

The Philatelic Communicator

Journal of the American Philatelic Society Writers Unit #30



-30-

www.wu30.org

First Quarter 2018 Issue 199

Lawrence Block's Hit Man Series

Ron Breznay

A hit man who collects stamps. That unlikely combination describes Jack Keller, or “just plain Keller,” the main character in a series of novels and short stories by Lawrence Block.

Despite being a paid assassin, Keller is a likeable character, and not just because he's a philatelist. I guess you could say he doesn't kill anybody who doesn't need killing. Also, he tries to avoid killing women, and he absolutely won't murder a child. Not great rationalization, but, hey, it's fiction. The stories are not action-oriented or focused on the details of the hits; rather, they are more character studies of Keller and the people he meets.

The second main character is Dot, who runs the service that provides hit men. She is also a sympathetic character, who serves iced tea to Keller on the porch of her suburban home as they go over the details of a contract and talk about life in general. Dot is more than just a facilitator. She is a confidante to Keller.

As the series begins, Keller is about to retire as

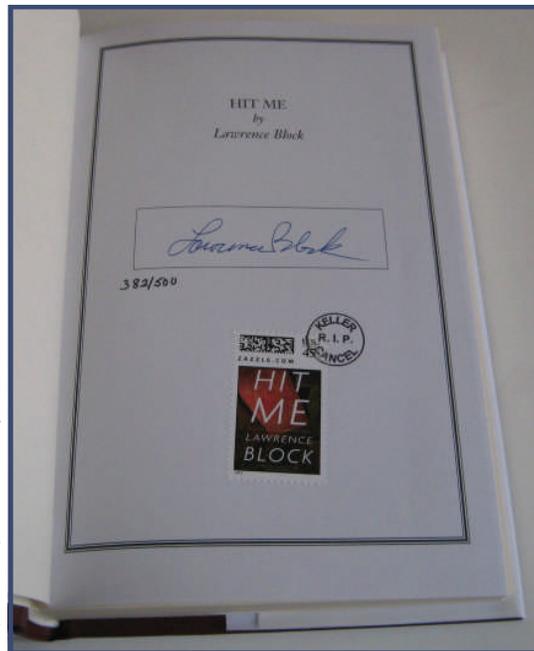
a hit man and he starts to wonder how he's going to fill his time. He remembers collecting stamps as a child and decides to get back into the hobby. He starts collecting like there's no tomorrow, adding many scarce and expensive stamps

to his collection. He soon realizes that he's quickly running through his retirement savings and decides to get back into the killing business.

Keller has philatelic adventures when he is out of town to carry out a hit. He buys stamps from stamp dealers, attends auctions, helps evaluate a collection, and meets with other collectors. There is a lot of philatelic detail in the descriptions of these events, so the stories satisfy the stamp collector as well as the thriller reader.

Lawrence Block is a philatelist and was just added to the

Wikipedia list of Philatelists by our associate editor who is a senior Wikipedia editor. Block collects the same stamps that his character Keller does: non-U.S. stamps from the classic period of 1840 to 1940, plus Great Britain through the reign of King George VI. Therefore, Block



. Signed Title Page of Book *Hit Me*

Block. Continued on page 4



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David Crotty From the Editor

Publication Change

Once we realized at Stampshow that the WU30 treasury was way more than a little thin we asked members to chip in for dues not collected in the last three or four years. We gratefully acknowledge here that members chipped in to the tune of about \$2200. About 20 members dropped out, all of these even after paying up on past dues. Most remaining members opted for the email delivery of TPC. About 6 members opted for the B/W photocopy delivered by USPS. This gives us about 110 paid members, some through year 2020.

While I have not discussed this with the executive committee, I would like to suggest that members get the option of email delivery or printed delivery. The Meter Stamp Society that I edit for provides that choice, and despite our small numbers we are nicely solvent by using that option.

New Secretary Treasurer Alan Barasch

When we asked around for a new Secretary Treasurer three members came forward. President Lloyd de Vries chose Alan Barasch, a member from St. Louis. Alan has provided a report with a little background for himself and you will find that on page 16.

Hall of Fame Nominees for 2018

This would be a good time to think about who you members consider who would be good choices for our Hall of Fame ceremony at Stampshow this year. The show and our annual breakfast will be held in Columbus, Ohio. Send us a message if you have choices. Generally the selection committee comprises of past inductees and is headed by Dane Claussen.

Font Experimentation

I have been experimenting with fonts. This is issue is mostly Garamond. Does it work for you? Do you have a favorite font to suggest? Due to the software I use your suggestion has to be Microsoft True-Type fonts.

Oxford Comma

Our Associate Editor has defected to using the Oxford comma at the end of a list and before the "and." It is driving me crazy. What are your feelings on this issue?

Dave

Zwilling Resigns As Library President

Lloyd de Vries

Steve Zwilling resigned March 2nd as president of the American Philatelic Research Library, according to Linn's Stamp News. The APRL's board of trustees will hold a telephone conference meeting on March 12th to elect a new president. The bylaws require that a replacement be chosen from among the current board members.

"I resigned due to pressing family issues that require my attention," Zwilling told *The Virtual Stamp Club* in e-mail. "The Library needs a Presi-

dent who can devote the time and attention that the position requires."

Zwilling, who works for the U.S. Department of Education, was elected to the board of trustees last spring, and then chosen as president by a unanimous vote of the board in August, just seven months ago. He previously served as secretary and director-at-large on the American Philatelic Society board of directors.

Virtual Stamp Club March 7, 2018



Why Do We Write?



John Hotchner

In the 3rd Quarter, 2015 issue (p. 3) we looked at a number of reasons why philatelic writers write. Since then I stumbled across a wall chart titled "10 Great Reasons to Write". They are not specific to philately, but valid nevertheless, and I think they supplement nicely the earlier list. So, herewith, the amended list; edited a bit to eliminate duplication:

- Write because you must.
- Write for the money.
- Write to organize your thoughts.
- Write to convey information.
- Write to solicit information.
- Write to share (frustrations, discoveries, etc.).
- Write to publicize your wants.
- Write to establish your credibility as an expert.
- Write to support a society or publication that you value.
- Write to give back to the hobby something of what you have gained from it.
- Write because you have been asked to and there is no graceful way to refuse.
- Write to explain something.

- Write to tell your side of the story.
- Write to tell what happened.
- Write to connect with your reader.
- Write to tell how you feel.
- Write to explain what you think.
- Write to record important details.
- Write to describe something.
- Write to enjoy yourself.

The first entry and the last entry are not synonymous. They may both apply, but for many of us, writing is a compulsion, more than something we do for enjoyment. Writing requires planning, organizing, expenditure of mental energy, and an expenditure of precious time. For some, this is the definition of work; to be avoided at all costs. But for others it is indeed an enjoyable experience. But for both, there is a product at the end that is pleasing; even satisfying. And that can be addictive. This is the point when writing becomes a compulsion, even if it is work!

