

Philatelic Society of Lancaster County

The James Buchanan Chapter 173 of the American Philatelic Society

American Topical Association Chapter 118

Website: https://lcps-stamps.org

2nd Wednesday/Month-Meet in Person at Landis Homes at 6:30 p.m. 4th Wednesday/Month-Meet Virtually at 6:15 p.m.

The Veranda Chronicles

It is the tail end of February as I write this column, clarifying that I am composing it in warmer weather, not on another trek to Florida or California, but right here in Lancaster where the temp is in the mid to upper 50s. I hope you are enjoying it as much as possible and for as long as it lasts.

The many hobby doings this month include the philatelic Gatherings on March 15th, with a talk on airmail to Bermuda and the Rattlesnake Island Postal System. DELPEX is on the 29th, and the Morlatton Postcard Show is on the 28th and 29th at the Farm and Home Center. I attend the Philatelic Gathering meetings and am willing to carpool. Just let me know if you'd like to ride along.

Several of my past Verandas have involved computer and digital skullduggery, and some of you have shared information with me regarding computer and cell phone treachery attempts that you have experienced from phishing to grand theft auto. One of our members told me about a message he received on his new iWatch not long ago . . .

From: (redacted)

United States Postal Service (USPS)

Your Package has arrived at the delivery point but cannot be delivered due to inaccurate address information. Please provide accurate details: (hyperlinked web address redacted)

Please reply with a "Y", then exit the text message. Then open it again, click the link, or copy into your Safari browser and open it.

As postal customers, most of us know that when we mail a package, if the address is incomplete or there is an inaccuracy when entered into the computer at the post office, the clerk is trained to identify the inaccuracy and rectify the error while we are still present with them.

This message is commonly known as a "phishing" attempt, an attempt to gather personal information that a scammer will use to attempt to steal your identity. In the above example, replying "Y" to the message will confirm that it was sent to a legitimate phone number, and invite more phishing attempts. The link will take you to a bogus webpage set up to collect your data, which might be used by the scammer collecting it, and/or sold to other criminals in the internet underworld known as the "dark web".

Speaking of scams and the USPS, the epidemic of counterfeit Forever Stamps shows no signs of slowing down. Stamp Auction Network's Philately Live just had a short breaking story from CBS: Customs and Border Security officials recently confiscated 161,860 counterfeit U.S. Forever Stamps. That's equivalent to 8093 booklets of twenty stamps each! These were secreted in eight shipments from China entering the U.S. via Chicago's International Mail Branch. If you're like me, you're already doing the math; this shipment would defraud the USPS of \$118,157.80! And how many other shipments of counterfeit U.S. stamps continue to go undetected? It adds up to some real money. About the only place to get legitimate United States Postage at a cost below face value is from stamp dealers at stamp shows – when they have it – and it is usually in stamp denominations below the price of Forever Stamps, which only increase in value as postal rates increase. The United States Postal Service never sells their stamps below face value, period! Stamp dealers are able to purchase these stocks of postage from collectors who wish to sell off their postage sheets and plate blocks or from the family members of collectors who have inherited multiple sheets and blocks. Older postage is highly discounted; how many three cent stamps can you put on an envelope to pay your bills?

Warm wishes to you all! – Dr. Charles J. DiComo

Upcoming Programs

Official Seals
By David Hunt

Wednesday, March 12, 2025 Landis Homes, 6:30 p.m.

On March 12 we will delve into the very back-of-the-book and look at official seals. The first US Official Seal was issued in 1872 as a security device for registered mail envelopes. Later seals served to seal packages of postage stamps sent to postmasters by the Stamp Agency in New York

and then by the Bureau of Engraving and Printing. There was also a seal specifically intended for dead letters. However, the majority of official seals issued were meant for sealing envelopes found unsealed or damaged in the mails.

