



HAPPY 50TH
POWAY STAMP
CLUB

POWAY STAMP CLUB NEWSLETTER

SAN DIEGO COUNTY'S BEST STAMP COLLECTING CLUB

APS #1 12097

April 8th 2026

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Club's Mission Statement

To promote a closer social relationship among stamp collectors of Poway, San Diego, and vicinity, and to assist in spreading the knowledge of stamps and the pleasures derived from stamp collecting to those interested in philately.

Contact Us

Poway Stamp Club
12675 Danielson Court #413
Poway, CA 92064

Club E-mail

PSCphilately@gmail.com

CLUB MEETINGS

General Meetings

April 8th

Fun with Stamps
Stephen Gill

Stephen will present ways to have fun with stamps including tips and insight into creating a presentation for our club.

April 22nd

Certifications
Teela Pongpakdee ("Pong")

Pong will discuss certifications: How to prepare and submit your stamps to the companies that provide the service and the varied options available to collectors.

Please remember to bring your badge or bring \$1

2025 Club Board Members

President David Waller
Vice President David Klauber
Treasurer Bill Kolb
Secretary Trice Klauber
Member at Large Jim Grundy
Member at Large Neal Lyles
Past President Art Berg
Program Director Bill Gallagher

2026 Club Volunteers

Club Registrar Trice Klauber
Auctioneer Jim Grundy
Club Librarian Jo Ashley
Newsletter Editor David Waller
Guild Contributors Jon Schrag
 Bob McArthur
 Manual Marti
 Jim Grundy
 David Klauber
 David Waller
Library Rep. Neil Schneider
Opp. Drawing Scott Boyd
Webmaster David Klauber

Chair Positions

Acquisitions Trice Klauber
Comm. Outreach TJ Ducat
SD Stamp Show David Kaluber
SD County Fair Art Berg

2025 Club Representatives

Federated Rep. Bill O'Connor
S.D. Phil. Council Nick Soroka
Rep. (Alternate) Art Berg
APS Ambassador Trice Klauber

PSC Website

Powaystampclub.com



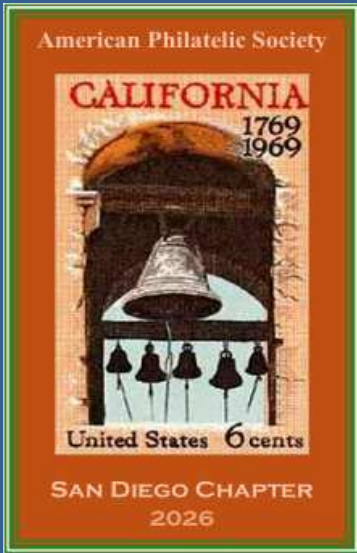
CLUB EVENTS

Below is the meeting schedule for 2026; all events are proposed and subject to change as necessary to accommodate other events such as auctions.

April	8	Stephen Gill Fun with Stamps
	22	Pong Certifications
May	13	Arden Simoni Hawaiian Stamps
	27	TBD – Presentation
June	10	TBD – Presentation
	24	TBD – Presentation
July	8	TBD – Presentation
	22	TBD – Presentation
August	12	TBD – Presentation
	26	Member's Voice Sale
September	9	TBD – Presentation
	23	Large Voice Sale
October	14	Ugly Stamp Contest Nominations for BOD
	28	TBD – Presentation
November	12	Elections for BOD TBD – Presentation
	19	No Meeting
December	9	Holiday Party
	23	No Meeting

Seeking Presentations

To submit ideas for future presentations or to secure a time slot for your presentation, email Bill Gallagher at ors2@cox.net or text or call me @ 760-840-0459.



Meetings

Club meetings are held every second and fourth Wednesday of each month except November & December at:

Philatelic Library

12675 Danielson Court #413
Poway, CA 92064

APS

The Poway Stamp Club and many of its members are members of the American Philatelic Society (APS). If 33% of our members are also members of the APS, then the Club receives a free year's membership to the APS.

Please join the APS!

Participation

All Club members are encouraged to provide input for the Club's monthly newsletter. Your knowledge and expertise is important and should be shared. Submit your article to:

dwall@dbwipmq.com

Please contribute!

Club Website

PowayStampClub.com

Visit our Club's website to find a schedule of activities, resource links, and contact information as well as our newsletter.

Take a look!

CLUB NOTES

Club Meetings

The Poway Stamp Club meets twice a month, except in November and December, on the second and fourth Wednesday at 12675 Danielson Court, #413 in Poway. The meetings begin at 6:30pm.

Membership

It is time to inspire others to collect stamps. Enroll a new member today. Give a gift that could last a lifetime. Annual memberships to the Poway Stamp Club are \$20. For those individuals who are already philatelic collectors (and have been a member of the Club in good standing for two years), a lifetime membership in our club could be the perfect gift. Lifetime memberships are \$200.

Next Bid Board

Our next Bid Board will be held, April 4 through April 18th. Make sure that you visit the website and place your bids. For more information and Bid Board rules visit the Club's website at PowayStampClub.com.

Club Newsletter

We Need You!



All Club members are encouraged to provide articles for the monthly newsletter. Join our Internationally recognized Writers Guild and submit your items to the Club's Editor today.

E-mail:

dwall@dbwipmq.com

Closing the Book



Bill Mous 1946-2026, Lakeside California ([http: Willem \(Bill\) Mous Obituary \(1946 - 2026\) - Lakeside, CA - Times of San Diego](http://www.timesofsan-diego.com/obituaries/2026/03/13/willem-bill-mous-obituary-1946-2026-lakeside-ca/)). A military service was held at Miramar National Cemetery on March 13.

Bill was born in Limburg, Holland. He started stamp collecting a few years after a long successful career as a civil service government employee specializing in Netherlands, Dutch Indies, Japanese Navy and other WWII occupation stamps. He will be missed.

Diane Maisonneuve 2026

A Celebration of Life for Diane will be held on April 11th. The evite link is below with all the information needed. **Please RSV**P at <https://evite.me/JPubYHww79> if you plan to attend as the event is catered.

Diane was a collector, member, friend to many and has been missed for some time.

Member Spotlight!

By David Klauber



The Poway Stamp Club Newsletter highlights its new members in each issue. Since our last newsletter, 2 new members have joined. Today's spotlight is on our newest members.



