THE PHILLY PHILATELIST

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

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November 2026 | www.GPSCC.org | Volume 14, Issue 10

NEXT MEETING

November 14, 2026 at 10:00 a.m.
Community Rooms
GIANT Supermarket
315 N. York Rd., Willow Grove, PA

Lunch:

For those interested, we will meet at noon at **Graeme Park Pizza** for a Dutch treat lunch after this meeting. Graeme Park Pizza is located at 801 County Line Road in Horsham, about five miles or a 20-minute drive north of the meeting location. Graeme Park Pizza's menu can be viewed here: https://www.graemeparkpizza.com/menus.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Paul F. Miller

Wow! Another year has quickly passed.

As you read this, we will be in the month of November 2026. That means Thanksgiving and the holiday season are right around the corner. Let me be the first to wish you a wonderful year end, a very happy holiday season, and a happy and healthy start to the next new year.

GPSCC membership activity was in full swing throughout all of 2026. Looking back, I remember that GPSCC had great meetings during the year – including the ever-popular "Stamp Show-and-Tell" meeting.

A sneak peek into 2027 allows me to tell you that another "Stamp Show-and-Tell" will be scheduled for the May 2027 meeting. It is always a great event for our members, and everyone enjoys participating. Start thinking about the cool, interesting, and fun stamp items that you may want to share with the club next year. Plan on attending, if you can.

Another big event in 2026, although not directly connected to our club meetings, was the Boston 2026 World Expo – the international stamp show that is held in the United States about once every ten years. Many of GPSCC's members attended this once-in-a-lifetime event and reported back that it was fantastic.

I reported in our newsletter on the Expo for several months leading up to the event and did some follow-up reporting after the event, too. If you were able to attend, I hope it was a great experience for you.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE (CONTINUED)

Although not every GPSCC member may have attended all the 2026 meetings or the Boston 2026 World Expo, all members could have enjoyed National Stamp Collecting Month during October 2026.

At our October 2026 meeting, I highlighted some fun history and interesting facts about National Stamp Collecting Month. Whether you were able to attend the October 2026 meeting or not, I hope you enjoyed the month, celebrating your own collection and stamp collecting in general. Remember, as a philatelist, you are part of a much larger group than GPSCC, because stamp collecting is viewed as the world's most popular hobby with millions of people actively participating!

Looking forward, what do we have on the near horizon?

Well, the GPSCC 2027 Membership Dues Renewal has begun, with many members already responding and providing a resounding "Yes" to continuing their membership. As of the end of October 2026, I am happy to report that we have a 67% response rate for 2027 renewals. That's great progress! It is wonderful to see the strong participation level and support for GPSCC. Remember, a 2027 membership allows you to participate in the club in any way that fits your lifestyle. Attend a meeting, if you like; read the newsletter from front to back; be a presenter at a meeting; write an article for the newsletter; and stay up to date with periodic email messages about club activities throughout the year.

Lastly, a great way to exercise another fun aspect of the club is by attending the Holiday Dinner. This year, the Holiday Dinner is scheduled for December 15, 2026. We are currently looking into a new restaurant alternative. Information about the dinner and how we will manage the process will be sent out via email in the near future. Plan to attend if you can because it is a great way to mingle with club members and enjoy the holiday spirit.

In summary, 2026 has been (and will continue to be) a great year for GPSCC and its members. Let's keep the momentum going, rolling it right into 2027.

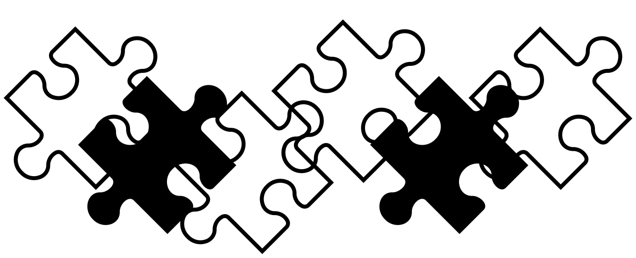
Remember to renew your membership for 2027 so that you can participate in what we have waiting for you next year. Happy holidays and Happy New Year!

