

## Ralph Dupas: A postcard from a Champ

*By Jim Joppy*

You're probably wondering who Ralph Dupas is; I had the same thought when I purchased this postcard while visiting the American Philatelic Center in August of 2022. The postcard was addressed to Dupas' friend, Karl Rappleye of Belvidere, Illinois, and is postmarked New Orleans, LA, April 12, 1954. I was intrigued by the postcard and wanted to learn more about the boxer, considering I am a boxing fan and had never heard of Ralph Dupas.

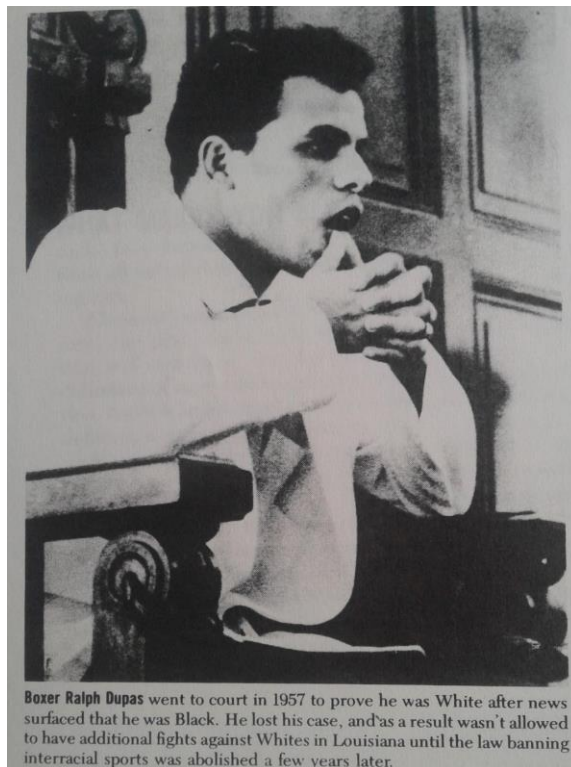
Ralph Dupas (October 14, 1935 – January 25, 2008) was an American boxer from New Orleans, Louisiana. He won the world light middleweight championship in 1963. Dupas was considered one of New Orleans' best professional fighters and finished his career with a 104-23-6 record.

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He was inducted into the World Boxing Hall of Fame in 2000 and the Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame in 1994. Dupas was referred to as the Cajun Ghost. He was the second of eleven children and became a professional boxer in 1950 at the age of 14. The famed boxing trainer Angelo Dundee saw Dupas fight and became his trainer. Wow, imagine being good enough as a boxer to turn pro at the age of 14? In fact, Dupas had 51 fights between the ages of 14-17, and only lost four of them (1950-1954). Dupas wrote on the postcard "I'm fighting on 28 of April on T.V." Dupas, who was 18 at the time, was referring to his 55<sup>th</sup> professional fight on April 28, 1954, when he fought Dennis Pat Brady at the Coliseum Arena, New Orleans.

Dupas became a ranked contender in the lightweight division in 1953 and by 1955, after beating a variety of top fighters, ascended as the top-ranked lightweight in the world. In May 1958, Dupas fought Joe Brown for the lightweight title, but lost by eighth-round knockout. He also lost a 1962 welterweight title bout to Emile Griffith. Another championship opportunity came for Dupas when he won the title on a fifteen-round unanimous decision over Light Middleweight Champion Denny Moyer in New Orleans on April 29, 1963. However, Dupas lost the title in September of 1963 to Italian Sandro Mazzinghi by thirteenth-round knockout.

Another major fight Dupas battled during his boxing career was being barred from fighting whites in Louisiana in the 1950s when rumors surfaced his mother was "Negro." At the time Louisiana did not permit interracial athletics between blacks and whites based on a 1956 state law. After a court battle from 1957-1960, Dupas was eventually issued a birth certificate identifying him as white.



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Dupas briefly retired in 1964 and worked as a card dealer in Las Vegas. He returned to the ring in 1966 and retired for good after five fights that year. After his boxing career, Dupas began to exhibit signs of pugilistic dementia. His brother Tony, also a former fighter, moved Dupas from Las Vegas back to New Orleans, and put him in a nursing home, where he died at age 72 on January 25, 2008.

