

HPS

THE PERFORATOR



**January
February
March
2016**

**THE
NEWSLETTER OF
THE HOUSTON
PHILATELIC
SOCIETY**

EDITOR - JAY STOTTS

Send articles for publication, classified advertising (Free !), news of members, exhibit award information or anything else of general interest to club members to:

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GHSS Foundation, Inc. Has Qualified Under 501(c)(3) !!!

Larry Ballantyne has worked tirelessly since September 2014, to qualify the Greater Houston Stamp Show Foundation as a nonprofit organization in the eyes of the Internal Revenue Service. The good news that his efforts succeeded came to Larry on the day after Christmas, a great gift for the foundation as it starts the new year.

Larry authored the Bylaws of the organization which lists as its purpose "to encourage the educational aspects of philately, and to aid in collecting, studying of, and sharing of knowledge about postage stamps, postal history, and all related areas of philatelic activities."

The granting of the 501(c)(3) status by the IRS will allow individuals to donate philatelic property to the GHSS Foundation and take a federal tax donation claim. With such donations, the Foundation will gain material important to advancing the educational goals projected in the purpose statement above.

It will also allow us to retain the current fee structure which we have with the Humble Civic Center, the venue for the annual Greater Houston Stamp Show. Without the 501(c)(3) status, we faced significant rental hikes from the venue in 2016.

The 3-day GHSS event at the Humble Civic Center is our prime opportunity each year to offer educational programs such as seminars, consultations and our Beginner's Booth services that have been a key to reaching younger collectors as they start to pursue our fascinating hobby.

The GHSS Foundation, Inc. would like to express our very sincere Thank You to Larry for his efforts on our behalf the last several months.

2016 Dues: Pay Now

The annual HPS membership dues are due at the beginning of the year, so now's the time to pay. Individual memberships are \$7/yr. and family dues are \$10/yr.

Your dues can be paid in person at our Monday night meetings or you can mail them to our HPS treasurer:

Larry Ballantyne
P.O. Box 6634
Katy, TX 77491-6634

**Houston Philatelic Web Site:
<http://www.houstonstampclub.org/>**

Upcoming Philatelic Shows & Bourses

February 6 - 7, 2016

Houston TSDA Bourse. Crowne Plaza Hotel, 7611 Katy Freeway (I-10 West, south side feeder road.) Bourse hours are 10-5 on Friday and 9-4 on Saturday. Web site: www.tsdastamps.com.

February 26 - 28, 2016

TEXPEX 2016. TEXPEX is an American Philatelic Society World Series of Philately event scheduled for the Hilton DFW Lakes Executive Conference Center, 1800 State Highway 26 East, Grapevine, Texas 76051. Admission and parking are free. Hours are 10 to 6 on Friday and Saturday and 10 to 4 on Sunday. A full compliment of Bourse dealers will be on hand. The second annual Texas Shoot-Out has been planned and is open to all TPA chapter clubs. Each club can put together a 1-frame, 16-page exhibit for anything their members want to show, primarily consisting of members' individual single page exhibits with an emphasis on having fun and entertaining the viewers.

May 20 - 21, 2016

Houston TSDA Bourse. Crowne Plaza Hotel, 7611 Katy Freeway (I-10 West, south side feeder road.) Bourse hours are 10-5 on Friday and 9-4 on Saturday. Web site: www.tsdastamps.com.

July 22 - 23, 2016

Houston TSDA Bourse. Crowne Plaza Hotel, 7611 Katy Freeway (I-10 West, south side feeder road.) Bourse hours are 10-5 on Friday and 9-4 on Saturday. Web site: www.tsdastamps.com.

September 16 - 18, 2016

Greater Houston Stamp Show. Our annual show is again planned for the Humble Civic Center. The 3-day event will feature more than 32 stamp and postal history dealers from across the country which makes this the strongest Bourse inside the Phoenix, St. Louis and Orlando triangle. We will also host the nationally recognized exhibiting single-frame color competition. The color this year is Blue.

Upcoming Meetings

January 18 ...

What Should You Collect & How Should You Choose It?

Ron Strawser will provide some ideas on adding new collecting interests for us.

February 1 ...