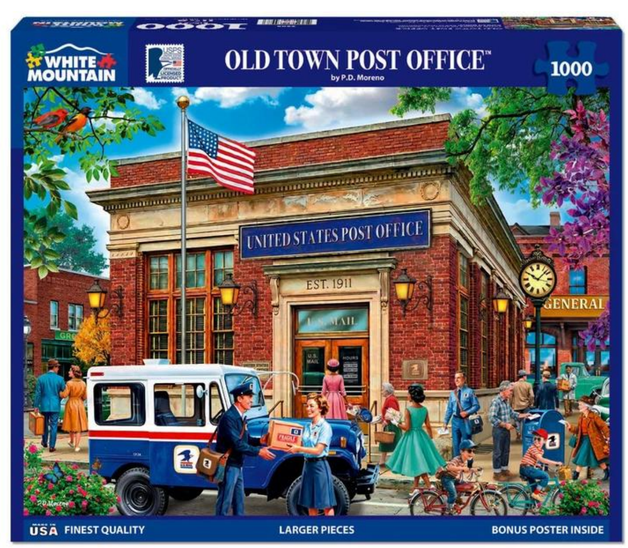
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NEED A BREAK FROM COLLECTING?

With winter rapidly approaching, we can all expect to spend more time indoors. Stamp collecting is a great way to pass the time, but sometimes you just need a break.

In those cases, how about tackling a jigsaw puzzle? Here's one with an old-timey feel that is still connected to the hobby. You can find this one at White Mountain Puzzles.




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PROGRAM FOR NOVEMBER 14, 2026: HARALD KRIEG ON "EAST AFRICA INDEPENDENCE"

Our last meeting for 2026 will take place on a Saturday morning instead of a Tuesday evening.

The change is to accommodate our speaker, **Harald Krieg**, who will discuss "**East Africa Independence**." Harald will join us via Zoom from his home in Germany.

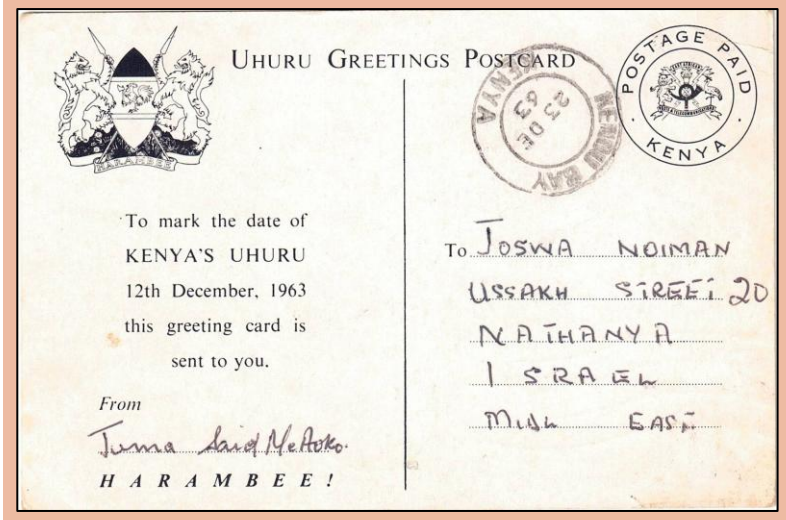
Harald will cover the colonial history of the East African territories, the differences in the structures of the colonial administrations versus the postal administrations, and the different movements for independence in Kenya, Tanganyika, Uganda and Zanzibar.

