

Hinges & Tongs



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Winter, 2024

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**2025 will be another
active year for RPA**

**Savings Stamps as Postage:
Permitted or Not**
by John M. Hotchner



After our Holiday celebration event on December 19th, it will be on to 2025 for RPA. We'll kick off our season with two meetings each month through June: that's 12 meetings of philatelic fun before the year is even half over. We meet the second and fourth Thursday of the month at the Unity Village Community Center, 1477 Long Pond Road in Greece. Buy/sell/trade runs from 7:00-7:30 PM, followed by the formal meeting at 7:30 PM. A silent auction concludes most evening programs. There will be material that has been donated to the club to bid on, but you are welcome to bring something of yours to sell at the auction also.

The post office over its history has done many things well, other things not so much. One area of consistent failure has been stopping users of the mails from using stamp-substitutes. A good example is the use of Treasury Department Savings and War Savings stamps on envelopes entered into the mails in the period from the 1940s to recent times.

Over the years I have accumulated over 50 examples of this sort of usage from 1941 to 2012. Some are solo uses paying the entire rate. Others are combinations with actual postage with a total that pays the applicable rate. Each and every one is counter to post office rules because they were not U.S. postage stamps despite their appearance. Money raised from the sale of these stamps was to be turned over to the Treasury Department as the revenue collected was toward the purchase of U.S. Savings Bonds. Use of these stamps on mail was lost revenue to the Postal Service.



Unity-Village Community Center in Greece

As you can see on page 2, the first five meetings already have programs assigned, but after that we have several open slots. If you would like to talk about something you collect, or a philatelic subject that interests you, we'd love to slot you into one of those open dates. As the first open date is still more than 3 months away, there is plenty of time for you to put together an evening program.

If you have not paid your dues for calendar year 2025, please bring \$20 to an upcoming meeting or send a check payable to RPA to P.O. Box 10206, Brighton Station, Rochester, NY 14610-0206.



Figure 1. \$1 1942 War Savings Stamp

continued on page 3 (see Savings Stamps)

President's Message

Another year comes to a close. It has been a good year for the RPA. We have new members and many guests visiting our meetings. I would like to thank all our members that gave presentations. Besides expanding our stamp collections, it is also important to expand our philatelic knowledge. Our last meeting will be our holiday party/business meeting/stamp quiz. Quite an agenda! I hope this becomes an annual event.

Promoting the Hobby

A lot of us have heard the phrase 'Promoting the hobby.' At a town hall meeting last spring Scott English, executive director of the American Philatelic Society, said the APS has more members over 90 than under 40.

Obviously without new collectors entering the hobby, the future of the hobby looks bleak. We all must do our part to promote stamp collecting. Back when I was starting to collect stamps, stores like Woolworths had shelf space devoted to coin and stamp collecting supplies in their stationery department. Sibley's had a stamp and coin department that helped attract shoppers to join the hobby. I remember Andy Hale selling items to new customers below cost to attract business and he would stock beginning stamp collecting kits for the holidays. Such outlets do not exist today. And this is the reason why I say we all must do our part to promote the hobby.

The APS has initiatives at the national level to promote the hobby. At the local level, we can all do something ourselves. One member gave a talk about collecting at a local library. Another member long ago had a course on stamp collecting through a town's recreation department. I donate beginner books about stamp collecting to library book sales. Libraries sometimes have space for displays. Schools sometimes ask for stamps for different projects. I understand people are busy with their own lives (work, family, etc.), but small actions can make lasting impressions.

Jack Rosenstein

We meet at the Unity Village Community Center, 1477 Long Pond Road in Greece. Buy/sell/trade runs from 7:00-7:30 PM, followed by the formal meeting at 7:30 PM. A silent auction concludes most evening's program.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

January 9th "50 Modern EFOs from the
Prexies to Today" by *John Hotchner*

January 23rd "A Journey into Pre-Adhesive
Mail" by *Gabriel Foltz*

February 13th
[Linn's 2024 U.S. Stamp Popularity Poll](#)

February 27th Geomorphology on Postage
Stamps by *Fred Haynes*

March 13th ... Railroad Destination Cancellations
(Part 2) exhibit by *Robert Lighthouse*

March 27th, April 10th, April 24th TBA

If you can't attend a meeting in person, join us via a Zoom connection using the following link and login details at 7:30 PM each meeting night.

