



ROPEX canceled • Babe Ruth and baseball
RPA Meeting News • A Famous Philatelist
Redwood, New York handstamp
Wildflowers on Stamps

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Baseball, The Babe, and Philatelics

by Rich Spinelli



Little Rich Spinelli, age 5 years, at J. P. Riley Playground, the Home of Champions in Rochester, New York, preparing for one of the great days of his life. (Thank you, Rochester ACE)

Hand-drawn by a member of the Art Cover Exchange.

I was very pleased to share my knowledge and collection on "Baseball, The Babe (Ruth) and Philatelics" with the RPA on Thursday, April 28. It is not inconceivable to think that a form of baseball began when some pre-historic person threw a round stone at another and that person swung his battle club and "batted" away the stone. What happened next can only be presumed. The reality is that the first reference to a game of "baseball" was recorded in Russia in the 13th Century. The Russian game "Lapta" consisted of two teams of 5 to 10 members with a pitcher and batter. A ball would be thrown to a batter who would attempt to hit it and run to the opposite side and back before being hit by the ball.

Abner Doubleday is credited with "inventing" baseball in 1839. However, many documented references to baseball in England and the US beginning in 1744 defie that presumption. Those references were shown in my presentation.

cont. on Page 6 (see Baseball and The Babe)



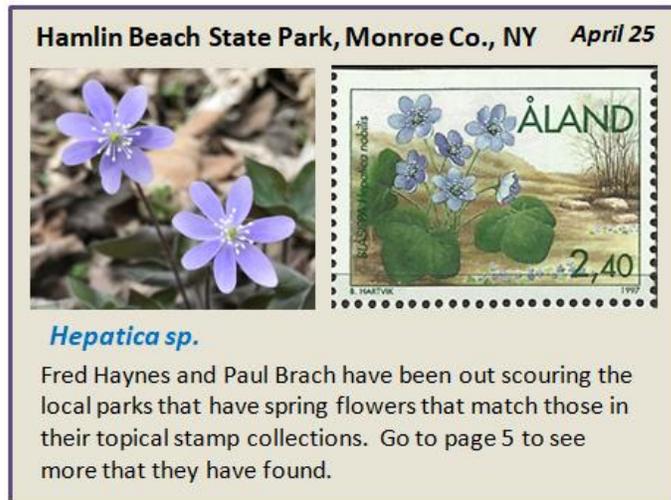
canceled

By Tom Fortunato

Canceling ROPEX this spring was not an easy decision for those of us who had worked hard in an effort to plan its return to our club calendar. It was clear from the start that the event could not, and would not, be the full scale show we had hosted pre-pandemic, but we did hope to hold some form of show/bourse in our usual May time slot. Linn's sought input on the status of ROPEX last month and I suspect RPA members may also be interested in some of what I sent them in response.

It all started in the fall of 2021. We had made arrangements last September with the Greece Ridge Mall here in Rochester (with about 120 storefronts) to hold our show in an unused storefront. Our needs were clear that it had to be in an abandoned store that could be locked up nightly and not in a mall corridor aisle due to security concerns. We were told that would not be a

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RPA Meeting News

We are back to meeting twice a month in the JCC of Greater Rochester, 1200 Edgewood Avenue in Brighton. Buy/sell/trade runs from 7:00-7:30 followed by a formal meeting at 7:30.

If you can't attend in person, join us via a Zoom connection using the following link and login details at 7:30 PM most meeting nights: <https://us05web.zoom.us/j/7117955142?pwd=amR3Z1Z3L0d4bkJaNHdJUjBmbjFaQT09>, Meeting ID: 711 795 5142, Passcode: 9W3Mkg Note that Zoom connections last 40 minutes. On disconnection, click the meeting link again to rejoin the meeting in progress.

Upcoming RPA meetings:

If this issue of Hinges and Tongs is released in time, we have four meetings left before the summer break. If you are reading this after May 12th then we have only three remaining!

May 12th **Everyone a dealer night:** *We cannot replace ROPEX, but perhaps we can enable some buying/selling among members in its place.*

May 26th **Winston Churchill on US Covers**
By Luis Greiff, Jr.