There was one other entry on the chart I noted earlier. It doesn't apply to writers so much as to workers generally, but I suspect it will ring a bell with many of us: "I want to hire employees who don't finish their work. Said no boss, ever!"



Block. Continued from page 1

writes knowledgeably about that era of postage stamps.

Block has also written non-fiction about stamps. He had a column, “Generally Speaking,” in *Linn’s Stamp News* from 2009 to 2012. The first 25 of these columns were collected in the e-book *Generally Speaking*.

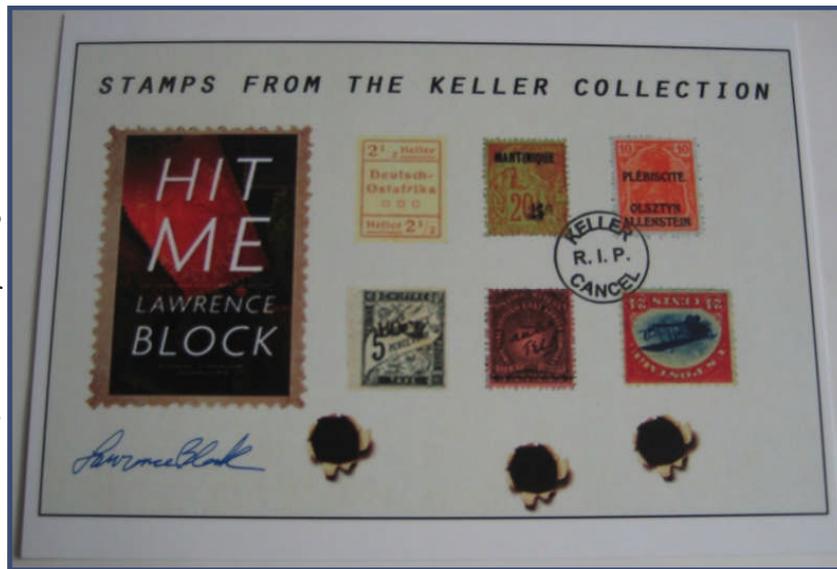
Besides the Keller stories, Block has written over a hundred novels and numerous short stories, beginning in the 1950s. He is particularly known for his series about recovering alcoholic private investigator Matthew Scudder and the gentleman burglar Bernie Rhodenbarr. He has won many awards for this fiction, including two Edgar awards in the Best Short Story category for two Keller stories.

There are five hit man books so far. *Hit Man*, *Hit List*, *Hit Parade*, and *Hit Me* are episodic novels, being more collections of short stories than novels. *Hit and Run* is a true novel. A few short stories, including some that are chapters in the episodic novels, are available as Kindle Singles.

Block gave a talk about Keller and stamps at World Stamp Show—NY 2016. Unfortunately, it was one of the days the club did not go to the show.

A Philatelic Edition of *Hit Me* was published by the specialty publisher Mysterious Press in a

limited edition of 500. Each copy was signed by the author and numbered. A real U.S. stamp pic-

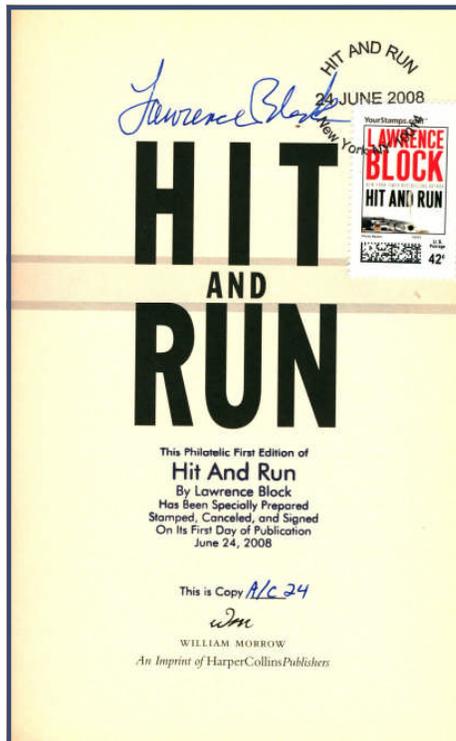


The Hit Man’s Stamp Collection

ture the book cover (printed by Zazzle) was applied to the limitation page and tied to the page with a custom Keller cancel. In addition, there was a souvenir sheet, “Stamps from the Keller Collection,” which depicted a perforated label of the book’s cover and the six stamps

mentioned in the book. Two copies of the souvenir sheet (one mint, one canceled) were included with each copy of the Philatelic Edition.

There was also a Philatelic Edition of *Hit and Run*, which was the regular hardcover first edition along with some enhancements: the author’s signature, a rubber-stamped limitation notice, a limitation number, and a personalized U.S. stamp tied to the title page with a special cancel. The “postmark” bears the book’s official publication date (June 24, 2008) and the city of publication (New York).



Signed Copy held by the APRL

Note: Originally published in the December 2017 issue of *The Magnifying Glass*, the official newsletter of the Wyoming Valley [Pennsylvania] Stamp Club. Reprinted by permission.

Writing - What to Write About

Steve Zwillinger

We don't know how many people want to become or to continue to be philatelic authors but get stuck at the Choosing-A-Topic step in the writing process. This column is for those individuals who want to write but aren't sure what to write about. What should you write about? It's simple: What do you find interesting?

It's your passion or knowledge or conviction that can make an article interesting. You should write about something that interests you. If it is not interesting to you, it very well may not be interesting to the rest of us either.

A short list of possible writing topics follows. Do any of them elicit thoughts about the subject? Do any of them elicit a thought you'd like to share with a philatelic audience?

- What is your favorite philatelic reference book and why? It could be general or specialized.

- What is your favorite cover or cancel? Why?
- Writing or collecting advice you wish someone had given you.
- Writing or collecting advice you wish you had never heard.
- One writing or collecting 'rule' you break.
- One writing or collecting 'rule' you won't break.
- The most difficult philatelic thing you've written – and why it was difficult and/or how you overcame the difficulty.
- The most satisfying philatelic thing you've written – and why it was satisfying.

Please note that although some of these topics might be appropriate for *The Philatelic Communicator*, other ones might be more appropriate for the *Philatelic Literature Review* (the publication of the American Philatelic Research Library) or a specialist journal.



