

# Philatelic Society of Lancaster County



The James Buchanan Chapter (#173) of the  
American Philatelic Society  
Chapter 118 of the American Topical Assn.

## Meeting Begins at 7:00, Wednesday, 12 March 2014

Bluebird Commons / Woodcrest Villa. Dick Shaefer, Host  
Doors Open at 6:30-Come Early to Buy, Sell, and/or Trade

## From the Desk of the President

Hopefully with all this winter's snow, everyone has had some quality time to work on their collections and exhibits. By the time this newsletter is received, we'll have seen some relief from much of the snow and will be thinking about spring. It is only eight calendar days away-at least on paper!

At the January meeting, we discussed the latest documented PSLC by-laws (2008) which we want to update, amend, and reinstitute. Our goal is to have a copy available at each meeting for reference, one for each new member, and a personal copy for existing club members who desire one. Our club officers and

board members have copies, and we seek input from all club members to assess the current document and recommend additions, deletions, and changes. After the first draft, we'll need to re-focus, edit, and finalize. We'll need your help.

Recently I spoke with Roy Baardsgen about our annual bus trip, as it is always best to plan as early as possible because of all the work necessary to put together such an event. Roy said that presently there is no destination planned. We feel we need an open discussion at our March meeting to establish a destination of interest to all members, one that will be a worthwhile excursion that

everyone will enjoy. So please give it some thought and bring your suggestions this month. All suggestions are welcome.

I know it is early in the year, but it is never too early to open the discussion about officers for next year. Bill Greiner will move up to the presidency and will need a "veep" for 2015. An early "volunteer" would save a lot of solicitation and meeting time over the next several months.

Our program for March is the Westtown Local Stamps with Bill Schultz. This will be very interesting and informative, so I hope to see everyone there on Wednesday. **Len**

## The Westtown Locals: Bill Schultz

The Westtown School in Chester Co., PA, is about 25 miles from Philadelphia. It opened as a Quaker boarding school in 1799 and is still in operation. It is the second oldest secondary school in America. Since this school was located 4.3 miles from the Westchester, PA PO, mail had to be transported to and from the PO by stage coach.

As such, a two cent fee was charged on all outgoing letters from the school starting in 1853. Prepaid local stamps were sold at the school for this purpose, and they were used

until the late 1860s. These local stamps were to be affixed to the back of outgoing correspondence, however some on the front are extant. When tied to the cover with a cancel, the value of the local can reach up to four figures.

There are seven (7) pictured variations of the Westtown locals in the 2008 Scott *U.S. Specialized Catalogue*.

Pictured nearby is a black and white facsimile of an 1857 cropped cover with a Westtown local (#145L1) which is tied to the cover and a 3¢

claret #11 Geo. Washington.

Bill Schultz is returning to PSLC once again. He will tell us the stories of the Westtown School and their very historical local stamps, and show us a variety of these from his collection.



Volume 77, No. 3

March, 2014

### Highlights

- Westtown Locals
- Len's Vision
- A Fall Bus Trip?
- Ron Hess, Collector
- Shows on the Road
- From the Literature
- Help for Lancopex
- Japanese Postmarks

### VISITORS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME

PSLC Meets the 2nd Wednesday of the month (except August) at The Bluebird Commons in Woodcrest Villa, 2001 Harrisburg Ave, Lancaster, PA 17601 at 7:00 PM. Dues are \$10.00. For club info, call Lucy Eyster: 717.735-2586

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## 2014 Programs & Stamp Shows

### Monthly Programs

**12 March:** The Westtown Locals. Bill Schultz. Dick Shaefer, Host

**9 April:** 1.) The Patriot Postal Cards of the 1970-1980s. John Brownell. 2.) Lancopex advert card preparation for show. John and Deb Ehleiter, Hosts

**14 May:** Spring Auction. Bill and Truude Greiner, Hosts

**11 June:** Rogue River Mailboat. Bob Brown. Paul Petersen, Host

**9 July:** U.S. International Philatelic Expo Stamps, Covers, Labels & More, Paul Petersen. James Ziogas, Host

**13 August:** Club Family Picnic

**10 September:** Fall Auction. Lucy Eyster, Host

**08 October:** Great Britain Inland Airmail Service: 1935-1937. Mike Bach. Fred Sargent and Fred Mackey, Hosts

**12 November:** Open House, One-Page Exhibits, and Your Best Stuff Extravaganza. Len Kasper. Bob Paire, Host

**10 December:** Dinner

### Local Shows

**Some Sundays Stamp Bourse:** Farm & Home Center, Lancaster. 22 June, 17 Aug, 5 Oct, 7 Dec. Kevin Kellman (K<sup>2</sup>), Manager; 301-371-4558. Door prizes for registered customers-no need to be present to win.

