

Stamp



Chatter

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October - December, 2023

Sequoia Stamp Club

APS #687-54588

Club meetings are held every **second and fourth Tuesday** of each month at the Community Activities Bldg., 1400 Roosevelt Ave. Redwood City, at 7:00 PM.

Mailing Address:
P. O. Box 235
San Carlos, CA 94070

Refreshments are served and visitors are always welcome.

More info at:

www.penpex.org/ssc



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President's Message

As we move through the fall season to the winter, the activities continue to build for the members of the thriving Sequoia Stamp Club. Our club, and I mean all of our members, are enjoying being part of a tight-knit community of philatelists. The free-for-members annual pizza party had record attendance, with the added benefit of building friendships and enjoying a nice dinner together. Once again, Jim Giacomazzi treated our club with a series of live auctions this time with the Bolleri Consignment. These auctions take a lot of time for Jim to put together while benefiting the club financially, plus helping out the former member's family.



I continue to be impressed by the skills and friendships formed by the members of our stamp club. Recent presentations by members including Laura Peterhans, John Corwin, and Craig Butterworth are both informative and fun to see and hear. Thank you, Kevin Kraemer, for lining up such a strong year of programs.

Winter means PENPEX. Yes, our annual club-hosted stamp show led by Kristin Patterson and her team of volunteers will be held on December 2 & 3 at the Community Activities Building. This large philatelic show is a first-class way that we recruit new members of our club. Plus, we are able to purchase stamps from the dealers and display our stamps with the chance to be awarded show ribbons. Please be sure to sign up to help out at the show by [clicking here](#).

My wish is for each and everyone of you to enjoy a healthy and happy holiday season.

Jay Strauss, Club President

Calendar: Club Meetings (in black), Stamp Shows (in red), & Other Events (in green)

- ♦ Oct 6 - 8: **WINEPEX Stamp Show, Best Western Plus hotel, Novato**
- ♦ Oct 10: "Tagging Errors" by Peter Adams. Silent Auction.
- ♦ Oct 24: **6 PM SSC Board Meeting (all welcome).** 7 PM Members' Live Auction, Wally Jolliff, auctioneer.
- ♦ Nov 4: **Western Philatelic Library Silent Auction, 9 AM - 11 AM Redwood City.**
- ♦ Nov 4 & 5: **SACAPEX Stamp Show, Scottish Right Center, Sacramento**
- ♦ Nov 14: "Tax Stamps Due to the Civil War" by Kristin Patterson. Also, nomination of officers. Silent Auction.
- ♦ Nov 18 & 19: **Filatelic Fiesta Stamp Show, Napredak Hall, San Jose**
- ♦ Nov 28: Kiloware Stamp Night (5¢ per stamp). Also, election of officers.
- ♦ Dec 2 & 3: **PENPEX Stamp Show, CAB, Redwood City**
- ♦ Dec 12: Holiday Party. Silent Auction.
- ♦ Dec 26: Happy Holidays. No meeting. See you next year!

The complete schedule can be found online at www.penpex.org/ssc/calendar.

Picture Gallery



Pizza Party

Blue Line Pizza, San Carlos, on September 5.



Pizza Party photos courtesy of Jim Stratton

Watsonville Inter-club Event

On September 16, members from local stamp clubs got together at the Senior Center in Watsonville. Six SSC members participated along with people from Pajaro Stamp Club and San Jose Stamp Club.



Watsonville photos courtesy of Peter Adams

Left: Brian Jones of San Jose Stamp Club welcoming everyone.

Above right: Kristin Patterson talking about Sequoia Stamp Club and PENPEX.

Below right: Ed Jarvis, President of the Western Philatelic Library asking how many people have used the library?



New Members

Asha Smith joined the club in July. She was one of this year's scholarship winners, and she collects U.S. stamps plus flower and space stamps.

Sandra Hirzel joined the club in August. She is a friend of B Durrer and collects stamps up to 1929.

Susan Johnson also joined in August. On her membership application form in the Collecting Interests field, Susan wrote "Almost everything".