Publishing an Exhibit as a Bound Book

Steve Zwillinger

Editor's Note: *I asked Steve about his project to put philatelic exhibits into print. My own thought is that exhibiting is a massive waste of talent in as much as exhibits are shown briefly to a limited audience. Most if not all should be printed in some way. I did have to consult my dictionary for "idiosyncratic".*

I've started working with exhibitors to publish hard copy versions of their exhibits. Initially I started with Grand Award winners that are primarily on 8.5 x 11 inch paper. This is because I am using CreateSpace, a subsidiary of Amazon, and they cannot handle paper larger than 8.5 by 11 paper. I've done 6 volumes of exhibits so far - 5 though (Createspace) and one printed in India on 11 x 17 paper that has five one-frame grand award winning exhibits in it. One of these published exhibits was also a C-of-C (Champion of Champions) winner and now I am talking to another C-of-C winner about publishing his exhibit. I have had

preliminary discussions with several other exhibitors about their exhibits

I'm working on two other categories of exhibits now. The first is a series of single stamp US exhibits I hope to have the first volume available very shortly as it is almost completed.

The second group of exhibits are those that I think need to be preserved and available that are in many cases esoteric and not well known. I am working on preparing an exhibit of Carpatho-Ukraine for publication. This was an exhibit by a collector, now deceased, whose wife gave permission for me to prepare a manuscript. Truth be told, they are all idiosyncratic.

The best thing is there is no charge to the exhibitor. I do this because I enjoy it and want to help preserve our philatelic heritage.

To see the printed volumes go to Amazon.com and search for 'grand award stamp exhibit'

A Dangerous and Startling Thing

A humorous introduction to stamp discussion boards.

Leon Lutje

Welcome to the exciting and educational world of philately. I can see you are well prepared. You have a magnifying glass specially made for looking at stamps, tongs specially made for handling stamps, a lamp with enough candlelight power to light up the Las Vegas strip specially made for lighting stamps, a stamp album costing hundreds of dollars specially made for storing stamps, and a Starbucks triple-double mocha send me to the outer galaxy coffee, specially made for drinking while playing with (oops! I mean examining), your stamps. You have been diligent in your preparations. I certainly hope when you sit down at your desk (of course specially designed for sitting at while dealing with your stamps) you did not forget. Stamps!

Unfortunately, unlike collectors of past generations, you have another area in which you must essentially become, if not quite expert, at least proficient to navigate the world of the modern philatelist. Do not be alarmed. I am here to help. Although a dangerous and startling area of our beloved hobby, it can be mastered and when mastered, it is a most enjoyable experience. I am speaking of the, (I cringe as I write), Online Stamp Discussion Boards!

Take a few moments to resume normal breathing. Relax and count to ten. We will get through this together. When we are done you will be able to ask, answer and comment with the best of them. Trust me.

As a novice, the first thing you must remember about stamp discussion boards is the simpler the question, the more complicated the answer. The question you ask with the expectation of a precise, uncomplicated answer, will trigger a few diatribes from experts the length of which, in the old days, would bring concerns of pushing your data usage limits. Most do not have data limits these days, however you get my point.

Let's study an example. Mr. Novice stamp collector has a question. He expectantly posts the question on the discussion board. Any stamp discussion board will suffice. The exchange will go something like this:

NEWSTAMPPERSON1066: Hello! I am new to this forum, and I really love this site. Anyway, my therapist's best friend's cousin just gave me a bazillion stamps. I cannot read them because they are in a foreign language. One of them has a picture of a guy that looks like Worf. Are they Klingon stamps? Which Scott catalog would they be in? I looked at volume 4 but could not find Klingon. Also in volume 5 I could not find Narnia. Are my catalogs too old? My main question though is what color is the cross on U. S. Scott #1016 Red Cross Issue? Thanks in advance for the kind welcome and answer.

Mr. Novice seems to be an amiable enough fellow. At this point we will not address the Klingon or Narnia issues (no pun intended), let us go right to his question. It is simple enough. Remember there is no such thing as a stupid question. Now, if I was browsing the boards at the time he posted, I would be inclined to give him a grand welcome to the board and site then proceed to give him a simple one word answer. I would be wrong. Never give a simple answer when a fifteen-hundred word response will work as well. Let's see what happened.

OLDSTAMPPERSON1066: Welcome NEWSTAMPPERSON1066. We are glad to have you on the board and the site. You will find many interesting articles and people in our community as well as great opportunities to ask questions and learn. I am so glad you asked this particular question. It will give an opportunity for others who are in the same quandary a chance to learn. Fortunately, I have studied this problem for over 50 years and believe I have finally found the right answer.

Dangerous continued OnPage 7

Your stamp U. S. Scott #1016 was printed by the esteemed American Banknote, Turnip and Cattle Company. This printer was located in Poy Sippi, Wisconsin and was in business for three months. At the time your stamp was printed the manager of the company was Darwin Kleen, who according to records insisted on being addressed as Mr. Kleen. He was a no nonsense businessman with a Pickwickian physique. His hobbies were trout fishing and cow-tipping. The press operator on your stamp was the famed Al “roll’em out” Brown, a legend to all postal historians. The ink mixer was Gus. Unfortunately, Gus was melancholy one day due to the Chicago Cubs being throttled by the St. Louis Cardinals the day before. Thus, Gus had an aversion to the color red and mixed in extra magenta. As I can see by the scan, your stamp has a slight discoloration. This oddity is listed by Scott as U. S. #1016lol and is worth \$1,000,000. Or it could be your stamp was sneezed on by a previous owner. I am not sure. Maybe SNEEZEON STAMPSGUY can answer. Again, welcome to the site.

You might think when you read this answer there is too much information. Well, there is much great information. But our friend OLDSTAMPPERSON1066 did not actually answer the question did he? You will find many discussions start with a question that never gets an answer. It makes a discussion board fun, like searching for a rare stamp in a mixture, we are looking for an actual answer in a discussion thread. Let’s see what happens next.

SNEEZEONSTAMPSGUY: Hello NEWS-PAMPPERSON1066, and welcome to the club. I am sorry to report you do not have the famed “Gus” variation of Scott 1016. However, I cannot confirm your stamp has been sneezed upon. Could you perhaps get a better scan for us? My inclination is the discoloration was caused by something I have seen too often, Gerber’s beets. Please to not let your children eat near your stamps. I see hundreds a day in my business. I won’t even go into what I saw a stick of black licorice do to a U. S. Scott 292. I had to tell a lady “no, it is not a variation with an extra bull. It is a tiny bit of licorice.” a real nightmare. Again welcome.

Realize this is only an example of the thread. There are over 2456 answers and the thread has been active for three years. Keep in mind the original question, “What color is the cross on the U. S. Scott 1016, Red Cross Issue?”