**Delpex:** Nur Shine Center, New Castle, DE. (S) 12 April 2014

**Philadelphia National Stamp Expo:** Egypt Road, Oaks, PA, F→N, 3-6 April 2014

**Lancopex:** Farm & Home Center, F/S 25-26 April 2014

## Fall Bus Trip?

Where to? Bring your trip desires.

## February Minutes and Treasury

Joy Bouchard and Lou DiFelice

**Opening:** Len Kasper opened the meeting at 7:05 p.m. and thanked all who attended, given the evening's heavy snow forecast.

**Membership:** Lucy Eyster introduced tonight's visitor, Catherine Stringes from Woodcrest. Current membership rosters were provided for officers and board members. Tonight's attendance was 30.

**Minutes:** The January meeting minutes and treasurer's report were approved unanimously by voice vote.

**Treasurer's Report:** (See below and left for \$\$\$ values) Lou DiFelice gave a detailed report of the club's income and expenses for the month.

**Drawing:** Betty Lentz and RD Noble won the Feb. drawings.

**Old Business:**

**Lancopex:** Lou noted an increase in venue costs at the

Farm & Home Center. It is quite expensive. Other sites are available, but each has its pluses and minuses. Please convey any recommendations you may have to Lou.

Paul Petersen passed around a sign-up sheet for **show patrons** at \$5/per person or couple. These will be listed in the show program. He then circulated sign-up sheets for **manpower** for the show to cover Thursday p.m. set up through Saturday p.m. tear down.

**By-laws:** Len said that officers and board members now have copies of the current by-laws that are to be considered for update/revision. All members who are interested in providing input should request a copy. Paul will check with APS to see if they have any recommended guidelines for the by-laws in their chapters.

**Programs:** Paul passed

around a sign-up sheet for those interested in attending a pre-meeting (no host) dinner with March speaker, Bill Schultz. This will be at 4:15 p.m. at the Olive Garden Restaurant, 910 Plaza Boulevard on 12 March.

**New Business:** None

**February Programs:** 1.) To celebrate the 100th Anniversary of the Canal Zone, RD Noble showed an APS DVD entitled **Canal Zone Gems**. 2.) Brian Wagner gave a short PowerPoint presentations about a web-based computer program for making a variety of custom stamp album pages. [www.stampalbums.com](http://www.stampalbums.com).

### Treasury Report

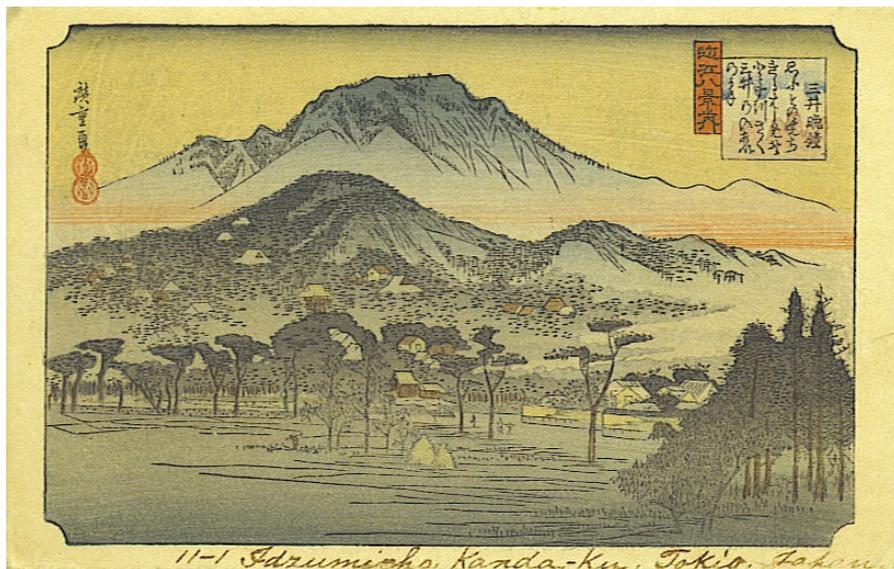
Opening: \$5,702.17 (1 Jan)

Income: \$323.00

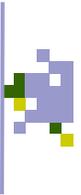
Expenses: \$1,905.95

Closing: \$4,119.22 (31 Jan)

3-CDs valued at \$6,862.36



Though Ed knows very little about Japanese postmarks, stamps, postal history and postcards, he adds that it is fun to dabble. This card was a gift to his wife, as it is one of her favorite art forms. Then she asked him when it was from? See Pg.-4 for a discussion of these dating issues.