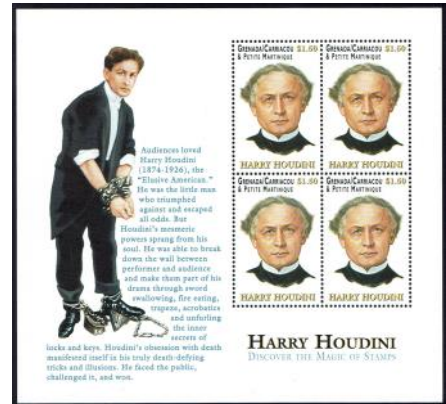
Welcome to the club, Asha, Sandra, and Susan!

Newsletter Staff: Co-Editors: John Corwin and Jim Giacomazzi; President's Message: Jay Strauss; Feature Article: Marsha Brandsdorfer; Photographer: Ken Perkins; Printing & Distribution: John Corwin. The *Stamp Chatter* is published quarterly by the Sequoia Stamp Club. Visit our website at: www.penpex.org/SSC or email us at sequoiastampclub@yahoo.com.

Harry Houdini

By Marsha Brandsdorfer

Ehrich Weiss would become known as the famous escape artist and magician, Harry Houdini. He was born on March 24, 1874, in Budapest, Hungary, a few years before his family immigrated to the United States and lived in the small town of Appleton, Wisconsin. When the Jack Hoeffler Five-Cent Circus was in town, Ehrich first became enthralled about magic after watching a magician perform tricks. Ehrich would then find jobs to make money to buy books on magic and supplies to perform tricks himself, and he practiced before his siblings. When he found a position working as a locksmith, he learned how to open most locks using a simple piece of bent wire.



Grenada Grenadines #2271

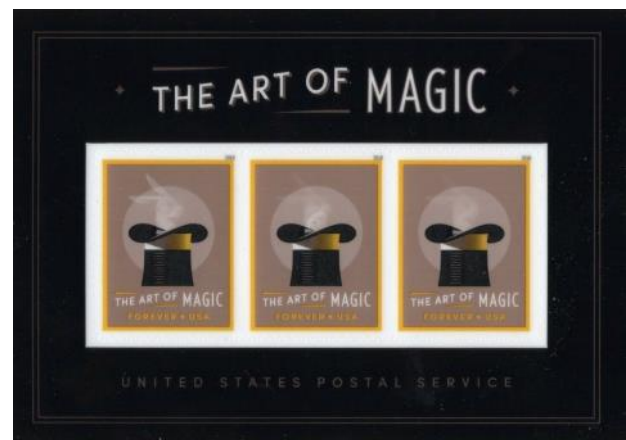


United States #3651

His family would eventually move to the Upper East Side of New York City and Ehrich spent more time learning magic by borrowing books from the public library. He particularly relished a memoir by French magician, Robert-Houdin. Ehrich decided he would name himself after the magician, added an "i" and called himself Harry Houdini. Ehrich, now Harry, was determined to make it as a conjurer. After his father died, Harry went off on his own to perform wherever he could find work: at carnivals, schools, beer halls. Oftentimes, however, positions were hard to find or did not last very long. Harry met his wife Beatrice (Bessie) Rahner when they were performing at a theater in Coney Island, where Bessie was working as a singer. After they married, Bessie would assist Harry in his acts. Harry continued to try out new tricks and continued to perform wherever they could.

Harry's struggles in America were hard and he decided to see if he and Bessie might do better in Europe. In late spring 1900, Harry boarded a ship to England with Bessie. Harry's tours in Europe would become quite successful, where he would challenge anyone to try and restrain him on stage before live audiences in various cuff locks, chains, straitjackets, and other mechanisms. Years later, he would be the recipient of the challenges of others who dared his escape. News of his triumph as an escape artist and magician started to make its way to America. He returned to America to perform at major cities. Through the rest of his life, Harry then continued to tour back and forth to Europe, America, Canada, and Australia. Harry would pass away in Detroit, Michigan, on a Halloween afternoon, October 31, 1926, days after having an operation due to appendicitis.

My research comes from the book, *The Great Houdini*, by Beryl Williams and Samuel Epstein.



