



THE PHILLY PHILATELIST

Award-Winning Newsletter of the Greater Philadelphia Stamp & Collectors Club

Founded 1904

American Philatelic Society – Chapter 18

April 2025

www.GPSCC.org

Volume 13, Issue 4

NEXT MEETING

April 15, 2025 at 7:00 p.m.

Community Rooms
GIANT Supermarket
315 N. York Rd., Willow Grove, PA

Dinner:

For those who would like to join us for dinner beforehand, we will meet at The W Tavern, about a block from GIANT, at 5:00 p.m. for cocktails followed by dinner at 5:30 p.m.

210 York Rd., Willow Grove, PA

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Paul F. Miller

Last month, I suggested that you could kick the winter blues to the curb by attending a GPSCC meeting. We had Scott English, executive director of the American Philatelic Society (APS), lined up for the March 2025 meeting for a terrific presentation about his thoughts on the future of the stamp collecting hobby. Unfortunately, Scott had a family emergency that prevented him from coming. Fear not, because we may still have him join us at an upcoming meeting, if schedules permit.

So, my offer to attend a GPSCC meeting was not a "bait and switch." Things happen, schedules change, and we try our best to accommodate everyone. In fact, if you did attend, you saw a great example of how adaptable we are as a club.

Bruce Marsden, our treasurer, suggested we view an online presentation previously aired by the Collectors Club of New York. The presentation spotlighted

Antonio Alcalá, an artist, designer, and philatelist who has worked with the National Postal Museum and the U.S. Postal Service. He has designed or overseen the design of more than 100 U.S. stamps.

A few of our club officers saw the original presentation and commented on how fascinating it was. If you were at the meeting, I think you would agree with that assessment. If you were not at the meeting, I am sorry that you missed out.

What I am driving at here is that it is important for you to attend a GPSCC meeting to benefit from the full experience that the club has to offer. Even when we have a set schedule for a particular meeting, things can change, but we try our hardest to make sure that every meeting is worth attending.

(Continued next page)

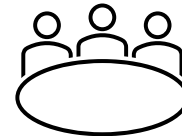
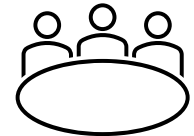
PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE (CONTINUED)

Plus, during many meetings we branch out into topics that are not on the agenda – and that makes for an even better club meeting experience.

For example, Jaume Balsells had a terrific article in the March 2025 newsletter about a wayward piece of mail. Jaume actually brought that piece of mail to the club’s March 2025 meeting, and it spurred on a nice conversation about the topic. More members at the meetings equal more conversations, greater participation, and a better group experience.

Robert Cohen does a fantastic job when he provides minutes of the meeting in each month’s newsletter, but he can only highlight a portion of what really occurs during a live meeting. Attending in person helps you to enjoy the group setting and participate in the camaraderie between members.

So, I hope you enjoy reading every month’s edition of *The Philly Philatelist*, but try, if you can, to join us for a live meeting. Everyone gets to participate, and you can come away from the meeting feeling good about your attendance.

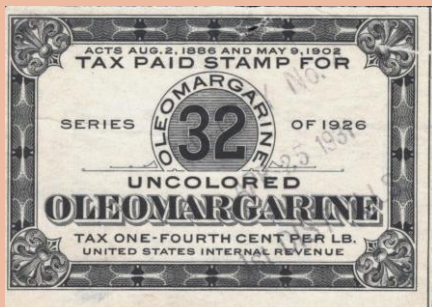
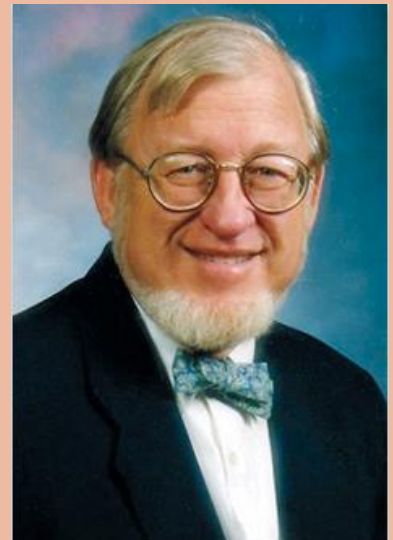


