



N.S.S.S. meets on the 2nd and 4th Saturday of each month at 10:00 am  
in the Sparks Heritage Museum at Pyramid and Victorian Avenue  
<http://home.earthlink.net/~renostamp/>

# N.S.S.S.

P.O. Box 2907 Sparks, Nevada 89432



POST BOY

The month of July gave us record breaking weather. Several old record highs fell. The record for the number of consecutive 100 plus degree days fell. Never thought I'd hear myself say this, but I'm glad August is here so we can cool down.

The election on the second meeting in July went smoothly and new officers were installed at the club picnic, the following week. Our officers are;

President **Terri Edwards**  
Treasurer **Mike McAuliff**  
Board **Paul Glass**  
**Mike Potter**

As the final act as our outgoing president **Stan Cronwall** selected **Mike Potter** as our new Program chairman.

This month's program was given by **Ed and Arline Davies** A CD of album pages has been donated to the club library for use in the computer. All countries are represented so you may pick and choose which to print for your collection. If your computer at home is not working or you don't have one at home, you can probably use the one at the library, just call ahead and check.

The **Nevada State Fair** is coming. It runs from the 24th of August to the 28th. There is still time to enter. If you have seen the rules, ignore them. Exhibits larger than two pages are allowed. You may enter your exhibit at; **[nvstatefair.com](http://nvstatefair.com)**. The rules for stamp exhibiting at the State Fair will be controlled by the NSSS. For more information, contact **Dick Dreiling** at 425-0623.

Our picnic was its usual great success. If you weren't there, you were missed and you missed a good time. Special thanks to **Dick Dreiling**, our favorite cook and **Jim Ringer** who had to go get a barbeque when the park's was found broken. **Cathie Ringer** and **Barbara Dedreichson** put the tables together and the **Wimbles, Ringers** and **Dreilings** were there to clean up our mess. Thanks to all.

We are always looking for volunteers for committees (see **Terri**), the museum (see **Dick**), to come to the meeting early and help **Jim** set the room. The club needs your help.

There are a few up-coming philatelic events, but not in August. Sept 16-17 in San Francisco will be the **SF Coin & Stamp Show** in the Cathedral Hill Hotel, 1101 Van Ness at Geary. 11:00am to 6:00pm. Special parking - \$5.00.

At the end of the month the **Filatelic Fiesta** will take place in San Jose, Sept 30, Oct 1st & 2nd. The address is Parkside Hall at 180 Park Ave. in San Jose (the address in Linns is wrong). Hours are 10:00am to 6:00am, 10:00am to 4:00pm on Sunday. This might be a good show to try your hand at exhibiting. Contact Jim Sauer at; [hjamesauer@yahoo.com](mailto:hjamesauer@yahoo.com)



The Graf Spee

### **A Mystery & A Challenge**

By Stan Cronwell

In the process of doing research on what may become another exhibit, "The Fate of Hitler's High Seas Fleet" I stumbled across a rather curious absence of philatelic materials either to or from the so-called German "pocket battleship" *Admiral Graf Spee* on what became its final voyage.

### **Foreground**

As some of you may know, *Graf Spee* came to an ignominious end in 1939 in the mouth of the Plate River in Montevideo Harbor. Elements of the British Navy (the cruisers *Exeter*, *Ajax*, and *Achilles*) had inflicted damage on the ship, and chased her into Montevideo Harbor on December 13, 1939. The three British ships lurked just outside waiting for *Graf Spee* to try making a run to open water.

The Uruguayan Government would only allow *Graf Spee* to remain in port for four days to effect repairs. Despite pleadings from the ship's captain, Langsdorff and the German diplomatic service, no time extension was granted.

The captain and his officers determined that *Graf Spee* could not fight its way out to open water, so the decision was made to scuttle. On December 17, a skeleton crew brought the ship up to steam, sailed it out into the mouth of the River Plate, set the explosive charges and scuttled it. Langsdorff committed suicide on December 20.

