

Minutes
Hamilton Township Philatelic Society
Hamilton Township Free Public Library
Hamilton, New Jersey
February 18, 2020

The second meeting of 2020 took place on Tuesday, February 18, at the Hamilton Township Library. The meeting began with a recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance led by President Dennis Kennedy at 7:13 pm.

There were eighteen (18) members and two (2) guests in attendance. All officers except Treasurer Ken Steel were in attendance. President Kennedy reported that our current account balance is \$4,707.83 and that we made 19 cents in interest.

President Kennedy said that through the efforts of Jeff Boyarsky, three albums of foreign stamps were donated to HTPS. They are being sold to the members at 10 cents per stamp; so far \$200 has been made. Anyone who wants to go through them can contact Dennis. The money will be donated to the Stamps for the Wounded. He also brought in a huge box of unsorted but off paper stamps, also at 10 cents per stamp. President Kennedy said that there are two positions open for the 2021 elections, Secretary and Treasurer. We are a volunteer organization and need people to step up to do the necessary work.

The two visitors, Don Leibowitz and Ira Chudnow, brought in, by Jeff Boyarsky introduced themselves. Don Leibowitz joined HTPS by the end of the meeting.

Someone said that he had heard that Dr. Ron Gonzalez's father died.

The May meetings will have ten minute presentations by members. Ed Murtha asked that people be asked to make ten minute presentations of items from their collections. Andy Boyajian said that he would have a presentation ready.

It was mentioned that the venue for the second Saturday bourse would now be the American Legion facility on Route 130 in Hightstown, New Jersey.

Tony Zingale is accepting articles for the *Hamilton Hinge*. Sid Morginstin said that he has numerous articles that could be used; they need to have images added.

A motion to adjourn was made by Milton Keiles seconded by Andy Boyajian and passed unanimously. The meeting ended at 7:28 pm.

After the 50/50 winning numbers were selected, a Presentation was given by Tom DeLuca.

Tom's presentation on First Day Covers (FDC) started at 7:33 pm and ended at 8:44 pm. He asked for those present to raise their hands if they collected single stamps, plate blocks, postal history or FDC. Tom said that about one half of the original members of HTPS were FDC collectors. Postal history and FDC are intertwined. An FDC is any envelope which has a stamp applied and cancelled with the date of the first day of sale. The usual envelope size is 6 3/4. Often they are considered souvenirs. From a postal history standpoint, the covers provide information on the questions, when, who, and why of the event. His presentation was in three sections.

He started with a cover of the American Indian Legacy stamp. He had multiple examples of the FDC's for the 13 cent Indian Head Penny stamp premiered in 1978. Some were machine cancels, some were hand cancels some were pictorial cancels some were slogan cancels and some were unofficial cancels. He showed examples of each. Unofficial cancels are those covers which were sent from cities which were not designated an Official First Day city, but were posted on the first day of issue date. They included Kansas

City, MO; Kansas City, KS; Delaware Stamp Room, DE; Black Snake Hills Post Office, MO; Jonesboro, GA; Griffin, GA; Ben Franklin Station, Philadelphia, PA; and Philatelic Store, Inglewood, CA. Needless to say, the search for these unofficial FDC examples can be a time consuming, multi-year project, with some being found serendipitously.

FDC's can have single stamps, plate number singles, blocks of four, plate block of four, copyright blocks, and combinations of stamps with similar themes. Some covers had cachets, and some not.

There was also a second day cancellation for the American Indian Legacy stamp at the USPS Philatelic City, Washington D.C. and at other designated cities, Hartford, CT, Richmond, VA, Portland, OR, and Memphis, TN.

Tom said that many early FDC's did not have cachets, so collectors had to know the first day dates as they browsed through boxes of covers. He said that about half of those after 1932 had cachets.

The next series of covers were of the Sullivan Expedition for which there were 14 official cities. He showed a series addressed to Mr. Sprague which were connected in some way to the 1779 expedition to punish the Iroquois Confederation. The covers included were those of Auburn, NY; Canandaigua, NY; Canojarie, NY; Elmira, NY; Genesee, NY; Oswego, NY; Waterloo, NY; and Watkins Glen, NY.