Enrique Sanchez Don Backstrom

#638 Enrique Sanchez of San Diego, California

Enrique recently joined us at a club meeting, and our President, David Waller, nominated him for membership. He's part of the Post Crossings group and was introduced to our club and the San Diego Stamp Show. Enrique is a passionate philatelist with many years of experience. We're excited to see him at our monthly gatherings. His collections include U.S. and foreign stamps. Welcome to the club, Enrique!

#639 Don Backstrom of Salmon, Idaho

Don found our club via the club website. He visited our club on a Friday for evaluation and decided to join our club. Don is new to Philately as the result of inheritance. We look forward to helping Don on his quest to become a stamp collector. Great to have you as a member.

This brings our total paid membership to 162. We look forward to getting together at PSC meetings with our new members.

Membership Renewal

If you have not already renewed your membership to the Poway Stamp Club, please do so. Membership fee for 2026 is \$20 and if you have been a member in "Good Standing" for at least two years you might also consider becoming a Life Member. The cost for a Life Membership is \$200.

If you have any questions, please contact Trice Klauber at:

indysmama@gmail.com



Consider becoming an American Philatelic Society
Member!

President's Message



Dear Members,

In my last President's message, I noted that "[T]he Board has made some significant changes that will affect how the Poway Stamp Club conducts business in 2026." This has included establishment of a few new Committees to assist the Club in achieving their goals. Along with these new committees the Board has elected Chairpersons and prepared a list of responsibilities for these positions. While many of the responsibilities may be obvious for particular Committees, there are certain authorities that are inherent in the Chair's position that enable them to conduct business of their committee. One such authority, that is universal among all Committees, is the ability to recruit members or other committees to assist in the performance of their duties. For example, if the Acquisitions chair is inundated with donations that require sorting for club auctions, then he/she may enlist other members to help prepare auction lots. In addition, if donations have become scarce, then the Acquisitions chair may ask for the assistance of the Community Outreach chair to assist with advertising in the hopes of bringing in more donations. Our members, Board of Directors, and Committee chairpersons are a family, and we work together to ensure that the business of our Club is accomplished for the benefit of all.

So, what are my expectations? With the inevitable increased need for volunteers to assist in accomplishing the new committee's goals, I would like our members to reconsider what they would like to see accomplished by our Club, relay those thoughts to the Board of Directors, and begin offering their time to assist our new Committees in achieving their goals. (*i.e.*, Membership Participation, Goal 1).

I look forward to our continued success in 2026. If you would like to help, then please let me know.

In the News

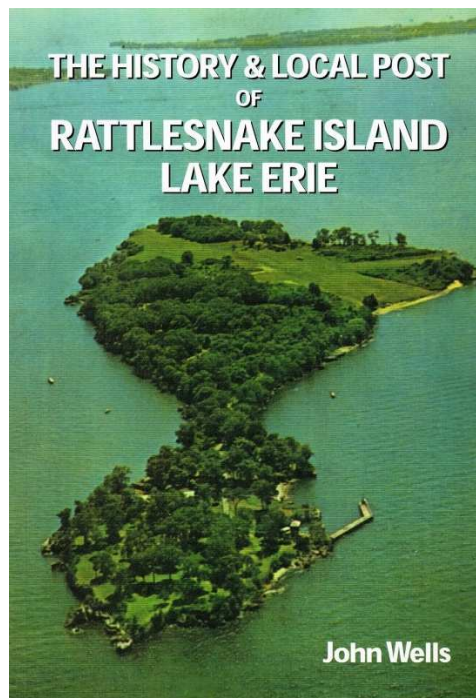
Remaining World Series of Philately Shows 2026 (Information obtained from The American Philatelist November 2025)

- **WESTPEX:**
 - **Dates:** April 24-26, 2026
 - **Location:** San Francisco Airport Marriott Waterfront Hotel 1800 Old Bayshore Highway, Burlingame, California.
- **Rocky Mountain Stamp Show**
 - **Dates:** May 8-10, 2026
 - **Location:** Arapahoe County Fairgrounds 25690 E. Quincy Avenue, Aurora, Colorado.
- **Boston 2026 World Expo:**
 - **Dates:** May 23-30, 2026
 - **Location:** Boston Convention & Exhibition Center, Boston, Massachusetts.
 - **Details:** This is the 12th International Philatelic Exhibition hosted in the U.S. and a highlight of America's 250th anniversary celebration. It features a competitive FIP exhibition, dealer and postal bourses, society meetings, and special exhibits.
- **BALPEX**
 - **Dates:** August 7-9, 2026
 - **Location:** BWI Airport Marriot, 1743 West Nursery Road, Linthicum Heights Baltimore Maryland.
- **NAPEX**
 - **Dates:** August 28-30, 2026
 - **Location:** McLean Hilton at Tyson's Corner, 7920 Jones Beach Drive, McLean, Washington, D.C.
- **INDYPEX**
 - **Dates:** September 18-20, 2026
 - **Location:** Hendricks County Fairgrounds & Exhibition Center, 1900 Main Street, Danville, Indiana.

At The SD Philatelic Library

The History & Local Post of Rattlesnake Island Lake Erie

by Neil Schneider



The author, John Wells, starts by describing how the lakes were formed during the Ice Age. They are the largest freshwater lakes on the planet; they hold about 21% of the total surface water on the planet. They could be described as freshwater seas.

Before the war of 1812 the Lake Erie islands were occupied by Ottawa and Huron (Wyandot) tribes. It is believed that the Ottawa tribe gave Rattlesnake Island its name. Rattlesnake Island was bought by Alfred Pierpont Edwards in 1807.

On August 22nd, 1854, Abigail Dunning of Hartford, Connecticut sold North Bass Island and Rattlesnake Island to Horace Kelly of Cleveland, Ohio. On June 22nd, 1861, Rattlesnake Island became part of Put In Bay Township. In the 1900s a family by the name of Hammond lived on the island. A further notable event concerns the 225-foot sidewheel steamer 'State of Ohio' which on the 20th of September 1906 tried to run over the island in thick fog and was grounded until October 17th when two tugs finally pulled her afloat.