### **The South Atlantic Assignment & Security**

On August 21, 1939 *Graf Spee* departed Wilhelmshaven to wait on station in the mid-Atlantic for further orders to possibly interdict trade routes between Great Britain and her colonies.

In order to provide some measure of security as regards where *Graf Spee* would be operating, the ship would make no ports of call.

Instead, it would be re-provisioned on a periodic basis by the German oiler/depot ship *Altmark*. In fact, *Graf Spee* and *Altmark* rendezvoused on nine occasions between September 1 and when the raider was scuttled.

German ground and air forces had attacked Poland on September 1, but there had been no immediate reaction from France and Great Britain. This despite the treaty, which called for both countries to come to the aid of Poland.

Then, on September 3, Great Britain declared war on Germany and a day later France followed.

On September 26, *Graf Spee* was cleared for operations. Mercantile warfare by surface ships could begin. *Graf Spee's* commander, Captain Langsdorff, picked the South American route as his hunting ground, and set a direct course for Pernambuco. Not far from there, during the afternoon of September 30th, he made his first kill.

The chase was on.

Mystery Solved

Captain Hans Langsdorff

After more than 65 years, no philatelic materials have surfaced as being either to or from *Graf Spee* while it was on this assignment, and now we think we may know why. Mail going to or coming from *Graf Spee* was probably sent via *Altmark*.

*Altmark* did make ports of call, so the mail then had to be shifted to/from other secure carriers such as diplomatic pouches, carried by ships or planes of fellow belligerent, Italy, or by ships and planes of neutral countries.

The Philatelic Challenge

In theory, a collector looking for philatelic materials from this particular *Graf Spee* sortie could identify cards and letters but it will require some detective work.

Each element of the German military was assigned a Feldpost Number (FPN) so that it would have some measure of security (versus naming the particular unit openly), as well as to facilitate the movement of mail and parcels to and from the frontlines. This was especially important for the units fighting on the Eastern Front where they were destroyed, rebuilt in reserve areas, and plugged into new areas of the front as needed.

The first job of the detective is to determine the FPN's of both the *Graf Spee* and *Altmark*. According to "Die Feldpostnummern der deutsche Kriegsmarine 1939-1945" The Feldpost Number for *Graf Spee* was 19290, and 01596 for *Altmark*.

Next, we need to know the dates of the sortie to the South Atlantic. This is well documented as being from the Wilhelmshaven departure on August 21, 1939 to the scuttling on December 17, 1939.

Perhaps the toughest problem to solve is obtaining a list of the *Graf Spee*'s officers and crew that sailed on this particular sortie. This is needed so that addressee names on the cards and letters can be checked against a known list of people aboard the ship. This would also be key to identifying "absenders" (the ship board senders) of mail to family and friends. Germans were excellent record keepers, so it is probably just a matter of locating the proper current German Government source or repository.

Finally, it is the time required to go through hundreds if not thousands of Feldpost letters, cards, and lettersheets looking for this elusive combination of dates, and names with the *Altmark* Feldpost Number.

*Graf Spee* Cinderellas

An enterprising assistant radioman from *Graf Spee* created somewhere between 50-100 covers and reportedly mailed them from Montevideo.

The usual tug-of-war goes on between the purists who feel these are strictly "philatelic" and unworthy of being collectible, and those who believe that these items should be looked upon as "pieces of history".

The pictures are from Joseph Gilbey at <http://www.grafspee.com>, Thank you Mr. Gilbey.

<http://www.alphabetilately.com/>



Alphabetilately! Alphabetilately? Alphabetilately is a bit tough to pronounce at first, but try it a few times and it kind of rolls off your tongue. Still sounds funny, though. Lets see, "A" is for Apple. Not very complex for a bunch of sophisticated philatelists like ourselves now, is it? Did that in the first grade! Well, well, not this you didn't. As a matter of fact, "A" is for advertising covers! but its not jut any advertising cover, it's corner cards and cameos, advertising collars and Seabury and Johnson covers and much much more.

