

Lebanon Stamp Collectors Club

December, 2022

Number 41



An Post launches new digital stamp (*Nenagh Guardian*, nenaghguardian.ie)

Digital postage is coming of age

By Paul Petersen, PSLC

Ireland has joined the bandwagon of some other European nations seeking a new way of paying for postage other than the classical postage stamp!

There are several threads of discussion occurring in the philatelic press, and within several stamp society meetings and journals, of the many changes in the hobby – some good, some not as good, and some COVID-related – that are taking place. There has been some amalgamation in each; there is even some talk of a merger of The American Philatelic Society and the American Stamp Dealers Association. But at the highest levels, we are seeing an early trend in some stamp issuing entities in offering alternatives to the postage stamp as a way to pay the fee(s) for first- and other letter-class mailing rates.

At a recent meeting of the Lancaster club, **Larry Rosenblum** screen-shared a Danish cover that was mailed with a 4X3 matrix of numbers in the right upper corner of the cover, the traditional placement site for the postage stamp. These hand-written numbers or code are unique to the cover and are used in place of stamps. They are obtained through a special app on the customer's laptop or smart phone. And this process has been going on for a decade or so.

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In the 7 November issue of *Linn's* (Denise McCarthy, Pg. 12) it is reported that Ireland's *An Post* is issuing the digital stamp, a 12 digit/letter code to be hand-written on the cover in place of the stamp. Ireland joins the other European nations of Denmark, Norway, Germany, Sweden, and Holland in this service. This way a letter can be mailed at any time or place, and this comes with next-day delivery and delivery notification. This serves those who use postage infrequently but may encounter a situation when a stamp is needed on that rare occasion.

This digital 'convenience' comes with a 60% premium, as the traditional cost of a stamped corresponding item is €1.25 (+/- \$1.25), and the digital stamp is €2.00 (\$1.99). But why buy a booklet of stamps when only one or two are needed? And there is no trip to the post office. And at the world's gas prices...Have to wonder how these digital stamp trial balloons will turnout in a few years hence. What might we speculate for postal customers of the USPS? I can think of a few individuals who would rather do this than search though their junk drawers for that odd postage stamp or two that has been lying around. What do you think? P²

LSCC Christmas Dinner – Tuesday, December 20, 2022

Quentin Haus Restaurant, RT 72 South in Quentin PA

6:30 PM

If you haven't already, please let Don Smith know that you are coming. But, if you need to make a last-minute decision to join us, please come out for some philatelic fellowship!

Digital postage: a win for postal history preservation?

I love working with my stamps – my mounting solutions have seldom endured, but the most fun I have with stamps is sorting them, rather than looking at them. I consider myself a stamp collector more than a postal historian; most of the lots I go after have been soaked off of their envelopes long ago. So, I think the introduction of digital postage could become a win for the preservation of postal history.

It's possible that the use of digital postage can encourage the preservation of the complete piece of mail. The habit has always been to cut the stamp off the envelope and soak it off the paper. Self-adhesive postage has largely rendered soaking obsolete, but many stamp collectors have adapted, and accept collecting used self-adhesive stamps on paper.

Digital postage really isn't anything new; postage meters have been around for the last century. But the fact that the commercial digital codes that have been developed are random, manuscript markings on the mail piece, might just encourage people who are inclined to save them to keep the entire package intact. With a few exceptions, manual postage markings ended with the stampless mail era. Another similarity to the early days of stamps is, there was a discount available for those who prepaid their mail by purchasing a stamp as the USPOD transitioned to requiring them for use on all mail. The digital postage "convenience fee" may eventually go away as the practice catches on with the public.

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Our old habits will not necessarily be habits for the new generations of collectors that will succeed us. There will be plenty of old stamps left around for people to enjoy, but the fact that the use of stamps is declining doesn't worry me one bit. The old hunter-gatherer impulse will continue to drive hobbyists to make collections of new objects that appeal to their tastes.

