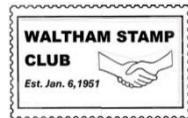




Waltham Stamp Club

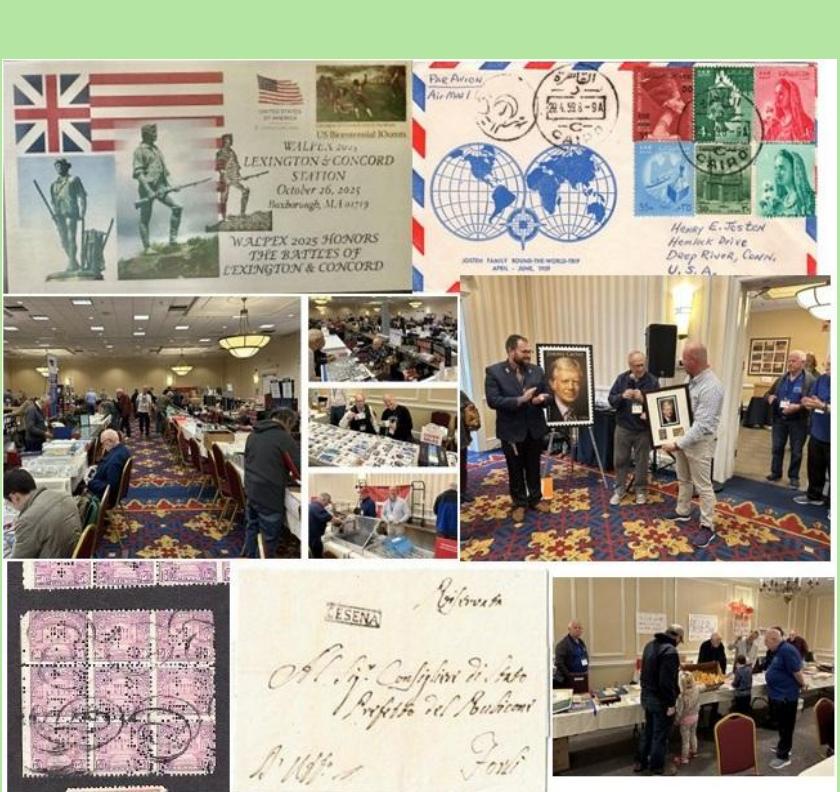
FOUNDED APRIL 1951



A member of the American Philatelic Society from 1968 (Chapter #683), the United Stamp Societies, Inc., and the Northeastern Federation of Stamp Clubs.

NOV 2025 VOLUME 6 EDITION 2

IN THIS ISSUE



features

WALPEX 2025

The newsletter contents are divided into the following sections:

- Contacting the Waltham Stamp Club
- Stamp Club Events and Highlights
- Feature Stories and "phun" facts from our members
- Stamp Sales and Bourse Book Procedures
- Where to Go for Buying and Selling Stamps
- Appendices

- WALPEX theme – 250th Anniversary Battle of Lexington & Concord
- Using AI to Uncover Postal History by Michael Giorgetti
- Josten Family RTW Trip by David Ball
- Fiscally Used US Postage by Stephen Tauber
- Presentations by Robert Brew and Ms. Tibbetts of USPS LPC
- Calendar of Events
- Spellman Museum
- Boston 2026 Expo



The club website: www.walthamstampclub.org
The meetings are at the SPELLMAN PHILATELIC MUSEUM
(On the campus of Regis College)
241 Wellesley Street, Weston, MA (use the rear parking lot entrance)

The Waltham Stamp Club meetings are held virtually in addition to being held at the Spellman Museum and are available online utilizing ZOOM. You may join a zoom meeting using a PC or mobile phone. You can download the ZOOM app if you do not already have it. A meeting ID and password will be sent to you in the meeting invitation as well as a link to the website. Your display name once you have joined ZOOM will be shown. You have the option to connect the audio and/or video for others to hear and see you at the meeting. There is also a telephone number provided in the invitation to the meeting so that you may participate without an internet connection.

From the Editor

The American Philatelic Society (APS) has recently reorganized and restructured many of its functions and at the joint APS/APRL (Research Library) meeting held October 28 discussed plans to streamline activities and make them more responsive to its member needs. The board decided to do an in-depth survey of all its members soon. As a result, the announcement for the Star Route Awards has been delayed but we expect to hear from them shortly. We will be submitting our newsletter and for the first time our website.