PROGRAM FOR APRIL 15, 2025:

“PURE ADULTERATION? OLEOMARGARINE, PROCESS BUTTER, MIXED FLOUR, FILLED CHEESE AND FERTILIZER TAXES”

Noted revenue collector **Ronald Lesher** will join us on "tax day" to present, "Pure Adulteration? Oleomargarine, Process Butter, Mixed Flour, Filled Cheese and Fertilizer Taxes." Is there anything that can't be taxed?!

Ron received the APS's prestigious Luff Award in 2021 for distinguished philatelic research. He has been collecting stamps since 1956 and is a regular contributor to *The American Philatelist (AP)* on revenue stamps. In fact, be sure to read his two-part article “The Collector of Revenue” in the March and April 2025 issues of the *AP*. He has twice been a guest curator at the National Postal Museum and is a national and international accredited judge.



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UPCOMING CLUB MEETINGS

2025: May 20 – June 17 – Aug. 19 – Sep. 16 – Oct. 21 – Nov. 18 – Dec. 16
(Holiday Dinner)

UPCOMING EVENTS

April 18-20 – [Philatelic Show](#), Boxboro Regency Hotel & Conference Center, 242 Adams Place, Boxborough, MA.

April 19 – [Philatelic Gathering](#), 10:00 a.m.-noon, Chester County Historical Society, 225 N. High Street, West Chester, PA.

June 6-8 – [NAPEX](#), McLean Hilton at Tyson's Corner, 7920 Jones Branch Dr., McLean, VA.

June 21-22 – [SCOPEX](#), American Philatelic Center, Bellefonte, PA.

July 14-18 – [APS Volunteer Work Week](#), American Philatelic Center, Bellefonte PA (see article on p. 5 for details).

August 14-17 – [Great American Stamp Show '25](#), Renaissance Schaumburg Convention Center, Schaumburg, IL.



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WEB SITE

www.gpscc.org

FOLLOW US ON INSTAGRAM

[@gpscc19090](https://www.instagram.com/gpscc19090)

HAVE SOMETHING PHILATELIC YOU WANT TO SHARE?

The Philly Philatelist is always interested in publishing articles by our members or other collectors.

Articles of any length are welcome. An article that is 750 words long with two or three images will fill

two pages. Just email the text in a Word file and the images as separate files to Mike Wilson at newsletter@gpscc.org.

Thanks!



MINUTES OF THE MARCH 18, 2025, GPSCC MEETING

President Paul Miller called the meeting to order promptly at 7:00 p.m.

Paul first thanked Jaume Balsells for his article, “The Troubled Travels of Mail in the Pre-Zip Code Era” in the March issue of *The Philly Philatelist*. Coincidentally, Jaume brought in the postcard that was the topic of his article. There was a discussion about other towns in the United States that have names that parallel those in Spain.

The club now has 56 members with the addition of Rick Anderson and Joel Grubman. Paul indicated that a few other collectors have contacted him, and they will be attending future meetings.

Secretary Robert Cohen and Paul Miller signed off for the club’s nominations for APS President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and Directors-at-Large.

Club members were reminded that reservations for hotel rooms for Boston 2026 started on March 17 and will continue until just before the convention. The website to reserve rooms is found at www.Boston2026.org.

Boston 2026 also announced the upcoming issuance of two promotional stamps by the U.S. Postal Service (USPS). The issue will be in se-tenant format and printed in intaglio. The stamps picture the Old North Church in Boston and Paul Revere on his Midnight Ride. The first day ceremony for the stamps will be on Thursday, August 14, 2025, at the Great American Stamp Show in Schaumburg, Illinois.

Paul reminded the group that Yamil Kouri, president of Boston 2026, will join us via Zoom at our May 20 meeting to give us an update on what’s taking place at the show.