Official seals are utilitarian and not pretty or colorful, but the multitude of separation methods are right up there with the Washington-Franklins in terms of confusion. There are Perf. 12 $\frac{1}{2}$, 12, 11 $\frac{1}{2}$, 9 $\frac{1}{2}$, 8, 8; Hyphen Hole 9 $\frac{1}{2}$, 7, 6 $\frac{1}{2}$; and Roulette 9 $\frac{1}{2}$. 8 $\frac{1}{2}$, 5 $\frac{1}{2}$. In many cases these are compound perfs. The presentation will end with coverage of US Possessions official seals and a few foreign seals.



A Republican Soldier in the Spanish Civil War (1936 – 1939)

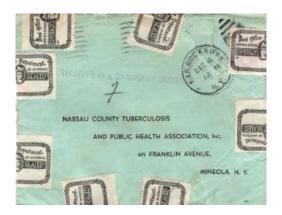
By Jaume Balsells

Wednesday, March 26, 2025 Via Zoom, 6:30 p.m.

The Spanish Civil War remains a pivotal chapter in European history, characterized by intense ideological conflict and international involvement. The war pitted the Republican government, supported by leftist militias and international volunteers, against General Francisco Franco's Nationalist forces, backed by Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy. The discovery in 2005 of an intact archive of correspondence between a Republican soldier and his family made it possible to study his experiences spanning the entire length of the conflict. This presentation reconstructs those experiences through the philatelic records and offers a rare glimpse into the postal history of the losing side of the war.

PSLC Calendar

All meetings on the second Wednesday of the month are in person at Landis Homes, and all meetings on the fourth Wednesday of the month are on Zoom. If you would like to deliver a presentation to the club on an open date in 2025, please contact <u>Paul Petersen</u>. Descriptions for many of these programs are found on the <u>PSLC website</u>



12 March: Official seals. David Hunt

26 March: A Republican Soldier in the Spanish Civil War (1936 – 1939). Jaume Balsells

09 April: Scott English

23 April: Overprints on Newspaper Wrappers. Cemil Betanov

14 May: First appearance of Lincoln on stamps. Ronald Lesher.

18 May: PSLC Outdoor Bourse, at Freedom Memorial Park in Millersville

28 May: Captain Tim Healy. Rick Barrett

11 June: Spring PSLC auction at Landis Homes

25 June: The centennial of the 1925 Santa Barbara earthquake. Rob Sternberg

09 July: Crash mail. Mike Wilson

23 July: Rounding Up Texas Post Offices: Identifying and Locating all the Sites that a County Has

to Offer. John Germann

13 August: PSLC Annual Summer Picnic

27 August: Civil War pension philately. Scott Ney

10 September: Fall PSLC auction at Landis Homes

24 September: Graf Zeppelin & Hindenberg: U. S. Mails. Cheryl Ganz

08 October: 3.2 Wine and Beer Taxation. Ron Lesher

22 October: Elmer Long (or) The Post Office 75 Years Ago vs. Today. Rick Barrett

12 November: PSLC Open House and One-Page Exhibition

26 November: The DC-4 Skymaster Plane. Tom Nichols

10 December: PSLC Annual Holiday Dinner

24 December: Open



Figure 1

A Visit to the Nuwara Eliya Post Office and Philatelic Bureau in Sri Lanka

By Rob Sternberg

My wife Susanne and I just finished our second (and probably last) annual around-the-world trip. Last year between the two of us we visited Salt Lake City, Guilin and Hong Kong (China), Honolulu, Seoul, Bangkok, Dubai and Stuttgart. Our main goals were for Susanne to take a Chinese language course, and for us both to visit our older son Max and his wife Emilie in Bangkok and to see my father-in-law in Germany. I succeeded in not having to spend a night on a plane by making those additional stops on our itinerary. This year our itinerary took me to Santa Barbara (researching the 1925 earthquake which I will report on for our club's June 25 meeting), Susanne to Guilin for another language course, then both of us to Hong Kong, Chiang Mai (northern Thailand), Bangkok, Sri Lanka, and London.

While in Sri Lanka for two weeks, we took a common tourist route, flying into the capital city of Colombo, going to the west coast beach resort of Bentota (for a wedding), stopping at Galle with its Dutch-era fort on the south coast, then Ella, Nuwara Eliya, and Kandy in the central highlands, and finally looping back to the Colombo area before departure.