<https://us05web.zoom.us/j/7117955142?pwd=amR3Z1Z3L0d4bkJaNHdJUjBmbjFaQT09>

Treasurer's Report

The RPA remains in solid financial shape. Here's a summary as of late November.

At this time we have \$19,183 in total; \$10,000 in a 7 month CD earning 3.6% interest and the balance in a business checking account. We recently changed from Citizen's to Key Bank. Expenses of \$1,210 in 2024 included typical annual costs for our USPS PO Box, Zoom registration, exhibit frame storage and printing/ mailing Hinges & Tongs to those without email, along with a one-time honorarium to Unity for the use of their meeting facility. Income from dues and donations (including auction lots) totaled \$2,521.

Looking ahead to 2025 the bulk of exhibit frames will be donated to the Boston 2026 international exhibition, eliminating our annual storage fee of \$300. Anticipated expenses in 2025 are projected at under \$800.

A detailed breakdown of the budget is available on request.

Savings Stamps (continued from page 1)

One of my favorite covers is shown in Figure 1 (on page 1). The \$1 1942 War Savings stamp was used in place of a 1c stamp to make up the 3c First Class rate in 1954. It is one of 46 Savings Stamp covers I have that went through the system free of postage due. This did not happen out of inadvertence. Among my covers are examples that are Registered, Insured, Special Delivery, and Air Mail. Postal clerks had to handle these and verify that the postage was correct before sending them on their way.

Maybe they didn't know these were not postage stamps? I can accept that for modern usages but not in the 1940s. Maybe they felt that the collection of postage due was not worth the effort? OK, maybe for a penny. But lots of these were 10c and up with the total loss being significant. It is startling to me that of the 52 covers in my collection, only six were handled as postage due mail.

My earliest due cover is the 1942 example in Figure 2. Perhaps the mailer thought the 25c green Postal Savings stamp looked enough like the 1c green Prexie to pass. It didn't. As the mailer did not put his or her return address on the envelope, the 1c postage due was collected from the addressee.



Figure 2. A postage due example.



Figure 3. Multiple problems with this one.

Figure 3 is a March, 1970 Special Delivery cover with two problems. First is the use of 30c in Savings stamps to pay for Special Delivery. Second is the fact that the Special Delivery rate had gone from 30c to 45c on July 14, 1969; eight months earlier. How does a postal clerk not know this? The cover is back-stamped by the delivery post office; so again, it seems the addressee paid the missing 45c.



Figure 4. Excessive postage due? or perhaps not.

Above we have a 2c Jefferson plus a 10c War Savings stamp on a 1957 cover. The object was to pay the 3c First Class rate (that did not change to 4c until 1958). So, why a postage due charge of 4c? My suggestion would be that the mailing was double rate because of the "Photos". So 1c due in place of the War Savings stamp, plus 3c for the second ounce of weight.



Figure 5. Definitely bogus postage here.

In this final example (Figure 5) we have a 1944 cover addressed to Jamaica. It is marked "Air Mail", so the proper rate would be 10c per half ounce, but the 10c War Savings stamp was invalid ("No good" in pencil). The mailing was censored at the Miami Civil Censorship Station. The post office marked it due

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(T) collect one surface rate - 50 centimes”), and took it out of Air Mail; adding “Not in Air Mail” and sent it on to Jamaica, where 5 pence was collected. I don’t understand why the Miami post office did not send it back to the mailer for proper postage, but likely, as the piece had been censored, they just pushed it forward.

Bottom line: Savings stamp usages are not scarce, but examples showing (proper) rejection by postal authorities and collection of postage due are difficult to find.

If readers know of other examples, please contact me at jmhstamp@verizon.net; or at PO Box 1125, Falls Church, VA 22041-0125.

Your Package is “in the mail”

We often joke about the package that arrived too late, maybe it was not delivered until after Christmas or perhaps it took multiple weeks to travel 200 miles. Or maybe it shows up late with a postal marking that suggests it went out of its way to get from point A to point B. But check this out. This postcard arrived more than a century after it was mailed!