Mike Wilson wrote an article for the fourth issue of [StampEd](#) titled, “Cheap Postage: The Movement that Created the Hobby.” The article details why it was incredibly expensive to send or receive a letter in the 1840s and how the “cheap postage” movement came to be. It’s a great read!

Louis Gotlib indicated that DELPEX will be taking place on March 29 at the Nur Shrine Center in New Castle, Delaware. There will be approximately 20 dealers and a Bid Board of 400 items run by the Brandywine Valley Stamp Club.

Jaume Balsells started a discussion about how long it will be until the USPS will no longer deliver letters. Presently, the Denmark postal service, PostNord, will stop delivering letters to the Nordic nation at the end of 2025, although package distribution will remain. Bruce Marsden indicated that the USPS will no longer deliver letters to Denmark.

Due to a death in the family, APS Executive Director Scott English was unable to attend tonight’s meeting. The club members extended their sympathies to Scott and his family.

Instead, we viewed a recent presentation sponsored by the Collectors Club of New York titled, “Small Talk: How a Stamp is Made” by Antonio Alcalá. Mr. Alcalá is one of the four Art Directors for the USPS. He also runs Studio A in Alexandria, Virginia. We learned the steps of designing a stamp. There is a lot of research involved, hiring of talent and sketches before the final stamp is approved and printed. We viewed three examples of his work: the Underground Railroad series of 2024, the 50th Anniversary of Woodstock stamp from 2019, and the Emancipation Proclamation stamp of 2013.

Respectfully submitted by Robert Cohen

DID YOU KNOW?*Michael L. Wilson*

Take a guess which U.S. commemorative was printed in the highest quantity. (No fair peeking at the image to the right!)

Well, you guessed it: the 2-cent denomination from the Washington Bicentennial Issue of 1932 (Scott 707).

A whopping 4,222,198,300 of that stamp were printed. No other commemorative even comes close. You go George!

**APS VOLUNTEER WORK WEEK: COME FOR A DAY, COME FOR A WEEK!**

Volunteer Work Week is taking place at the American Philatelic Center (APC) in Bellefonte, Pennsylvania July 14-18, 2025.

The week begins on Monday at 9:00 a.m. with a welcome reception, followed by a tour of the APC. Participants will then work on a project in an assigned department. The amount of time and number of days spent volunteering are up to each individual participant. There are many projects to be accomplished during the week, in every department, so volunteer time is thoughtfully utilized by staff.

The American Philatelic Research Library and Circuit Sales will maintain their normal operating hours during Volunteer Work Week. You will have

opportunities to socialize, play games, and attend events in Bellefonte and State College outside of volunteer hours.

The deadline for registration is Friday, June 27, and you can [register here](#). Recommended lodging is at the [Best Western University Park Inn & Suites](#), about a six-mile drive from the APC.

Contact education@stamps.org with any questions, or give them a call at (814) 933-3803 ext. 239.



Volunteer Work Week

July 14, 2025 - July 18, 2025

REGISTRATION

OPEN



ZIP CODES!

Paul F. Miller

In the March 2025 edition of *The Philly Philatelist*, Jaume Balsells wrote a terrific and interesting article about the troubled travels of a postcard sent from Madrid, Spain to the University of New Mexico, in Albuquerque, New Mexico. The year was 1941, which preceded the use of ZIP Codes in the United States.



Scott 1511 issued
January 4, 1974

The use of ZIP Codes today is a very common aspect of the standard mailing address of any piece of mail. It helps the mail get to where it is going. After reading Jaume's article, you realize that ZIP Codes probably would have helped that unfortunate piece of mail.

Because of Jaume's article, I wanted to learn more about ZIP Codes. Here is what I discovered. My article is limited to the ZIP Code system in the United States. However, postal code systems, in various forms, are used in 117 of the 190 member countries of the Universal Postal Union.

The ZIP Code is a system of postal codes used by the U.S. Postal Service (USPS). The "ZIP" in "ZIP Code" is an acronym for "Zone Improvement Plan." It was designed to help ensure that mail and packages were accurately and efficiently delivered to millions of locations throughout the country. The term "ZIP" was chosen to suggest that the mail travels more efficiently and quickly (i.e. zipping along) when senders include the code in the address.