United States #5306 featuring lenticular printing which makes the white rabbit appear to pop out of the hat

Cover of the Month

By Jim Giacomazzi

The cover shown was one of about fifty items related to the Canal Zone that were recently donated to the Western Philatelic Library. Although it is missing one of its stamps, it got my attention because of to whom the letter was addressed. It was sent from Panama City, Panama, on March 8, 1915 to "General G. W. Goethals, U.S.A., etc, etc, etc, Ancon, C.Z." Ancon is



crossed out in pencil and replaced by "Hts". The back stamp shows that it arrived in Ancon on March 9, and then was forwarded to Balboa Heights that same day. Ancon was developed to house employees of the Panama Canal during its construction, and in 1914 the Panama Canal Administration Building opened in nearby Balboa Heights.

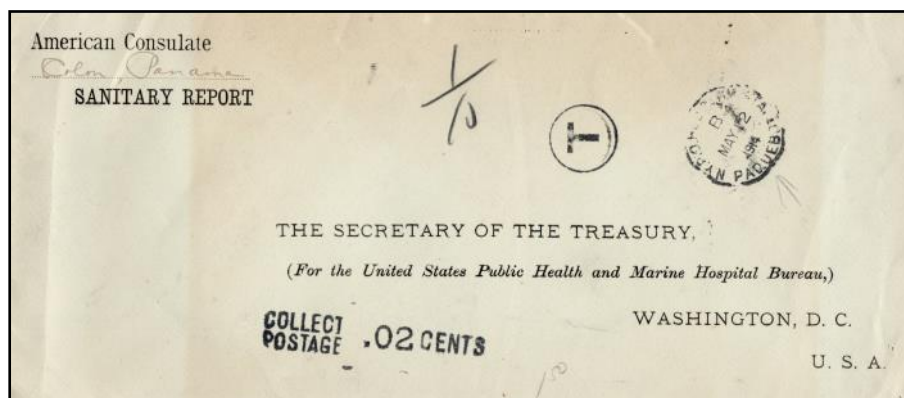


T.R. & Gen. Goethals

George Washington Goethals was born June 29, 1858, in Brooklyn, New York. Following his graduation from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point in 1880, Goethals was commissioned in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers where he gained valuable experience in the construction of canals and harbors. In 1907 he was selected by President Theodore Roosevelt as chairman and chief engineer of the Isthmian Canal Commission (two predecessors had resigned). The following January he took complete charge of construction work and government in the Canal Zone.¹

The obstacles facing Goethals were enormous. In addition to the technical problem of constructing the massive locks, he had to house and feed some 30,000 employees, many of whom were troubled by disease including yellow fever and malaria. The esprit de corps he engendered has become legendary. The building of the Canal was completed in 1914, two years ahead of the target date of June 10, 1916. Colonel Goethals received unstinted praise from visiting engineers and from the technical press of the world. Congress awarded Goethals their thanks and a promotion to major general. When the Panama Canal was opened to commercial traffic in 1914, U.S. President Woodrow Wilson appointed Goethals the first governor of the Canal Zone, a post he retained until January 1917.²

If you have an interest in Canal Zone philately and history, be sure to attend the silent auction at the Western Philatelic Library on November 4. Two lots of covers, mostly 1910 to 1930, relating to the Canal Zone such as those illustrated will be up for sale.



¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_Washington_Goethals

² <https://www.britannica.com/biography/George-Washington-Goethals>

Researching a Mystery Ship Postcard

By Shav La Vigne

While looking through a vendor's box of Navy ship postcards at the 2022 PENPEX Stamp Show in Redwood City, California I was excited to find this AZO (period 1904 to 1918) "real photo" postcard of an unknown ship beached somewhere but no clues as to where. Upon inspection, no hull numbers were to be found and the only clue of her American identity was the flag flying from her aft yardarm.

What was the name of this unlucky vessel? Where and when was she beached? What was the story behind her grounding and what was her fate? I could not wait to buy the card and to get to work on solving the mystery!



Knowing that the ship was American and obviously a Navy vessel, I began looking for clues by noting the features of the ship. She had four funnels or stacks with armament along both sides. By her looks, she was obviously an older ship probably used around World War I or before.

With these clues and a lot of looking, I was able to determine that she was an old cruiser of the type built at the end of the 19th century. Checking more details led me to finally determine that she was a *St. Louis* class cruiser, one of only a class of three that were placed in service very early in the 20th century; around the time of the Spanish American War.