Chapter 2 shows a map and tries to place Rattlesnake Island in a group of islands near the border between Canada and the U.S. that cuts across the middle of Lake Erie.

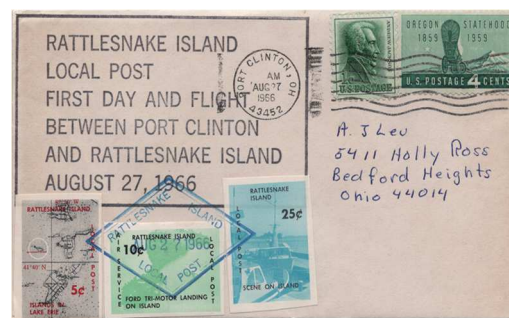
Somewhere between 1929 and 1932 the island was developed as a holiday home by the president of Toledo Scale Company Hubert Bennet. While the dust bowl and great depression were going on, Hubert Bennet spent \$250,000 to build a cabin, guest accommodations, a harbor and landing strip for small aircraft. A second landing strip was added when a Catholic Order owned the island. Mr. Bennet died in 1951, but his legacy lived on.

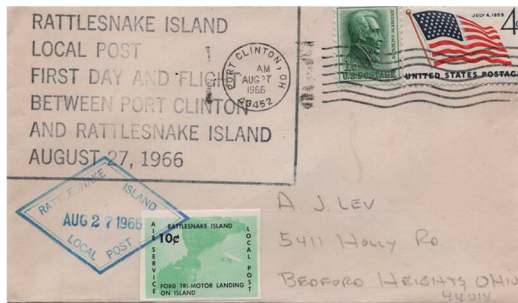
In 1952 the island was sold for \$60,000. It was sold a short time later, when the previous business venture failed to be realized, for \$45,000 to a Catholic Order. It sold again in 1959 for \$100,000 to a prominent surgeon and a stockbroker. Other nearby islands secured mail service. There was no mail service on Rattlesnake Island.

Starting in 1844, many small private companies started on the mainland to pick up and deliver mail. The act of 1861 forced most private companies to shut down except Boyd's in New York and Wells Fargo. During the Navigation Season mail was delivered to the islands by steamboat. From December to March mail was delivered by horse drawn sleigh, if the ice was smooth enough to navigate. There are numerous stories in the book about the hazards and loss of life delivering to the islands.

With the advent of the Ford Tri-Motor starting in 1926, transport began to change. The inaugural flight of the newly created Erie Isle Airways took place on November 11th, 1930, flying a Waco biplane. Thus, regular air service began to Put In Bay, Middle Bass and North Bass islands. The pilot Hershberger frequently assisted the mail carriers by conveying the postmen and their cargo when conditions were particularly bad. Milton Hershberger operated air service between the mainland and the Erie islands from 1930 to 1953. By 1935 Hershberger had acquired no fewer than five Tri-motors, and with the increasing success of his air service changed the name of his company to Island Airways.

There was still no post office on Rattlesnake Island. Dr Frackelton discovered that Title 18 of the U.S. code permitted an individual to establish a local postal service. The new owners had taken over the island in 1959, but it wasn't until 1966 that the post office gave permission to operate the private post office. The rules said local stamps could not be placed in the upper right corner and official postage must be affixed to deliver beyond the mainland post office in Port Clinton, Ohio where it entered the United States mail stream. The first stamps were issued on the 27th of August 1966 and were designed by Dr. Frackelton and printed by Mueller Printing Company of Cleveland Ohio.





Editor's Corner

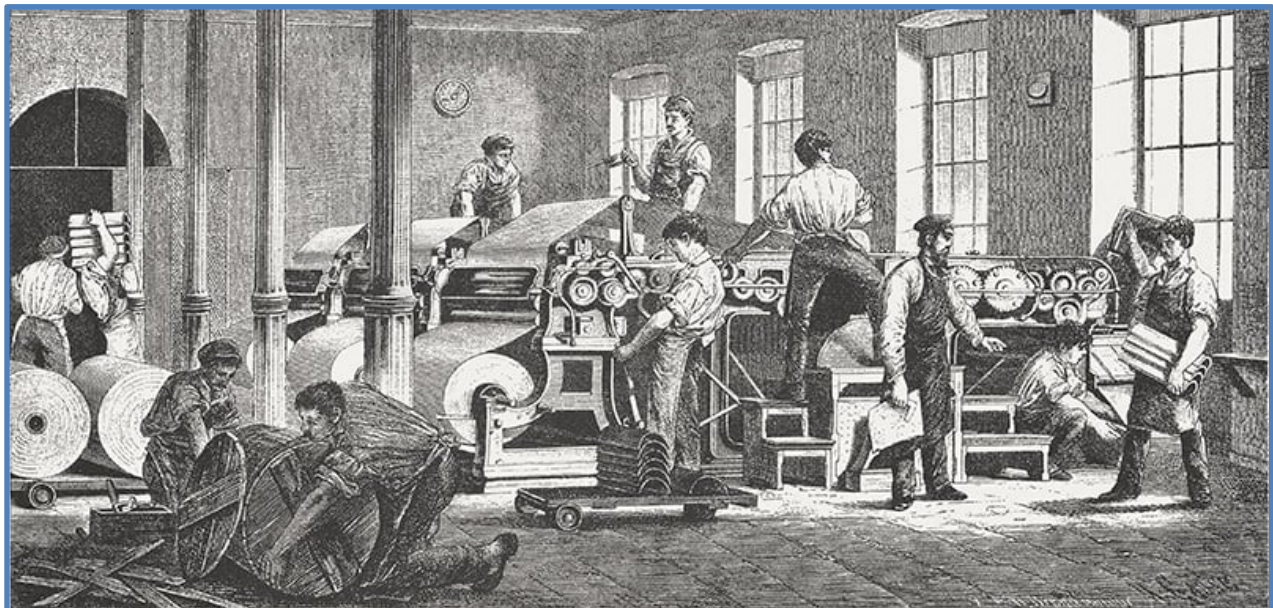


Image obtained from <https://blog.thelabelprinters.com/brief-history-of-printing-presses-part-3-the-industrial-revolution>.