I wrote a short piece here for the Dec. 2023 issue on "A Serendipitous Visit to the Thailand 2023 World Stamp Championship." The equivalent on this year's trip was a stop at the post office and philatelic bureau in Nuwara Eliya. We stayed a bit outside of town at the Heritance Tea Factory hotel to enjoy the rural setting and learn about the history of tea in Sri Lanka (formerly Ceylon).

On our way to the hotel, we drove through Nuwara Eliya and spent some time at Central Market (no, not Lancaster's) and the lovely Victoria Park. We passed by the post office but skipped it for lack of time. But when my son Max wanted to go back into town the next day for a look around and a restaurant visit, I decided we should visit the post office.



Figure 2

The exterior of the building (Figure 1; photos and scans mine, except where indicated) was a Tudor Revival style two-story red brick building with a clock tower. Built in 1894 by the British, it is one of the oldest post offices in Sri Lanka. On Dec. 26, 1990, Sri Lanka issued a stamp (Scott LK 984; Figure 2, image from Colnect) showing this post office, with a face value of 10 Sri Lankan rupees, or about \$0.03 U.S.

I was tickled to find a philatelic bureau adjacent to the post office (Figure 3). After browsing a rack of first day covers (Figure 4), I selected two items for purchase. One was a package of two first-day covers from 2024, each bearing stamps of five different Sri Lankan waterfalls (Figures 5-6), and a wonderful booklet (Figure 7) describing each waterfall in Sinhalese, Tamil, and English.

The stamps, Scott LK 2388-2397, were issued Feb. 2, 2024, each with a denomination of 50 Sri Lankan rupees, or about \$0.15 U.S. The price of the package was just 700 rupees, or about \$2.35. (Four similar Sri Lankan waterfall stamps, LK 1453-1456, were issued in 2003.) We did see several impressive waterfalls during our trip, although I don't think any of them were those portrayed on the stamps. Figure 8 is a photo of one of those waterfalls that we did see, above tea fields outside of Ella.



Figure 3: The philatelic bureau adjacent to the post office



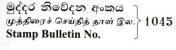
Figure 4: Shopping for FDCs at the philatelic bureau



Figure 5



Figure 6



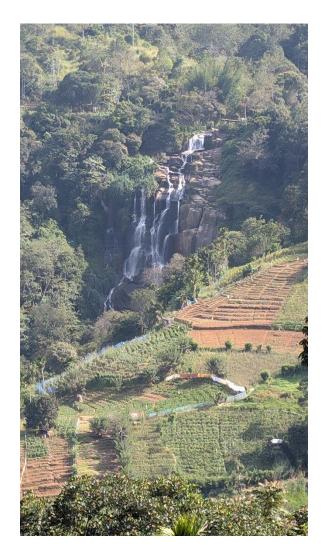
විශේෂ නිකුත් කිරීම ඛ්රිஷட வெளியீடு Special Issue



ශී ලංකාවේ දිය ඇලි ඉහස්ගයயின் நீர்வீழ்ச்சிகள் Waterfalls of Sri Lanka 2024.02.02

Philatelic Bureau
Department of Posts,
Postal Headquarters, D. R. Wijewardena Mawatha,
Colombo 01000, SRI LANKA.

මුද්දර කාර්යාංශය, තැපැල් දෙපාර්තමේන්තුව, තැපැල් මූලස්ථානය, ඩී. ආර්. විජේවර්ධන මාවත, කොළඹ 01000. (முத்திரைப் பணியகம், அஞ்சல் திணைக்களம், அஞ்சல் தலைமையகம், டீ. ஆர். வீஜேவர்தன மாவத்தை, கொழும்பு 01000.



Figures 7 and 8

The other cover (Figure 9) and accompanying booklet (Figure 10) celebrated the bicentennial of the Royal Botanical Gardens in Peradeniya, just outside Kandy. The first day cover was issued Dec. 12, 2022, franked with stamps LK 2333-2336, having denominations of 50 and 60 rupees, approximately equivalent to \$0.15 and \$0.20 U.S. This cover cost 250 rupees (\$0.80 U.S.). Figure 11 is a photo I took of the Great Lawn and its Java Fig tree when we visited the Garden; this is the same view shown on stamp LK 2336.



