



Figure 80-1.

## Tip 80 – Address the source of a stamp’s design in your commentary

Figure 80-1 shows a page from Santiago Cruz’ Reserve Grand and gold-medal winning exhibit *Colombia - the 1917 Perkins Issue*. He was fortunate enough to acquire, as part of a lot of Perkins Bacon archival material, the original postcard with the image of Cartagena Bay in Colombia used as a design for the postage stamp. It adds to an understanding of the stamp issue. Not all of us are fortunate enough to know the sources of the designs of the stamps we collect. Santiago’s exhibit provides this information. Although archival material such as original drawings, essays or proofs may be either unavailable or too pricey for us to include in our exhibits, there may be other original design related material available. These additional design related materials may include postcards (as shown in Figure 80-4) or photos that were used in the development of a stamp design and which may be available to add to a collection or exhibit. Santiago’s page is a wonderful addition to his exhibit.

At a recent stamp show I attended, I had mixed feelings upon seeing an exhibit on a stamp very similar to one I exhibit in which the exhibitor had included supplemental information about the engraver and the source of the image used for the postage stamp. I was happy that I could make my exhibit better by including this information in the future (I don’t know why I had not done so before) and slightly depressed with the realization that in the prior showings of my exhibit I had omitted useful information. In my next rewrite I will address this shortcoming. I realize I have been trying to tell the story of a stamp issue while omitting the beginning or background parts of the story.

## Tip 81 – The necessity for clear communication in an exhibit is inversely proportional to a viewer’s familiarity with the material

The less well known your material is, the greater your obligation to explain and describe what the material is. For items that viewers (and judges) recognize and have experience with, they can fill in any holes in your presentation with their own knowledge. For items that viewers (and judges) have never seen before, they can only rely upon what you say and they cannot fill, on their own, any holes in your presentation. Any failure to describe or explain your material in clear and understandable terms may work against you.

Figure 81-1 shows a page from Joann & Kurt Lenz’s Single Frame Grand Award winner at StampShow in Columbus, U.S. *Test Stamps Related to the B.E.P. (ca. 1907-1959)*, which contains material that many people have never seen or heard of before. How many of us have seen dummy booklets or know what they are? By looking at this one page we know why they exist, how they were prepared and how they were used. I didn’t ask Joann or Kurt how many times the text on this page was reviewed and revised, but it stands as a wonderful example of precise, succinct and complete expository prose to accompany unusual and striking material.

Figure 81-1.

