

“Serving Lebanon and Berks Counties”

THE PATENT - OVERPRINT

The combined monthly newsletter of the Lebanon and Reading Stamp Collectors Clubs

March 2025

Number 67

The March meeting of the Lebanon Stamp Collectors Club will be held on Tuesday, March 18, 2025, at 6:30 p.m. in the Community Room at the Lebanon Community Library, 125 N. 7th St, in historic downtown Lebanon.



Les Facteurs ruraux/The Rural Postmen

Translation by Dick Colberg

We saw in a previous issue that under Cardinal de Fleury, rural postmen were called "Va-de-Pieds".

One of our subscribers from Gien sends us a photograph representing one of these brave officials quietly installed in a dog cart.

It seems that this mode of transport is frequent in this region.

The old term "Va-de-pied" (goes by foot) could therefore not be applied in this case!

Stamp Collecting – Tools of the Hobby

At the February meeting of the LSCC, President Colberg delivered a thorough presentation on the tools of the hobby. Here's a summary of the tools that he discussed with us . . .

Albums

Worldwide and country specific albums are widely available, and not cheap. However, a quick search of the internet will turn up printable album pages for the beginner and advanced collector alike, some for free and some for a more economical cost than an album.

Tongs

There are several different styles of stamp tongs, from spade tip to pointed tip. Short, blunt tips are generally fine for enjoying a well-curated collection, while longer pointed tips can more efficiently go through big piles of stamps. One universal recommendation: do not use cosmetic tweezers! Their barbed tips are extremely hazardous to the health of your stamps.

Magnifying glass

Along with a pair of tongs, it's always useful to have a magnifier with you when you're hunting for those elusive gems to fill spots in your album. Dollar store magnifiers work, and now we have electronic ones that we can hook up to our computers to "flyspeck" to our heart's content.

Glassine envelopes

These have been used by generations of collectors to store their duplicates in. They keep out the moisture of the air but are a lot cheaper than stock books and more battle-tested than modern Ziplock bags. Many decades-old accumulations can be found with stamps housed in yellowing glassines stamped with ancient catalog prices.

Stock sheets

Stock sheets are a more expensive way to keep your stamps, but a high-quality brand will keep your stamps safe for many years. Stock sheets have an advantage over stock books for their loose-leaf versatility to add, subtract, and rearrange pages. A trend in Europe is to create custom albums using stock books and stock sheets, by writing or printing out a paper label with country, catalog number, and catalog value, and placing it as desired on the page. Care must be taken to make sure that no numbers or spaces are missed; but a great advantage to housing your stamps in this way is that no hinge or mount is needed.

Stock books

Stock books are available in several different sizes and page counts, with black or white backgrounds. They are a great way to store duplicates or create special albums without the need for hinges or mounts.

Hinges

Hinges are still a thing, although unlike in the past, they aren't the best or the only thing a collector can use to construct their album. Stamps are generally most valuable in "never hinged" condition, so a mint stamp that was never hinged should be left in that condition. As for low value used stamps, hinges are usually more economical than mounts, unless you are after Dennison hinges; these were discontinued about 50 years ago, and as they are generally considered the best hinges of all time, old stock can sell for 100 times its original price (caveat emptor: be wary of overpaying for modern "Dennisen" hinges, with an "e" instead of an "o", which are in a look-alike package, but are not of identical composition).

Mounts

Mounts come in many different sizes to accommodate the height of a stamp and can be cut to satisfy width requirements. This is the preferred way for most collectors to display a mint stamp in an album, because while they are more expensive than hinges, they will protect your investment from gum disturbance and damage due to improper hinge removal. "Hingeless" albums come with a mount already affixed to the page and cut to specifications for each stamp.

Watermark detector & fluid

As stamp collectors, we learn that the presence of a watermark can mean the difference between one catalog number or another or might make an otherwise common stamp into a valuable and sought-after one. Watermarks on some countries and/or stamp issues might be detected without the aid of watermark fluid: for example, on certain British and German stamps. Conversely, they might be frustratingly difficult to find, like on some of the earliest U.S. Washington-Franklin issues.

In addition to Watermark fluid, a black watermark detector tray is an essential tool. The stamp is placed face down in the tray on a very small amount of fluid (a drop or two on the back may

also do the trick) and the watermark, if any, will temporarily appear while the fluid is still on the stamp. You may use watermark fluid on mint stamps, because it evaporates quickly and does not disturb the gum.