In the early days, the U.S. Post Office Department (USPOD) used postal codes identifying postal district and zone numbers. In May 1943, the USPOD

implemented this postal code system for 178 large cities.

Frank Walker, the Postmaster General at the time, stated that many experienced postal clerks were going into the army for World War II, and the zone system would enable inexperienced clerks to sort mail without having to learn the delivery area of each city carrier. Not only was the USPOD losing a large portion of their staff, the mail volume increased significantly due to the war effort.

The system was designed to be simple: a one or two-digit number was used as a suffix to the city name, indicating a specific geographical area within the city. For example, an address in New York might read "New York 15, NY", with "15" denoting the postal zone within the city.



By the early 1960s, a more organized system was needed. The idea was that improving and extending the existing zone system would accelerate handling and delivery of mail. So, on July 1, 1963, the new ZIP Code system was unveiled. The basic format was comprised of five digits, the first designating a region of the country and subsequent digits localizing the destination further.

Who helped create this concept? Well, there were several key people. The phrase "Zone Improvement Plan" is credited to D. Jamison Cain, a postal service executive.

But Philadelphia Postal Inspector named Robert Moon is considered the "Father of the ZIP Code." He actually submitted his proposal for the postal code

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ZIP CODES! (CONTINUED)

system all the way back in 1944. (Let's see – 19 years to get a new idea implemented. Yep, that sounds about right for the postal service!)

Moon came up with the idea for the first three digits of the ZIP Code, which describe the sectional center facility (SCF). An SCF is a central mail processing facility representing those three digits. The fourth and fifth digits, which give a more precise locale within the SCF, were proposed by Henry Bentley Hahn Sr.

Put differently, the first digit of the ZIP Code represents a group of U.S. states, from "0" for the Northeast to "9" for the far West. The following two digits stand for a central post office facility in that region. The final two digits refer to the area's postal zone or a local post office. For instance, the ZIP Code 90210 signifies that the area is in the western region (9), is sorted through a central facility in California (02), and is specifically linked to Beverly Hills (10).

When the ZIP Code was rolled out on July 1, 1963, it was a non-mandatory system. It took time for people and businesses to figure out how all of this should work on their addresses and mailing labels.

Since this was a big change, the USPOD knew it had to come up with a crafty way to educate and excite the public about the ZIP Code. The result: A cartoon character, named Mr. ZIP, was used to promote the use of the ZIP Code. This cartoon character had a body type and body language depicting speedy delivery. He was lovable and easy to identify. His whimsical characteristics helped win over the American public!

The name "Mr. ZIP" was coined by D. Jamison Cain, the same smart man who created the phrase "Zone Improvement Plan." Mr. ZIP was often depicted with a legend such as "USE ZIP CODE" in the selvage of panes of postage stamps or on the covers of booklet panes of stamps. Mr. ZIP was featured prominently alongside the musical group "The Swingin' Six" in a

variety show that was used to explain the importance of using ZIP Codes.

On October 1, 1963, the USPOD issued its official list of two-letter state abbreviations. This helped to establish proper spacing for the city, the state, and the ZIP Code on the last line of a mailing address. By 1967, this format became mandatory for second- and third-class bulk mailers, and the system was soon adopted generally.

The five-digit system functioned efficiently for nearly two decades, but as population density increased and mail volume grew, further improvements became necessary. In 1983, the USPS introduced the ZIP+4 system, adding four extra digits to the original code. The additional digits offered a higher level of precision, indicating a specific group of addresses, an individual high-volume receiver, or a specific P.O. box.

Some fun facts:

- The ZIP Code itself is not copyrighted, but information associated with it is protected under copyright law.
- Mr. ZIP was adopted as the trademark for the ZIP Code, indicating its copyright status.
- The first ZIP Code was 00001, which was assigned to the General Post Office in New York City.
- There is no 00000 ZIP Code.
- The highest ZIP Code in the United States is 99950, which is assigned to the town of Ketchikan, Alaska.
- There are over 42,000 ZIP Codes in the United States.