Once you get past the initial letter and what it is represented by you get to go into the subject in more depth. Each subject mentioned above is what is under the A list and there are several more. Each subject has one to five paragraphs to describe it and several links incorporated within the subject matter. There are also many many cover illustrations which you click on to enlarge for a better view.

As an example, I went to "The pinnacle; Seabury & Johnson";  
*"By the turn of the century, advertising covers had become fabulously elaborate, with multi-colored trompe l'oeil designs covering both sides of the envelope. Here is one of the most avidly sought, the Seabury & Johnson cover. Note that it even incorporates a stamp collar into the design."*

This is the first of four paragraphs used in this sections. Above this paragraph are pictures of the front and back of a Seabury cover. You can enlarge each. Seabury & Johnson are separate links. Seabury goes to "Find a Grave" and shows the burial place of George J. Seabury while the Johnson link takes you to the history of the Johnson and Johnson company. The next paragraph gives a little information about the cover and the third has a link to more pictures of Seabury covers taken from an auction catalog. The last paragraph has a link to information about the company who made the covers.

After exploring the rest of this page (there are eleven more sections similar to this one) you can go to the "B" page. Kind of changes the concept of "A is for apple" doesn't it? More like A is for apple and every kind of apple there is and applesauce too.

There is a ton of learning material in here, if you can find it. After all, how would you find corner cards or cameos unless you knew to look under A is for Advertising? this is a good site to look through from time to time. You will garner lots of knowledge. It's not an encyclopedia so some things will be difficult to look up. I like it and I will be back!

Last month's quiz wasn't as tough as I thought it would be. Everybody got the answers right! Well this one might test your mettle a little more. Watch out for number seven, it might fool you. So take your favorite beverage and sit under the peach tree. They should be getting ripe and juicy by now. Enjoy the shade. Enjoy the fresh peaches. Enjoy the iced tea (or whatever) and see if you can score another hundred auction bucks!

1. The U.S. issued its first self-adhesive in 1974. What did it show?  
A) Pigeon                      B) Bluebird of Happiness                      C) Dove of Peace
2. What color is the eighty cent Diamond Head airmail of 1952?  
A) Light Blue                      B) Red Violet                      C) Yellow Green
3. Thomas G. Masaryk appears on two 1960 American stamps. What country did he come from?  
A) Hungary                      B) Czechoslovakia                      C) Poland
4. The fleet of Columbus is shown on one of the 1893 Columbian issues. What was the denomination?  
A) Four cents                      B) Five cents                      C) Six cents
5. How many stamps are there in the CAPEX souvenir sheet of 1978?  
A) Eight                      B) Ten                      C) Twelve
6. Which type of writing instrument is shown on the Religious Freedom issue of 1957?  
A) Ball point pen                      B) Fountain pen                      C) Quill Pen
7. How many stars are there on the four cent flag stamp issued in 1959?  
A) Forty eight                      B) Forty nine                      C) Fifty
8. Who is on the twenty cent stamp of the 1938 definitive set?  
A) Rutherford B. Hayes                      B) James A. Garfield                      C) Chester A. Arthur
9. How many stamps are there in the Columbian Exposition issue of 1893?  
A) Twelve                      B) Fourteen                      C) Sixteen
10. What is the name of the ship on the one cent value in the Huguenot-Walloon issue of 1924?  
A) New Netherland                      B) The Huguenot                      C) Belgian Queen

There, that wasn't so bad, was it? Score a perfect ten? Now take the glass to the kitchen and wash all that peach juice off your face. You look terrible.

Once again I have erred. Sagamore Hill is spelled with a second "a" after the "g". It didn't seem to bother anyone and only one person made mention (thank you).