The ship shown on this card is USS *Milwaukee* (C-21) the second ship of the *St. Louis* class; later followed by USS *Charleston*.

USS *Milwaukee* never saw any serious action, nor was it involved in any Naval battles. She was built at the Union Iron Works in San Francisco, California and was commissioned on December 10, 1906. Her career consisted of helping to guard the west coast of the United States along with transporting Naval Militia from the west coast to Hawaii. Eventually she was assigned to duty as a tender to destroyers and submarines of the Pacific Fleet, based in San Diego, California.

On January 5, 1917, under the temporary command of Lieutenant William F. Newton, acting as a torpedo force commander, *Milwaukee* sailed for Eureka, California to assist in the salvage of the Navy submarine *H-3* which had run aground off Humboldt Bay on December 14, 1916.

Several days later on January 13, while attempting to refloat the submarine and disregarding the recommendations of local mariners, the ship's commander committed a series of unforgivable mistakes. Eventually, *Milwaukee* entered the first line of ocean breakers off Sonoma, California near the coast of Eureka. She became trapped in the breakers and was never able to be freed.

Four hundred twenty-one enlisted sailors and seventeen officers were safely rescued by the Humboldt Bay Life-Saving Station and local volunteers, but all attempts to salvage the ship were unsuccessful and soon the pounding of the surf damaged her beyond repair. Ironically, the submarine *H-3* was eventually salvaged and returned to service.

On March 6, 1917, *Milwaukee* was decommissioned. In a storm, November of 1918, her keel broke in two. USS *Milwaukee*'s name was struck from the Naval Vessel Register on June 23, 1919 and her hull was sold for scrap on August 5, 1919.

There is a memorial to USS *Milwaukee* near where she became stranded and, to this day, signs of her can still be seen at low tide. My mystery to learn about a long-forgotten ship has been solved, and my postcard can be, and is, documented.

Scott 9X1: Considered by Many to be the First “Real” U.S. Stamp

By Robert Brilliant

Certain stamps hold a special place in collectors' hearts not just for their beautiful design, but also for their historical significance and rarity. Among these stamps is Scott 9X1, the New York City Postmaster Provisional, a relic of the earliest days of American postal services and a sought-after piece of philatelic history.

Issued in New York City on July 5, 1845, 9X1 marks a pivotal moment in the development of the American postal system. Postmaster Robert H. Morris initiated the creation of this stamp as a response to the chaotic and time-consuming practice of collecting postage fees from mail recipients upon delivery. The decision to issue a pre-paid adhesive stamp aimed to streamline the mailing process and reduce the administrative burden on postal workers. 9X1 thus provided a valuable domestic proving ground for the feasibility of adhesive postage stamps to fund and grow a robust mail system.



9X1 stands apart from the other primitively produced postmaster provisionals with its beautiful design and engraving, executed by skilled artists at Rawdon, Wright & Hatch - the same security printing firm that produced Scott 1 and 2, the first official US stamps. This professional quality, lacking in all the other postmaster provisionals, raises 9X1 in the eyes of many collectors to the status of being the first “real US stamp.”

As an added security measure, every copy of this stamp sold was at first initialed by postmaster Morris, and soon thereafter by two assistants brought in to perform this dull and repetitive task. Examples with Morris's rare RHM initials sell for a large premium over the most common variety initialed “ACM” by young assistant postmaster Alonzo Castle Monson.

9X1 is a relatively rare stamp. Of the 143,600 stamps printed it's estimated only about 5,000 copies still exist, the majority being single examples off cover. This scarcity, combined with its historical significance, has made Scott 9X1 highly coveted among collectors, with prices to match. The most common variety, a used single initiated “ACM”, catalogs in Scott at \$500. Rarer unused copies often sell in the \$1500 - \$2000 range and larger multiples on cover can fetch tens of thousands at auction.

However, when compared with the rarity and prices of other US Postmaster Provisionals such as the St. Louis Bears, Millbury Massachusetts George Washington, and the Battleboro Vermont provisional, 9X1 is eminently obtainable. It constitutes a logical and historically significant launching point for any serious collection of US stamps.

Scott 2913: An Error and a Freak, and a Probably Expensive stamp at that!