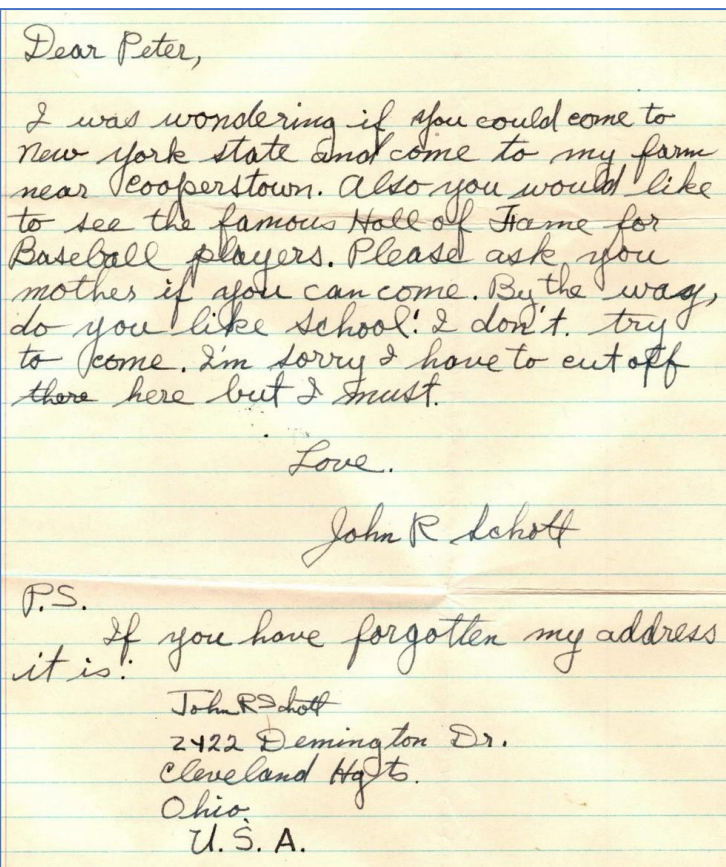


A BOYHOOD LETTER THAT DIDN'T GET DELIVERED, 1947

Michael L. Wilson

In December 1947, John Schott was an 11-year-old living in Cleveland Heights, Ohio. As a baseball fan, he must have been pleased with the Cleveland Indians (now the Cleveland Guardians). They finished 1947 with a winning record and in fourth place in the American League. That was also the year that Larry Doby played his first game with the Indians. That's noteworthy because Doby was the first black player to appear in an American League game. Jackie Robinson, who broke the color barrier in professional baseball, started his career with the Brooklyn Dodgers in the National League earlier in 1947.

Sometime in 1947, probably in the latter part of the year, John penned this letter to his friend Peter:



Dear Peter,

I was wondering if you could come to New York state and come to my farm near Cooperstown. Also you would like to see the famous Hall of Fame for Baseball players. Please ask your mother if you can come. By the way, do you like school? I don't. try to come. I'm sorry I have to cut off there here but I must.

Love,

John R Schott

P.S. If you have forgotten my address it is:

John R Schott
2422 Demington Dr.
Cleveland Hgts.
Ohio
U. S. A.

I don't know Peter's last name, but I do know that he never received John's letter. It landed instead in the Dead Letter Branch of the Miami Post Office.

Because John neglected to put his return address on the envelope (a big no-no), a postal clerk opened John's letter and found his address on the letter. At that point, the letter was placed in an official envelope (see image next page), 5-cents of postage due stamps were affixed, and it was returned to John.

The 5-cents of postage due was per postal regulation. According to the 1948 edition of *Postal Laws and Regulations*, page 370, Section 45.9(b):

Fee for return. The fee of 5 cents for the return of ordinary letters and parcels of the first class to writers which do not bear the card address of the sender shall be collected by means of postage-due stamps to be affixed by postmasters to such letters and parcels before delivery, and the amount to be charged shall be indicated on official or penalty envelopes before dispatch to post offices from a dead letter branch.