For those of us who have never used watermark fluid, there are YouTube videos available that demonstrate the proper way to use it.

There are also expensive machines that use infrared light to detect watermarks, and cheaper fluids which will work, but the cheaper methods were not recommended by any of the experienced collectors that we had in attendance at the meeting!

Perf gauge

As with watermarks, the perforation of a stamp can tell you which spot a stamp belongs in your album, and whether or not it may be a candidate to donate to a youngster beginning their collection or consignment to an auction house.

Dick demonstrated how to use one for us, and there are several different kinds available. A gauge made of plastic which you can place over the stamp while it rests in front of you on the table might be the best choice, especially for a beginner. It's a tool that you must have and know how to use if you are to become what we call a serious philatelist.

Color gauge

Dick brought in an older example of The Wonder Color Gauge, and two other color guides. The Wonder is nice because it arranges the colors in similar groups and provides a portal to lay the gauge on top of the stamp to compare its color to the gauge. For some issues, especially the earliest ones, only the most trained eye can differentiate between a rare color shade and a more common one, but for most issues, a color gauge is sufficient.

Sheet protectors

These are the page protectors you can find at any office supply store. As with all of the supplies that come into contact with your stamps and covers, they must absolutely be archival – they should contain no harmful or unstable chemicals. Some chemicals used in the past, particularly PVC, have proven to break down over time, and can harm your collectibles. If you have a plastic holder that is turning yellow or a plastic page that is beginning to feel oily to the touch, remove your items from it immediately!

Drying books

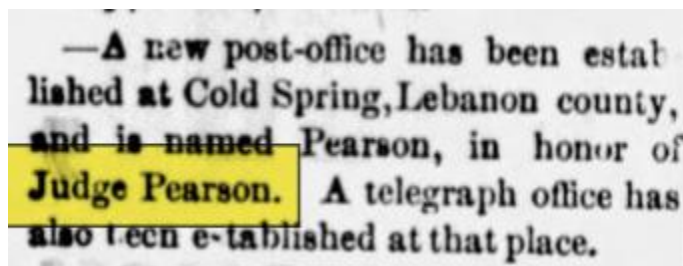
How many of us still soak stamps off paper? A drying book might be helpful. They are designed to house your stamps while they are still damp and allow them to dry flat. These continue to be available if you need one and want something more classy than cereal boxes and wax paper to press your stamps as they dry. YouTube has many videos that can help a novice collector learn proven methods of how to soak stamps correctly, and there have been studies that even

advanced collectors would want to consult before they consider placing any of their classic pieces into the water.

Catalogues

This category can be a column all of its own, and in fact, the APS devoted an entire issue of the *American Philatelist* to stamp catalogs in January 2022.

Come to the meeting this month, as Dick will have a lot more to say about stamp catalogs, reference books, and philatelic journals!



Lebanon Daily News, Monday, January 13, 1873

An Occurrence at Pearson Post Office

By Scott Ney

One of the better-remembered places of 19th century northern Lebanon County was once known by the obscure name of Pearson.

The hotel at Cold Spring had three different post offices: Cold Spring, Pearson, and Ney. The original post office at Cold Spring lasted less than a year before it was discontinued, and another post office was not created at the site of the Cold Springs Hotel until November 1872. In that time, the name Cold Spring was used for a post office established in Wayne County.

DECISIONS

OF

THE HONORABLE JOHN J. PEARSON,

JUDGE OF THE TWELFTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT,

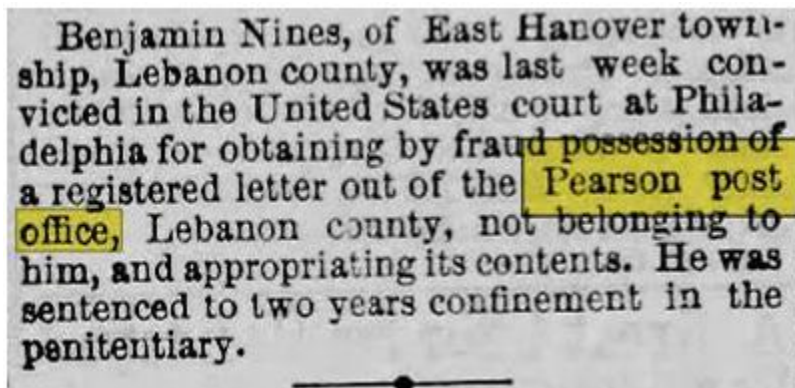
COMPOSED OF THE COUNTIES OF DAUPHIN AND LEBANON.