By Peter Adams

OK what is wrong with this stamp? First off, IT ISN'T IN MY COLLECTION! Second, and here things get difficult, yes, it is an error and a freak. It is an error because the light and the dark tan colors are missing. It is a freak because most of the color shifts, but how much and where?



For this article, I have removed some of the cancellation on the left side using Photoshop. I intentionally did a very poor job of removing the cancellation. Hopefully that choice makes the stamp easier to understand and less likely to be used to produce a counterfeit stamp.

So what shifted, which directions, and how much? This stamp was printed with a lithographic technique resulting in dots of various colors that blend together to produce a desired color. This makes describing the color that shifted a little troublesome.

For what shifted, well here goes. To puzzle out what shifted, first figure out what color did not shift. In this stamp, the light blue background covers the entire stamp. So this stamp cannot be used to identify a shift of that color. The dark brown of the porch and house did not shift, or did not shift much. So everything else can be compared with the dark brown color.

Three shades of blue were used to print this stamp. They all shifted, but their shifts were different. The light blue background color has been discussed. The second blue is a medium blue that is the shadows in the flag. That color shifted right about 20 percent. The third blue is dark blue in the window. It is probably the same color of blue in the block that includes the price, and the blue in the lower right corner. That color shifted horizontally so much that identifying if it shifted left or right is not possible to tell from this stamp. If a copy appears with the selvage, that stamp will definitively identify which way the colors shifted. The third blue color is in the field of the flag. That color shifted along with the second blue color. The red shifted right less than the second blue and third blue, perhaps 25 percent.

The photograph on the left came from a newspaper clipping titled "Second tan-omitted Flag discovered" dated 3/25/2002. I do not know the source of the article. All the above comments are mine.

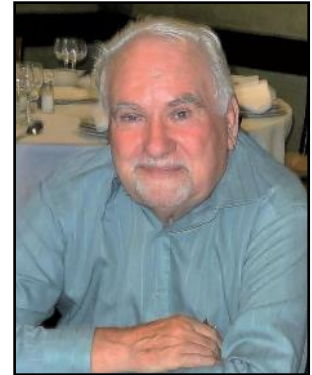
In Memoriam

Sadly, three club members passed away recently. We honor them here. They will all be missed.

Louis Lang passed away on August 21; he was 88 years old.

He was born in Chateauroux, France on November 17, 1934. As a young adult, Louis joined the French Army, where he spent 3 years in Africa. After his service, he boarded the Queen Mary for America in 1956, to join his mother and siblings in San Francisco. He used his machinist abilities to gain employment and settled in the Peninsula, later opening his own machine shop. Louis and his wife, Sonia, met in Oakland, California and married in April 1958.

Louis had a lifelong passion for stamp collecting. He joined our club in 2015 and had diverse interests in the hobby.



Paul Ortega passed away on September 4 at the age of 101 and 7 months.

He joined our club in 2000 and was the twelfth longest serving member. He collected Russia stamps and enjoyed exhibiting his Russian material. Paul helped at PENPEX as the Exhibits Chair from 2007 to 2013. In the picture, he is shown enjoying dinner at the 2010 PENPEX Awards Banquet.



Also on September 4, Lewis Miller passed away in Santa Rosa at age 93.

When Lewis lived in Redwood City, he joined our club in 2014. Lewis collected stamps of Germany and German colonies and German states.

Members' Advertisements

WANTED: Used or Mint Stamps

Russia 1900 – 1938

Macao 1894 – 1918

Romania 1931 – 1938

Laura Peterhans, 650-637-8783, lkpeterhans@yahoo.com

WPL Silent Auction

On Saturday, November 4, 2023, a silent auction of 100 lots will be held at the Western Philatelic Library, 3004 Spring Street, in Redwood City. Doors open at 9:00 AM and bidding ends at 11:00 AM. Items include donated US and Worldwide stamps, albums, stock books, covers, box lots, and supplies. For more details, call Jim Giacomazzi at 650-365-2956 or email him at jgiacoma2@comcast.net.



Sequoia Stamp Club members may submit advertisements for no charge. Full details are available at <https://www.penpex.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Rules-for-Classified-Ads.pdf>