June 9th Program: TBA

June 23rd RPA Business Meeting

As you can see we have an opening for a member to present in June. Just let club officers know if you would like to share something.

Did you miss our last meeting history lesson on "Rochester's Landmark Buildings" at the April 28th meeting? It is available on the [Meetings page](#) of our webpage. Or just [click here](#) and go directly to Tom's presentation.



1909 Oak Island. The Old Gold Salvage Group.
Do you recognise anyone ?



Kelly Armstrong discovered this picture and wondered if others might be interested. Do you recognize anyone in this picture? The picture was taken at Oak Island in Nova Scotia and the gentleman third from the right smoking a pipe is a famous philatelist. Any guesses?

A bit of background: Oak Island has been a destination for treasure hunters for over 200 years. The famous individual in this picture became interested in Oak Island stories through tales passed down through his family. The Oak Island Association and Old Gold Salvage group was a company that had been carrying out sporadic excavations at the site for decades. This young individual became associated with their work while working part time as a law clerk and attending college. One final hint - His grandfather Warren Delano Jr., was a well known sailor and trader who financed some activity on Oak Island.

Any guesses? See Page 6 for the answer.

RPA has learned that parts of the philatelic collection of Al Parsons will be available through Schuyler Rumsey Philatelic Auctions during the Great American Stamp Show in Sacramento, August 25-28. It was the specific wish of the family that it be offered during an APS GASS event. Al was a long time RPA member and frequent ROPEX exhibitor, organizer of Elmira's STEPEX stamp show, officer of the Empire State Postal History Society, and he served with Ada Prill and George Fekete on the APS Board of Vice Presidents for a number of years through 2007.

The auction catalog is expected to be online soon at <https://www.rumseyauctions.com/>.

You can read more about Al Parsons in the [Feb-April, 2021 issue of Hinges and Tongs.](#)

ROPEX canceled (continued from Page 1)

problem, that there would be no charge, and that we could probably take our pick of 2 or 3 by the time May rolled around. A contract for a zero-dollar lease for the 4 days we needed the room was signed shortly thereafter.

Soon after, we initiated dealer solicitations and took out ads in Linn's and Coin World. A postcard mailer was designed and printed for our collector mailing list of 1,500 collectors, stamps and mailing labels attached to each, rental tables and chairs ordered, etc., all in preparation for the show.

Things started to fall apart in mid-April. I was emailed that all the mall's storefronts would be leased as of May 1 except for one, a larger store, but we would be required to pay its utility bills for the entire month of May if we wanted to use it, for \$5,400. The only alternative they could offer would be to hold the show in an unoccupied hallway corridor, one which rarely sees mall patron traffic, and without mall security or cameras. Dealers would be required to setup and tear down their tables daily, which is a lot of work, even for a two day show. Without having an alternative location venue, yet alone an affordable one, we decided we had no choice but to cancel.

You can see our show plans here: <http://www.rpastamps.org/ropex.html>. Dealer income continues to be the main revenue source for any show. Our stamp dealer base in western/central NY continues to drop due to attrition (dealers moving out of the area, especially south to NC and FL), not willing to travel to as many shows as in the past, retiring or, unfortunately passing away. The intent this year was to convert ROPEX into a stamp, coin and general collectibles show to broaden our dealer and patron potential. Coin dealers are accustomed to having 24 hour armed security at their shows, which precluded their participation. Collectible dealers (antiques, sports cards, etc.) are used to a totally different mindset with show patrons paying an admission charge to offset typically very low dealer table fees. As a result, we had minimal interest from non-philatelic dealers.

Few realize the costs involved when it comes to having competitive exhibits, whether it be a WSP show or a local/regional. Even with having exhibit frames already paid for, one needs to budget for the storage of those frames, transport costs bringing

them to and from the show, advertising for exhibitor participation, paying judging fees, award expenses, etc. Our last ROPEX was held in 2019, and we realized any decrease of dealer support could not support exhibit expenses to WSP standards. In fact, ROPEX exhibit related costs have typically been offset by \$1,000 or more yearly by dealer income for the past 20 years. Broadening (and publicizing) a dealer base beyond philately does not align with WSP requirements. For these reasons we decided to not have exhibits at ROPEX 2022.