First Quarter Auction

Members are encouraged to bring up to three lots for the auction, so look through your excess material, duplicates, etc. to see what might sell well in the called floor auction. With your planned income, go ahead and buy what strikes your fancy that may enhance your collection.

February 15 ...

Art and Artists Behind the 1933 George Washington Bicentennial Series

Rich Bajenski will delve into the artwork behind this popular series of twelve stamps.

March 7 ...

Polar Philately

Steve Stewart will introduce us to one of his special interests, Polar Philately.

March 21 ...

Teddy's 1909 African Safari

Jay Stotts will tell the story of President Theodore Roosevelt's 1909 year long trek through British East Africa from a thematic point of view, featuring several philatelic elements.

April 4 ...

Second Quarter Auction

Bring up to three lots for the auction. Search your duplicates to see what might sell well in the called floor auction. Bring some cash as well, so you can pick up a bargain or two.

April 18 ...

Buffalo Cinderellas

Special guest speaker Rick Barrett, the author of a book entitled *Buffalo Cinderellas*, will tell an interesting story associated with the 1901 Pan American Exposition and two people who created souvenir cinderellas for the event.

The BEP's 1984 Quadrant Plate Experiment

By Jay Stotts

As with every other year, in 1984 the Bureau of Engraving and Printing was always looking for cost saving production approaches. This is the story of the Quadrant Plate Experiment.



Scott 2071



Scott 2074



Scott 2075



Scott 2081

Printing Considerations

The state-of-the-art in stamp production in 1984 was the Andreotti gravure press, capable of printing seven different colors in one press run. Each color was applied using a different inking cylinder.

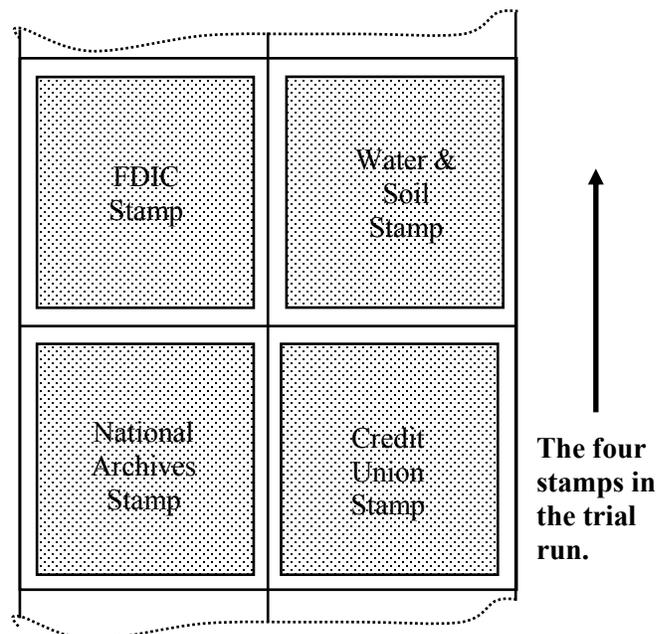
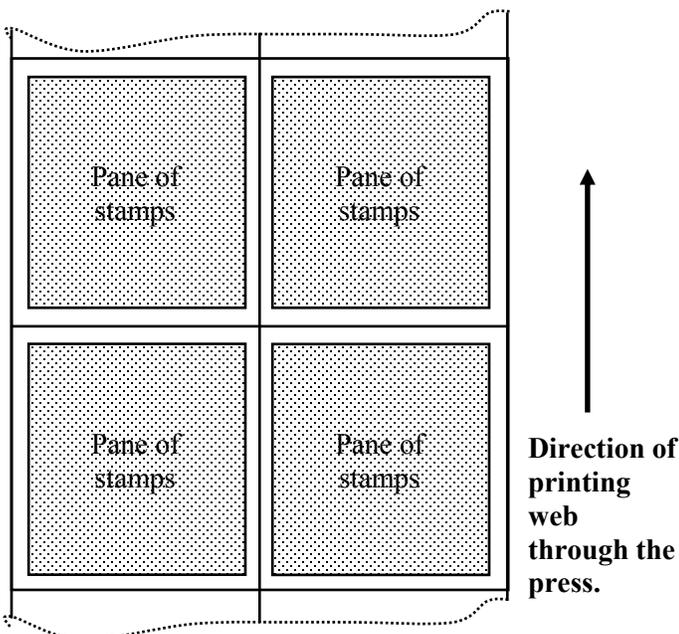
The press was a gravure press, a form of printing in which tiny dot patterns are etched into the plate. These dots retain ink until the paper draws it out. This method requires special fast drying inks.