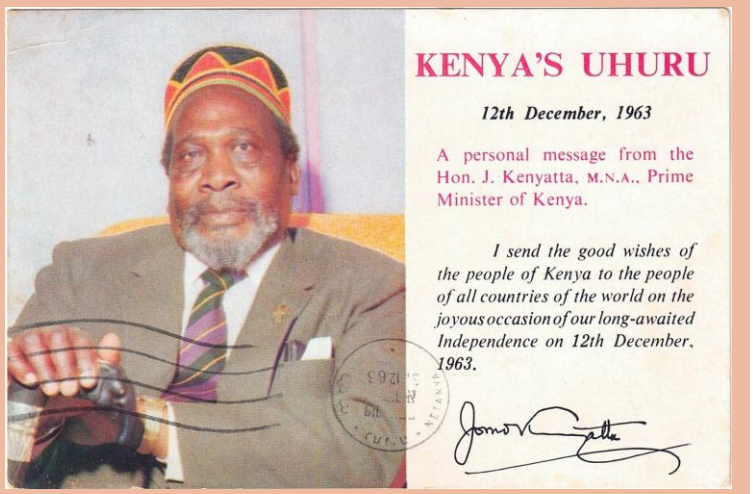
He will discuss how independence features on philatelic material and the consequences of independence, i.e., what did the countries develop towards?

Harald Krieg was born in 1970 and grew up in southern Germany near the Swiss border. He has lived in Neuss, Germany for over 20 years. He studied chemistry and has been working in the automotive catalyst industry for nearly 30 years.

Introduced to stamp collecting by his mother, Harald has been a passionate collector since childhood. At the age of 14, he decided to pursue a unique collection, focusing on stamps from Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda, rather than following common trends. Today, he specializes in stamps from British East Africa and German East Africa, as well as all postal territories that have evolved into modern-day Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda.

His interest in stamp collecting has led him to visit East Africa and other parts of the African continent numerous times, fostering a deep connection with the region. Harald is a Fellow of the Royal Philatelic Society London and a member of several philatelic societies, including the East Africa Study Circle (UK), ArGe Sammler Deutscher Kolonialpostwertzeichen (Germany), the German Colonies Collectors Group (USA), and various other organizations.





The New York Times

Reflections on 1960, the Year of Africa

The inspiration for this talk is this article that appeared in the New York Times *on February 6, 2020.*

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SHARE YOUR FAVORITE STAMP OR COVER!

I would like to highlight your favorite stamps or covers in *The Philly Philatelist*. All you need to do is send me a picture of the item and a sentence or two about why it's your favorite.

If your favorite item is a stamp and you don't have a way to scan an image, just give me the country, year and a description, and I'll track it down.

If it's a cover, bring it to a meeting and I'll take a picture of it, or send it to me via regular mail and I'll scan and return it to you. My mailing address is 19 Brookdale Dr., Doylestown PA 18901. Thanks!

Mike W. (newsletter@gpscc.org).

UPCOMING EVENTS

November 21, 2026 – Philatelic Gathering, Chester County History Center, 225 N. High Street, West Chester, PA, 10:00 a.m.-Noon. Presenters are **GPSCC member Louis Gotlib** on "Match and Medicine RS1 and RS66-72," and Ronald Majors on "Highlights of the Postal History of the Decimal Issue of Canada (1859-1868)."

December 10-11, 2026 – 14th Winton M. Blount Postal History Symposium, National Postal Museum, Washington, DC.

UPCOMING CLUB MEETINGS

2026: Dec. 15 Holiday Dinner (no meeting)

2027: Jan. 19 – Feb. 16 – Mar. 16 – Apr. 20 – May 18 – Jun. 15 – Aug. 17 – Sep. 21 – Oct. 19 – Nov. 13 – Dec. 21 Holiday Dinner (tentative).

All 2027 meetings start at 7:00 p.m. except Nov. 13, which will start at 10:00 a.m.

AND NOW FOR A LITTLE HUMOR...

Philatelists never lose their temper. They just get a little perforated around the edges.

A stamp collector's marriage lasts because both partners know when to stick together and when to lick their problems.

My wife says I care more about my stamps than her. I told her that's not true, because she's one of a kind and the stamps came in sheets of fifty.

MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 20, 2026 GPSCC MEETING

President Paul Miller called the meeting to order promptly at 7:00 p.m. Since October is National Stamp Collecting Month, Paul gave some background information about our hobby.

