

"Serving Lebanon and Berks Counties"

THE PATENT - OVERPRINT

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

January 2026

Number 76



Lebtown.com

The January meeting of the Lebanon Stamp Collectors Club will be held on Tuesday, January 20, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. at the Lebanon Community Library in historic downtown Lebanon. Dick Colberg will be presenting on "The Stamps of the Liberation of France". There may be time after Dick's presentation for a show and tell period as well.

Thoughts about a Happy New Year in 2026

By Scott Ney, editor

I celebrated the new year in 1986 during the golden age of my childhood. I was 10, old enough to care about things but not quite old enough to be concerned about anything. My biggest care in life was the new baseball cards that would come out later in January, and the new baseball season that would follow them. When one of the limited number of televisions in the house wasn't available to watch music videos on MTV, I had a brand-new Panasonic portable AM-FM cassette player my mom and dad gave me for Christmas (to paraphrase Ralphie in *A Christmas Story*, probably the best Christmas gift I ever got or would ever get). If we didn't get home from church in time to watch professional wrestling on a Sunday morning, it was hardly a quality-of-life issue.

It's even more fun to look back on those days now because of where my kids are in their lives. My daughter is 13, in middle school, and like me when I was her age, struggling with issues that her life

experience has not yet equipped her to handle. My son, 10 years old and at the same point in his life as I was in 1986, is growing up in a completely different world but seems to be enjoying himself every bit as much as I did. No, he's not a baseball fan, and may never be one; but back in my day I didn't have a computer connected to the world that could easily hold my attention for an entire day or the ability to watch my favorite programs on TV anytime that I wanted.

40 years later, I am my parents; a seasoned adult with cares, concerns, responsibilities, and kids. I have been fortunate that my mom and dad and the people in my life who helped raise me gave me the opportunity to be successful in addressing the many concerns that adulthood thrusts upon me. The reality of life is that one also needs a little bit of luck, or blessings, if you prefer, to surmount life's challenges. I've received my blessings in spades.

My dad passed away last year in January, and he didn't always have a great deal of success in life overcoming obstacles. One of the things I've done differently than dad is to embrace my hobbies. I believe my dad loved us and did his best to provide for his family, but he didn't take good enough care of his own needs. My dad liked to hunt for treasure with his metal detector and work in his garden, but he stopped using his metal detector when I was in high school, and he allowed too much valuable time that he could have spent at peace in his backyard cultivating the earth to be consumed by other things that, at best, didn't make his life better.

In 2026, I hope you will join me in continuing to engage in stamp collecting and your other favorite hobbies. If the financial commitment of collecting ever becomes a burden, I humbly suggest taking a break from pursuing, and take the time to better organize and enjoy what you already have. Maybe you can join me in taking up a new hobby? I'm rediscovering the Classical Greek that I was introduced to during my days at the university, with the goal of making my own translations of authors ranging from Homer to St. John. Collecting knowledge is a noble pursuit, and collecting books containing knowledge need not be an expensive endeavor. What are some of the things that interest you? 2026 might be a good year to put your mind to something new.

Let us enjoy this time with our families, our friends, and our hobbies, and reflect upon our blessings, because we don't know how many more new years that we've left to enjoy with each other.



Lebanon County Historical Society

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
January 20, 2026	The Stamps of the Liberation of France – Dick Colberg
February 17, 2026	
March 17, 2026	
April 21, 2026	
May 19, 2026	
June 16, 2026	Meeting at Cornwall Manor, program to be determined
July 21, 2026	
August 18, 2026	
September 15, 2026	
October 20, 2026	
November 17, 2026	
December 15, 2026	LSCC Holiday Dinner

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 \(lcps-stamps.org\)](http://lcps-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. \(lcps-stamps.org\)](http://lcps-stamps.org)



The Lebanon Stamp Collectors Club Lebanon, PA 17042 – 17046

Scott Ney, newsletter editor



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)
Issue: 2026 - 01

NO MEETING FEBRUARY

**NEXT MEETING WILL BE TUESDAY
MARCH 3rd 2026**

Topic still to be decided

TREASURER'S REPORT:

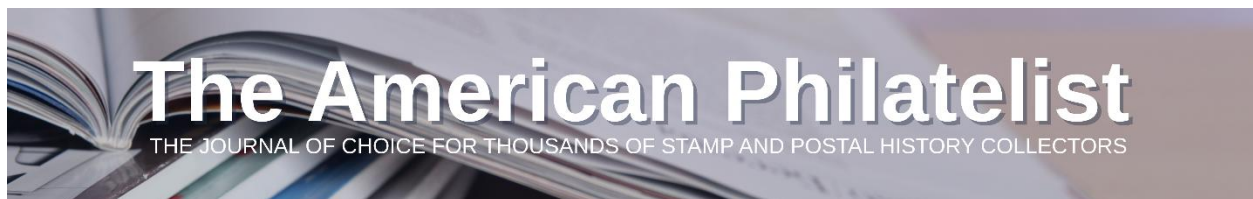
Current Account as of 12/31/2025: \$ 765.80

Savings Account as of 03/14/2025: \$ 3,414.63

CLUB DUES ARE OVER DUE:

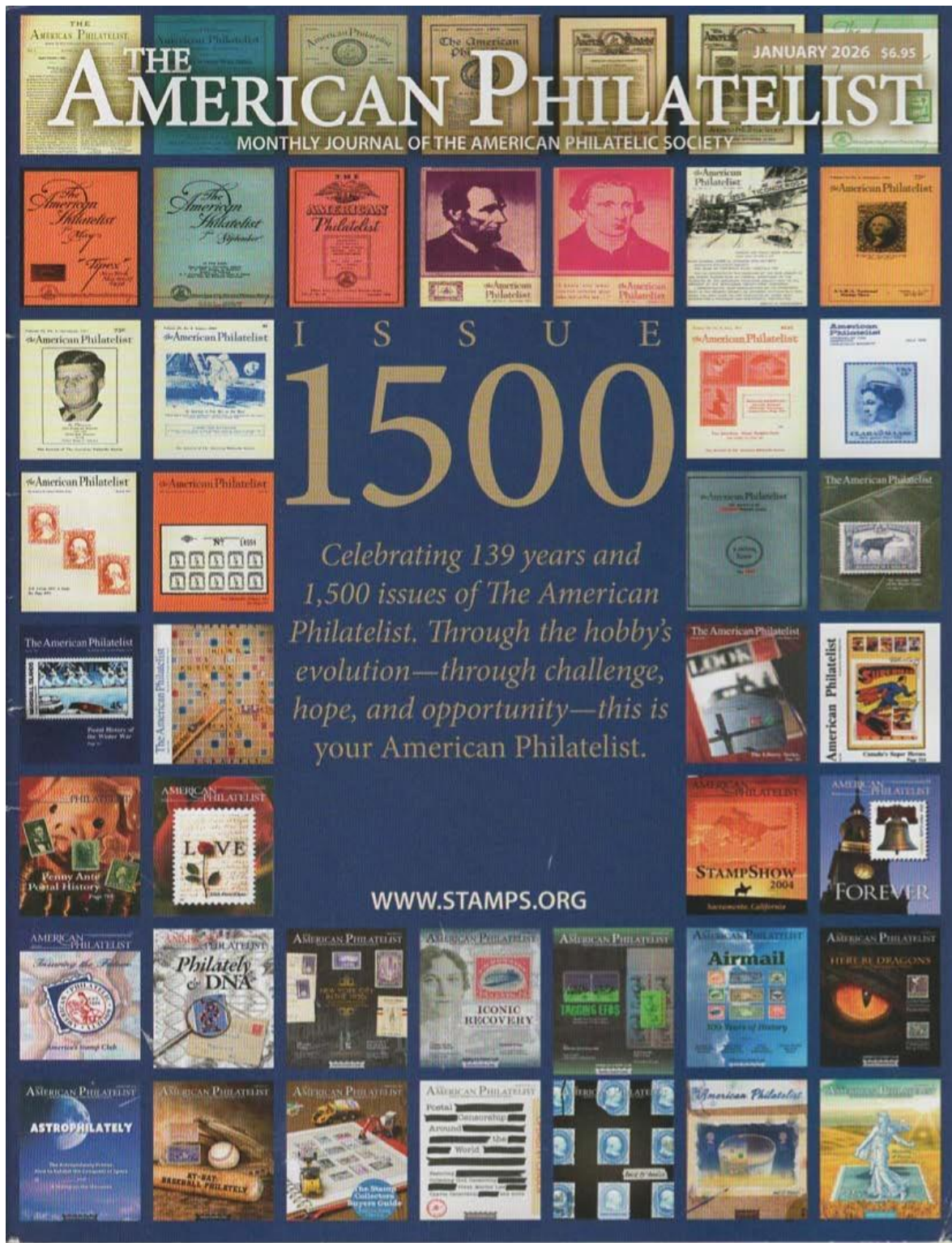
If you haven't yet paid for 2026 please send a \$ 10.00 check made payable to RSCC and send to Attn: Mike Bach 12 Colorado Avenue, Sinking Spring PA 19608. If I do not receive them by January 31st, I will be hounding you!!!