It must be stated that the lack of exhibits was not a deciding factor for ROPEX 2022 dealer participation. Dealers are understandably choosing to attend larger shows in major metropolitan areas, especially those in the south and west, a trend that started at least 10 years ago. That's also where the aging philatelic community (i.e. collectors) have migrated. Coincidence? Dealers will go where the collectors are. Notice I wrote collectors, not exhibits or exhibitors. Exhibitors are aging, opting to attend fewer shows in person than in the past due to costs, health or transportation issues. We have seen a steady increase at ROPEX of exhibitors willing to mail-in their exhibits rather than attend in person, and suspect this is a national trend. Having a few "big pocket" exhibitor spenders will always help a dealer's bottom line, but cannot be a dealer's sole reason for participating in a show.

ROPEX has been the Rochester Philatelic Association's major "fund-raiser." It not only gave area collectors the opportunity to buy items for their collections and learn about joining the RPA, but also put money into RPA coffers to offset yearly club expenses that outweigh dues income. We cannot afford to sponsor a show that does not at least break even. Increasing show-related costs of all kinds and decreasing dealer revenue makes this more and more difficult.

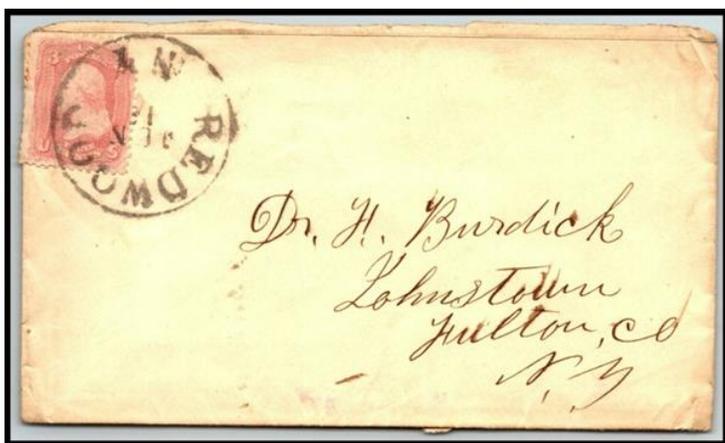
Around the year 2000 and for a few years afterwards we hosted a one-day "Stamp Collecting Month" Saturday event near the food court at a selected area mall, hosting informational exhibits and table displays to promote the club and our hobby. This may ultimately be the route we take keep the spirit of ROPEX alive, albeit in a different form.

RPA will need help from its members to think outside the box if we wish to move forward serving the local philatelic world with an annual show or with a regional bourse.

**Redwood, New York
Handstamp
by Larry Rausch**



In October, 2021, I purchased a handstamp from Redwood, New York on eBay. Like most of the 250 town handstamps that I have acquired this one came with no supporting documentation, but the internet is a wonderful place for seeking information. First I found this photograph of an interesting cover that deployed the handstamp that I own.



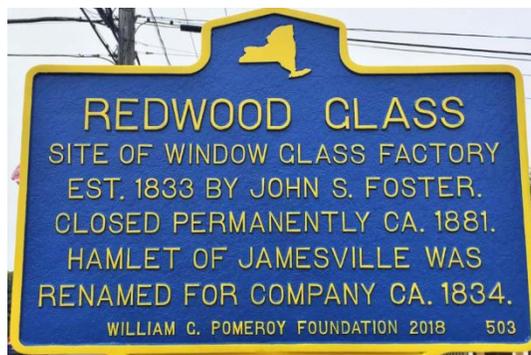
This 1860's Washington three-cent cover shows the cancellation of this scarce antique Postal Hand Stamp from Redwood, NY.

I do not own this cover, or one like it, to go with the hand stamp. Of all the dies I own from small towns I only have found covers that I could purchase from five of them and maybe another handful where I could find photographs of covers like this one. I sure wish I could get more history at the time of purchase and also find more covers that used the handstamps that I have. But for now I will have to settle for internet research on the various locations. The following is what I have learned about the interesting town of Redwood, New York.