Figure 9

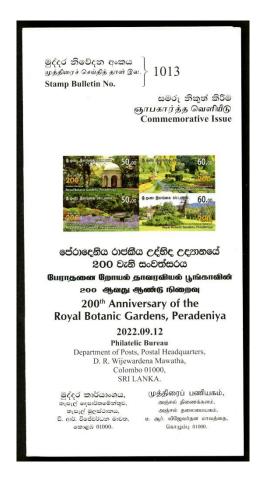


Figure 10

Postcards seem not to be widely sold in the parts of Asia I have visited. But the Nuwara Eliya philatelic office did sell some. I bought a few, then got stamps at the post office counter (Figure 12). The stamps cost so little, I wondered if I was having trouble with my currency conversions (there are about 30 Thai baht to the dollar, but 300 Sri Lankan rupees to the dollar). But according to *MyPostcardblog* (https://blog.mypostcard.com/en/international-postcard-postage/#asia), the two lowest rates for international postcard postage to the U.S. in 2020 were from Swaziland (\$0.15/2.80 SZL) and Sri Lanka (\$0.19/35 LKR). So, I (pretended to) drop my cards in the mailbox as soon as I could, before the rates might increase (Figure 13). But it's now a month later, and the cards have not yet arrived. Maybe when it comes to government services, you get what you pay for.



Figure 11: The Great Lawn

When I am on the road, I don't usually think too much about philately, but just like last year in Bangkok, finding a connection to my hobby like this one can enhance the travel experience.



Figure 12



Figure 13: Mailing postcards!

Boston 2026 Expo Items

The next once every ten years U.S. International Stamp show is little more than a year away!

First, some bad news: the proposal submitted by PSLC member Dave Silcox in the last newsletter has been scrapped due to insufficient interest. Thank you to everyone who responded to Dave's call. Dave's follow-up message contains useful information for those of you who would still like to make their own plans to attend the show:

Hello everyone,

In mid-November I started to promote a bus trip with room to Boston 2026 among four stamp clubs; Lancaster, Reading, Lebanon, and Allentown.

At the time, I asked all interested parties to respond by mid-February of 2025 if they were interested in participating in order to see if we had the potential of filling a 40-person bus. Money for one night of the room reservation must be submitted in May of 2025...one year in advance.

To date, I've had only two positives from the Allentown club, two with possible interest from the Lebanon club, and two from the Lancaster club. The Reading club was given an extended time line, until the first week in March, to reply since that will be their first meeting of the year. However, this trip was covered in the newsletter that they received in the past.

Given the poor interest level, I am canceling the trip effective immediately and will notify the tour agency of the same.

Anyone who has an interest in attending the Expo might want to consider taking the train on their own from Lancaster to Phila. and Boston. The trip time is 8.5 hours with a current cost of \$217.00.

Room reservations will open in May of this year for the participating hotels located within walking to the convention center. You can find additional information regarding this show from the Internet, at the link below.

Newsletter editors: Please publish the above notification in our upcoming newsletters.

All the best,

Dave Silcox

Now, a request: The Boston Expo's planning committee requests off-paper stamps, worldwide and U.S., to be used for a host of programs during the event: junior collectors, adult classes, Stamp Collecting Merit Badge sessions, and other miscellaneous promotions and giveaways. Their goal is a lofty one: 3,000,000 stamps!

The PSLC is participating in collecting stamps for the event, and Len Kasper has agreed to be the point person. As you work on your collections and come across duplicates in your accumulations, please consider setting them aside to donate to Boston 2026. As your pile grows, Len will be happy to collect them at our meetings.

Please note on the package or wrapper of your donation that these stamps are for the Boston 2026 show. We'll be collecting stamps each month until the end of the year, but don't wait – start filling a cigar box now! You can contact Len at hotrodparts33@aol.com with any questions. Paul is also more than happy to field any questions.

