

The Importance of Philatelic Literature and other Ramblings

World Stamp Show



The Importance of the Book

Some months ago, a client said to me that my exit from the philatelic literature business was impeccably timed for it coincided with the demise of the philatelic book. Nothing could be further from the truth. His premise was that the rise of the Internet and major works of the past and present are now available online.

From my perspective, the Internet has been to savior of philately. It has provided the hobby with many new collectors and an access to original source information in minutes in what used to take months or years of letter writing or searching. This has made our hobby much more dynamic. Placing major works online has also increased the access to knowledge for new and existing collectors. While it augments, it does not replace the intimacy of working with the printed page.

I enjoy using the Internet to research Civil War covers and letters. In fact, it is the only way to efficiently complete such a task. However, when it comes to plating or researching a marking, I turn to my books. There is something about opening the book, placing it flat on my desk, finding the appropriate page and placing the cover right next to the marking or plating diagram that I can't get with my computer.

In the long run I think that what goes up on the Internet will increase future collectors' desire to own the book. After all, we are collectors who collect things, like stamps, covers and books.

Literature Dealers

I still get request for books and I do still maintain a small stock of titles on essays and proofs and the books I published over the years. I always direct the requester to my website and the links button on my home page. When you arrive on the links page you will find links to three of my friends who deal in philatelic literature: Leonard Hartmann, Bernie Bernstein of Main Street Philatelics and Phil Bansner. I have known and competed with them for over 40 years. And each of them will provide you with the same great service that I have provided in the past.

I found Leonard in 1973 through an ad in *The Chronicle*. I bought hundreds of books from him over the years; first as a collector and then as a dealer. I met Phil about the same time when he was just selling stamps and essays and proofs. I bought the latter from Phil and later books when he added philatelic literature to his mix. Bernie came to the table later, about 20 years ago, and I have both bought from, and sold books to, him.

I have the greatest respect for all of them. Each is considered a longtime friend. Any one of them would be happy to fill your literature needs.

NAPEX has the right Critical Mass

While a few shows are flat, or are heading down, NAPEX is going by leaps and bounds. Much of the success of a show is a direct result of the decisions and efforts of the volunteers who stage it.

I just returned from NAPEX 2014 about a week ago (at the time of this writing). It has always been good in the past but this year there was excitement in the air almost ever hour of every day. The crowds were strong all three days, yes, even on Sunday. They even had a record number of room nights for out of town collectors, over 300. This did not happen by accident.

Dan Piazza, the show chairman, and the rest of committee work tirelessly throughout the year to review the past years show and improved the next one. They have a superb working relationship with the hotel.

Nothing happens by chance, everything is well orchestrated. And most importantly they are promoting the show constantly throughout the year.

If I were a show chairperson I would plan to attend NAPEX 2015 and learn about what it takes to become one of the top WSP shows.

New York 2016 – It's Time to Build the Buzz

Are you planning to attend the next international show in the United States, World Stamp Show New York 2016?

This is the only question on this issue's survey! Please email me at jim@jameslee.com.

I've been wondering when the buzz is going to start to build around the country for this show. We are now just under two years out from the start of the show. I don't hear collectors or dealers talking about it like they did before Washington in 2006.

It is time to light a fire under my dealer brethren and start to build a buzz. I am guilty and have not been plugging it other than a table sign at shows. Well, I am answering the bell! Starting with the next issue of this newsletter we will have information about New York 2016. It will be featured in our email newsletter as well as on our website.

Will I see you at New York 2016? Please let me know.

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