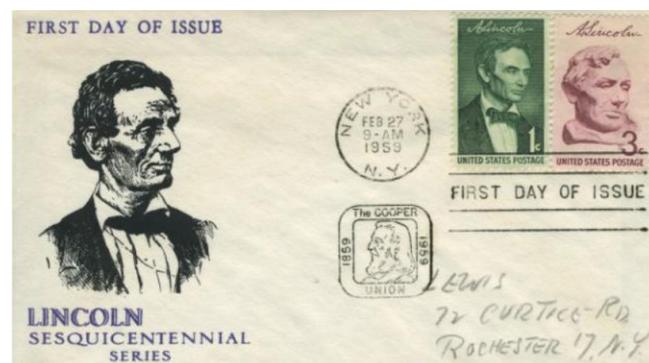
Looking at the entire Lewis cover legacy, however, his magnificent silk screen work stands out. Mr. Lewis made his first silk screen FDC with Scott # 1027, the New York City, 300th Anniversary issue, The New York City, the 8 Cent Liberty, and the

George Eastman issue are the only known issues that have both Photo and Silk Screen Cachets. He produced more of the silk screen cachets than the photo cachets but they are still scarce as the known number produced ranges from 1 to 8 through 1959, and 1 to 30 through 1971. Mr. Lewis also produced limited numbers of many Postal cards and Postal stationary during these periods.

By 1962, after missing very few issues, Eric must have anticipated that he would not be able to keep pace with the Postal Service new issues. He designed a Generic Flag cachet, first used on the Sam Rayburn stamp. By 1965 the Generic cachet was being used more frequently and apparently he could no longer keep up with the new issues. Although not as desirable as a normal cachet, his generic cachets also had very limited numbers produced. In 1971, Eric Lewis made his last cachet for the Blood Donor issue Scott # 1425. He had produced cachets for over 380 stamp issues, not counting the different designs or special events. The known total cover count is over 3,100 for all issues and with the knowledge of this special man and his covers, we hope that we will find a few more of those we know he gave to others.



Eric Lewis cachet cover of George Eastman issue



Many of Lewis' cachets are self-addressed to his Rochester address on Curtice Rd.

*Editor's note: Mr. Culkowski informs us that he still has some duplicate Lewis FDC he could sell. If any RPA members would like to contact him for a list or further information, I can provide contact information. FMH*

## New US Issue

Did you know that 2014 will be the year of the horse? On January 15<sup>th</sup>, the US issued the seventh stamp in the *Celebrating Lunar New Year* series. The Year of the Horse begins on January 31, 2014, and ends on February 18, 2015.

The stamp combines original artwork by Kam Mak with Clarence Lee's intricate paper-cut design of a horse and the Chinese character for "Horse," drawn in grass-style calligraphy by Lau Bun.



### New US Postal Rates effective January 26, 2014

Guess what, those forever stamps you bought last year will be worth more this year !!

- First class rate increases to \$0.49 (up from \$0.46)
- Each additional ounce add \$0.21 (up one cent)
- First class flats (1 oz.) up 6 cents to \$0.98.
- Postcard rates up one penny to \$0.34.

Check with the Post Office for other rate changes.

## A Topical Stamp from the Czech Republic

The Czech Republic issued a rail car stamp in June, 2013 featuring the Tatra 15/30 railcar. The presence of "rails" intrigued train stamp collector and RPA member Florence Wright as she pointed out that "Tracks are for More Than Trains" in *The Dispatcher* (ATA Railroad Unit newsletter). Her note was picked up on by the Topical Time in the Nov-Dec issue (page 60). Not only that, but three train topical collectors responded to her note in the *Dispatcher* with follow-up letters to the editor listing other railcars on stamps. Who would have figured that a 1930's vintage railcar currently resting in the Technical Museum in Prague would garner such interest Well, for one, Florence Wright did !

Below is a Maxicard featuring the railcar stamp.



By the end of 2013, four of the 100 sheets of upright Jenny \$2 stamps had been purchased. The fourth was purchased by Art Van Riper, a collector from Sayre, NY. He purchased his sheet at the Waverly, NY post office near Elmira. One of the earlier purchased sheets was spotted for sale online for \$25,000.



## UPCOMING SHOW

**BUFPEX, 2014**

March 1-2

VFW Post

2450 Walden Ave

Cheektowaga, NY



Did you get your Harry Potter stamps? Twenty different Forever stamps issued on November 19, 2013