<u>Boston 2026 World Stamp Show, Inc. – The Twelfth International Philatelic Exhibition of the United</u> States

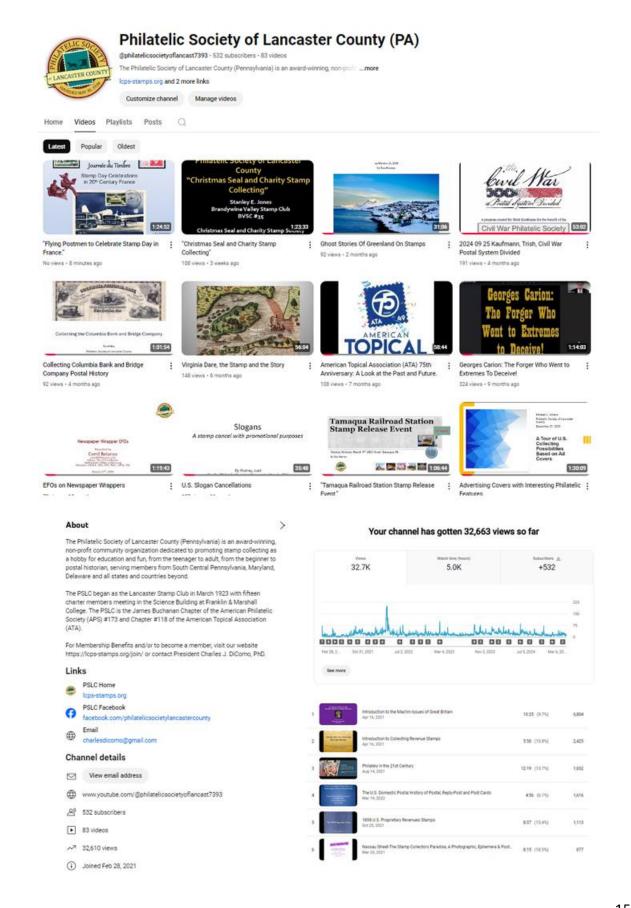
PSLC Member Anniversaries

<u>Name</u>	Date Joined	<u>Years</u>
Frederick Boland	3/09/2016	9
Caroline Ford	3/13/1999	26
Catherine Kotanchik	3/07/2021	4
Eric Levine	3/10/2024	1
Vern Marten	3/13/2002	23
Mark Serfass	3/31/2024	1
Patricia Tucker	3/30/2021	4

The PSLC YouTube channel enters its fifth Year

Dr. Charles DiComo created the PSLC YouTube channel on February 28, 2021. Since then, the channel has posted 83 videos and has gained 532 subscribers and gathered 32,610 views as of March 8.

Next time you are on YouTube, check out the channel. If you see a video you really like, you can "smash that like button" to help others find it more easily, and if you "hit the bell icon", you will be alerted when a new video is posted to the channel. These are two things that you can do for any videos or channel on the platform.





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!

On the publishing scene

BULLETIN



OF THE EMPIRE STATE POSTAL HISTORY SOCIETY



"A scarce use of the "Greenock Penny Post" handstamp on an 1839 stampless folded letter from London, Upper Canada to Kilmun, Scotland via New York City."

ESPHS Founded FU

Charles J. DiComo, PhD ESPHS & PSLC President PaPHS Board of Directors USPCS Life Member

Let's take a trip through New York City Harbor in 1839 by analyzing a well-traveled stampless folded letter (SFL) which entered the mails in London, Upper Canada on its way to Finnart Cottage in Kilmun, Scotland in the County of Argyllshire.

It originated in London, Upper Canada (U.C.) on March 31, 1839, when William Murray penned a three-page letter to his mother and father, Captain James C. Murray of the Royal Navy ("R.N." on the address panel), discussing the Canada Rebellions of 1838 and 1839, including the Aroostook War.

A scarce use of the "Greenock Penny Post" handstamp on an 1839 stampless folded letter from London, Upper Canada to Kilmun, Scotland via New York City.