You may be aware that as of May all our Waltham Stamp Club newsletters are available on our club website, www.walthamstampclub.org. Our webmaster, Ed Sterling, has done a terrific job of linking all our issues to the website and that has attracted stamp collectors and others interested in our club.

In this issue we have as one of our feature articles, WALPEX 2025. The stamp show held on October 25-26 had at its theme, the Battles of Lexington and Concord. It was, by everyone's account, a huge success. As the volunteering manager, I was very happy with the large number of club members who participated. Many thanks to Chris Brouady who managed the show and brought in the dealers. This year the cover cachet and stamp cancel designer, Chris Calle was present at the show. Because of rising hotel costs, we needed to charge a modest admission fee of five dollars for adults.

Michael Giorgetti wrote a timely article on Using AI (Artificial Intelligence) to Uncover Postal History. Based on a very old nineteenth century stampless letter purchased on eBay, Mike used ChatGPT to determine its historical significance. Stephen Tauber in "Fiscally Used US Postage", wrote about an unusual perfin pattern and postage cancellation. David Ball wrote about A Round- the-World trip taken by the Josten family and documented with airmail covers from twenty locations.

Our new club president Robert Brew is off to a great start. In September we had a stamp auction with a record number of lots and Show and Tell and in October we had two presentations that are described briefly in this newsletter. Norm Shufrin, club president emeritus played an active role in WALPEX in bringing the US Postal Service and the rededication of the recent Jimmy Carter stamp.

Schedule of Events for Fall and Winter 2025-2026

November 4 How Many Victoria Falls Have There Been and Where Will Be the Next One ? presentation by Frank Slack
November 15 Saturday brunch meeting, Treasures from the Vault by Ken Flowers
December 2 AI and Stamp Collecting, presentation by Robert Brew
December 16 Holiday Party and Yankee Swap
December 30 Fifth Tuesday (non-business) meeting for APS and bourse

Future Philatelic Shows

Dedham Show – first Sunday of each month, Nov 2 at Holiday Inn at 55 Ariadne Road in Dedham MA
Nashua Show – at the Apple Grove Events Center at 19S Depot Rd in Hollis NH on the third Sunday of each month. Nov. 16.

Recent Waltham Stamp Club Activities and Meetings

- Last month we instituted a change in bourse book procedures wherein the borrower must sign his or her name before receipt and is liable for its return.
- On Sept. 2 we held a stamp auction with a record of 223 stamp lots.
- On Sep. 16 we had Show and Tell with following highlights:
 - Frank Slack showed an unusual cover addressed to a woman in rural Rhodesia. She wasn't there and the letter was forwarded to Paris with additional (unnecessary?) postage and then returned? to the original addressee in Philadelphia, with no record on the envelope that it ever got there.
 - Steve Tauber showed a variety of US government postal stationary that had the \$300 penalty for unlawful use marking, which was remarkably stable over a hundred years.
 - Bruce Humphrey showed a Russian souvenir philatelic book with a variety of interesting stamps, which he obtained on a wintertime trip to Moscow as a young man.
 - James Hencke showed a variety of interesting Indian States court documents, which included elaborate watermarks on both laid and wove paper.
 - Norm Shufrin showed postcards which were over franked, franked with an express mail stamp for an unusual reason, and franked with an unusual denomination available for only a short period of time.
- On October 7, Robert Brew gave an informative and entertaining presentation on Zip codes.

- The US zip codes started in 1963 and featured Mr. Zip on stamps and envelopes. Optical character recognition is used to speed the process of handling and sorting the mail.
- The five-digit numerical code contains three digits for the processing mail facility. The first digit is the section of the US, for example 0 is New England, 1 is New York and Pennsylvania, and 9 is the West Coast and Hawaii.
- ZIP stands for Zone Improvement Plan and in 1982 was expanded to include a four-digit extension number.
- Unique Zip codes are used for high volume addresses, PO Boxes, Military and standard.
- Although the four-digit extension is not required, it facilitates processing mail and may speed up delivery.
- “Sortatron” in Ireland is not a town but an official national postcode system that helps locate every individual address. Codes are seven-character alphanumeric code that contain a routing key and a unique identifier. The codes are not sequential but are able to pinpoint every mailbox in the country.
- On October 21. Ms. Caroline Tibbets gave an excellent presentation “Peek into the Operations of a Local USPS Operations Center.”
 - She works at the center in North Reading MA on Route 28 at a location close to several highways including routes 93 and 95.
 - LPC – local processing center for Middlesex and Essex counties
 - Regional Transfer Hub (RTH) – a central hub for sorting and processing mail and packages
 - The RTH receives, sorts and dispatches mail along designated routes
 - The machines that make it possible are Automated Package Processing System (APPS)
 - Automated Parcel and Bundle Sorter (APBS)
 - Single Induction Package Sorter (SIPS)
 - SPIDER – an older sorting machine consisting of four conveyors, used to sort oversized packages
 - APBS - Two thousand to seven thousand package bundles are handled each hour.
 - APPS- automates package and bundle distribution, it can process up to 9,500 parcels per hour using cameras and bar code readers
 - Additional information and videos can be found in following location :
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2Nw0SF7Z-Xo&pp=ygUwbWFjaGluZXNgb2YgdGhIHZcHMgLSB1cyBwb3N0IG9mZmljZSBhdXRvbWF0aW5n>