The town of Redwood is located in Jefferson County near the far northern border of the United States with Canada, just north of Fort Drum. The small town owes

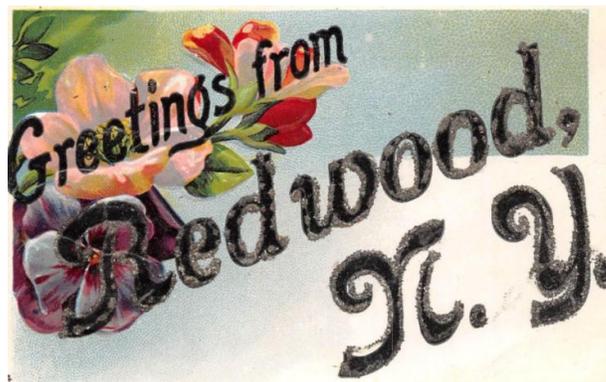
its origin to a glass factory established in the summer of 1833 by John S. Foster. Mr. Foster had been employed as a glass agent by Redford Glass Company for many years. When he was discharged in 1832, in resentment against his Redford employer, Mr. Foster moved to Jefferson County 150 miles to the west. He was searching for the perfect location to establish a competitive glass factory.

Foster chose the similar sounding name "Redwood" in an effort to steal some of the business of Redford. On September 30, 1833 the first glass pour was made—premium window glass. Shortly afterwards, he was appointed as Redwood, NY's first Postmaster on December 19, 1833. Mr. Foster unfortunately died of a heart attack on January 2, 1834 on a trip to Watertown.



Mr. Francis Depau, who had financed Mr. Foster's business venture, enabled Redford Glass Company to survive until a fire destroyed the factory in 1868. Unable to recover, the Redwood Glass factory was dissolved a few years later.

However, the hamlet of Redwood survives to this day with a population of 605 in the 2010 census. Today's postmark, if you could find one, would carry the zip code 13679.



For postcard collectors among us, this c1910 glitter covered greeting card featuring Redwood, New York sold for \$6.00 online.

It is Wildflower Season in New York by Fred Haynes and Paul Brach

Spring is in full swing in western New York and so is wildflower season. The parks and preserves of the area provide all sorts of opportunities to get out and enjoy the weather and seek out the local wildflowers as we move through the spring and into the early summer. It is only early May, but we have been out over 20 times already in 2022 visiting sites within about an hour of Rochester. We carry our cameras and capture some of what we see. Often the flowers we find remind us of our topical stamp collections back home. Here are just a few examples.

tends to hide beneath the large and very diagnostic leaves. But if you know where to look they can be found and enticed into photographic position.



Casey Park was the site of iron mining in the early 19th century, but now it is a town park with a wonderful 1.9 mile loop trail that encircles a water-filled linear quarry. *Daphne mezereum*, sometimes called paradise plant, is a limestone-loving wildflower native to northern Europe, but it has been introduced to North America and can be found in cool damp woods with carbonate soils in the northeastern United States.

Trout lilies (*Erythronium americanum*) are very early spring flowers in our area. Their green and brown mottled leaves appear first signaling the appearance of the brilliant yellow lily that will soon emerge. We see them in many of the area parks in mid- to late-April, popping through the leaf cover before almost anything else has started to grow.



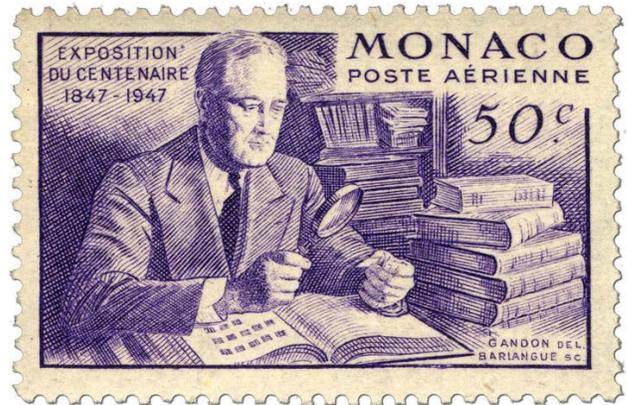
The flower of the wild ginger plant (*Asarum canadense*) is hard to spot. It is dark magenta and it

One of the earliest spring flowers in our region is the coltsfoot (*Tussilago farfara*). This pretty yellow flower can emerge as early as late March. The flowers arrive before the leaves which do not appear until at least May. It is actually the distinctive shape of the leaves that give this flower its common name. By the time they appear, the beautiful yellow flower is all but gone.