1. - B) Sagamore Hill is shown on issue #1023. The Roosevelt family built Sagamore Hill in 1885 on Oyster Bay in Long Island, New York and moved in the following year. This was the site of the end of the Russo-Japanese War in 1905.

2. - A) # 1307 was issued on April 9, 1966. It portrays a mongrel dog which, with the possible exception of Owney, doesn't get much press these days.

3. - B) Walt Whitman is pictured on the ultramarine blue five cent stamp, #867 under the heading of Poets. You probably know him as the author of "Leaves of Grass", an epic poem he had to publish himself because no American publisher would touch it.

4. - C) The Old Man of the Mountain was made famous by Nathaniel Hawthorne's "The Great Stoneface", a name often used to describe it. You will find this natural New Hampshire monument on # 1068.

5. - B) HemisFair was a world's fair that celebrated the 250th anniversary of San Antonio. The worlds fair is, in turn, celebrated on Scott #1340. next time you're in San Antonio, be sure to visit the Tower of the Americas. Great view of the city!

6. - A) The SS Dorchester was launched in 1926 and used as a luxury ship traveling between Boston and Miami. In 1942 it was converted to an Army troop transport ship. On its sixth trip to Greenland (Feb. 3, 1943) it was sunk 100 miles from harbor. #956.

7. - C) Grover Cleveland was the first Democrat to be elected to the office of president since the Civil war on a platform of government non-interference with private business. My how the times have changed.

8. - A) Myron was an early Greek sculpture who created the beautiful statue called "Discobolus". We know it as the Discus Thrower.

9. - A) #1738-42 were issued in 1980. #1743 was issued in 1978. Go figure. They (#1738 42) were sepia and yellow in color,

10. - C) Robert R. Livingston was a patriot of some small accomplishment. He helped to write the Declaration of Independence, the US constitution and the New York state constitution. He also gave the oath of office to George Washington. #323.

Hope you managed to find the stamps that were printed in 1980 but Scott cataloged them with the 1978 issues.

Laura Beck sent this piece to the Post Boy. The author is unknown. Very nice, Laura.

## Soliloquy of a Postage Stamp

I am the world's greatest traveler. I've journeyed from pole to pole, and all the climes between . . .by dogsled, camel and horseback, by every land, sea and air conveyance; even by submarine, dirigible and rocket.

I am the world's greatest art and portrait gallery. The heroes and heroines of mythology pose within my borders. I portray the greats and near-greats of all time; kings and queens, pharaohs and presidents, princes and princesses, poets and patriots emperors and explorers, athletes, architects, aviators, artists and adventurers, tribal chieftains, inventors, moguls, musicians and martyrs, dramatists and novelists, shahs, sultans, saints and sinners. Even the vanished forms of the phoenix , dragon centaur and unicorn appear upon my face.

I am the worlds greatest picture chronicle and miniature encyclopedia. I map communities, countries and continents, and reveal views from every remote strange corner of the earth. I depict mountains and valleys; oceans, lakes, rivers, waterfalls, geysers, harbors, bridges and dams; native canoes, sailing ships and modern ocean liners; monuments and statues; castles, cathedrals, churches, missions, mosques, temples and ruins of temples; and every type of locomotion from automobiles to zeppelins and steamboats to spaceships. I delineate all manner of sports, handicrafts, customs, sacred rites and ceremonies; and nearly every variety of bird, animal, fish, fruit and flower.

I frame the horrors of war, the blessings of peace, the hardships of emigration, the plight of indigence and the blight of famine. I illustrate the adventures of Don Quixote, the fairy tales of childhood and the legends of all civilizations. I reflect the symbols of art and culture, of natural resources and industry, of trade and commerce, of agriculture and architecture, and of all human endeavor. I commemorate the expeditions and voyages, and the inventions, discoveries and creations that make life worth living.

Millions of men. women and children are fascinated by me. Through my infinite variety they find boundless pleasure, relaxation and enchantment.

*Yet . . . I am only a postage stamp!*