Mysterious Postcard Delivered 121 Years Late

from *What to Know* by Lucas Frau, published 9/27/2024 in northjersey.com




A postcard originally sent 121 years ago finally arrived at its destination, an office building in Wales, delivered in the regular mail on Friday, August 16th of 2024. The Swansea Building Society described the discovery as a “mystery that may never be solved.

The 1902 half cent King Edward VII stamp (Scott #127) was postmarked by a circular date cancellation dated August 3, 1903. The card was addressed to Miss Lydia Davies. The building society believed Miss Davies resided in their head office on Craddick Street in Swansea.


It appears that the card was sent from Fishguard in Pembrokeshire. The front of the card depicted a wintry scene with a stag standing over a frozen tree stump. Snowy mountains and a starry sky provided a backdrop. The message on the card was cryptic and only partially legible. It read “Dear L., I could not. It was impossible to get the pair of these. I am so sorry, but I hope you are enjoying your self at home. I have got now about 10 (unreadable) pocket money not counting the train fare so I’m doing alright.” The note ends with a request to “Remember me to Miss Gilbert + John with love to all from (unreadable).”

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UPCOMING MEETINGS



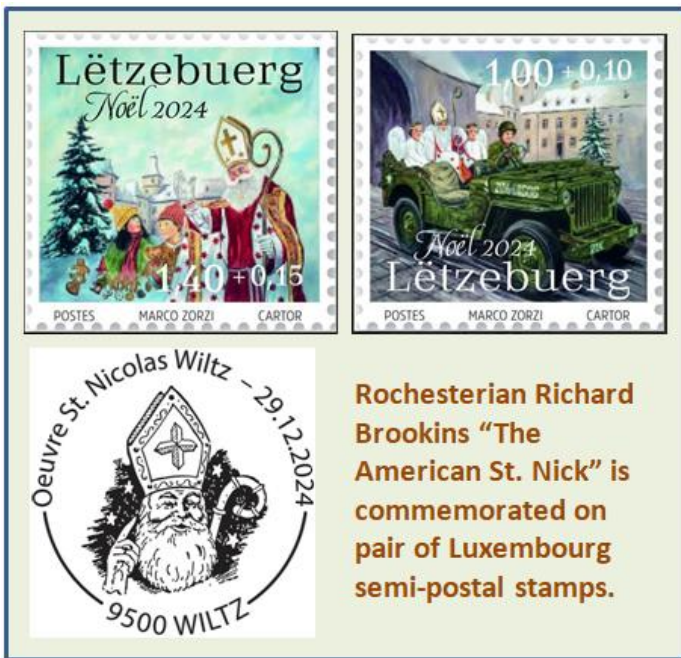
Come see a
CIA invert in
person on
January 9th



Who knows where Kerguelen is?
Who has seen this arch?
Come learn on February 27th

**Luxembourg honors
Rochesterian with stamp issue
by Tom Fortunato**

As members of Rochester’s major stamp collecting organization, we especially enjoy reading of stamps issued in the US and around the world involving Rochesterians. Here’s one that everyone can relate to, as the story has been told many times in the local media here, especially around the Christmas holiday.



Luxembourg’s 2024 pair of Christmas stamps released on November 29 honor Richard W. Brookins, a.k.a. "The American St. Nick," who along with his fellow American soldiers found themselves in the small town of Wiltz in December, 1944 during World War II. They learned of the local holiday visit of 'Kleeschen' (St. Nicholas) who would parade around the streets handing out sweets to eagerly awaiting children, a tradition unkept due to the wartime conditions. It was decided to have Brookins assume the role, complete in costume, and bring some joy to the local residents. Flanked by two local children dressed as angels in a jeep, he handed out candy, treats, and food donated by the servicemen to the welcoming citizens. Days later the town fell victim to the Germans as part of what became known as the Battle of the Bulge.

Their act of kindness was commemorated on its fifth anniversary in 1949 by locals and has been honored ever since.

Brookins was born in Rochester, New York, on February 25, 1922. Before enlisting in the Army he worked at Ritter Dental and was employed by Rochester Telephone on his return from the war. He was invited back to Wiltz in 1977 to re-enact his now famous depiction as a symbol of American solidarity with the grateful people of Luxembourg, returning several times before his death in 2018.

While he is no longer alive, it would be interesting to know if any of his relatives still reside in the area and are possibly aware of his depiction on the recently released stamps. He joins the ranks of notables such as George Eastman, Frederick Douglas, Susan B. Anthony, Chester Carlson and other Rochesterians honored through philately.