HAPPY NEW YEAR



Congratulations on the 1500th edition of the American Philatelist.

Below is the front page of this month's edition with examples of past covers. Those of us who are APS members will be able to read the story of the evolution of this publication.



Sorry Folks, this is my favorite stamp,

When I stumbled on this article from Arts and Collections, I could not resist including it in this month's edition.

The Penny Black: A Stamp Collector's Holy Grail

By [Annalisa D'Alessio](#)



Although around 68 million were produced, the Penny Black is one of the most famous and sought-after postage stamps for avid collectors. It is so famous, in fact, that Stanley Gibbons—a company specialising in the retailing of collectable postage stamps established in 1865—has a few on sale for anywhere between £300 and £300,000, depending on their condition.

Considered the world's first adhesive postage stamp to be used in the public postal system, the Penny Black was issued in May 1840—it features a profile of Queen Victoria, making it all the

more valuable to historians and collectors of relics from the Victorian era. Its design was inspired by the City Medal, a coin designed to commemorate the Queen's visit to the Guildhall in November 1837.

The stamp, which is black and white in colour and 20 x 24 mm in size, caused a true revolution in the postage industry; it increased postal traffic dramatically from 75 million to 410 million in under a decade. In addition to being the first evidence of postage pre-payment, the Penny Black also rendered sending mail affordable and encouraged many to read and write. Prior to its release, it was normal for mail recipients to pay postage on delivery and be charged by the sheet and distance travelled.

Despite its fame, the original stamp was a failure which remained in circulation for less than a year. The Penny Black's colour and design made it difficult for a red 'cancellation' to be visible. The red ink was also easy to remove, leading many to recycle used stamps. A year after its release, the Treasury switched to the Penny Red to avoid forgery and began using black 'cancellations' instead.

Even though over 68 million of these stamps were printed, the Penny Black is still a very rare collectable to come across. This is because the vast majority were thrown away at the time; stamp collecting as a hobby and passion did not yet exist.

Over the years, the iconic stamp has become somewhat of a Holy Grail for stamp collectors and philatelists. This is due to a number of reasons including printing plate numbers, margin condition, corner letters — which range from AA to TL — and errors.

Discerning collectors on the lookout for an outstanding Penny Black will want to own examples with four clear margins. These are relatively rare as the stamps were printed in unperforated sheets, making versions with badly cut margins all the more common and worth very little.

Another trait to look out for is the plate number: the Penny Black was famously printed from 11 plates. The 11th plate was originally intended for the printing of the new red stamps, but around 16,000 were printed in black. These are among the rarest and most sought-after examples in circulation.

Other 'varieties' such as re-entries, retouches, marks and flaws caused by printing plates, guidelines and double corner letters are all sources of interest for collectors. These traits all have the power to dramatically increase — or decrease — the stamp's monetary worth.

In modern popular culture, the Penny Black is widely known as a British icon. In 2015, its design featured in the innovations section of the new British passport. The same year saw Google celebrate its 175th anniversary with a dedicated doodle on its homepage.

The cover below is from my collection:

**The Penny Black was issued on May 6th 1840.
This cover is dated June 2nd, a mere 27 days after the first issue.**



The cover included two Liverpool date stamps that confirm the mailing date.



The Reading Stamp Collectors Club

Mike Bach, newsletter editor