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Figure 2: Page one of a single sheet, three-page letter written by William Murry to his mother and father Captain James C. Murray, R.N. at Finnart Cottage in Argyllshire County, Kilmun, Scotland.

Bulletin, January 2025 Vol. 58, No. 1

The Bulletin of the Empire State Postal History Society, Jan. 2025, Vol. 58, No. 1, pp. 4-6.

https://lcps-stamps.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/2025-01-DiComo-Chas-1839GreenockPennyPost-BULLETINV58N1p4-6.pdf

News from the Philatelic Gathering

February 15, 2025... Two speakers offered informative presentations at the first Gathering for 2025 held at the Chester County History Center in Chester, PA.

Richard Colberg talked about "Miss Vickie by the Numbers, Great Britain Surface-Printed Issues, 1840-1883." "Miss Vickie" was none other than Queen Victoria. He described the first 43 years of Great Britain stamp issues beginning with the Penny Black. He passed around a reconstructed sheet of the penny red.

Dick went on to discuss the plates used in printing the stamps. They were sometimes identified within the stamp's design (1 for plate one, 2 for plate two, etc.) In some cases, stamps were printed on two different watermarked papers, and in different shades. These numbers were different from those in the sheet margins.

Ron Majors took us on the tour of the <u>"1860 Royal Visit of the Prince of Wales to Canada and U.S."</u> The top royalty deferred and so the trip was led by Albert Edward, the 18-year old Prince of Wales. The tour lasted four months but covered much of eastern Canada and the northeastern United States. He showed examples of cacheted covers, invitations to events, etc.



Upcoming Regional Stamp Shows

2025 K2 Lancaster Stamp Shows: These are held at the Lancaster Farm and Home Center of Lancaster County, 1383 Arcadia Road, Lancaster 17601. The first show of 2025 was held on Sunday, February 9, from 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. **The next show will be on June 22**, followed by shows on August 3, October 12, and December 20 and 21, 2025.

For more info about the K2 Lancaster Stamp Shows, visit the <u>PSLC homepage</u>, or contact Kevin Kellman at k2stamps@gmail.com or +1 (301) 524-9562.

March 29, 2025: DELPEX Stamp Show This year celebrating the Universal Postal Union (UPU)! An all-ages event for stamp enthusiasts throughout the Delaware Valley. There's sure to be something for all levels of interest. We are just minutes from South Jersey, Philadelphia and Northern Delaware. For "GPS" (Google, Waze, etc. Navigation) — Use New Castle, DE.... NOT Wilmington! Location: Nur Shrine Center, 198 South Dupont Parkway (U.S. Route 13), New Castle, Delaware 19720.

For more information, visit the **DEPLEX website**.

March 28 & 29, 2025: Morlatton Post Card Club's 48th Annual Postcard Show.

Location: Farm and Home Center, 1383 Arcadia Road, Lancaster, PA. 17601. Hours: Friday 10:00 AM to 6:00 PM, Saturday 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM. Admission \$3.00, good for both days. Vintage and modern postcards, books and ephemera for sale.

For more information, contact Aaron Heckler at +1 (484) 655-8170 or pegpens822@gmail.com.

August 14 to 17, 2025: Great American Stamp Show '25. LOCATION: Renaissance Schaumburg Convention Center, 1551 North Thoreau Dr., Schaumburg, IL, 60173. HOURS: Thursday to Saturday, 10:00 AM to 6:00 PM; Sunday, 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM. COST: Admission is FREE! Preregistration is recommended to help you save time and avoid on-site registration lines. Co-hosted by the American Philatelic Society (APS), the American Topical Association (ATA) and the American First Day Cover Society (AFDCS). Sponsored by the U.S. Postal Service (USPS).

For more information, visit the APS website.

Member Requests and Notices

Members of the PSLC may submit a notice of collecting interests and requests for research at no cost. Please email your requests to the newsletter editor for consideration. We will run your items for a minimum of three months unless otherwise directed.