Pearson was named for Judge John J. Pearson, of the 12th Judicial District, comprised of Dauphin and Lebanon Counties. Covers from Pearson are as rare as unicorns, but there is a record of a federal crime committed at the post office that provides non-philatelic evidence of its existence.

According to a report in the *Lebanon Daily News* of November 28, 1877, a registered letter, addressed to “Pearson’s, Luzerne County”, was missent to “Pearson Station Post Office” in Lebanon County. Benjamin Nines, of neighboring East Hanover Township, learned of the letter from his father, who was asked by the postmaster whether he knew of any man in the neighborhood bearing the name of the letter’s addressee.

Mr. Nines appeared at the post office and falsely stated that he was the intended recipient of the letter, signed for it, and obtained possession of its contents: a draft for \$42.37. When the matter was investigated by a special agent, Nines returned a letter written in “a Norwegian language” to the agent, stating that the letter was all that the registered package had contained.

Nines stood trial in the U.S. District Court in Philadelphia and was found guilty of fraud. He was sentenced to two years “in the penitentiary”.



Harrisburg Patriot News, Wednesday, December 12, 1877

Pearson had at least two postmasters: William Lerch, who was the proprietor of the Cold Springs Hotel, and John Nichols. Mr. Lerch resigned his commission after selling the hotel to a Catholic organization and moving to Pine Grove. The post office at Pearson was officially discontinued shortly before Nines’ trial, on October 26, 1877.



Lebanon Daily News, Tuesday, April 6, 1875

The intended purpose of turning the hotel into a retreat for Catholic priests was not realized, and the hotel property was sold again in 1880, and re-opened as a summer resort the year later. Yet another post office, Ney, was established in June 1881, which would outlast the hotel by a couple of years; the

Cold Springs Hotel burned to the ground in September 1900, and Ney was discontinued in 1903. By then, the Postmaster at Ney was also the telegraph operator for the Pennsylvania Railroad, and when rail and telegraph service was discontinued at Cold Spring station, so was the Ney Post Office.

One more post office, Lotell, would be established to serve the residents of this sparsely populated mountain village of Lebanon county (1909 – 1939). Lotell became a seasonal post office, serving Camp Shand of the Lancaster YMCA, before it was closed for good.

Today, the site of the hotel and the village of Cold Spring has been reclaimed by the wilderness, but it still has occasional visitors who are interested in exploring the once-thriving ghost town in the mountains.

Note: all newspaper clippings were found on Newspapers.com

Lebanon Stamp Collectors Club Calendar

Please contact the editor if you are interested in presenting at one of our monthly meetings.

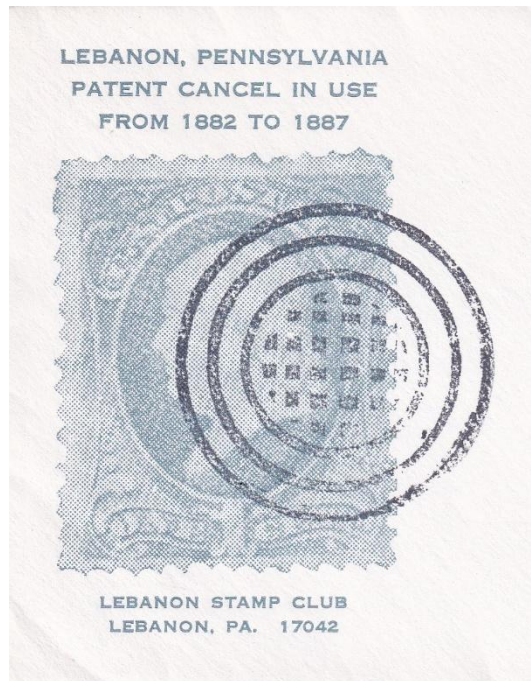
Date	Presenter and Subject
March 18, 2025	Maintaining and expanding your philatelic knowledge – Dick Colberg
April 15, 2025	
May 20, 2025	
June 17, 2025	The Stamps, labels, postcards, covers, and other ephemera of the 1939 New York World’s Fair – Paul Petersen (outdoor location TBA)
July 15, 2025	
August 19, 2025	Civil War Pension Philately – Scott Ney
September 16, 2025	
October 21, 2025	
November 18, 2025	
December 16, 2025	Holiday Dinner at The Rotunda Restaurant and Pub