Now for the other end of the spectrum. Asking questions is a very good way to become well versed in a particular subject. Stamp discussion boards can make the job very easy. Instead of reading tens of volumes on a subject you can simply ask a question, sit back and relax and watch the information pour in. This was the attitude of LEARNSTAMPSTHEEASYWAY. She decided she wanted to become expert on the Washington/Franklin subject. Fair enough. Although a daunting subject enough to make one cringe, LEARNSTAMPSTHEEASYWAY attempted to take a short cut. As would anyone, she expected to be inundated with massive amounts of information on the Washington/Franklin front by simply posting on a discussion board. She wanted to take it easy and not go for it all at once. Here is her post.

LEARNSTAMPSTHEEASYWAY: I know I have been a frequent poster for several years and should know the answer to this question but here goes. Can somebody explain to me why there are so many variations, errors, oddballs and types of the red 2 cent Washington stamps? Thanks

She grabbed a cup of coffee, sat back and waited for the rush. After reading the post concerning the question of the red in red cross, she was expecting mounds of juicy information she could use to impress at her monthly stamp club meeting. Ten minutes later she started to worry. No replies yet. “This is odd,” she thought. This question had given all of the stamp geeks bait and she should be reeling them all in by now. After thirty minutes and no reply she started to panic. After an hour with no replies she was helplessly in anxiety mode. After several more cups of coffee finally there was the blissful ding on her computer letting her know someone had replied. With anticipation she went to the screen.

WASHINGTONFRANKLINEXPERTGUY: Hell, I don’t know. Hope this helps.

This fine lady was simply in the wrong place at the wrong time. An expert finally had a flagrant act

of honesty and came clean. I am sure this guy could have gone on for pages and pages. He must have attended Experts Anonymous the night before and was feeling drained. In any event the story has a happy ending. Our friend decided to just collect ice hockey and was in stamp heaven.

Another important issue for the novice discussion board participant is terminology. It is essential to have a glossary at your side, otherwise you will be confused. I can tell you that I was totally baffled for five days following a subject. I was at a loss until on the fifth day I ran to the glossary and found a perfin is not an adolescent puffin. Go figure.

Here is just a small sampling that will help you get started:

- FDC is not Federal Drug Commission
- OG is not an abbreviation of OMG
- MNH is not mint not honey
- FBI is not fine brilliant imperforate.

This ends our lesson one of discussion boards. Go post and have some fun and learn something.

Note: Leon is a retired pastor living in East Central Wisconsin near Green Bay. Like many, after retirement he came back to a pre-teen obsession with collecting stamps and now spends ten to twelve hours a day on the hobby. He has published one book and is in the process of writing another. He lives with his wife of forty years Nancy (Bunny Marti). They have four children and five grandchildren.



We Get Letters (Sometimes)

Chicagopex Prospectus

From: Ken Trettin

I have attached a copy of the Prospectus (see TPC page 14) and the Application for the 2018 Chicagopex Literature Exhibition. There have been quite a few changes due to the new Literature Judging Manual approved last year by the APS board. Since the PC is no longer printed perhaps you would be able to include this in the next issue. I am accepting entries, and the PC could be the first. The Application is a fillable PDF form.

Yours,
Ken

Editor's Note. The Chicagopex show is the last remaining club show that offers literature exhibiting. We have included their very informative prospectus on page 14 and very much encourage writers and editors to submit their works to this show.

Membership and Literature Judging

1. William Kriebel

<kriebewv@drexel.edu> wrote:

Hi,

I do NOT plan to renew at the present time. I took a printed copy of the TPC Fourth Quarter and the

three earlier issues on a long train ride to visit my daughter in Massachusetts over the Christmas holidays. It reminded me why I left WU30, after several years as a member.

I submitted one of my journals, *Bull's Eyes*, more than once and the last criticism was something like "too much information in the footer"! How much is "too much"?

Then I produced *Souvenir Cards: A Visual Reference* in 2012, and submitted it to CHICAGOPEX 2012 as a "Handbook." To my dismay, the "jury" had reclassified it as a "Catalog" and faulted it for "not having values"! I was advised that the jury has that prerogative!

Quite frankly, I don't want or need that kind of "help"!

Regards,
Bill Kriebel

2. GreyOldDave <decrotty@yahoo.com> wrote:

Bill

We are not really the literature judges but we certainly comment on these discussions sometimes. Sounds to me you can contribute with an article or two.

Letters continued from Page 8

Hope you don't go too far. We will miss you.
Dave

**3. William Kriebel <kriebewv@drexel.edu>
To:decrotty@yahoo.com**

wrote:

Hi again,

So who are the judges? I thought them to be members of the Writer's Unit. Not so? If then, how are they chosen and by whom?, Bill

**4. GreyOldDave <decrotty@yahoo.com>
wrote:**

Bill

The Literature and Philatelic Judges are handled by the APS. You may notice that the APS provides training and certification for judges and publishes

the judging rules booklets, not to mention that the rules booklets are available from the APS website. We at WU30 follow the discussions about judging closely and hopefully many of the judges also belong to WU30. Dave

Information Storage

Steven Zwillinger

<steven.zwillinger@gmail.com>

To:GreyOldDave

wrote:

Know what article I would like to read? or participate in writing as a group venture?

A file structure to store philatelic information so you can find it again.

I suspect there are as many file structures as there are collectors or authors.

Steve

Prestigious new premises for The Royal Philatelic Society London

One hundred years since the purchase of its legendary headquarters at 41 Devonshire Place, London W1, The Royal Philatelic Society London is moving to new and larger premises in the historic centre of the City of London at 15 Abchurch Lane, London EC4N 7BW.

Membership of the Society now stands at almost 2,400. This, together with the continuing growth of the Society's collections, means that the facilities at 41 Devonshire Place are no longer large enough nor serve the needs of members. In late 2016, the Council of the Society took the decision to buy a larger, convenient, characterful new home in central London. The search was led by Chris King, Past President of the Society, who took almost a year to find the new building. He said:

When we saw 15 Abchurch Lane we knew that we had found the right place. Better still, every member who

has seen it, agrees that this is the place for us.'

Work is now well underway to complete the move by June 2019, which also marks the 150th anniversary of The Royal Philatelic Society London, the world's oldest and most prestigious philatelic society. Property Consultant, Gerald Eve, is managing the project on behalf of the Society and City architects, Tate Hindle, is leading the redesign of the building.

The final and most important priority is to ensure that all the necessary finances are in place. The Society's President, Patrick Maselis, is leading the **Tomorrows Royal** fundraising campaign. His overriding objective is to ensure:

'The Society will continue to grow, develop and prosper in the next 100 years as it has in the last 150'.

For further information visit the website: <http://www.rpsl.org.uk/abchurch.asp>



Who Needs a Dictionary?

Lloyd de Vries

Somewhere in my house I have a copy of the Merriam Webster Collegiate Dictionary.

I think.