To Our Readers,

As with many clubs across our country, I am concerned that too few individuals (*i.e.*, 4-5 individuals) perform a majority of the tasks required to maintain our Club (*i.e.*, membership >150). While these key members are extremely dedicated, there comes a time when they must step down for any number of reasons. It is in these instances, where their true contributions become evident and the tasks that they performed too cumbersome for a single member to perform, that the Club realizes there is a problem if someone cannot step into that position and begin performing those tasks immediately. Unfortunately, without preparation for such circumstance, there is usually a significant and time-consuming learning curve. So how does the Club prepare? Certainly, one avenue is to have someone train overtime with the current Chair to take over in the instance the Chair is not able to or can no longer perform the duties of their position. This does not mean that this individual will assume the position indefinitely, only until a replacement can be found or they decide that they would like to

accept the duties of the position.

That being said, I would like one or more individuals interested in learning the Editor-in-Chief's tasks to begin apprenticing with me to prevent a lapse in publication of the Poway Stamp Club Newsletter in the event an issue arises.

If you are interested, then please contact me at dwall@dbwipmg.com.

David Waller,
Editor-in-Chief

Member's Articles

Every Cover Tells a Story

by Jim Grundy



Figure 1: Italian First Flight postcard that made the round trip from Rome to Turin and back again in 1917 and uncanceled stamp with overprint "Esperimento Posta Aerea Maggio 1917 Torino-Roma-Roma-Torino".

This postcard is one of the many covers and postcards that I set aside for future articles. What caught my attention this time I went through the pile was the words “First Flight” written in English on this Italian postcard. This month’s article involves an Italian First Flight postcard that made the round trip from Rome to Turin and back again in 1917. I found that this postcard is hiding some interesting stories. Let me explain.

During World War I, Italy was an ally of France and England, fighting against Germany. The trench warfare occurring in France was also taking place north of Italy. Over 150,000 Italian fighters lost their lives between 1916 and 1918 trying to dislodge the German forces. In addition to Italy’s problem with the German Army to the north, they were also concerned with the German Navy. It was possible that the powerful German Navy would blockade the islands of Sardinia and Sicily. Supply and communication would be a problem. A possible solution to this potential problem would be to use airplanes instead of ships to cover the distance between these islands. To test this possibility, a flight that would travel 286 miles between Rome and Turin was planned.

The flight from Rome to Turin was scheduled for May 19, 1917. A special stamp was issued for this flight. It was a standard Special Delivery stamp with an inscription that read ‘Experiment Air Post May 17, Turin-Rome Turin-Rome’. **THIS WOULD BE THE WORLD’S FIRST AIRMAIL STAMP!** The stamps went on sale in Rome and Turin on May 16th. Two hundred thousand stamps were printed with a limit of three stamps per customer. Special commemorative postcards were issued by the Italian Philatelic Club. The postcards were addressed to Gualtiero Merlotti, who was a member of the Italian Philatelic Club in Rome. Due to bad weather, the Italian Air Force Pomilio PC-1 World War I reconnaissance airplane didn’t take off until May 22nd. The airplane was piloted by Lieutenant Mario de Bernardi. On this flight, he carried 480 pounds of mail, containing mostly postcards, and 200 newspapers. His return flight to Rome was delayed, and he didn’t return until May 27th.

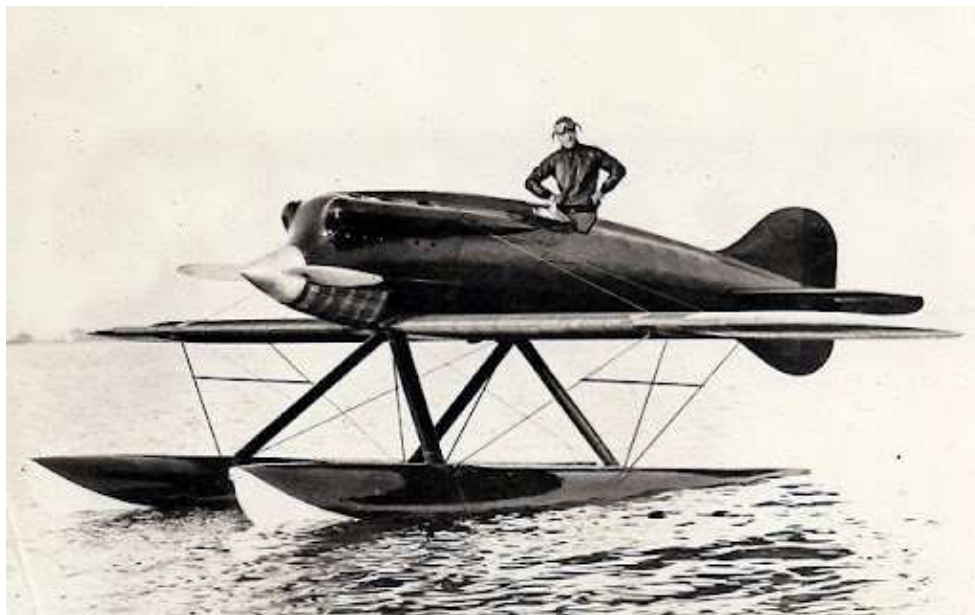


I searched through biographies of the pilot Mario de Bernardi and found some interesting information. Mario de Bernardi was born on July 1, 1893, in Venosa, Italy, to a middle-class family. At 18, he enlisted in the Italian Army and served in Libya during the Italo-Turkish War. In 1913, he enrolled in the Volunteer Pilots School and earned his civilian pilot’s license in 1914. At

the start of World War I, he joined the Italian Air Force. Mario was the first Italian pilot to shoot down a German airplane. By the time he made the flights from Rome to Turin and back, he was a veteran pilot and a test pilot for the Italian Air Force. When World War I ended in 1918, Mario had downed five German aircraft in combat and was honored as an ace. From this point, Mario de Bernardi moved from World War I ace to a world-renowned pilot.



In the 1920's and 30's, his biography is extremely impressive. So impressive in fact, that his flights of 1917 are often omitted, or appear in only one sentence. After World War I, the Italian Air Force kept him as a test pilot. In this position, he was exposed to the most modern or experimental aircraft of the time. In 1925, he focused on seaplane racing. From 1926 through 1928, he dominated the prestigious Schneider Trophy Seaplane Races.