The Lebanon Stamp Collectors Club thanks the Philatelic Society of Lancaster County for hosting our affiliate page, which is accessible by clicking the following link:

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

The PSLC Events Calendar is located at the following link:

[Philatelic Society of Lancaster County – Award-winning, non-profit community organization dedicated to promoting stamp and postal history collecting as a hobby for education and fun. \(lcp-stamps.org\)](http://lcp-stamps.org)



The Lebanon Stamp Collectors Club Lebanon, PA 17042 – 17046



The Overprint

Newsletter of the Reading Stamp Collectors' Club

Meetings held at Calvary Lutheran Church,
1009 Elizabeth Avenue in Laureldale.
Elizabeth Avenue crosses Kutztown Road in the Muhlenberg Township area.
(About a mile north of Rt 222)

**Meetings are the first Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m.
(doors open around 6:30 for pre meeting social time)**

TUESDAY April 1st

**TOPIC: OFFICIAL SEALS
Presenter: David Hunt**



**After Dave's presentation we also need members to bring a
special cover or stamp that they would like to share.**

“IT’S A RUM TALE”

At the March 4th RSCC meeting Mike Bach did a presentation entitled “It’s a Rum Tale”. This was based on a cover (below) from July 31st 1970 that commemorated the last day that a tot of rum was served to sailors in the British Navy. (Black Tot Day)



The presentation covered the background surrounding serving a tot of rum and the time line of serving alcohol aboard Navy Ships from a gallon of beer to each sailor per day pre-1667t to the 2oz rum tot at the end.

As the cover included HMS Victory (now a museum at Portsmouth Naval Yard) and a Portsmouth Cancel additional pictures and information on both were also presented and discussed.

Those present at the meeting learned that when the “bosum” had passed out a tot to each sailor he would shout “Sprits Up” to which all the sailors would respond with “Stay Fast the Holy Ghost”. So, in keeping with the tradition those present concluded the meeting with the same toast.



**AS WE ARE MEETING ON APRIL FOOL'S DAY, I THOUGHT SOME
COVERS RELATING TO THE DAY WOULD BE APPROPRIATE**

**The first is from USS Pennsylvania to East McKeesport PA
Dated April 1st 1935**



**On the next page are two more covers that are identical (more or
less) from Joker West Virginia and Kidder Kentucky.**

Both are dated April 1st 1936 and are to the same recipient.

**Can you spot how many differences there are between the
two covers. I have spotted 10 but there may be more.**



And finally, an interesting idea from Japan

Japan hopes to lure tourists to national parks with "goshuin" stamps

[KYODO NEWS](#) - Feb 11, 2025 - 10:54 | [All](#), [Japan](#)

The Japanese government recently launched an initiative it hopes will encourage foreign tourists to venture off the beaten path to the country's national parks by offering collectible stamps resembling "goshuin" which are traditionally obtained by visitors to temples and shrines.

With the stamps available at all 35 of Japan's national parks, as well as from the Shinjuku Gyoen National Garden in Tokyo, the Environment Ministry hopes visitors will find a path less trodden by creating interest in the nation's stamp-collecting tradition.

Traditional goshuin are stamps provided for a fee by the places of worship as proof of a visit. They usually include the location's name and the date of the visit handwritten in calligraphy.



The tourist-focused stamps have the parks' respective names written in powerful brushstrokes, and measure 4 centimeters long and 3 cm wide. They are available through the end of March 2027.

"Visitors may be unfamiliar with Japanese written with a brush or the culture of using seal stamps," a ministry official said. "We want them to enjoy this tradition while they are on their travels."

Tourists can obtain the stamps at each national park's visitor center.

The [stamp](#) sheets are also available onsite, or downloadable from the ministry's official website.

More RSCC History in the next Overprint