The truth is, I haven't seen it in years. I'd like to tell you it's because I never have questions about spellings or the exact meanings of words, but if I did, I'd be lying. The fact is, I use two online dictionaries, for all my writing, professional, philatelic, and personal.

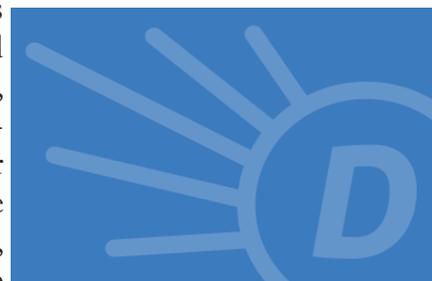
One is Merriam-Webster's. You'll find it at www.m-w.com which forwards to www.merriam-webster.com (but m-w.com is faster to type). It recently added a thesaurus tab.

The other one that I use is www.dictionary.com and its companion site, www.thesaurus.com. You can easily reach one from the other by clicking on tabs. Its "About" section says it was established in 1995 and



Merriam Webster
Logo

that in 2004, it acquired the Random House Unabridged Dictionary. Since 2008, it has been owned by IAC or "InterActiveCorp," which started with television stations and has expanded into other media, including the Internet. Its other sites include Match.com, Ask.com, and the [Daily Beast](http://DailyBeast.com). Just in case you were wondering.



Dictionary.com Logo

Both sites also have a number of articles and games, if you want to take a break from your stamps and covers.

Editor's Note: I still have the Seventh New Collegiate Dictionary, 1972, on hand because I sometimes misspell so badly that Microsoft can't help me. Actually this copy was part of the dowry my wife brought with her when we married. 

Hard Copy is Too Hard Now

Lloyd de Vries

Back in the early 1990s, the main reason I decided to go online in the pre-Internet dial-up dark ages was not to run discussion groups, but so I could submit my *Stamp Collector* first day cover columns to Van Dahl Publishing. I was finding too many mistakes added when the text was entered, or "rekeyed," into the typesetting system. I could make enough mistakes of my own, thank you!

I was one of the few submitting articles electronically then. Today, it's the norm, as I discussed recently with Donna Houseman, editorial director of *Linn's Stamp News*.

Donna Houseman: "We still have some people who will try to send in manuscripts that are type-written and we don't encourage that at all. Mistakes do happen when we are rekeying something, so to

have it come in in a Microsoft Word file or something like that makes it a lot easier for the editors, and quite frankly, we don't need as many people now because we don't have to have someone in the office retyping what comes in."

LdeV: "Does anybody still send something in longhand?"

DH: "Yes, they do."

LdeV: "And your reaction?"

DH: "If it's *really* good, we'll accept it, but most of the time, we don't accept anything like that anymore."

Editor's Note: Yes we heard this discussion between Lloyd and Donna at StampShow and it was too good to let it go. 

Reviews

Print & Electronic

Reviews in *TPC* are indexed at
www.wu30.org Journal page.



Agathon Fabergé: Portrait of a Philatelist by Kaj Hellman and Jeffrey C. Stone. 382 pages, 8 ½ by 10 inches (21.5 by 25 cms), hardbound, Suomen Filateliapalvelu, Turku, Finland, 2017. €50 plus postage from Suomen Filateliapalvelu Oy, Noutokatu 3, 21100 Naantali, Finland, or www.filateliapalvelu.com.

In conjunction with the centenary celebration of Finland's independence, this magnificent portrait of a world famous philatelist was released during FINLANDIA 2017 held in Tampere in May 2017. Agathon Karlovitch Fabergé was the second son of Peter Carl Fabergé who had taken over the well-known House of Fabergé, the legendary maker of jewelry and other art objects.

Two serious philatelists—the late Kaj Hellman and Jeffrey Stone—spent years studying the philatelic life of Agathon Fabergé and his extensive collections. They had access to family archives not previously available. The result is this wonderful book which now takes its place on the shelf of the history of philately.

A one-page abstract appears at the beginning of the book in Finnish, Swedish, English, German, and Russian. However, the text of the book itself is in English, making it available to a wide collecting audience. A short biography recounts Agathon's birth in St. Petersburg and his involvement with the family business where his knowledge of art objects and languages were important assets. However, he had a falling out with the family and briefly ran an antique shop.

Members of the Fabergé family fled Russia with the threat of the revolution but Agathon remained and served time in prison. Finally in 1927 he and his second wife and their daughter escaped to Finland. Many of his collections of art objects were confiscated but he managed to smuggle part of his philatelic collection and other artefacts to Finland where he settled in a suburb of Helsinki.

Agathon began to collect stamps at age nine. He joined the St. Petersburg Section of the International Philatelic Society of Dresden where he met many well-

known collectors and was therefore able to acquire important pieces for his specialties. The authors illustrate many key items from his collection and identify who he purchased them from. One chapter details Fabergé's pursuit of the Zemstvos sold by Ferrari, and another chapter reflects on his long-term study of these issues and the great rarities that he owned.

Subsequent chapters reflect on Fabergé's joining several stamp clubs and his buying and selling of material. He was involved with major exhibitions in Helsinki, Berlin, Vienna, Paris, and Brussels in the late 1920s through the 1940s, some of which he exhibited at or served on the jury. Throughout the book there is emphasis on the tremendous research and study that Fabergé conducted, often applying light pencil notes on the backs of his stamps. He engaged in a number of plating studies.

Authors Hellman and Stone trace the various auctions of Fabergé's collections in the late 1930s and early 40s—Plumridge, Harmer's, Robson Lowe, and Pelander. The controversies and intrigues surrounding the Harmer auctions in particular add fascination and excitement to the Fabergé story.

One important research tool that evolved while preparing this book is a philatelic database of items from Fabergé's collections derived from private collectors, museums, auction houses, and dealers' stocks. A chart shows the number of items acquired by the collector each year from 1898 to 1950. Although his major philatelic focus was on Finland and Russia, he also developed serious collections of Italian states, German states, Norway, and Japan among many other countries.