National Stamp Collecting Month was the brainchild of the Council of Philatelic Organizations and the United States Postal Service in 1981. Postmaster General William F. Bolger initiated the program to promote the educational and recreational benefits of stamp collecting across all age groups, calling it "the hobby of a lifetime."

John Bourke is widely considered to be the world's first fiscal/revenue stamp collector. In 1774 he served as Receiver-General of Stamp Duties in Ireland. He assembled a specialized book containing various embossed revenue stamps and hand-stamped charge marks. This took place before the Penny Black in 1840. His original collection survived and is preserved in the Royal Irish Academy in Dublin.

According to independent and market research reports, there are around 60 million stamp collectors in the world. Roughly 63% are over 50 years old. North America accounts for 34% of all stamp collectors.

Our GPSCC membership is now at a total of 67 members. Of those members, 12 joined in 2026.

Dues notices were sent out during the first week of October. At this point, 51% of members have renewed. Fifteen members were notified that they were randomly selected to receive free membership in the GPSCC 2027 Membership Dues Sweepstakes.

Members will receive notification about the location of the GPSCC Holiday Dinner scheduled for December 15, 2026. The previous location, The W Tavern has closed, and the club is working on a new venue.

Paul introduced **Bill duBell** who presented "1931 Zeppelin Mail, LZ-127 Graf Zeppelin." He is new to collecting Zeppelins and is learning more each day. The cover that started it for him was the first leg of the round-the-world flight in August 1929 from New York to Germany.

Bill uses a variety of resources including the German-language Michel catalog and the online American Air Mail Society Zeppelin and Airship Catalog. Using these reference materials, Bill is able to tell the stories of these various Zeppelin flights.

His collection includes stamps, covers, and postcards from around the world. Members were able to have a close-up view of these materials in binders, which were passed around during his presentation. He also has a growing collection of airmail stamps. It was great to see a presentation on a subject that we, as collectors, hear so much about.

Vice President, Mike Wilson, reminded members that our next meeting will be on Saturday, November 14, 2026 starting at 10:00 a.m. Our speaker will be Harald Krieg from Germany who will present "East Africa Independence." The topic was recommended by member Anne Gibby who became interested in this after reading an article in the *New York Times*.

Respectfully submitted by Robert Cohen





Bill duBell during his presentation (left) with his title slide (right).

DID YOU KNOW?

Paul F. Miller

Last month in my "President's Message," I discussed the importance of membership to an organization. Membership creates a sense of belonging, which can promote cooperation, shared goals, and enhanced opportunities for development.

At the GPSCC, we are lucky to have a membership base that is thriving and growing. Each member participates as desired, but we are all members because of our shared enjoyment of the stamp collecting hobby.

Currently, the GPSCC's membership stands at 67. Thanks to efforts that we have in place to attract new members, GPSCC has welcomed 12 new members in 2026 (so far). I warmly welcome these new members and wish them much enjoyment from their membership in the GPSCC.

The new 2026 members are:

Kauko Aro
Don Hargy
Ivan Jurin
David Newman
Becky Potter
Darius Rogers
Bill duBell
Steven Hubschmitt
Emil Kupper
Dave Nicholas
Kevin Rice
Lionel Wiley

I also want to recognize two members who joined at the end of 2025:

Frederick Palmer **Amy Slutter**

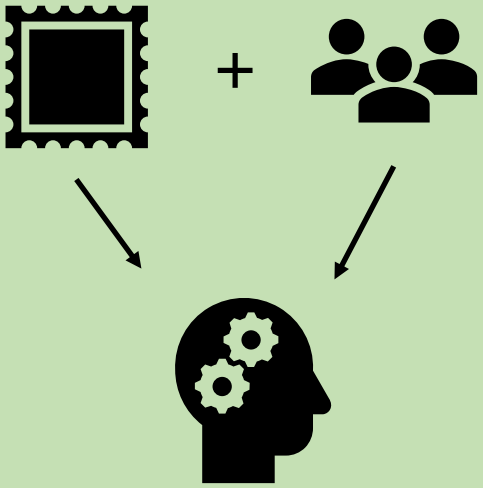
If you know someone who would enjoy and benefit from a GPSCC membership, please let them know about our club. Membership applications are available on the GPSCC website or can be obtained from one of the GPSCC Officers.