Feature Stories from Our Members

WALPEX 2025 – Battles of Lexington and Concord

The theme of the seventieth annual Waltham Stamp Club stamp show was the 250th anniversary of the Battles of Lexington and Concord. The battle took place between the colonial forces and the British army at a location less than ten miles from the site of the stamp show. The success of the show was like “the first shots heard round the world.” No, the show’s activity did not lead to our nation’s independence, but it did bring more than six hundred visitors during the two-day weekend, Oct. 25-26, thirty happy stamp dealers, thirty-two exhibits, record receipts from our famous phishbowl, and smiles from everyone including our club volunteers.

Chris Calle, who designed the cachet and cancel for our cover was at the show and signed for anyone who desired. The cachet features the statues of the Minuteman in Minuteman Park in Lexington and one in Concord standing below a Grand Union flag. This flag had thirteen alternating red and white stripes and crosses of St. George and St. Andrew in the Union. During the Revolutionary War, this version of the flag was flown in Cambridge at General George Washington’s military headquarters.



Our show's success depended on our stamp club volunteers. At our sign-in table and registration desk were Norm Shufrin, president emeritus, Donald and Jessica Leuschner, Monica and Steve Neuman, and others. Also located in the entrance hallway were members selling WALPEX covers from this year and former years stamp shows. They included Peter French, Paul McBride, David DuBois, and Scott Ridlon, James Hencke, and Ted Atkinson.



One of the best and uniquely attractive features of WALPEX is the phabulous phishbowl. Here collectors can purchase packets of stamps and located in some of the envelopes are coupons for prizes. Both adults and younger participants appreciate examining the international postage stamps and commemorative issues to determine which philatelic items are available for selection of prizes. Gail Mays organized the event, beginning preparations a year in advance. Members who assisted Gail over the weekend were Robert Mays, Rick Robinson, Tom Barner, Tom Turner, Marc Jasmin, Howard Kogan and Jim Nalbandian.



This year, Celine Poulin-Lape, pictured below (lower left) organized and brought to the show thirteen unique stamp exhibits. The exhibits, mounted on thirty-two different frames were created by James Hencke for the Princely States of India and China Treaty Ports, David Ball for Around the World in 26 Days, Original Space Art, and Lindbergh Carries the Mail, Stephen Neuman for Events that Led to American Revolution, Peter Lenk for Money Mail, Charles Garniewicz for USS Frigate Constitution, Tom Barner for Ships and Things that Float, George Norton for the

Language of Stamps, and the Spellman Museum. Announcement for the winner will be made at our next business meeting in November.



WALPEX would not be a stamp show without the stamp dealers who sell stamps, books, and philatelic supplies to our visitors and club members. Thirty stamp dealers from as far as California, two auction houses, and the Spellman Museum were among those present. AFDCS's Foster Miller and cachet designer Chris Calle, shown in photo middle right, sold and signed First Day Covers. Chris Brouady, club vice president who brought the dealers into the show and Robert Brew, club president deserves our special thanks.



An event established five years ago is the rededication of a new stamp recently issued by the US Post Office. The event was organized through the collaboration with Norm Shufrin of the stamp club and Ryan Dieoreo from the USPS. The Waltham Stamp Club displays stamp artwork and plaques from the US Post Office at the

Spellman Museum. All past awards and numerous other philatelic exhibits can be viewed at the museum. Shown below are Norm, Ryan, Chris Brouady, and Brian Howard, Director of the Spellman Museum.