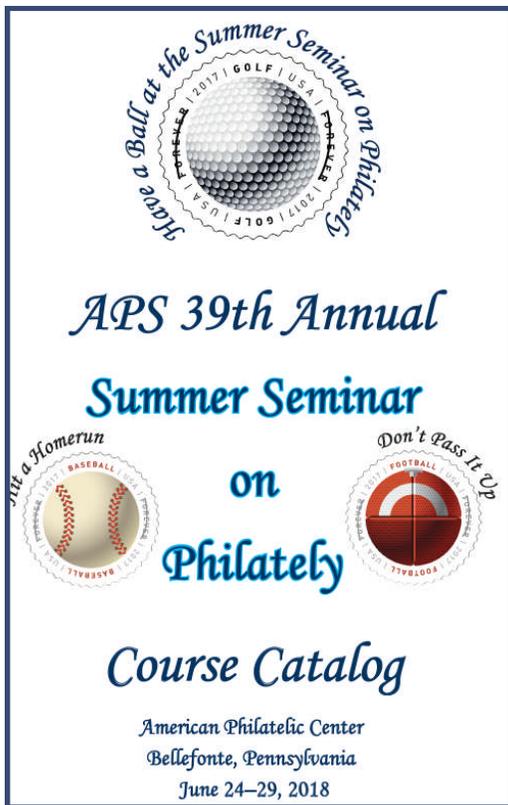
Informative appendices include an interview with Fabergé published in 1929, a detailed inventory of his exhibits at the 1933 WIPA exhibition in Vienna, and listings of his Zemstvo stamps and Moscow postal stationery envelopes. An extensive bibliography reveals some of the many sources used to compile this impressive tome profiling one of the great collectors of the 20th century.

The book is well designed and edited. Illustrations are excellent and enable readers not only to see amazing material but also provide insight to the great knowledge held by a truly eminent philatelist. The authors are to be commended for allowing collectors to see the results of their research and to learn about, who was until now, a somewhat enigmatic practitioner of the hobby.

Alan Warren

Reviews continued on page 12

APS 39th Annual Summer Seminar



Four Day Courses

A Comprehensive Postal History of Great Britain
Detecting Damaged, Altered & Repaired Stamps
Stamp Technology

Testimonials From Past Students 5

Two Day Courses: Monday and Tuesday

Intermediate Exhibiting
The Prohibition Movement
Topical Collecting 101
Washington-Franklins, Part 1: Identification
World War II Era Postal History

Two Day Courses: Wednesday and Thursday

Advanced Exhibiting Seminar
Federal Taxation of Tobacco & Tobacco Products
Three Kings & Two Queens in New Zealand
The Washington-Franklins of U.S. Postal Stationery a.k.a. Circular Dies
Washington-Franklins, Part 2: Expertizing

Reviews continued from page 11

Norgeskatalogen 2018. 480 pages, 6 ½ by 9 ½ inches, card covers, perfect bound, Oslo Filatelistklubb, Oslo, Norway, 2017. ISBN 978-82-93453-02-4, 425 NOK plus shipping from Oslo Filatelistklubb, Frydenlundgate 14, 0169 Oslo, Norway, or www.oslofilatelistklubb.no.

The normal annual edition of this catalogue of the stamps of Norway was not published last year. The 2018 edition has the same number of pages as the 2016 version. The catalogue committee introduced two changes this year. The pricing is based on very fine rather than fine quality as the collecting standard. This has resulted in some increases of values. In addition, a minimum value has been set at 1 krone and designated in the listings as **M**.

For many years *Norgeskatalogen* has set a high standard for a single country catalog and the 2018 edition continues that tradition. In addition to the postage stamps, the back-of-the-book items include coils, book-

lets, officials, postage dues, returned letter stamps, personalized stamps and franking labels. Souvenir sheets, mini-blocks, and year-sets are also listed.



As with recent editions, two specialized articles are included in the 2018 catalogue. Bjørn Erik Rasmussen discusses the 20 mm posthorn issues (NK 49-55) in some detail. An unsigned article describes the double-ring bridge cancels (sometimes called Swiss cancels) used from 1936 to 1943, followed by a 22-page listing of these postmarks. Both articles are in Norwegian language only.

Although the special articles are in Norwegian, many text passages throughout the catalogue are in both Norwegian and English, extending the utility of this excellent book. Another important feature is the table of postal rates from 1877 to 2017. *Norgeskatalogen* continues to be the key reference for Norway collectors.

Alan Warren

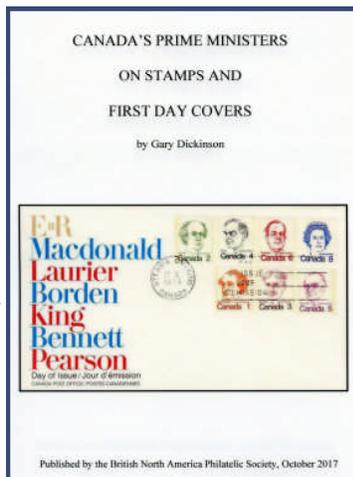
Reviews continued on page 13

Canada's Prime Ministers on Stamps and First Day Covers by Gary Dickinson. 88 pages, 8 1/2 by 11 inches, stiff covers, spiral bound, British North American Philatelic Society, Ottawa, Canada, 2017. ISBN 978-1-927119-82-2, \$49.95 CAD plus postage from www.sparks-auctions.com/bnapsbooks.

Gary Dickinson has authored many articles and handbooks on the first day covers of Canada. This book is his contribution to the celebration of the country's sesquicentennial. The focus is the country's prime ministers and he surveys both the stamps and first day covers of those who held that office.

The current policy is to issue a stamp for a prime minister only after they have died, and about a year following their passing. Of Canada's 23 prime ministers, 15 have been honored with postage stamps. The first chapter carries a table listing all of them, their years of service, the party they represented, and the Scott catalogue numbers for those stamps that have appeared.

Each prime minister stamp issue and its FDCs are described chronologically, starting with a brief profile of the PM. The first ones to be honored were John A. MacDonald and Wilfrid Laurier for whom a set of three stamps was released in 1927. Even at



this early date there were quite a few printed and rubber-stamped cachets that were used. The covers are nicely illustrated and the cachet makers identified.

From 1951 to 1955 eight more prime ministers were honored with stamps. These also are illustrated and accompanied by FDCs including maximum cards and a few unknown cachets. The 1973-76 Caricature set of stamps depicts seven prime ministers including five who previously appeared on stamps. Combination first day covers are known with these definitives.

The last three ministers and the years in which their stamps appeared are Arthur Meighen (1961), John Diefenbaker (1980), and Pierre Trudeau (2001). FDCs of the last two stamps have limited cachets as the Canadian Post Office had stepped into the cachet business, causing many cachet makers to leave the scene.

Nearly 40 different general purpose cachets are known for all of the PM stamps and these are illustrated in an appendix. Another appendix is a useful cachet makers index. Text and illustrations are nicely laid out and the images are sufficiently large to see details. Reference notes appear at the end of each chapter. The subject

of this handbook suggests a topical FDC exhibit could be built around the prime minister issues.