## Bits and Pieces from the Philatelic Literature

! In a letter to the editor in the February edition of *The American Philatelist* (pg. 116) GM Lauderbaugh offers a very practical recommendation. In a rush to get to an out-of-state stamp show, he neglected to compile his want list and took his five albums instead, intending to fill in some spaces. Once home he realized that he left an album behind at the show. Fortunately a dealer found it and turned it in to the show chairman. Since GM did not have his name or other identifying information in his album, show personnel could not contact him. Eventually all ended satisfactorily with the return of his album. He has since inscribed his name in all volumes, and he believes that readers should do the same.

! Hal Kline sent a link to *Weird Magazine* with an article about the 20 Feb 1792 signing (by Pres. Geo. Washington) of the **Postal Service Act** which created a national postal service. At the time it cost 6¢ to deliver a letter through a 12 mile radius (\$1.40 in today's dollars) and 12.5¢ to send a letter up to 150 miles. Ben Franklin had been colonial postmaster from 1753 to 1774. As the Revolutionary War was brewing, he recommended that the fledgling U.S. set up a

competing postal service. This was a good call, as Gen'l Washington relied on this service to pass messages from the Army to the Continental Congress during the hostilities. The article concludes with a sidebar about Franklin. He was fired as postmaster in 1774 for publishing the private correspondence of Thomas Hutchinson, the Royal Governor of Massachusetts!

! **Bill Snyder** forwarded a *Wall Street Journal* article on stamp collecting in China, given the rage this has become for both investment and hobby purposes. The number of new collectors and investors continues to rise at a steep curve there, and the market for quality Chinese material has grown significantly.

! There were several philatelic notes of interest in the December issue of *Stamp Magazine* (UK). On page 9 the U.S.A. made headlines with the hunt for the **un-inverted Jenny**. Just as interesting is the article about the **Let's Move Fitness stamps** that were postponed because the White House raised safety concerns. Three stamps depicted unsafe activities including doing a cannonball into the pool, skateboarding without knee pads, and performing a headstand without a helmet.

! In the November '12 issue of

this newsletter was a short piece about the **privatization of Royal Mail** that occurred last fall. Apparently there have been some concerns with the opening price of £3.3/Share which jumped to £4.5 immediately following the opening bell on the stock market. Many wonder if Royal Mail shares were undervalued, and if so, why? As a result, the National Audit Office will be launching a "value-for-money examination" of the whole privatization process including how the price was set. (*Stamp Magazine*, Dec., Pg. 25).

! While those of us in the U.S. are hearing about BridgeGate, Justin Bieber's antics, and Michael Sam's coming out of the closet, there is a serious referendum this year in the United Kingdom, that consortium of England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland. In his letter to the editor (*Stamp Magazine*, Dec., Pg. 30), Rob Roy MacGregor asked why Royal Mail is not issuing a stamp to mark Scotland's 18 September 2014 historic referendum on independence. Rob Roy opines that perhaps the public will have to "wait for Scotland's first stamp issue as a born-again independent nation, some time in 2015 perhaps."

## In Flagranti Collecto

Retired firefighter and PSLC member Ron Hess was featured in the 7 February 2014 Scribbler Column in the *Lancaster New Era*. Besides philately he is quite knowledgeable in the history of the Lancaster Fire Department with LFD memorabilia in his collection. Ron noted that in the late 19th Century, if a home or business owner was not a paid-up member of the Fire Department, the fire would not be put out. You needed a visible marker (an insurance plaque) on the house to show that you had paid your dues.

## Visit Stamp Shows On The Road

If you plan to travel out of town and desire to attend some stamp shows along the way, there is a nearly one-stop website to help you identify when and where these stamp shows are being held.

Check out: [www.stampshows.com](http://www.stampshows.com)  
 You can check state by state to correlate your itinerary with the scheduled stamp shows. From my brief review, the website seems to be thorough, and just as important, user-friendly. While details of each show may not be complete, the show is listed by location, name and month of offering. A bit of additional research elsewhere will fill in the gaps as needed.