There were members who helped set up and tear down the tables and the exhibits and they included the following people: Peter Lenk, Chris Brouady, Peter French, Missy Buck, Jessica and Don Leuschner, Ed Sterling, Norm Shufrin and Stephen Neuman. Everyone smiled and was glad to attend the stamp show. The weather was sunny and mild and the atmosphere both inside and out was brilliant.

Using AI to Uncover Postal History

By Michael Giorgetti

Recently I purchased a stampless, folded letter addressed to Forli, Italy (**Fig. 1**) on eBay. My interest in this letter is both philatelic as one of my collecting interests is the postal history of pre-unification of Italy and the Pontifical States as well as genealogical as my paternal grandparents were born in Forli.

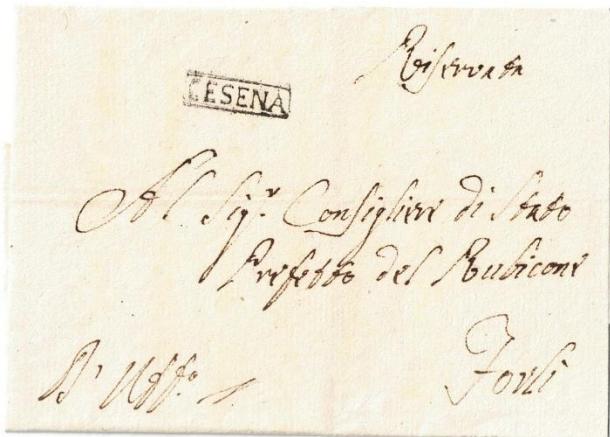


Figure 1

Forli is a commune (municipality) in Emilia-Romagna and together with Cesena in the capital of the Province of Forli-Cesena (**Fig.2**).



Figure 2

The description by the seller was “Cesena c1850 boxed on Stampless Folded Letter to Forli”.

Upon receipt I carefully unfolded the letter (**Fig. 3**) and noticed the date on the letter was 1808 (**Fig. 4**).



Figure 3

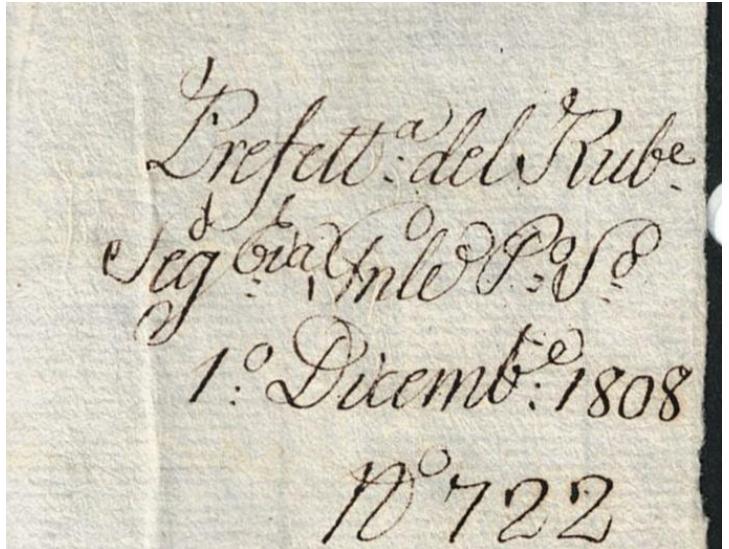


Figure 4

Forlì was part of the Papal Legation of Romagna until the Napoleonic Wars. In 1797, the Treaty of Tolentino forced Pope Pius VI to cede Romagna and other territories to France, and Forlì was incorporated into the newly created Cisalpine Republic. Papal authority was briefly restored in 1799 after French defeats, but by 1800 French control returned. In 1805, Romagna was integrated into Napoleon's Kingdom of Italy, where it remained under Napoleonic administration until 1814–1815, when the Congress of Vienna restored the Papal States. It was during this period that the letter was dated.

During the mid-nineteenth century, rising Italian nationalism fueled the Risorgimento. In 1859–1860, the Legations of Romagna, including Forlì, voted to join the Kingdom of Sardinia. This paved the way for the proclamation of the Kingdom of Italy on March 17, 1861, marking the definitive end of Papal rule in the region and the unification of the Italian peninsula into a single nation.

In order to understand the text as well as its historical context of the postal history letter purchased on eBay I turned to AI. I scanned the unfolded letter (**Fig. 3**) and queried AI to translate and provide historical context.

