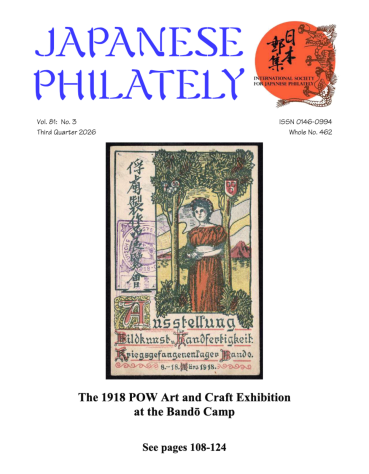
SYNOPSIS

Sarasota National Stamp Expo 2027
Writers Unit 30

Literature Exhibition



The Bandō 1918 POW Camp Exhibition and its Postcards

Published in ***Japanese Philately*** Volume 81 No. 3 October 2026, pages 108-124 and featured on the cover of that edition.

Goals:

- To identify the key contextual elements supporting development of the official Bandō Camp Exhibition postcards of 1918;
- To document the official Exhibition postcards and facilitate an understanding of the many variations of the POW designed postcards with the printing process that was used;
- To share census data accumulated by the author on the official Bandō Camp Exhibition postcards;
- To demonstrate the value of postal history in facilitating understandings and impacts of internment upon POWs through their cultural representations.

Background, Knowledge and Significance

The author has been collecting and researching Japanese WWI POW camp postal history for more than 40 years and presented on this area at the 2018 Smithsonian Postal History Symposium. Documentation of the POW designed & printed Exhibition postcards is very significant as it identifies cultural constructs of the time period and reveals impacts of internment upon the perceptions and values of POWs designing these cards. The official postcards of the Exhibition also represent essential understanding of the vision of the Bandō Camp Commander and the resultant support that he and the local community provided to ensure the success of the event. Many resources related to Japanese POW camps of WWI were lost during WWII bombings that impacted both Bonn and Hiroshima archival centres. Thus, such postal history affords rich insights, valuable not just to the philatelic realm but also to history in general.

Originality and Research

Key challenges compiling information for this article include fragmented access to records related to camp printed postcards and camp printers, as well as to the infrequent appearance in the marketplace of the postcards. Research included extensive examination of camp publications, programs for camp events, museum websites, POW correspondence, auction catalogues and communications with other collectors of this material. This research facilitated the development of a database of Bandō 1918 Exhibition postcards, enabled identification of numerous constant varieties of the POW designed postcards through an understanding of the printing process that was being used for the POW designed and printed postcards.

Technical

The formatting and layout of the article were completed by the editor. All materials illustrated in the article are from the author's own collection unless otherwise described. References have been included at the end of the article to denote other useful sources that contributed to perspectives represented in the article.