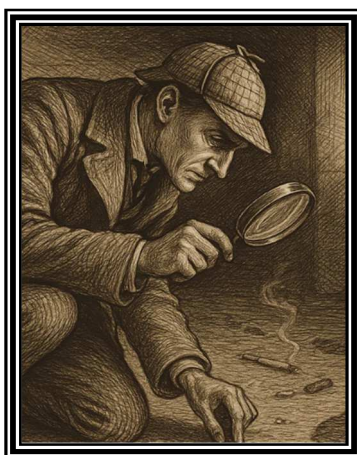


In three years, Mario's seaplanes increased the world seaplane speed record from 246.5 to 318.6

miles per hour. He became the first pilot to fly faster than 300 miles per hour and the first to fly faster than 500 Kilometers per Hour (310 mph). In 1930, he left the Italian Air Force to join the Caproni Company, where he worked as a test pilot and consultant. Bernardi still competed in prestigious aviation events and won the International Aerobatic Championship at the National Air Race held in Cleveland, Ohio, in 1931. He flew and helped develop many important Caproni aircraft before World War II. Following the war, Mario focused on designing a small civilian aircraft. He would call his airplane the Aeroscooter. On April 8, 1959, he flew his airplane to Rome to demonstrate its aerobatic performance. During the demonstration, Mario experienced chest pain. He made a perfect landing but died moments later, still in his aircraft. A very fitting end for Mario de Bernardi, an aviation pioneer.



You Can Be the Expert!



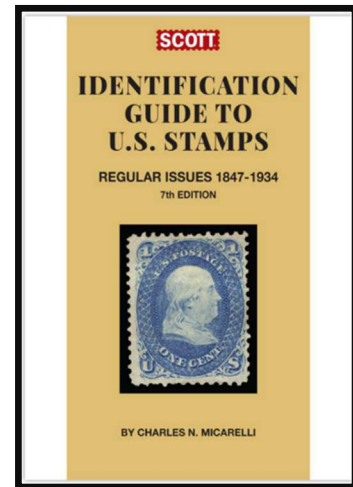
Micarelli's and Mastering the Process of Elimination

by D. Klauber



Introduction - Over the years, as a collector of classic U.S. stamp issues, I have had to quickly and accurately identify thousands of stamps. Some have called me an “Expert”; however, I recognize that the difference between an “expert” and everyone else is access to readily available knowledge. With this knowledge, you too can become an expert!

Enter “Micarelli’s” — a book officially titled *Scott Identification Guide to U.S. Stamps: Regular Issues 1847–1934* by Charles N. Micarelli (commonly called the “Micarelli Guide”)—and it is widely regarded as one of the top specialized tools for accurately identifying classic and early 20th-century U.S. regular-issue (definitive) postage stamps. Micarelli’s should be a must-have in every U.S. stamp collector’s private library. The book is considered essential for dedicated U.S. stamp collectors who want to distinguish among similar designs that may have notable value differences. Its goal is to teach collectors the necessary steps to confidently identify U.S. regular issues. The guide goes far beyond Scott’s Specialized Catalogue by highlighting the subtle, often tiny differences (“attributes”) that distinguish many similar varieties—differences that can make a big difference in value (sometimes hundreds or thousands of dollars). The latest edition of Micarelli’s is the 7th (published around late 2024 or early 2025). It covers U.S. regular issues from the first stamps in 1847 up to 1934, including the 1847 classics, 1861–1867 issues, 1869 Pictorials, Bank Notes (1870–1888), Bureau Issues (1894–1898), 1902–1908 series, Washington-Franklin heads (1908–1922+), and early 1920s–1934 definitives.



The Process - Most importantly, the “Process of Elimination” is crucial in the Micarelli Guide. Micarelli’s guide was created with a clear goal: to provide an efficient, objective method to confidently and accurately identify U.S. regular issues. It accomplishes this by offering a practical set of comprehensive attribute tables for variety. These tables help collectors rely on a process of elimination rather than a subjective “it looks like...” method for identification. Although not perfect, the guide effectively achieves this through a structured elimination process, starting broadly and systematically ruling out impossible options until only one choice remains.

There are nine chapters in the guide, organized by design family and denomination rather than just by Scott catalog numbers, so the entire history of a single look-alike series fits on a few pages. Summary tables and enlarged illustrations then serve as elimination checklists. In short, you identify a stamp by using the process of elimination, examining which attributes in each column your stamp meets.

Why does this method work so well? Because the tables turn subjective “it looks similar” into objective yes/no columns, making the process repeatable and teachable. Beginners learn in weeks what used to take experts years. Advanced collectors use it to distinguish between \$50 and \$5,000 varieties within the same design family. As the book’s own description states, it teaches “the processes which he or she must follow to make a positive and confident identification.”

How to best use the Scott Identification Guide to U.S. Stamps by Micarelli

I have created the following outline using a Four-Phase Elimination Workflow. If you follow the steps in order, you can effectively eliminate dozens of candidates at each stage. I suggest starting with basic Stamp Identification, with or without a Scott Catalog.

Before opening the Micarelli Guide, gather the necessary tools you will need to proceed. The tools you may need, besides the guide, are:

- Perforation gauge (always measure horizontal first)

- Watermark tray and fluid
- If available, have a color guide or paper reference (something every collector should have/create; how to create a solid paper reference is the topic of one of my previous articles, *PSC Newsletter Oct. 8th, 2025*)
- If available, have a color guide (The SDPL has a copy of R.H. White and other color references that you may need)
- Good lighting and magnification

Inspect your stamp and record the following features:

- Denomination (e.g., 3¢, 5¢)
- Design type (portrait style, vignette)
- Approximate color
- Perforation Horizontally and Vertically
- Watermark (if visible—use a watermark tray or fluid)
- Paper type (if obvious, e.g., soft wove vs. hard)

Phase 1 – Organize/Narrow to the Correct Series (Broad Elimination).

First, open the Micarelli guide and turn to the chapter that corresponds with your stamp's overall visual design and face value. Narrow your focus to a general issue or series.

- 1¢ Washington profile? → Chapter on Washington-Franklins (flat-plate vs. rotary).
- 3¢ Bank Note? → Dedicated Bank Note chapter.
- 2¢ Harding? → Rotary-press chapter.