Two postage due stamps were affixed for the 5-cents owed: a 2-cent (Scott J81) and a 3-cent (Scott J82). Both stamps have a scarlet color, are perforated 11x10-1/2, and were wet printed.

I'm sure at the time John was bummed that his letter to Peter was returned, but it doesn't seem like it had any lasting adverse impact on him. Indeed, John had an illustrious career in academia (despite the fact that he didn't like school at age 11!) and international affairs.

Born in Rochester in upstate New York in 1936, John's family moved to Ohio sometime in the 1940s. Census reports show the family living in New York in 1940 but in Ohio in 1950.

After graduating high school presumably in Ohio, John attended Haverford College outside of Philadelphia where he graduated magna cum laude.

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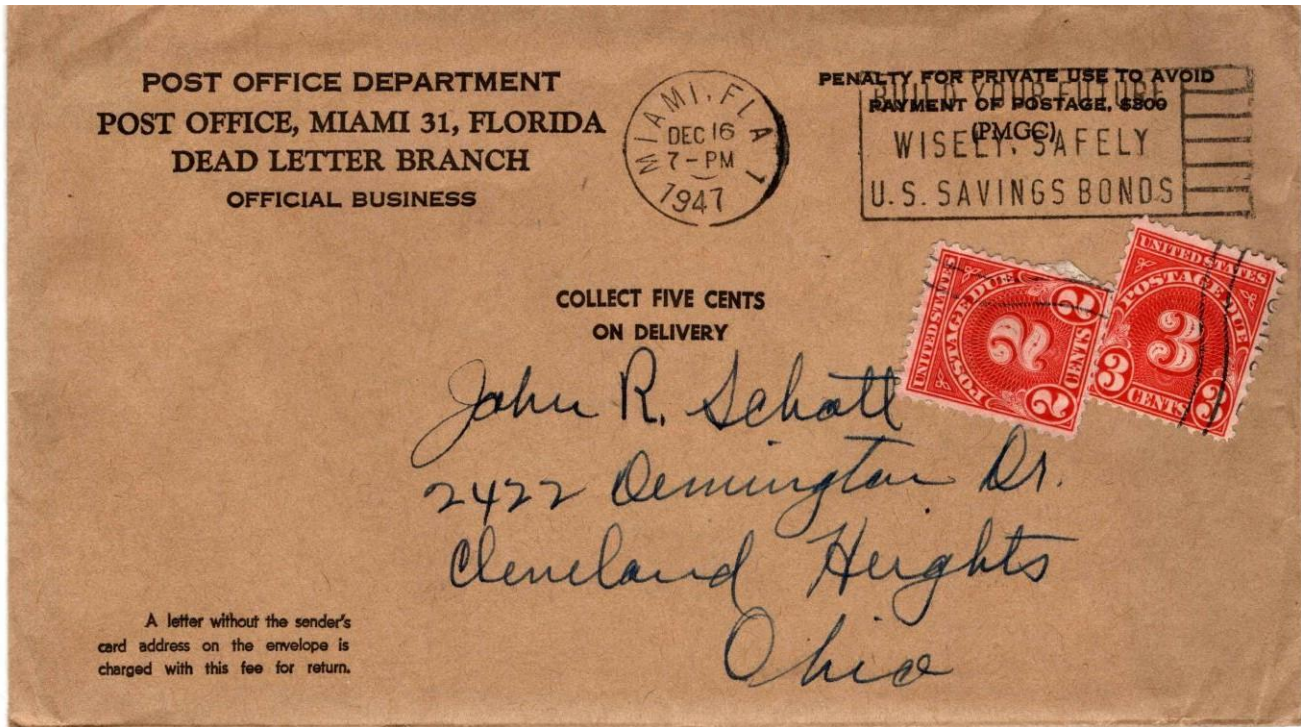
A BOYHOOD LETTER THAT DIDN'T GET DELIVERED, 1947 (CONTINUED)

He followed up his undergraduate education by attending Oxford University in England and then earning a Ph.D. from Harvard.