The experience of purchasing this postcard is an example of the pleasure I receive obtaining canceled mail and learning things I did not know based on my research.



<https://www.creolegen.org/2022/06/25/in-pursuit-of-race-the-reign-of-naomi-drake-1949-1965/>. Accessed 12/12/2022.

"What Makes You Black? Vague Definition of Race the Basis for Court Battles." Ebony Magazine, January 1983, pages (115-117).

Wikipedia. Ralph Dupas. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ralph\\_Dupas](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ralph_Dupas). Accessed 11/27/2022.

**January's LSCC meeting: January 17, 2023 at the Lebanon Community Library, 125 N 7<sup>th</sup> Street in Lebanon, 6:30 p.m. Jim Joppy tells the story of boxing champion Ralph Dupas, whose introduction came via a great postcard find at the American Philatelic Center in Bellefonte. Please bring in one or two of your favorite postcards to share after Jim shares this one with us!**

# Lebanon Stamp Collectors Club

## 2023 LSCC Meeting Schedule

Below is the progress on our 2023 meeting schedule, as it stands at the time of the publication of this newsletter. I will contact members of the club who I haven't heard from, as well as friends of the club who have expressed an interest in visiting us with a presentation, prior to releasing an updated schedule in next month's 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	Exploring more of the Arthur Groff collection
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	Scott Ney – 1923: The peak of Hyperinflation in Germany
December 19, 2023	Annual dinner, location TBD

## PSLC Calendar of Events

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 (Directions below). Doors open at 6:30 PM. We hold a brief business meeting, followed by our keynote speaker, then a Show, Tell & Ask, where members & guests can share their favorite stamp, cover, or other philatelic item and take a question or two. Come Early to Share, Buy, Sell, and/or Trade.

As an added bonus to our members and friends, far and wide, we will also host Virtual Zoom meetings on the 4th Wednesday of the month. Visitors always welcome! Contact Paul Petersen at +1 (717) 299-5640 or [pcpetersen@comcast.net](mailto:pcpetersen@comcast.net) for more information or to sign up for one of our slots.

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January 11: Welcome Back In-Person Meeting, The Crossing Meeting Room, Landis Homes, 1001 East Oregon Road, Lititz, PA. Doors will open at 6:30 p.m.; meeting starts at 7:00 p.m. Free parking and Wi-Fi. Early birds to assist in set-up, post-meeting please re-stack. Tables will be set up for members to Buy, Sell, and/or Trade before the meeting starts. Bring your box of glassines, covers, odds 'n ends, and an album or two, and we'll have fun. Then, we will have our ever-popular Show & Tell. Meeting Snacks: Paul will be passing around a clipboard for folks to sign-up for 2023 meetings. If anyone can sign up for January, let Paul know in advance. Note on

## Lebanon Stamp Collectors Club

Covid-19 restrictions: The administrator of the venue said that at Landis Homes Covid-masks are optional. You can wear one or not wear one. It is up to you. By now we are all familiar with the symptoms of Covid-19. If these develop, please do not attend.

January 25: "British Inland Airmail, 1933 to 1955," By Mike Bach, Virtual Zoom Meeting.

By 1933 three hundred thousand pounds of mail was delivered by Imperial Airways (forerunner to British Airways) throughout 3.5 million miles around the world, however not a single letter or package was delivered by air within the United Kingdom. This presentation will show the attempts of various airlines to start and fail to establish an internal airmail delivery service and the covers that they created. The story begins with Great Western Railways (yes a railway) on April 12th 1933.

February 8: TBA

February 22: "The Wilksburg Souvenir Sheets," By Stevan & Chris Cady

### 2023 LSCC Dues

It's January, which means its time to pay our dues! The club doesn't have a bank account, and hasn't had one for years; we rely on your dues to pay the room rental fee of \$15 per month to the Lebanon Community Library. Dues remain \$10, and can be payable at the next meeting you attend. Please bring cash (as we cannot cash checks made out to the club), or if you prefer, send \$10 via PayPal to Scott Ney [stnst2@aol.com](mailto:stnst2@aol.com) who will forward your dues, in cash, to Don Smith. The club appreciates your support!