This one step quickly eliminates many unrelated designs from 1847-1934. No more endless flipping through the entire Scott Specialized catalog. This first step typically narrows down the options to a small group of Scott catalog numbers (for example, Scott 184-191 for the 1870-1888 Bank Note issues, or Scott 331-355 for the 1908-1910 Washington-Franklin series).

Thankfully, the Micarelli guide is organized chronologically by major issue/series, typically divided into nine main chapters (exact divisions may vary slightly by edition). This allows you to narrow your search by overall design and denomination. The book covers the 1847-1834 issues

- First United States Issue 1847 and Reproduction of 1875
- Series of 1851
- Series of 1861
- Series of 1869
- Series of 1870-71
- Series of 1875, 1882, and 1883
- Series of 1894
- Series of 1908-21
 - ❖ Denominations in words
 - ❖ Denomination in numerals
 - ❖ Franklin Denominations in Numerals
- Series of 1922.

Phase 2 – Identify the Basic/Key Visual Traits (Illustration Elimination)

Each chapter starts with an overview of a key series. After finding your stamp's era and design chapter, use the detailed illustrations to compare your stamp against subtle differences noted in similar issues, such as perforation changes, shade variations, or design details (e.g., lines, shading).

Hold your stamp under a magnifier next to the guide's full-color plate images. Compare:

- Frame lines (thick/thin, broken, or extra)
- Shading on cheek, beard, or background
- Secret marks or recutting lines
- Plate-tone or offset vs. intaglio appearance

Any mismatch eliminates entire sub-groups. For example, a vertically stretched 2¢ Washington rotary image immediately rules out all flat-plate versions (see illustration below).



Phase 3 – Consult the Summary Tables Checklist (Attribute-by-Attribute Elimination)

Use the Summary Tables and Comparison Charts provided in each chapter to quickly compare and verify your stamp's series "attributes." This step helps you use the process of elimination to find the exact Scott catalog number you need. That's where the Micarelli Guide really shines. Each chapter features large, clear illustrations that display key attributes side by side. Most importantly, each chapter includes a table listing each major issue variety with its key attributes in a column format. You simply check which attributes your stamp has and remove the rows (varieties) that fail even one attribute criterion.

- Large, clear illustrations (many in color in recent editions) showing key details side-by-side
- Detailed comparison tables listing distinguishing features row by row

As appropriate, the common table columns describe the following "attributes":

- Scott number
- Denomination
- Color
- Illustrated Types (I, II, III, IIIa, etc.)
- Printing (Flat Plate, Rotary, etc.)

- Paper type (e.g., soft vs. hard wove, ribbed, laid etc.)
- Watermark (e.g., single-line USPS, double-line USPS, none)
- Perforations (11, 12, 10, compound, imperforated or coil)
- Printing Date
- Secret marks/grill types
- Physical differences (e.g., triangle vs. arrow secret marks on Bank Notes, frame lines on Washington-Franklins, shading differences, engraving style, overprints) Plate varieties/cancellations

Scan the table for the attributes matching your stamp (e.g., “3¢ rose, perf 12, no watermark”) and follow the rows to eliminate possibilities until only one (or a few) Scott numbers remain.

Examine the illustrations and closely

- Compare your stamp directly to the enlarged photos or drawings.
- Focus on the tiny diagnostic features highlighted in the tables, such as:
 - ❖ Secret marks (e.g., small triangles in the corners of 1870 Bank Notes)
 - ❖ Grill types (points up/down, size)
 - ❖ Differences in numerals, letters, or shading
 - ❖ Plate scratches, double transfers, or re-engravings
- Use good lighting and a magnifier (10x loupe recommended) to spot these details.

Phase 4 – Final Detail Focus (Micro-Elimination)

Cross-Reference and confirmation, if at this point you have not definitely identified your stamp: Return to the Scott catalog to check values, varieties, and footnotes.

If uncertainty remains, which is common with similar Washington-Franklins, note the exact differences and consult an expert (such as the APS expertizing service) or submit the stamp for certification (Philatelic Foundation, Professional Stamp Experts). Other online resources can help verify the authenticity of extremely rare stamps. In many cases, only one or two stamps may exist in the world or have been produced, and their owners are known. Some stamps may have attributes found online that are not included in the Micarelli Guide (rare, but it happens).

The Micarelli guide explains a logical, step-by-step elimination process: remove options based on one feature at a time (e.g., “This has a watermark, so eliminate the unwatermarked options”).

Pay close attention to the specific identification points highlighted in the guide, as these are meant to distinguish between rare and common varieties. Re-read the bullet-point identification notes at the bottom of the page for the last remaining candidate.

- “Check for the tiny hairline in the left vignette.”
- “Gum must be smooth, not crackled.”
- “Color must match the ‘dull green’ swatch.”

If your stamp fails here, go back to Phase 3 — the previous row you thought was eliminated might be the right match. If it passes all tests, you are likely to have a positive identification. Why This Method Works So Well. Because the tables turn subjective “it looks similar” into objective yes/no columns, the process is repeatable and teachable. Beginners learn in weeks what used to take experts years. Advanced collectors use it to spot \$50 vs. \$5,000 varieties in the same design family. As the book’s own description states, it teaches “*the processes which he or she must follow*”

to make a positive and confident identification.”


Practice – A Working Example

A good working example: Identifying a 1¢ Washington (1912–1921 series – up to 25 look-alikes). Your stamp notes: “1 CENT” light green, perf 10×10, no watermark visible, dull shade, single-line frame.