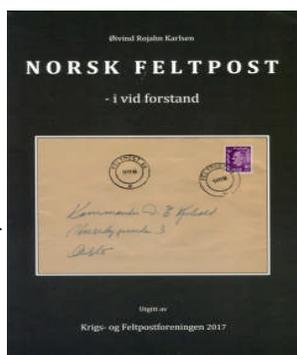
Alan Warren

Norsk Feltpost – i vid forstand (Norwegian Fieldpost – in the Broad Sense) by Øivind Rojahn Karlsen. 384 pages, 6 1/2 by 9 1/2 inches, card covers, perfect bound, Norwegian language, Krigs- og Feltpostforeningen, Oslo, Norway, 2017. ISBN 978-82-93453-01-07, 350 NOK plus postage from Norwegian War and Fieldpost Society, <http://warandfieldpost.com/>.

This handbook is an important resource for collectors of Norwegian fieldpost mail and cancels, with alphabetical and numerical listings. A list of abbreviations used in the book is followed by an illustrated table of cancellation types. Next is a list of sources—both printed literature and internet sites—used for background to the subject.

The first chapter is a list of the fixed or regular fieldpost locations in alphabetical order beginning with Aur. For each entry there is a brief background, a photo, a chronological listing of use with year dates, and illustrations of the cancel types used. Often a piece of mail showing the cancel and/or a Feltpost registered mail label for that location is illustrated. Some locations and their fieldpost control numbers are identified.

The second chapter lists the fieldpost stations arranged in 1940 after the invasion of Germany. These are grouped by four major District Commands of Oslo, Bergen,



Trondheim, and Harstad. A short chapter lists the stations after the country's Liberation in 1945.

One extensive chapter lists the stations chronologically for various military exercises, from 1890 to 2002. The chapter on Norwegian fieldpost stations abroad contains tables with locations in Sweden, Germany, Lebanon, Croatia, Kosovo, Afghanistan, and Tchad. The sixth chapter focuses on non-military fieldpost stations, beginning with Aalvik (No. 19) and in alphabetical order.

The next chapter lists the temporary non-military stations in chronological order from 1892 to 1997. The last one was a station at the 1997 Norwex international exhibition in Oslo. Chapter 8 lists stations at Norwegian military camps like Haakonsværn, Heggelia, Kolsås, Ramsund, and Sessvollmoen among others. A final group of markings are recent military departments with special cancels.

The last chapter is an important one that lists the field post offices numerically beginning with Nr. 1 at four locations from 1888 to 1957, to Nr. 413. An alphabetical index of station names concludes this handbook. There is no pricing or rarity information. However, collectors of Norwegian fieldposts will find this key resource important to identifying these markings.

Alan Warren



CHICAGOPEX 2018

Fifty-second Annual Philatelic Literature Exhibition

November 16–18, 2018, Itasca, Illinois

Literature Exhibition Prospectus

Chicagopex Literature Exhibition, PO Box 56, Rockford, IA 50468-0056 <revenue@myomnitel.com>

How we conduct our Literature Exhibition

About our exhibition

Our exhibition considers “philatelic literature” to be printed and electronic publications related to the collection and study of postage stamps and stationery, postal history, revenue stamps and stamped paper, cinderella stamps and associated specialized fields.

Our literature exhibition is an every-year literature exhibition and is conducted and judged according to the *APS Manual of Literature Judging and Exhibiting* dated April 2017 which is available free online at <<https://stamps.org/userfiles/file/judges/LitJudgingManual2017.pdf>>.

What can be exhibited

Entries must be in one of the categories outlined in that manual. Club newsletters and show programs are not accepted. The following categories are accepted for judging, whether in hard copy, via electronic media, or in combination:

Philatelic books, compendiums, handbooks and monographs (A “compendium” is a concise, yet comprehensive compilation of a body of knowledge, usually gathered from several sources.) Release date should be within the 24 months prior to the show at which the competition is taking place.

Philatelic society journals, periodicals (including philatelic study group bulletins). Release date should be within the 18 months prior to the show at which the competition is taking place, and a full year of the publication (not necessarily a calendar year) should be provided.

Catalogs (both specialized and/or priced philatelic catalogs and auction catalog formats). Release date should be within the 18 months prior to the show at which the competition is taking place.

Philatelic columns by a regular columnist in the philatelic or non-philatelic press that appear at least quarterly. Entries should consist of all four most recently published columns for quarterlies, all six most recently published columns for bimonthlies, at least eight of the last 12 columns for monthlies, or 20–25 representative columns for weeklies.

Individual articles or short series of articles on a single theme (limited to 10 entries). Release date should be within the prior 24 months from the date of the show.

Websites, CDs, DVDs, other digital media, blogs, and message boards that either stand alone or are an adjunct to one of the above categories. Websites, blogs and message boards are evaluated as they appear prior to the show; normally a month or so before the show. Release date of CDs, DVDs and other digital media, should be within a year of the date of application.

Limitations: Literature must be primarily in English or bilingual (English and another language). Literature in other languages cannot be fairly judged and, therefore, must be declined. A publication which has previously won a gold medal at CHICAGOPEX is not eligible. The most recent run of a periodical or a new edition of a handbook or catalog with significant changes in content is considered a new entry, and is, therefore, eligible.

The CHICAGOPEX Literature Exhibits Committee will decide whether an exhibit is accepted or rejected; no reason need be given for a rejection. Decisions of the CHICAGOPEX Literature Exhibits Committee are final. The Jury may disqualify an exhibit in accordance with the judging manual.

All rules apply to all entries.

Who may enter and how to enter

Entries may be made by individuals, societies, or commercial businesses. This may be authors, editors, publishers, sponsoring organizations, or webmasters. A separate application is required for each title entered. The entry fee is \$25 per competitive entry (a money order or a check in US funds drawn on a US bank, payable to the Chicago Philatelic Society. Exhibitors outside the U.S. may pay via PayPal; contact the exhibit chairman by email.) The entry fee is waived for non-competitive entries. The exhibitor’s signature on the Application constitutes acceptance of the rules stated in this Prospectus.

CHICAGOPEX Fifty-second Annual Philatelic Literature Exhibition
Prospectus Page 1 of 2

When to enter

Entries must be received by September 16, 2018, including the completed and signed application, the entry fee, a color photocopy of the cover or splash page, and two copies of the publication (one copy if entry is non-competitive). Prospective exhibitors will be notified of acceptance as soon as possible, but no later than September 30, 2018. If an extension is required, please contact the Exhibit Chairman by email.

Where to send the entry

All inquiries, applications, fees and entries should be sent to Chicagopex Literature Exhibition, PO Box 56, Rockford, Iowa 50468-0056. Inquiries can be made via email to the Literature Exhibits Chairman at <revenueur@myomnitel.com>.

What to send

Entry form: Entry forms and fees.

The Literature: Two copies of the entry are required (one copy for non-competitive).