KEEPING YOUR BRAIN HEALTHY: ADVICE FROM A TOP DEMENTIA EXPERT

The October 27, 2026, issue of the *Washington Post* featured a story with the headline, "At 80, he's a top dementia expert. Here's how he keeps his brain healthy."

That expert, Ron Petersen, recommends (1) exercising at least three times a week, (2) staying intellectually active, such as "engaging in hobbies," (3) eating a heart-healthy diet, (4) getting regular, quality sleep, and (5) staying connected.

Stamp collecting and coming to meetings of the GPSCC cannot do much for items (1), (3), and (4), but they definitely check boxes (2) and (5)!





U.S. stamps issued in 1986 celebrating Stamp Collecting (Scott 2198-2201)

AWARDS AND HONORS

Alan Warren

At the NOJEX show held in October in Hasbrouck Heights, N.J., **Vernon Morris** received a large gold and the reserve grand award for his "Evolution and Impact of Blood's Local Post, 1842-1862."

Mark Schwartz won a large gold, the Porter Venn award and the single frame reserve grand with his "The First U.S. Postal Card of 1873." Mark took another large gold and the U.S. Philatelic Classics Society medal for "The Postal History of Salem, Massachusetts."

The November 2026 issue of the *Pennsylvania Postal Historian* includes three short articles by GPSCC members.

Bill Schultz wrote two. One is titled, "Early Postmaster Postal Receipt – West Chester, PA" that highlights a $0.47 postal receipt dated April 1, 1815. Bill writes, "Finding an intact postal document from West Chester predating 1820 is a truly wonderful find, as the earliest known West Chester cover is dated 1809."

Bill's other piece is titled, "1892 - West Chester, PA to Paris via NYC & London." Bill describes the journey of a cover that arrived in Paris on July 15, 1892, ten days after it departed West Chester. It was addressed to Drexel, Harjes & Co., a Paris-based investment bank that counted Anthony J. Drexel among its founders. Drexel was an American banker who played a major role in the rise of modern global finance after the Civil War. As the dominant partner at Drexel & Co. of Philadelphia, he founded Drexel, Morgan & Co., which later became J.P. Morgan & Co., now JP Morgan Chase. He also founded Drexel University in Philadelphia in 1891.

Michael L. Wilson wrote the third contribution from a GPSCC member. His article is titled, "A Real Man's Christmas Tree Holder: An 1896 Advertising Cover." A cover postmarked in Philadelphia on December 10, 1896, features an ad for the "Crown" Christmas tree holder. The Crown was made of cast iron, weighed six pounds and could be screwed to the floor. It could hold up to a 3-inch diameter tree. The only drawback: it had no water reservoir.



The back page of the November 2026 issue of Pennsylvania Postal Historian *included a half-page ad promoting the GPSCC.*

FOUR THOUSAND POUNDS OF CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

Michael L. Wilson



The bomb on this V-mail letter carried no explosives, only good cheer. Its printed casing reads "4000 Pounds of Christmas Greetings with Best Wishes for 1944, Timed to Explode Upon Reaching You!" Above it, a formation of B-17 Flying Fortresses and escorting fighters crosses the sky. To the right, a holly wreath topped by the winged star of the Army Air Forces frames the printed words "from . . . Somewhere in England," with the sender's name, "Len," written in between.

The sender was Leonard William Ellis (1921–1999), a Philadelphia native whose Army serial number appears in the return address block beside A.P.O. 634, c/o Postmaster, New York, N.Y. That post office served Camp Lynn at Daws Hill, High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire, the headquarters of the U.S. Eighth Air Force, known by its code name "Pinetree." From there the command directed the daylight bombing campaign against Germany. A cartoon bomb made a fitting Christmas card for men whose daily work was planning the delivery of real ones.