- Eliminate all non-10 perf rows
→ (11) gone: Scott 536, 405, 423a, U23d, 498, 525, 544, 545, 538, 498, 501, etc.
- Eliminate all watermark rows
→ (1) gone: Scott 424
- Eliminate all wrong color rows
→ (1) gone: Scott 543
- Detail Focus: If you're still not sure about the color, see note (179). Next, measure the frame line; the stamp does not meet the Width or Height Measurements. The remaining row matches exactly

→ **Scott 462 confirmed.**

WASHINGTON 1-CENT
Design of 1912-21



Color	Scott#	Perf & Printing	Watermark	Date
GRAY GREEN	536	12½ ¹⁷⁵ OS	Unwmkd.	8/15/19
GREEN (light, dark, yellowish)	405	12 FP	S/L wmk.	2/12/12
GREEN	423A	12 x 10 FP	S/L wmk.	—
GREEN	U23D	10x12 FP	S/L wmk.	—
GREEN (light, dark, yellowish)	498	11 FP	Unwmkd.	3/23/17
GRAY GREEN, EMERALD	525	11 OS	Unwmkd.	12/24/18
GREEN	544	11 ¹⁷⁶ R	Unwmkd.	12/21/22
GREEN (yellowish)	545	11 ¹⁷⁷ R	Unwmkd.	5/7/21
GREEN (yellowish, bluish)	538	11 x 10 ¹⁷⁸ R	6/14/19	6/14/19
GREEN (bright, deep)	424	10 FP	S/L wmk.	9/5/14
GREEN (light, dark, bluish)	462	10 FP	Unwmkd.	9/27/16
GREEN (deep)	543	10 ¹⁷⁹ R	Unwmkd.	5/29/21

OS = Offset
FP = Flat Plate
R = Rotary Press

175. The 12½ perforations done on the Rosback machine were the smallest perforations used since the 1857 issue.

176. Design size 19 mm wide by 22½ mm high. Rotary press sheet waste.

177. Design size 19½-20 mm wide by 22 mm high.

178. This perforation is the result of taking excess coil stamp printings of vertical perf 10 and perforating them 11 horizontally. Design size is 19½-20 mm wide by 22-22¼ mm high.

179. Design size is 19 mm wide by 22½ to 22¾ mm high.

In under two minutes, the table has eliminated 13 of 14 possibilities.

Practical Tips for Using the Guide Daily:

- Bookmark the chapter index on the inside front cover.
- Photocopy or scan the summary table for the series you collect the most.
- Always start with the least expensive variety still in contention (standard expertizing rule) and eliminate upward.
- Keep a notebook: “Eliminated X because perf 11 instead of 10.”
- Work methodically—do not rely on color alone (fading, chemical changes, and reprints complicate identification).
- Have essential tools ready: perforation gauge, millimeter ruler, watermark detector, magnifier, and (if possible) a color guide.
- Practice on common stamps first to become comfortable with the tables and illustrations.
- The book is especially valuable for the notoriously difficult series:
 - 1870–1888 Bank Notes
 - 1908–1922 Washington-Franklin heads

Whether you're sorting a shoebox of banknotes or verifying a potential Washington-Franklin rarity, the Micarelli Guide turns the frustrating “which one is it?” into a satisfying, methodical hunt. The “Process of Elimination” is more than just a technique; it embodies the book's entire philosophy,

and once mastered, it transforms lookalikes into accurately cataloged treasures. The 7th edition (2024/2025) remains the most current and color-illustrated version. For any collector serious about U.S. regular issues from 1847 to 1934, this workflow is the single most valuable skill the guide offers.

In summary, treat the Micarelli book as your “detective manual” for U.S. classics: it does not merely list varieties; **it teaches you the logical process to confidently identify them yourself.** Many experienced collectors consider it essential (a “must-have”) for serious U.S. collecting beyond the beginner level. If you are working with pre-1935 U.S. regular issues, this book will save you time, money, and identification mistakes.



Vietnam Covers

by Jon P. Schrag



Figure 1: 1986 airmail cover to Russia

The photo shows a 1986 airmail cover to Russia. It was mailed for 150 VN DONG. What is incredible is that because Communist Russia subsidized postage rates, it cost less to send a letter to Russia than to send a letter across town in Ho Chi Minh City!

Most international covers since the Vietnam revolution in 1975 are very hard to find. The Russia destination is uncommon. An exhausting check at stamp shows in Southern California shows NO



The day of March 13, 2026, brought a visitor from Washington D.C. and a host of classic car enthusiasts together. It was for another exciting first day postage issue unveiling in the city. No, it had nothing to do with our dear President. It was a memorable unveiling of a set of five brand new forever stamps all involved in the showing of classic lowrider cars, “slow and low”, you might have driven behind on a hot summer night in San Diego. The event was hosted by dignitaries including city councilwoman Vivian Moreno, assemblyman David A. Alvarez, popular DJ Xavier “The X-Man” from radio and USPS chief postal inspector, Gary Barksdale.

Figure 1: Chief Postal Inspector, Gary Barksdale at podium.

However, the show was not about the speakers, it was about the push to get the lowriders immortalized. The cars on display did themselves proud in full, living color at the curb and at the front of the stage. The noted backers mentioned were local enthusiasts building cars, general car clubs and local citizenry who knew the familiarity of these car’s presence in their Latino and Chicano everyday life. Believe it or not, lowrider boulevard style of driving was once outlawed but it is no longer the case. It was a fun event to reveal a spirit embodied by classic car culture that included free food and beverages hosted by a charity involved in this tight knit community.



Figure 2: Two of the Lowriders represented on the new stamps.



The Pony Express: A Brief but Legendary Chapter in American Postal History

by Manual Marti



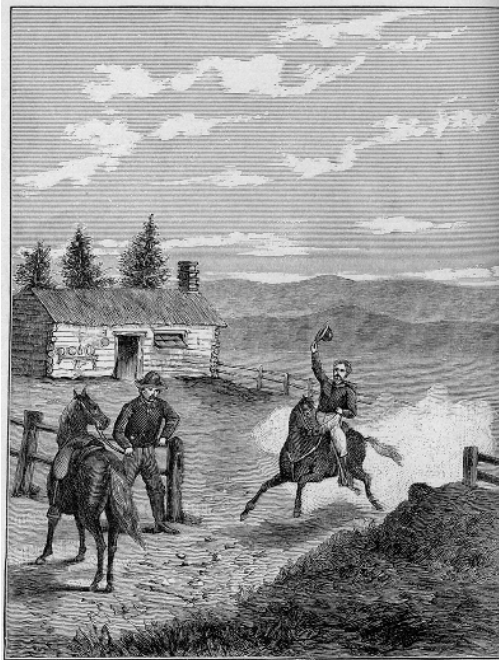
On this day, April 3, 2026, we celebrate the 166th year of the founding of the Pony Express. Issued on April 3, 1940, the United States commemorated the 80th anniversary of the founding of the Pony Express, the legendary horse-and-rider mail system that briefly revolutionized transcontinental communication.