During his professional career, he taught at Harvard, Wellesley College, and the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University. He also served as senior vice president of Thunderbird Graduate School of International Development. He founded and served as president of Schott & Associates and worked as a consultant in international affairs.

John lived in New Hampshire for a good portion of his adult life where he was very active in community and environmental affairs. He passed away in Dublin, New Hampshire in 2018 at age 82.

I certainly hope that with all John achieved in his life, he also had a chance to visit the Baseball Hall of Fame once or twice!



AWARDS AND HONORS

Alan Warren

At the Garfield-Perry March Party Show near Cleveland in March, **Mark Schwartz** took a large gold, the award for best U.S. exhibit, and the award for best postal history exhibit, AND the single frame grand award with his "Carrier Service at Boston: 1821-1863."

At the same show **Bill Schultz** took a large gold and the Machine Cancel Society award with his

new exhibit "Barr-Fyke Machine Cancel – 1899 to 1901 – West Chester, PA."

In the multiframe section Mark received another large gold along with the American Philatelic Congress award for "Independent Mail and Express Company Operations at Boston: 1843-5."

Congratulations Mark and Bill!

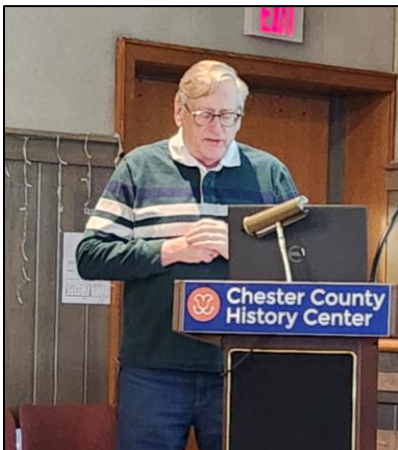
PHILATELIC GATHERING, MARCH 15, 2025

Members gathered at the Chester County History Center in West Chester, Pa., to hear two fantastic lectures.

Mike Wilson gave a presentation based on an article he wrote for *First Days* titled, [“Celebrating 50 Years of Airmail Service to Bermuda: A FDC Cover from 1975 and Maybe One from 1925?”](#) Mike described flights of the airship USS *Los Angeles* from Lakehurst, New Jersey to Bermuda in February and April 1925 and the preparations made to carry mail to and from the island. He then described his research into whether a cover from April 1925 carried on the *Los Angeles* and labeled as a Bermudian “First Day Cover” was the real deal. He offered three pieces of circumstantial evidence that supported the assertion, but he couldn’t prove it definitively. He concluded by

describing the impact that the airship *Los Angeles* made on Bermuda, including the fact that it has been commemorated on two Bermudian stamps.

The second speaker was Tom Geiger who described some [“Cool Stuff: Things I’ve Found Interesting and Saved over 55 Years of Collecting.”](#) These included the first stamp he collected – the 1966 Johnny Appleseed U.S. commemorative, covers cancelled on Christmas Day and New Year’s Day, a first day cover signed by Peanuts cartoonist Charles Schulz, several envelopes addressed to Dwight D. Eisenhower, and a number of humorous messages seen on postcards, among others. Tom also commented on his ongoing efforts with eBay projects that take up his time and a lot of space in the house!



Left: Mike Wilson



Right: Tom Geiger

PHILATELIC GATHERING APRIL 19

Two GPSCC members are on the Philatelic Gathering’s April 19 program.

Louis Gotlib will present “Liniments, Laxatives and a Congressman: Demas Barnes and His Stable of Patent Medicine Companies,” and Alan Warren will present “Denmark: The Christian X Definitive Issues of the 1940s on First Day Covers – An Overview.”

The Philatelic Gathering meets at the Chester County History Center, 225 N. High Street, West Chester, from 10:00 a.m. to noon. There is free on

street parking and free coffee and donuts. After the meeting, whoever wants to join the group for a Dutch treat luncheon at a nearby restaurant in West Chester is welcome. Contact Kean Spencer (keanwspencer1@gmail.com) if you would like to attend. There is no cost, but donations to the CCHC are appreciated.