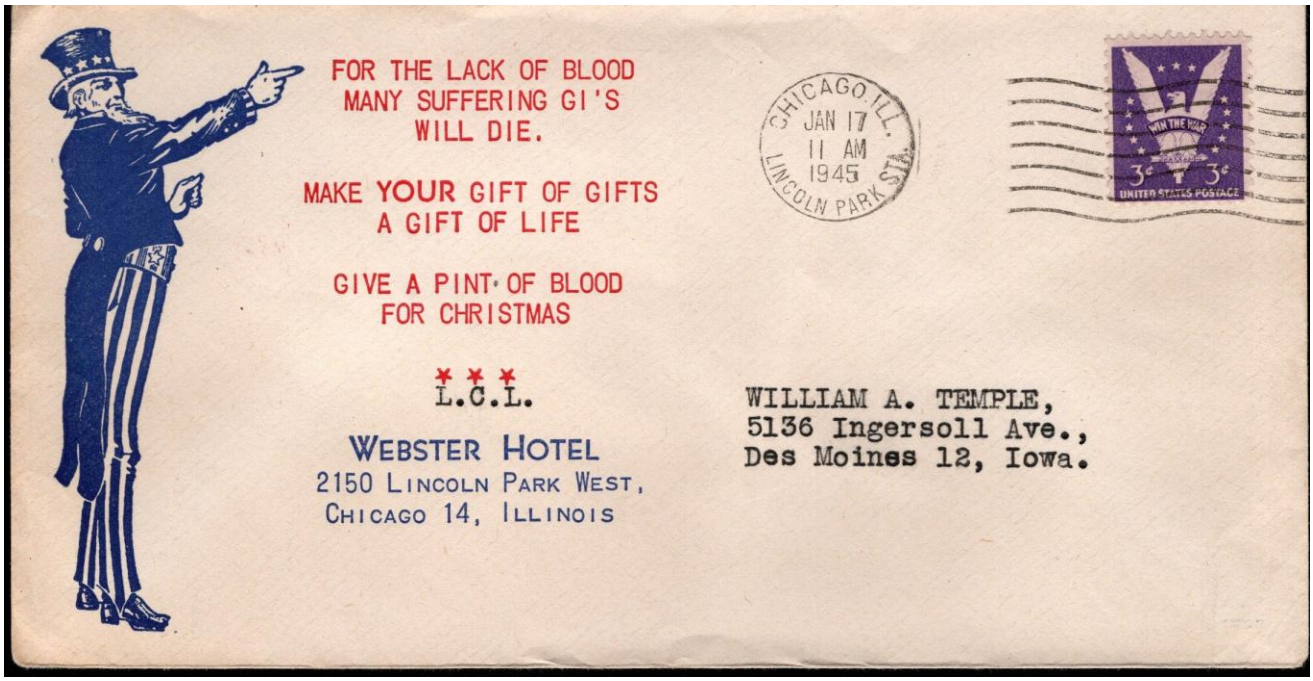
The letter went to Mr. and Mrs. R.S. Hays at 4441 Cottman Street in Philadelphia. Ellis lived just up the street at 4525 Cottman, so the Hays were probably neighbors. Before it was filmed, an Army officer read it and applied the circular "Passed by Army Examiner" censor's handstamp, signed in ink, at upper left.

The Post Office Department inaugurated V-mail on June 15, 1942, to solve a wartime shipping problem. Soldiers wrote on a standard form that was censored, photographed onto 16-millimeter microfilm, and flown home, with roughly 1,600 letters fitting on a single roll. At a receiving station, the film was printed on photographic paper at about one quarter of the original size, and the print was mailed to the addressee. What survives in a collection is that print: the sender's handwriting, the censor's mark and the printed design all passed through the camera together.

The wording "Best Wishes for 1944" indicates this one was sent during the 1943 holiday season, as the bomber offensive from England was building toward its peak.

A PINT OF BLOOD FOR CHRISTMAS: AN UNUSUAL WARTIME CHRISTMAS APPEAL

Michael L. Wilson



Christmas in 1944 was hardly a season of peace. American forces were fighting in Europe and the Pacific, casualties were mounting, and the need for blood donations remained urgent. Against that background, an unusual advertising cover from Chicago offered a Christmas message quite different from the usual wishes of peace and goodwill.