The design captures a mounted rider departing a relay station carrying mail in a mochila. It reflects the enduring romantic image of youthful riders, often teenagers undertaking hazardous journeys across the frontier.



2¢ Pony Express Rider (1940) - Brown Scott No.: 894
Issue Date: April 3, 1940
Design: Pony Express rider departing relay station
Printer: Bureau of Engraving and Printing

Established in 1860 as an alternative to the southern route operated by the Butterfield Overland Mail, the Pony Express responded to growing concerns that sectional conflict between North and South might disrupt communications with California. The service was always intended as a temporary solution pending completion of the First Transcontinental Telegraph, yet it proved vital in maintaining communication between Union interests in the East and the Pacific Coast during the opening months of the American Civil War.



PONY EXPRESS STATION.

**Pony Express riders switched horses every 25 miles to keep moving quickly.
Every 75 miles, they handed the mail to a new rider.**

Although the Pony Express charged its own carriage fees, letters also required official postage upon completion of the route under the United States Post Office Department. During that time the company issued five “Horse and Rider” stamps of this type in different colors and denominations. These semi-official stamps were used only on eastbound mail originating in California.

Wells Fargo Pony Express (1861)



Issuer: Wells Fargo & Company

Printer: Britton & Co.

Denomination: \$4.00 (green) Period of Use: April–July 1861

Purpose: Pony Express segment fee (approx. 2 oz letter)

Prior to its establishment, cross-country mail could require up to eight weeks for delivery. Beginning with its inaugural run from St. Joseph on April 3, 1860, the Pony Express reduced delivery time to approximately ten days - an extraordinary logistical achievement.



2¢ Pony Express Rider brown (Scott # 113)

With the Civil War past and the West opening up, the U.S. post office issued this homage to the tireless riders of the Pony Express in its inaugural series of pictorial stamps - the first in the world to depict images other than heads of presidents or states.

Recovered Pony Express Cover – Interrupted Mail (1860)



10c Washington on Pony Express cover 1860. from the William H. Gross.

Route: Pony Express (interrupted); later forwarded via U.S. mail

Marking: Oval hand stamp of Central Overland California & Pikes Peak Express Company

Endorsement: “Recovered from a mail stolen in 1860”

Destination: New York

Arrival: 1862

Rarity: One of two recorded examples

(ABOVE) American Indians overtook the Pony Express rider, interrupting delivery. The pony escaped with the letter pouch (mochila), which was later recovered on the plains. The letters were forwarded to their destination. This cover is one of only two known examples. It reached New York in 1862. By then, the Pony Express no longer existed.

Wells Fargo & Co. Virginia City

On August 11, 1862, Wells Fargo inaugurated its Virginia City Pony Express, which carried mail between Nevada mining towns and California business centers. While the original Pony Express delivered news, the Virginia City Pony was more concerned with business matters. Letters

required a 10¢ Pony Express stamp for every half-ounce, plus an appropriate US stamp to meet the current rate. The rate was raised to 25¢ in January 1863. By 1865, the roads were improved enough to allow for faster transportation and the Virginia City Pony Express was discontinued. As for Wells Fargo, the completion of the Transcontinental Railroad brought about the end of long-distance stagecoach routes. The stagecoaches were then used to transport people and mail between small towns that lacked a railroad link. By the 1880s, the Post Office was able to offer better service at lower rates than Wells Fargo and they soon discontinued their mail service. Wells Fargo offered express service until 1918 when that service was taken over by the government. Since then, the company has focused on banking and financial services.

Wells Fargo & Co. Virginia City Pony Express



Scott #143L8

Distinct from the original transcontinental Pony Express, the Virginia City Pony Express served regional mining communities, focusing primarily on commercial correspondence between Nevada and California business centers. Each letter required a Wells Fargo express stamp in addition to standard U.S. postage. The service declined as infrastructure improved and was discontinued by 1865.

Decline of Express Mail Services

The completion of the First Transcontinental Telegraph and later the First Transcontinental Railroad eliminated the need for long-distance horseback and stagecoach mail. While Wells Fargo & Company continued regional express operations, increasing efficiency and lower rates from the Post Office led to the eventual discontinuation of private mail services by the late 19th century. By 1918, government control of express services marked the end of this era.

The Pony Express, though operational for only 18 months - became an enduring symbol of innovation and frontier determination. Its associated postal artifacts, including commemorative issues and express company adhesives, illustrate the transitional period between private enterprise and a unified national postal system.

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Stamp News 2026

[New Stamps for 2026](#)



Issue Date: April 10, 2026,
Location: Washington, D.C.

As the nation marks its 250th anniversary, this pane brings together portraits of 25 people whose vision, leadership, and sacrifices helped define the American Revolution. The honorees range from the well-known, such as George Washington, Abigail Adams, and Benjamin Franklin, to those less often recognized, including James Armistead, Deborah Sampson, and Cornplanter. Together, they remind us that independence was secured by the contributions of many.

The block of 25 stamps rests against a background that features the Declaration of Independence, anchoring the portraits in one of the Revolution’s defining documents. Together, they create a visual narrative of courage, conviction, and collective effort, inviting reflection on our core values and affirming that the work of forging a nation is never finished.

The *Figures of the American Revolution* stamps are being issued as Forever® stamps.



Issue Date: April 18, 2026
Location: Providence Rhode Island

The U.S. Postal Service is commemorating the annual celebration that everyone enjoys with a new *Happy Birthday* stamp.



Issue Date: April 24, 2026
Location: Burlingame California

A day at the beach is one of summer's greatest pleasures - and now four new stamps from the U.S. Postal Service let you send a little seaside charm through the mail. Issued in booklets of 20, these stamps celebrate the simple joys of a coastal escape.

For millions of Americans, the beach is the ultimate escape - where the biggest decision of the day might be whether to take a dip or just let the waves wash over your feet. Sandcastle engineers sculpt their masterpieces, beachcombers hunt for sea glass, and bird-watchers enjoy front-row seats to a show of swooping seagulls. Cyclists glide along the boardwalk, the salt air rushing past as they take in the view. No matter how you spend your time by the shore, the memories last long after you've shaken the sand from your shoes.

The *A Day at the Beach* stamps are being issued as Forever® stamps in a booklet of 20.



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