As AI is known to produce “hallucinations;” defined as a response generated by AI that contains false or misleading information presented as fact; I chose three different AI

systems; ChatGPT5, Google Gemini and Microsoft Copilot and compared the results. While they were all generally consistent there were some differences noted. To solve this, I once again turned to AI, using ChatGPT to compare the three outputs and provide a summary.

Here is what I learned (AI Generated Text):

Outer Address:

- "All'Illustrissimo Signore, Consigliere [or Confessore di Stato], Prefetto del Buon Governo, Forlì" – To the Most Illustrious Sir, Counselor (or State Confessor), Prefect of Good Government, Forlì.
- "CESENA" (handstamp)
- Sent from Cesena. "1 Dicembre 1808"; December 1st, 1808.
- "N° 722" Registry number used for official filing. Filing note referring to the Prefecture of the Rubicone, (Fig. 4),
- A coat of arms–style watermark design, likely a papermaker's watermark from the late 18th/early 19th century, consistent with official stationery of Napoleonic or Papal administration (Fig 5).



Figure 5

Historical Context:

In December 1808, Italy was under Napoleonic administration. The Papal States were annexed and reorganized into French-style departments. Cesena became the capital of the Dipartimento del Rubicone, while Forlì was a key subordinate administrative center. The "Prefect of Buon Governo" was a civil administrator responsible for local justice, policing, and governance, acting as Napoleon's representative. Letters such as this reflect the bureaucratic order introduced during this period, modeled on French prefectures.

Interpretation:

This folded letter, sealed with wax (Fig. 6) and formally registered, represents official government communication between Cesena and Forlì. The convergence of titles and references (Prefetto del Buon Governo, Prefettura del Rubicone, registry filing) indicates it was part of structured Napoleonic correspondence. The content likely dealt with administrative matters such as taxation, legal cases, or governance reports.



Figure 6

Significance:

This document provides a rare glimpse into the Napoleonic transformation of Italian governance. It illustrates how French reforms imposed standardized bureaucratic practices in Italy, using prefects, departments, and registry systems to consolidate control. For modern historians, it is both a linguistic artifact (formal Italian administrative style) and a cultural-political one, showing how local governance adapted to French imperial models.

Unfortunately, there was no visible text on the inside of the letter that may have provided greater historical context, however ChatGPT “saw” faint text through the scan shown in Figure 3 but was unable to provide any further information.

AI can be a valuable tool to study postal history. Responses to the queries I asked were quickly provided and were consistent with the historical period that this letter was dated.

As with any new technology, caution is needed. When used with human input, knowledge and feedback I was able to gain a better understanding of the postal history of this cover. There is always an opportunity to learn as additional information becomes available or as technology continues to advance.

Fiscally Used U.S. Postage Stamps

By Stephen Tauber

A number of countries, especially the British Commonwealth, issue stamps valid for either postage or revenue. This is not, however, true for the United States. Among the Spellman Museum's holdings, there are a number of fiscally cancelled United States postage stamps (see Figure 1). In every case where the perfin pattern of the user can be discerned, it is R&Co. (Richards and Company, New York). The cancellation dates run from 1935 to 1937.

Two aspects seem noteworthy: There is no one- two- or five-dollar stamp used, even though there are blocks of 50-cent stamps totaling up to \$5. This might simply be a matter of keeping the total value of stamps on hand by the user down to a manageable level. What the author finds more remarkable is the fact that — although fiscally cancelled — the stamps, including the 9¢ National Parks stamp, also bear mute cancels of the type associated with registered mail. The single 50¢ stamp bears what appears to be a smudged segment of a normal town canceller.

Can one of our members explain this odd combination?