Normal stamp runs at the time were about 110,000,000 images. Obviously, with each new stamp issue, ink colors had to be changed, the cylinder plates were changed, etc. In other words, there were significant set-up activities with each new stamp.

A long roll of paper, called a web, was run through the press. The roll printed 20 stamps across the width. For commemoratives, the web was later divided into 400 subject sheets of stamps and then into four post office panes of 50 stamps as shown in the left schematic below.

The new idea, in this case, was to print four different stamps at the same time. When the web was cut into sheets of 400, there would be four post office panes as usual, but when the sheets were quartered into 50-stamp post office panes, each of the four stacks would have a different stamp issue. These stacks, or pads as the postal service calls them, could be handled, issued and distributed as separate stamps.

The advantage for the BEP was that they would have



one set-up activity instead of four. The press would make a continuous run that was four times as long, printing 440,000,000 images. The potential cost savings was clear - three less set-up operations.

The experiment produced the four stamps shown above. All were issued in early 1984. Readers are encouraged to look at the examples in their collections and compare the designs and colors.

The Stamp Designs

There were drawbacks aplenty, starting with the design of the stamps. With a limit of seven total colors for the four stamps, the designs, although honoring completely different events, had to be complementary.

Michael David Brown of Maryland was chosen to design the four stamps. He used six colors. He described the design challenge as “pretending that he had been given six bolts of fabric and asked to design four distinctive quilts from them.”

He used a building column to represent the “stability” of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, the first of the four stamps issued. He combined six colors on this stamp (tan, black, red, blue, rust and green). The stamp was issued January 12.

On February 6, the second stamp was issued. Brown used a stylized hand holding a flower to design the Soil and Water Conservation stamp. The same six colors are used in this stamp’s design.

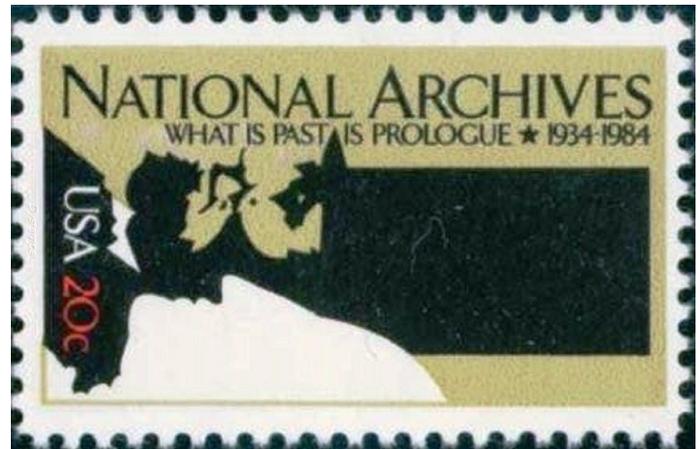
Four days later, the Credit Union stamp was issued. Here, a dollar sign and a stylized coin required five of the six colors. In this stamp, no tan is used.

The final stamp, commemorating the National Archives, was issued on April 16. This stamp is dominated by a profile of Abraham Lincoln and an exaggerated height stovepipe hat. A profile of George Washington is also present, but is subtle in the foreground. For this stamp, only tan, red and black were used.

This stamp’s Lincoln was not clearly obvious within the design, so much so that the USPS personnel were confused by the dominant “National Archives” lettering.

They turned the image on its side when placing an illustration in the daily *Postal Bulletin* of March 15, 1984 and it appeared as shown here.

When all four stamps are examined as a group, it



National Archives stamp as illustrated in the 3/15/84 *Postal Bulletin*.

become clear that they were designed by the same artist. Brown was the head of a graphic arts firm and they all have a graphic arts look to them.

Collector Impact

There are a couple of things to note that impacted stamp collectors.

First each stamp’s plate block can be collected in only one position because only one quarter of the normal plate block position was available to each stamp design.