Synopsis: Authors and/or editors should submit a brief synopsis with the application (as is done with philatelic exhibits), stating the purpose and intent of the entry, to assist the jury in evaluating the entry. This is your opportunity to speak to the jury. Do not send other “supporting documents” such as critique sheets from previous shows as they will not be forwarded to the jury.

Photocopy of cover: All entries should include a color photocopy of the cover of the book, the cover of one representative issue, or a color printout of the title page/screen, on a letter-size sheet of paper. In lieu of the photocopy, the exhibitor may email a color scan to the Literature Exhibit Chairman at <revenueur@myomnitel.com>.

Order forms or membership applications: Send about 10 copies of your order form or membership application blank. These will be distributed to literature viewers that take an interest in your publication. You may submit a pdf of your form rather than printed copies.

Judging and awards

A panel of APS accredited judges will act as jury. Evaluations will be made according to the latest *APS Manual of Literature Judging and Exhibiting* of the APS Committee on the Accreditation of National Exhibitions and Judges. This may be found on the APS website <<https://stamps.org/userfiles/file/judges/LitJudgingManual2017.pdf>>. The decisions of the jury shall be final.

The Literature Grand Award, Reserve Grand and an unlimited number of medals in eight levels will be available to the jury.

Awards will be announced at the Awards Banquet. The medal awarded and Palmars may be presented to the exhibitor at the show, or will be mailed to the exhibitor after the show. The medal will be given only to the exhibitor as noted on the application. Only one medal is provided per entry regardless of the number of authors, editors, etc.

A jury feedback session will be held during the show. A written evaluation will be mailed to the exhibitor after the show; there will be no subsequent correspondence by the jury. Non-competitive entries will not receive a jury evaluation, ribbon or medal.

What happens to the literature entry

Upon submission, one copy of the literature entry automatically becomes the sole property of CHICAGOPEX, to be donated to a philatelic library, museum, or other organization at the close of the exhibition. We encourage exhibitors to donate the second copy of the entry as well. The literature will be offered as a donation to the Collectors Club of Chicago, to the APRL, and then to other regional philatelic libraries, with preference being given to libraries that circulate their holdings.

If the second copy of the entry is to be returned, it must be accompanied by completely prepared return packaging, including addressing and postage. Returned exhibits will be sent via the United States Postal Service.

The “Fine Print”

The exhibitor agrees to release and hold harmless the judges and the American Philatelic Society and Chicago Philatelic Society, their officers, directors, employees, and representatives from any damages, including but not limited to damages to the exhibitor’s reputation or that of the exhibitor’s exhibit, suffered or incurred as a result of the judging.

Due precautions will be taken to protect exhibits against loss or damage. No responsibility of any kind or character shall attach, however, to CHICAGOPEX, the Chicago Philatelic Society, the Westin Chicago Northwest, or to any of their officers, agents, members or employees, for any loss, damage or costs arising from any cause or reason whatsoever.

Articles

Departments

Lawrence Block's Hit Man Series.....Ron Breznay	1	Steve Swillinger Resigns from APRL.....Lloyd de Vries	3
Why do We Write?.....John Hotchner	3	We Get Letters (Sometimes)	8
Writing - What to Write About.....Steve Zwilling	4	Membership and Literature Judging.....William Kriebel	8
Publishing an Exhibit as a Bound Book.....Steve Zwilling	4	Information Storage.....Steven Zwilling	9
A Dangerous and Startling Thing A humorous introduction to stamp discussion boards.....Leon Lutje	6	Reviews	11
Prestigious new premises for The Royal Philatelic Society London	9	<i>Agathon Fabergé: Portrait of a Philatelist</i>	11
Who Needs a Dictionary?.....Lloyd de Vries	10Kaj Hellman and Jeffrey C. Stone	11
Hard Copy is Too Hard Now.....Lloyd de Vries	10	<i>Norgeskatalogen 2018</i> Oslo Filatelistklubb	12
		<i>Canada's Prime Ministers on Stamps and First Day Covers</i>	13
		<i>Norsk Feltpost – i vid forstand</i> (Norwegian Fieldpost – in the Broad Sense).....Øivind Rojahn Karlsen	13
		APS 39th Annual Summer Seminar.....APS	12
		Chicagopex 2018 Prospectus.....	14



Secretary-Treasurer's Report

Secretary Report 2018 Q1

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to serve you.

Since I became your Secretary-Treasurer, I have been busy building a dataset to hold our member information. I also opened a bank account and sent second dues notices.

I placed \$100 into an account at PNC Bank in St. Louis to hold it until funds arrived.

I received a money order from Ken Trettin for \$1,520.21 to transfer the treasury to me. Second notices were sent to 19 members and I received \$160 in payments. I wrote one check transferring funds back to myself.

Our balance is now \$1,680.21.

The following members were placed in Inactive for non-payment of dues:

James N. Boyden	1946
Matthew C. Brogan	0962
Joe H. Crosby	2027
Claude Demaret	1989
Edward F. Fisher	1944
Larry Goldberg	1928
Lester C. Lamphear, III	1574
Gary Wayne Loew	0900
Jeffrey L. Needleman	1990
Jeffrey Segal	0318
Dr. Everett L. Parker	1994
Norman Shachat	1478

Two members also resigned:

William V. Kriebel	0894
Charles A. Wood	1516

About Alan

I have been a member off and on for many years. I wrote my first article for a national level magazine when I was 24 years old. It appeared in the Fall, 1974 edition of *Minkus Stamp Journal*. I am a 49-year member of APS.

I collect 19th Century Falkland Islands, Nova Scotia, St. Helena, Descendants of Queen Victoria on Stamps, Ascension, and Israel.

In my spare time, I am secretary of 5 of the 7 stamp clubs in Saint Louis and the auctioneer for Webster Groves Stamp Club and Monsanto Stamp Club.

To support my hobbies, I am a database programmer for a large pharmaceutical company.

About Writers Unit #30

The purpose of the Writers Unit #30 of the American Philatelic Society is to encourage and assist philatelic communications, knowledge, and comradeship. Membership is open to anyone interested in philatelic communications.

Membership Dues

Please note that starting year 2018 *TPC* will be distributed by email. Those who have paid for 2018 and beyond by the old rates will be given a credit for the future. The membership dues for each calendar year are:

Web Delivery email full color..... \$15.00

USPS delivery B/W photocopy..... \$20.00

Payment must be made in U.S. funds by a check imprinted with a U.S. bank transit number, or by postal money order payable to "APS Writers Unit #30." Some overseas members prefer to send U.S. bank notes. We will soon have PayPal available but not yet.

Updating Your Mailing Address

Please notify us of USPS and email address changes to assure that you receive without delay each issue of *The Philatelic Communicator*.

Alan Barasch, Secretary Treasurer

P O Box 411571

Saint Louis, MO 63141-3571

WU30@MOPHIL.ORG