## Lancopex Will Be Here In Just 42 Days

In just 42 days Lancopex will be here. The committee is busy at work to make it a great show. But there are things you can do assist, and your participation is appreciated. Your help is needed as follows:

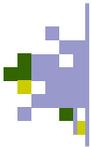
1. Your pre-owned stamp magazines. Bring them to the March or April meetings and/or to the show.

2. Your 1-Page Exhibits and other items in stock pages. Some stock pages and document holders are all you need to share your collection with show customers.

3. Your labor. We need many more to sign up to help to set up and take down and to provide a few hours during the show.



1-Page Exhibit by Lou DiFelice



# Musings: March-2014

## Dating on Japanese postmarks...

For me, the understanding of the Japanese dating system has evolved over time, and I'm far from an expert. It all started several years ago when viewing some correspondence and picture postcards from the Russo-Japanese War of 8 February 1904 to 5 September 1905. Given my collateral interest in postal history, I was enthused by the dates on the postmarks. These did not indicate 1904 or 05. Instead I saw year dates of 37-12-7 and 38-2-19. It was then I learned that many Japanese year-dates as seen on the postmarks and other documents are based on the year of the current emperor's reign. And the three digits of the 38-2-19 date above is a year-month-day format, i.e. the 38th year of the emperor's reign, the second month (February), and the 19th day. In Georgian years it's 19 Feb 1905. See [www.photoguide.jp](http://www.photoguide.jp).

While attending an out-of-town conference in 1986, I had some time to visit the Walker Art Gallery in Minneapolis. I was very fortunate to find an Hiroshige exhibit. He was a famous 19th century woodcut artist known for his views of Edo (Tokyo) and the panoramic countryside, especially Mt. Fujiama. At the Museum Shop, I purchased some books of his works and those of similar artists for my wife. For her, this artwork was love at first sight.

Not too long ago I came across a very beautiful Japanese picture postcard from the early 20th century for

her (See pg. 2). She asked me when it was from. I suggested we examine the postmark. Then I recalled the lesson from the early postal history and went to the internet for a date conversion site. I think my search was "conversion from Japanese to Georgian postmark dates," and that was it. We were able to find an approximate card date.



The problem, however, is not that simple, as there have been four emperors since the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, and the postmark does not differentiate among emperors. And there is a further caveat. The reigns overlap for a year. So for example, in 1912 it was the last reigning year of the Meiji Era and the first for Taisho Era.

**Meiji Era:** 1868-1912 (45 years)

**Taisho Era:** 1912-1926 (15 yrs)

**Showa Era:** 1926-1989 (64 yrs)

**Heisei Era:** 1989-pres. (26+ yrs)

Viewing the above table, a Japanese year date of 10 could fit into any of these four eras. However, in their normal documents and correspondence, the Japanese put an initial by the year date to

identify the emperor, but they do not do this on postmarks!

With stamps and postcards, we can use additional clues such as dates and context of known events and images. A Scott's Catalogue is also invaluable. So dating the stamp can help to zero in on the postcard's date. Further, the text in a letter or on a postcard may contribute some clues. From here it is the process of elimination to determine the imperial era represented.

On many covers and PCs there may be a second postmark with the city in English and the date in Georgian with a Day-Month-Year format. Until 1912 Japanese mail had two postmarks, one on the day of mailing, and the other on the date of receipt.

A few facts: Japan's first stamps were in 1871 and their first private picture postcards came in 1900 by a governmental postal act. There was hand painting on PCs until about 1912.

Now, let's turn to my wife's postcard. Fortunately it has two postmarks, one in Japanese and the other in English. The Japanese date is 1-12-28. The stamp is Scott # 99, a 4 sen rose from 1899-1907. It was mailed from Tokyo to Hartford. If we look at the year date of 1, this could occur in any of the four eras listed above. Since there were

no postage stamps in 1868, it cannot be the Meiji Era. The year 1 fits into the following: 1912 of the Taisho Era; 1926 of the Showa Era; and 1989 of the Heisei Era. I would go with the Taisho Era. And this correlates to the Georgian date of 28-12-12 which is 28 December 1912.

Some evidence comes from the text of the undated card. The message refers to cold weather and snow, so winter months of Dec. & Jan. may be indicated. This is from Kim Kawaguchi and is addressed to Mrs. Grase W. Bill. Might this be Bill W. Grase? Or Bill Grace, or Grace Bill? Language issues?



Then there is one of my favorite bullseye cancels as seen above. The dating of this is not so easy, and while I am still working on it, I hope to discuss this in a future column of the newsletter. Ed. ☐



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