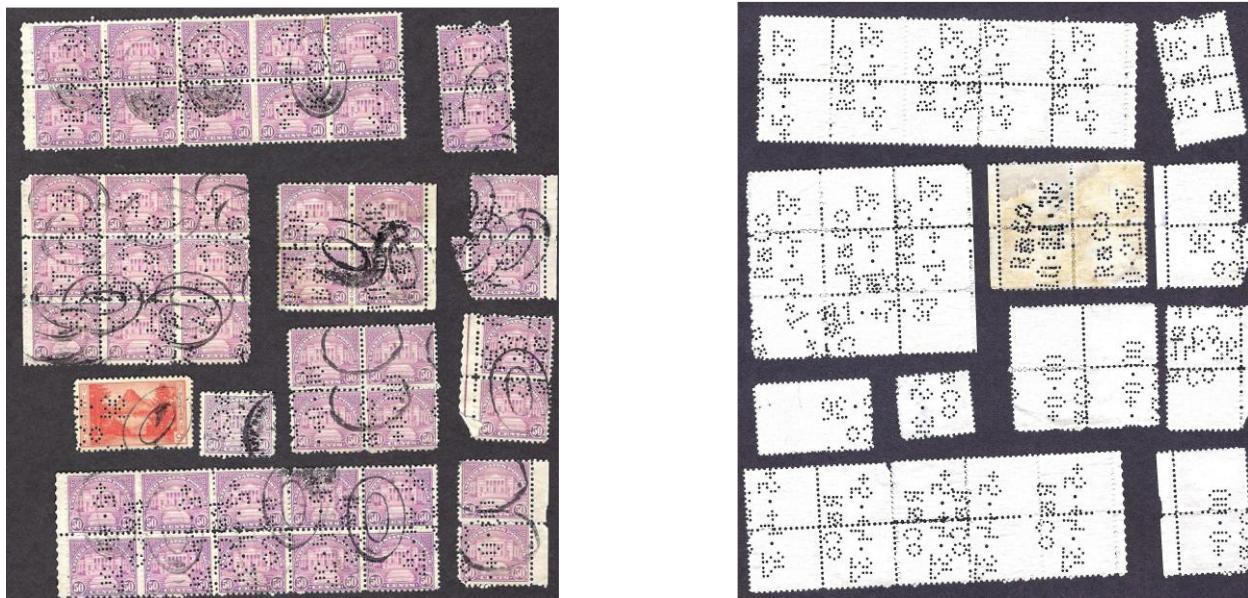


Figure 1. Fiscally cancelled United States postage stamps and reverse side

Josten Family RTW Trip

By David S. Ball

Between April and June 1959, a family from Deep River CT documented their Round the World trip with airmail covers from twenty locations including London, Cairo, Jerusalem, Darjeeling, New Delhi, Calcutta, Hong Kong, Tokyo, Anchorage, Fairbanks, Nome, Kotzebue, Vatican, Madrid, Lisbon and several others. Each is addressed to the patriarch of the family at their home address.

These days investigating postal history is relatively easy. Internet search engines like Google make short work of locating people, events, and airline timetables so the author was surprised to come up dry. Finding the family didn't take long. Newspapers.com showed dozens of mentions in CT papers in the 1950s visiting mother for a few days, having the neighbors over for coffee, or the dog experiencing a bout of constipation. With so many innocuous instances it was puzzling that a RTW trip was never mentioned. The author has also never established that anyone in the family was a pilot, owned an airplane, or collected postage stamps.

An Archetypical Trailblazer

The expectation no doubt originated with The Flying Hutchinsons. In 1931, George, Blanche and their two daughters visited the capitals of all 48 United States by air. The 'Flying Family' attempted an around-the-world flight the next year; their Sikorsky S-38 aircraft crash-landed off Greenland, leaving them stranded for several days before being picked up by a fishing trawler and transported to the United Kingdom. In 1939, the family attempted another around-the-world flight in a Lockheed Electra. The stated aim of this flight was to carry a scroll with a message of peace to the '68 nations of the world', but this flight only made it as far as Mexico before it was cancelled due to the outbreak of World War II. The youngest daughter Janet, at the age of 18, became a WASP and flight instructor.

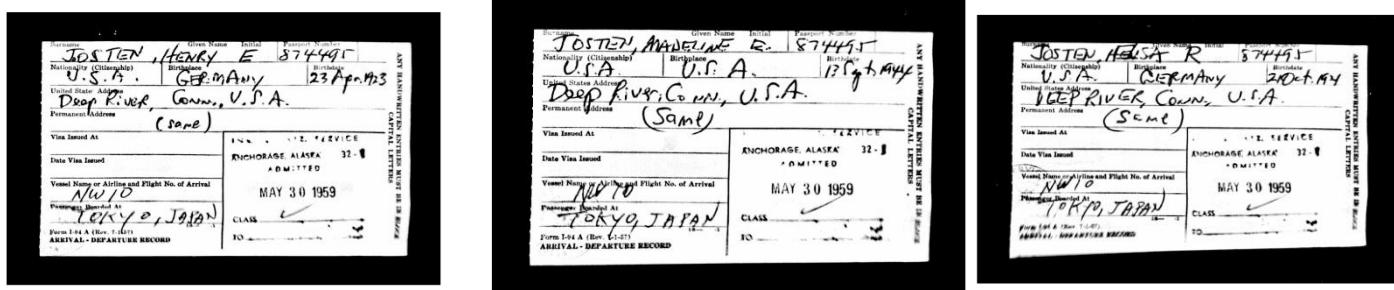
Enter the Josten Family

Henry E. Josten and his wife Elsa, were born in Solingen Germany in the early 1920s and emigrated to the United States. They moved to Elizabeth NJ where Madeline was born in 1944 before settling in Deep River CT. Henry was in the newspaper business. He was Editor of the *New Era* in town and six months after their trip head a group to buy several local papers. The family loved to travel and took cruises to Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.