The message was blunt: "FOR THE LACK OF BLOOD MANY SUFFERING GI'S WILL DIE." Beneath it came the Christmas appeal: "MAKE YOUR GIFT OF GIFTS A GIFT OF LIFE" and "GIVE A PINT OF BLOOD FOR CHRISTMAS."

A large blue illustration of Uncle Sam points toward the appeal, reinforcing the patriotic message. The red lettering and blue illustration make an eye-catching combination, even without the usual Christmas trees or Santa Clauses.

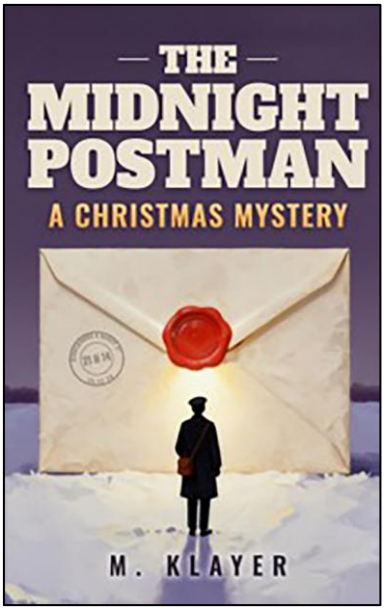
The envelope bears the imprint of Chicago's Webster Hotel. It was mailed from Lincoln Park Station on January 17, 1945, to William A. Temple in Des Moines, Iowa. The three-cent Win the War stamp (Scott 905), issued July 4, 1942, paid the domestic first-class letter rate.

Although the envelope promotes giving blood for Christmas, it was mailed more than three weeks after the holiday. Perhaps the hotel was using up envelopes left over from its 1944 Christmas campaign. Whatever the explanation, the appeal remained timely.

The American Red Cross began its national blood donor program in February 1941. During World War II, it collected more than 13 million donations, including approximately 5.4 million in 1944 alone. Much of the blood was processed into dried plasma for treating wounded servicemen.

The cover reminds us that Christmas on the American home front was not always about exchanging presents. In 1944, the most valuable gift might have been a pint of blood.

A CHRISTMAS MYSTERY FOR YOUNG POSTAL HISTORIANS



THE MIDNIGHT POSTMAN: A Christmas Mystery
By M. Klayer

298 pages
Ages 9–12
Kindle, paperback, and hardcover editions

What happens to letters addressed to Santa Claus? In *The Midnight Postman*, author M. Klayer turns that question into a Christmas mystery with a decidedly philatelic twist.

The story takes place in Strasbourg, France, in December 1958. On the top floor of the city's Central Post Office, 11,000 letters addressed to Santa are awaiting destruction on Christmas Eve. But something strange is happening. Each night, someone secretly answers the letters.

Eleven-year-old Odile, who keeps a notebook of postmarks, decides to investigate. Her search takes readers into the world of postal sorting rooms, cancellations, railway schedules, and the mysteries that can be uncovered in an envelope.

What makes the book particularly appealing to philatelists is its interactive format. Readers are invited to help solve the mystery using 48 reproduced exhibits, including envelopes, postage stamps, postmarks, a post office floor plan, and a railway timetable. Twelve puzzles provide additional clues, including one involving the old "language of stamps," in which the placement of a stamp on an envelope supposedly conveyed a secret message.

The book's 36 short chapters unfold between December 1 and Christmas morning, making it suitable for reading a chapter or two each evening during Advent.

Klayer describes the novel as a Christmas mystery for readers ages 9–12, although its postal setting and historical details may appeal to adult collectors as well.

For philatelists looking to introduce a young reader to the fascinating world of postal history, this unusual Christmas mystery might make an appropriate gift.

This description is based on information supplied by the author, rather than an independent review of the book.



U.S. "Christmas Cookies" Forever stamps issued September 19, 2026.