Doug Keefer is looking for postal history items with the following Cumberland County Pennsylvania small town cancels: Grantham, Bowmansdale, Huttonsville, Shepherdstown, Williams Grove, and Williams Mill. Please contact Doug via email at keeferds@yahoo.com.

Research Request: U.S. Private Die Proprietary 'Match & Medicines' Revenues, issued stamps, posttax labels, facsimiles on original packaging (bottles, boxes, tins), wrappers, product inserts, almanacs, billheads, etc. Looking to see images and also acquire. Contact Dr. Charles J. DiComo at charlesdicomo@gmail.com or +1 (914) 450-3791



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General Information

Visitors are Always Welcome!

PSLC dues are \$10.00 a year. For existing members who want to renew their membership for 1 or more years, and/or make a donation to support our Society activities and programs, you can use PayPal-Friends by remitting payment to President Charles J. DiComo, PhD at charlesdicomo@gmail.com and denote in Notes section the reason for payment, your name, and how many years you are paying. Venmo can also be used @charlesdicomo. For new members, please mail/email your Membership Application along with a check or money order to Treasurer, Lou DiFelice.

We meet in-person on the 2nd Wednesday of the month (Except August & December) at 6:30 p.m. in the Crossings Meeting Room, Landis Homes, 1001 East Oregon Road, Lititz, PA 17542. See our website for directions.

We meet virtually on the 4th Wednesday at 6:15 p.m. For society information and meeting links, contact Paul Petersen (pcpetersen@comcast.net).

Visit us on YouTube: https://youtube.com/@philatelicsocietyoflancast7393

Visit us on Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/philatelicsocietylancastercounty

Our mailing address is: PO Box 6053, Lancaster, PA 17607



The PSLC is honored to be selected as a winner of the 2024 APS Star Route Awards for our website and newsletter. The Society website (leps-stamps.org), our 24 – 7 virtual presence where philatelists all over the world can access our resources, is the winner of a Large Gold award. Our monthly newsletter, which exists to inform you of upcoming Society events and give you a creative outlet to provide interesting philatelic content, is the winner of a Large Vermeil award.

Final reminder! The PSLC is collecting dues for 2025

Dues remain at \$10 for yet another year. That is less than 84 cents per month. Where can you find a better deal?

Please submit your dues at your earliest convenience, to help us avoid unnecessary follow-up. If for some reason you decide not to renew your membership, which we sincerely hope would not be the case, please make us aware of that.

There are multiple ways you can submit your renewal payment:

- You may renew <u>IN PERSON</u>: Submit a check (no cash) in the amount of \$10 payable to PSLC to Wayne Heim at the membership table when attending our monthly, in-person meeting. Meetings are held on the second Wednesday of the month at Landis Homes, 6:30 pm.
- 2. You may renew <u>BY MAIL</u>: Print and complete the attached form and submit it, with your check to Lou DiFelice, 1024 Woodridge Blvd., Lancaster, PA 17601-2251.
- 3. You may renew <u>WITH PAYPAL</u> (Family and Friends): Directions for paying online can be found on the **Philatelic Society of Lancaster County Web site**, **Page 1**. Payment, along with any changes to your renewal (address, phone, email, etc.) should be sent to charlesdicomo@gmail.com.

Thank you in advance for your prompt response to this request, as we look forward to twelve more months of interesting, entertaining, mind-expanding philatelic presentations. If you have any questions, please contact membership chair Wayne Heim at heimwayne@gmail.com

Please clip this 2025 Dues Renewal Application, complete, and mail to Lou DiFelice, 1024 Woodridge Blvd, Lancaster, PA, 17601-2251 with \$10.00, Checks only, no cash. Be sure to sign your check. Thank you in advance.			
ame:			
hone:			
mail Address:			
\Box Please check here if you do not require a new membership card. This action will save the club time and the cost of postage.			
Please check the appropriate ATA/APS box(s) if you are a paid-up member:			
TA Member □ APS Member □			
Make checks payable to Philatelic Society of Lancaster County . Please advise of any changes in address, phone/cell, email, or change in ATA/APS status.			