In the spring of 1959 Henry (age 36), Elsa (38) and their daughter Madeline (age 15) took their RTW trip. The cachet of printed envelopes no doubt reflects his marketing flair and interest in documenting the journey. The author was stymied as to the lack of publicity to this journey until running across records in Figure 1.



Figure 1. Arrived in Alaska from Japan and receipts shown below.



The light bulb went on when at the notation “NW10”. A review of the airline timetable brochure from Northwest Airlines in 1957 confirmed that transoceanic service by DC-7C that matched the philatelic documentation.

In this case, NW10 departed Tokyo on Sunday evening May 31st and carried the Jostens 14 ¾ hour east, crossing the International Date Line (thereby “losing a day”), and arriving after lunch on May 30th (Figure 2). Whether Henry travelled First Class for \$562 or Tourist Class for \$420 is unknown. Spouses and children to the age of 22 accompanying a paying passenger on the Tourist Family Plan could get a ticket for half price. Considering this couple were in their mid-thirties with a child in high school and all the other tickets required to travel around the world, the author surmises Tourist Class was more likely.

Isn’t it wonderful, aero philatelists can reconstruct and vicariously share a family vacation that was documented in letters sent home? Dozens of details about their life in

CT can be found in newspapers from that time but with a little digging (and a dash of luck) we learned so much more.

Figure 1. NWA Timetable

References

<https://www.timetableimages.com>
<https://www.newspapers.com>

We encourage our readers to contribute to the newsletter by writing a brief description of how they started their philatelic hobby and their interests in stamp collecting.

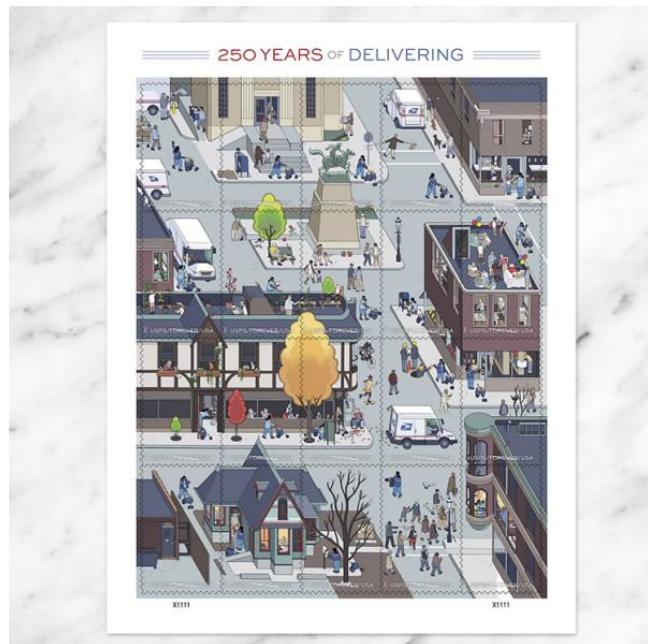
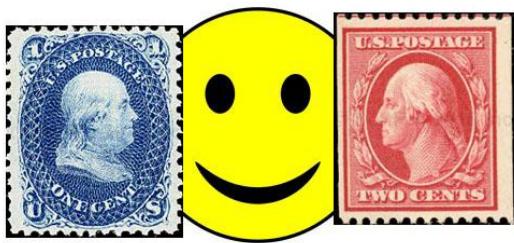
Contribute "phun" facts of interest to our membership. We all have something to contribute and our stories and phun facts will be shared with others in our club.

You may contact the editor, Stephen Neuman by email or by phone if you wish to write or submit. I will also accept any comments on how we can improve the newsletter.

Email stevegetsall@aol.com or phone at 508-395-4543

Digitized by srujanika@gmail.com

Phun Facts



Stamps issued in July, 250 Years of Delivering Stamps celebrates the 250th anniversary of the US Postal Service. The pane of twenty interconnected stamps shows a bird's eye view of a mail carrier's route through a bustling town. Laid out as four rows of five stamps each, the stamps depict the travel through the four seasons from top left to bottom right. There are numerous icons representing the Postal Service including Mr. Zip, the Postal Delivery truck, pony express rider statue, and the blue mailbox.