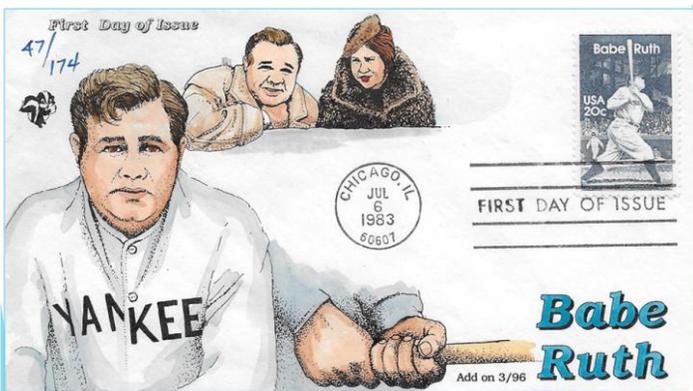
Baseball and The Babe (continued from page 1)

George Herman "Babe" Ruth (1895 -1948) is considered the greatest American Baseball player ever. Some years ago, I purchased a few Babe cachet covers on eBay. Over time, I collected about 50 of the many hundreds of Babe covers that have been designed and printed. Most of the covers come with the "erroneous" 1939 Baseball Centennial stamp or the first all-star game or various baseball player stamps. Babe was the exception to the baseball rule. He pitched for the Boston Red Sox for the first five years of his career before being sold to the NY Yankees. Had he been a daily player his whole career, no one to this day would have exceeded his home run total. I shared my cachet covers with the RPA members.

Answer From Page 2: Does this help?



Yes, in his younger years, Franklin Delano Roosevelt took an active interest in the search for lost treasure on Oak Island, in Nova Scotia. His interest was piqued by tales passed down through his family. In 1909, young Franklin participated with the Oak Island Association in attempting to find the jewels of King Louis XVI and his queen Marie Antoinette who are rumored to have sent their loot to Canada in 1791 during the French Revolution. FDR continued this interest until his death in 1945, even planning a trip there as late as 1939. That visit, however, was thwarted by bad weather and the building tensions that would lead to World War II.



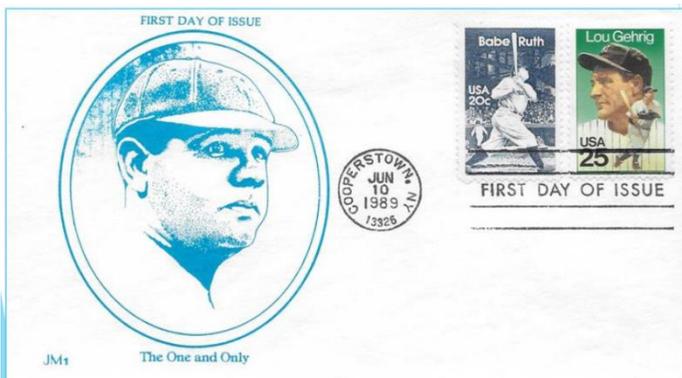
One of my favorite Babe Ruth covers.

This just seemed to fit the theme this month.

I also shared my 1867 line engraving of a baseball game which I hand colored, as well as my framed official copy of the 1919 agreement in which the Red Sox sold the Babe to the Yankees, thus initiating the 85 year "Curse of the Bambino" where the Red Sox did not win a World Series. (I was in Boston in 2004 when the curse was finally broken).



Mountain Flowers: USPS March 14, 2022



Together with Lou Gehrig, another Yankees legend

[The presentation can be found on the RPA website..](#)