Details of the two semi-postal stamps are found on the Post Luxembourg web links here:

[https://www.postphilately.lu/en-US/products/collectionneurs/timbres-de-collection/noel-2024-\(1.00-0.10\)](https://www.postphilately.lu/en-US/products/collectionneurs/timbres-de-collection/noel-2024-(1.00-0.10))

[https://www.postphilately.lu/en-US/products/collectionneurs/timbres-de-collection/noel-2024-\(1.40-0.15\)](https://www.postphilately.lu/en-US/products/collectionneurs/timbres-de-collection/noel-2024-(1.40-0.15))



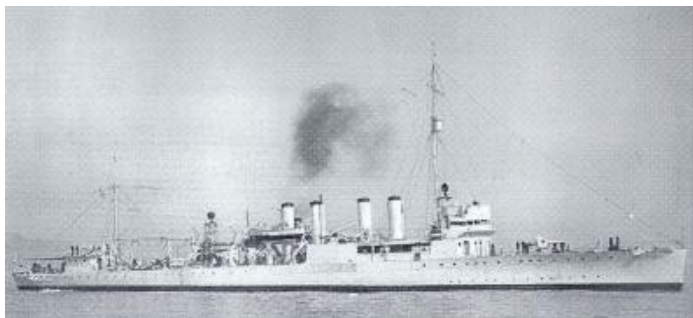
The new 1 ounce, global rate stamp to be issued on January 24, 2025 features the colorful compass rose drawn in a school geography class by Lucia Wadsworth, the aunt of poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, when she was 10 years old. Each stamp will cost you \$1.65.

The Mystery of the Boston Naval Yard Explosion and the Cover Cachets it Inspired

By Kelly Armstrong
keltickelly8@gmail.com

In addition to being an RPA member, I am a long-time member of the Universal Ship Cancellation Society (USCS). I wrote the following article about a set of add-on cachets for the December issue of their newsletter, the USCS Log.

I recently bought a box of U. S. Navy covers. They are all without cachets. I investigated a few for their potential as subjects for cachets. When I begin the process of making a cachet I research the topic of the stamp to “open the doors” for cachet ideas. When working on naval covers, I will often have multiple covers with the same ship cancel or more than one with the same ship. I prefer to create different cachets for each cover. This requires being creative.



The USS Manley was built in Bath, Maine and commissioned in 1917 during World War I.

In this box of naval covers, I came across three from the USS Manley. I noticed the printed words “Boston Naval Yard Explosion.” As a retired Senior Buyer with a large OEM, I know how to search the internet for product information. I was able to find photos of the explosion but little information. I contacted the Boston Public Library for assistance. Much to my surprise, I received a reply a few hours later with three articles.

At 2:15 AM on November 13, 1934, people were abruptly awakened by a large explosion in the

Boston Naval Yard. One hundred tanks of acetylene gas housed in the plant exploded. It was believed that a spark somehow ignited the gas tanks. Sadly Daniel Dunlea, the night watchman, was killed, but there were no other fatalities.

Given this information, I took another look at these three covers. The cancellation date is the date of the explosion. My best guess is that the USS Manley was in the Boston Naval Yard at the time of the explosion and the postal clerk or officer on the ship quickly acted to make up a cancellation and applied it to some envelopes. No persons are named on the envelopes, however two are addressed to 6 Winter St. in Dorchester, MA. An internet search shows that this is the location of a 3-story house built in 1905.

In addition to being a cachet maker, I am also a “student” of history and archeology. By studying the past, we can learn so much. Sometimes this can be frustrating because there is little information readily available. It then requires a “deep dive” and more research or, as in this case, a helpful librarian from afar.

Add-on cachets like those I created for these three covers are more difficult to work on than modern covers. With add-ons there is no margin for error. There is no opportunity for “do-over’s.” All are drawn freehand, requiring a good-eye and a steady hand. I have developed a process that works for me.



Here are the three cachets I designed in alignment with the special cancel.

The stamp on each cover is the 3c Mt. Ranier and Mirror Lake stamp from the 1934 National Parks Issue.

I am now on to the next “mystery” hiding in this wonderful box of naval covers.