We Encourage APS Membership

We at the Waltham Stamp Club encourage all our members to join the American Philatelic Society. As APS members you can participate in the educational experience of other philatelists by attending online seminars or sharing the resources of the large research library. There is a monthly stamp journal, the American Philatelist, and a weekly online newsletter. The November 2025 journal has feature articles on stamp art

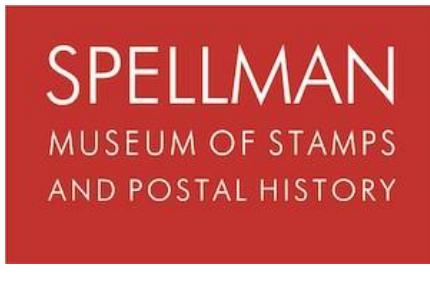
design including the large bank notes issued between 1871 to 1873 by Postmaster General John Creswell.

Remember the Dates of May 23 -30 2026

Boston 2026, the twelfth international philatelic exhibition will be held at the Boston Convention and Exhibition Center on May 23-30, 2026. The show commemorates the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of our nation's birth. There will be more than 4000 exhibits at the show, and many are international. New country specific tariffs came into effect and could affect imported philatelic material which in turn the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA) states that informational materials is free from the tariffs and stamps and other philatelic material is part of information media. In addition, the EXPO committee has employed a customs broker, Vantage Point, to assist with acquiring transportation bonds.



For Massachusetts residents, local transportation to the Expo Center by car, taxi, or train is possible. Consideration is being made to charter a bus service from Metrowest, but it is too early to know.



Spellman Museum News and Events

The Spellman Museum is open to many visitors, including students, four days a week from Thursday through Sunday, noon to 5pm. It is a philatelic gem that is great for all ages. The Spellman Museum is located on the campus of Regis College: 241 Wellesley St., Weston, MA 02493; tel. 781-768-8367.

On July 31, Stamp Artist Dale Stephanos presented his work on the recent commemorative honoring Betty White. On Sunday September 28, award winning storyteller Diane Edgecomb will discuss the stories featured on stamps such as the Very Hungry Caterpillar, Harry Potter, and Sherlock Holmes.



Refreshed with new content and easy-to-access design, the Spellman Museum website continues to be a vital tool and resource to friends, members, visitors and philatelists near and far. Stay updated and visit often for new and exciting content, featuring exhibit updates, stamp shows and live programming. Please take a moment to visit the website at www.spellmanmuseum.org and enjoy!

We encourage our club members to have a philatelic museum where we hold our meetings and share resources such as the philatelic library and the stamp store. It is a place where we can exhibit our collections. It is only one of two such museums in our country, the other is in Washington DC. But being non-profit, the museum has depended upon the help of volunteers.

There have been many renovations at the museum in the past year. All of the galleries have been updated with new collections. The Spellman Museum features extraordinary exhibits that illustrate national and world history, social movements, pioneers, and human achievement, connecting visitors with the shared human experience through stamps.

Where to Go for Buying and Selling Stamps

The last page(s) is always for the WSC members who are selling stamp or stamp collecting related supplies, online, so you can buy from a WSC member.

If you are selling online and a WSC member and want to be listed on the last page, email Stephen Neuman at stevegetsall@aol.com (508) 395-4543 or find us at a meeting.

Also, if you want to help with the newsletter, you can reach out to me for that too.

eBay:

Clark Frazier as CLARKPHILATELICS

Hipstamp.com:

**Clark Frazier as
CLARKPHILATELICS**

Dave Loving as Sam's Stamp Store

Stamps2Go.com:

James Capelle as JCAPWET

Email and Web Pages:

Dave Loving as samstampshop@comcast.net

Marc Jasmin as WWW.MGJPOSTALHISTORY.COM

And at <https://stampauctionnetwork.com/auctions.cfm>

Brick and Mortar Stamp Stores

Sam's Stamp Shop

Phone number: 508-222-3444

405 Old Colony Road, Norton MA 02766

Falmouth Stamps & Coin

Phone number: 508-548-7075

11 Town Hall Square, Falmouth MA 02540

Kappy's Coins & Stamps

Phone number: 781-762-5552

534 Washington Street, Norwood MA 02062