The Rhode Island Tercentenary was the next series; the official first day site was Providence, RI. There were 90 unofficial FDC for this issue. Among them were Chepachet, Esmund, Harmony, Lafayette, Portaine, Portsmouth, Potter Hill, Lansdale and Block Island, all in RI.

Next Tom showed the first cachet matching the stamp issue, the Harding stamp, (Scott #610), issued at Merion, OH in 1923. It was also the first commercially produced cover. Another first was the White Plains issue of 1926 which was issued at an International Philatelic Exposition. Yet another first were the 2 cent and five cent Hawaii, issued in Honolulu; the first day of issue event outside of the continental United States.

The next first was the 2 cent Wright Brothers Airplane issued in 1928. It was the first cancellation in color. Adam K. Bert was the preparer of the FDC. He was a stamp collector and dealer, who operated his stamp business in Pittsburgh. Among his customers was Gov. of NY, Franklin Delano Roosevelt. Mr. Bert died at age 102; he had the longest tenure of membership at the American Philatelic Society. When he closed his business in 1996, it was the closure of the United States oldest first-day cover service. Tom displayed a Zeppelin FDC.

Continuing his firsts, the first red cancellation was in 1937 on U.S. #798, 3¢ Constitution Sesquicentennial. It was issued in Philadelphia, PA on September 17, 1937. Tom showed covers with both seven bar and five bar machine cancellations. Another example was a dual cancel, one a hand cancel and the other a machine cancel, on Scott #859 Washington Irving Stamp. He also had a cover where the name Philadelphia was spelled wrong. Another example was of a cover with a pictorial cancellation.

There were several examples of FDC's for the Project Mercury stamp. The first day of issue was held in secrecy because of the uncertainty of success. There was a nationwide release at somewhere between 2:30 and 3:00 pm. There were 305 official cities. Other cities were termed as official-unofficial cities.

Another first was the 8 cent Amelia Earhart airmail stamp which was luminescent tagged. Another first was an FDC of Charles M. Russell in Great Falls, Montana, which was the first time that a cancellation without time was used. Yet another FDC first was the Robert Frost stamp which had a machine cancel with a Zip Code.

A first was the issuance of U.S. #1396 8¢ U.S. Postal Service stamp which was issued nationwide in every first and second class post office, more than 70,000. Tom showed examples of New Jersey covers from Trenton, Allentown, Princeton, Ringoes and Mount Holly. The Post Office supplied envelopes

Tom had examples of FDC's of U.S. #1399 18¢ Elizabeth Blackwell. Cachets were made by Artcraft and were in blue, red, brown, and purple. The issue date was January 23, 1974 in Geneva, NY. Examples of the Pouring Molten Iron stamp were next. The cachet was changed to Pouring Molten Steel when the industry said that steel, not iron, was being made. The Colorado Fuel and Iron Corporation sent out many of these covers.

In the third segment of his presentation, Tom spoke about the collection of one issue. He used the Vietnam Memorial stamp as an example. One example he showed was one of 10 covers of the Vietnam Memorial stamp. He also showed the MIA-POW stamp issued at the Jonathan M. Wainwright Memorial VA Medical Center in honor of National POW/MIA Recognition Day. It was a silk screen Colorano cover;

74 were made. There were many combinational covers with other related topic stamps added to the cover. Tom showed some of John Ranto's covers; all were handmade, often of post office descriptive sheets. He showed several hand colored, (Bedford), and hand painted covers, (Collins). He also showed hand drawn covers by Kendal Bevil, Rose Wall, Don Mangus, Doris Gold and Wall Scott. He had an example of an official ceremony program to wind up his First Day Cover presentation.

Tom showed the diversity of First Day Cover collections with a large number of examples. I never realized that there were so many facets to First Day Cover collecting.

Respectively submitted,
Joseph Francis Seliga, secretary