I can't see stamps going away completely, because it would eliminate a source of revenue for postal authorities the world over. Even people who don't collect stamps will continue to enjoy using them on their mail. But I also wonder if the USPS ever regrets all the stamps people bought for their collections decades ago that are ending up on our mail today.

What do you think about the issues that surfaced in Paul's article? Let me know and I'll include your thoughts in next month's newsletter – Scott Ney stnst2@aol.com

Meeting Dates for 2023 – Presenters Still Wanted!

Below is the progress on our chart that shows the dates for next year's meetings. In addition to the entries for January and February, there are also presenters who expressed interest in visiting us who cannot commit to a date right away. If you are able to present in a given month, please let us know. We'll also note the future presenters who have not committed to a date as of yet in the next newsletter.

I put the "show and tell" dates in for July and August with the consideration that the summer months are busy ones for travel and other conflicts. I can add more or remove those dates as needed to accommodate the schedules of those of you who would like to present for us.

Our meeting facility at the Lebanon Community Library does not have audio-visual hookups, so all presentations are in person and low-tech, pass items around the table kind of affairs (but, if you have your own AV equipment, we might be able to make it work there). We'll reproduce this chart once again with our progress in the January newsletter.

Date	Presenter
January 17, 2023	Jim Joppy – Ralph Dupas: Boxing Champion
February 21, 2023	Dick Colberg – Condom, France: A Postal History
March 21, 2023	
April 18, 2023	
May 16, 2023	
June 20, 2023	
July 18, 2023	Summertime Show and Tell – Part I
August 15, 2023	Summertime Show and Tell – Part II
September 19, 2023	
October 17, 2023	
November 21, 2023	
December 19, 2023	Annual dinner, location TBD

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Featured contributors for the newsletters still wanted for 2023

So far, we've filled the slots for four months' worth of featured content for the newsletter in 2023. So, there's still plenty of opportunities left for you to sign-up to contribute. Jim Joppy will lead us off in January with a strong piece to begin the year with, and Dick will share a few of his writings with us throughout the year as well. I think it would be great if every member of the club could share at least one item with us via the newsletter in the coming year! Please email me to select your month. – Scott Ney

Month	Featured Contributor
January	Jim Joppy
February	Dick Colberg
March	
April	
May	
June	
July	Dick Colberg
August	
September	
October	
November	Dick Colberg
December	

Calendar of Events

December 16-17: A 2-day **K2 Stamp Show** being held on Friday & Saturday from 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM at the Farm & Home Center of Lancaster County, 1383 Arcadia Road, Lancaster, PA 17601. We will have 10 dealers in attendance: K2 Collectibles, George Papandreou, Doug McCullough, Frank Soder, Papatella's Stamps, Lesley Botte, Hugh Clark, Jack Houser, Bill Snyder & Jack Zerby. Table fee is \$120 for 8 feet "L's" (8" front & 8" side) with an 8" back table. Setup starts 8:00 AM. For more information, contact [Kevin Kellman](mailto:Kevin.Kellman@k2stamps@gmail.com) at k2stamps@gmail.com

December 20 – Annual LSCC dinner at the Quentin Haus, on RT 72 in Quentin. Please RSVP to Don Smith (donsmith1022@gmail.com).

2023 Philatelic Society of Lancaster County Programs

We are excited to return to in-person meetings on the 2nd Wednesday of the month in The Crossings Meeting Room at Landis Homes on 1001 East Oregon Road, Lititz, PA. Doors Open at 6:30 PM. Come Early to Share, Buy, Sell, and/or Trade. Visitors Welcome! Contact Paul Petersen at +1 (717) 299-5640 or pcpetersen@comcast.net for more information.

We will also continue with our Zoom meetings on the 4th Wednesday of the month.

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January 11: Welcome Back Meeting, The Crossing Meeting Room, Landis Homes.

January 25: "British Inland Airmail, 1933 to 1955," By Mike Bach



A member of the PSLC family of affiliated stamp clubs



[The Lebanon Stamp Collectors Club – Philatelic Society of Lancaster County \(lcps-stamps.org\)](http://lcps-stamps.org)