The illustration on the next page shows the only plate block position available for each stamp. So, for diehard mated set plate block collectors, in this case, a matched set consists of one each of the plate blocks of the four stamps.

If you always collected upper left corners and liked that kind of consistency on your plate block album pages, there were no upper left plate blocks for the Conservation, National Archives or Credit Union stamps, only the FDIC stamp.

The second impact is that if you like EFOs, especial perf shifts, you should expect to find the same items on all four stamps. Since the perforations were added before the sheets were cut into panes, freak shifts were punched into all four designs.

A cursory review of current offerings on eBay shows some of these perforation shifts. Similar shifts can be collected on each of the designs as shown on the next page.



The available plate block position for each of the four stamp designs.



Very similar perforation shifts as shown on two of the designs.

Success ?

The first time that the BEP tried the quadrant plate approach was actually a year earlier, in 1983. They tried it with the Official stamp design. These stamps were very simple in design and only used three colors. Only the black face values differed in the designs. These stamps are Scott O127-O133.



The six values from the 1983 printing. The 14¢ stamp was printed later, in 1985.

The first plate printed 1¢ values in both the upper left and right quadrants with 4¢ values in the lower right and 17¢ values in the lower left.

The second plate printed 13¢ values in the upper right, \$1 in the upper left, \$5 in the lower left and an unpublicized, undenominated official stamp in the lower right.

The officials had a limited distribution audience and there was little lost if values got mixed. There were no design challenges with the 1983 experiment. It must have been viewed as a limited success to encourage the BEP to try the 1984 commemorative stamp experiment.

Risks with the commemorative quadrant plate printings were significant. Each stamp had a different First Day of Issue, an activity that required management.

Mix-ups could cause accounting nightmares as well. Shortages due to mixed-up stamps could be construed as lost or stolen stamps.

No First Day mix-ups were reported among these four stamps, but the experiment was never executed again.



The World's First Cancel: **The Maltese Cross**

Great Britain introduced the world's first postage stamp, the Penny Black, on May 1, 1840, but as early as February, 1838, the Post Office realized that they had to cancel stamps in order to prevent their reuse.

Several methods were considered:

- ◆ A leather punch hole through the entire letter and envelope.
- ◆ Placing the stamp across the joint of the envelope flap so that the stamp was destroyed when opening the flap.

The winning idea was a "dumb" obliterater. The shape chosen is today described as a Maltese Cross, but originated by combining the British 'cross patée' and the French 'croix de Malte.'

Three differently shaped proof

impressions were included in the Post Office minutes of March 31st, 1840.

Perkins Bacon was enlisted to develop an ink that could not be easily removed and on March 19th they sent 12 impressions to Professor Richard Phillips, a chemist, for testing. A red ink was found to be suitable since the new stamp was black. The ink formula was distributed by circular to all postmasters. A key ingredient in the mixture was linseed oil.

Two thousand handstamps were distributed in April, 1840 to post offices. Local colors varied greatly such as brown (Kensington), bright violet (Market St.), orange (Liverpool) and bright blue (Truro).

New devices incorporating numbers replaced the crosses in 1844.

Classified Ads:

Members may place philatelically related Buy, Sell, or Trade ads in The Perforator free of charge. HPS Dealer-Members may place free classified or feature ads in The Perforator at no charge as well. Member ads will run indefinitely until the advertiser requests a change or cancellation. Send copy to the editor.

Wanted: Mint and used stamps and postcards from China (year 1878-85). David Wu, Houston, TX freefoodwater@yahoo.com. 832-276-2956.

Wanted: U.S. unusual postal history material; 1887 large banknote issue, 10¢ through 15¢ Washington/Franklin issues. Also, U.S. 19th century green cancels. David Willig, Houston, TX, cbhz3@hotmail.com. 713-201-2042.

Buy/Sell/Trade: Texas Postal History. Email John Germann or phone him at 281-493-3938. jghist@comcast.net.

The Houston Philatelic Society....

Enjoy the fun of stamp collecting by sharing your interests with fellow collectors at an upcoming HOUSTON PHILATELIC SOCIETY meeting.

When : First and third Monday of each month at 7:30 PM

Where : West University United Methodist Church, 3611 University Blvd., Houston, TX

Visitors and new stamp collectors are always welcome.

Officers: President: Ardy Callender
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