

Printing Your Own Album Pages - Alternative Methods

by Dave Parsons

In trying to expand an album inherited from my father, the first option appeared to be finding extended year album pages from the album maker, such as Scott or White Ace. This proved to be tedious as older pages were hard to find and expensive and included pages for stamps not of interest. Of course the pages fit into the older album, if there was still room. But if not.....

This led to looking for alternate means of providing a means for logically storing stamps for one or more countries. One way was to use Vario pages which safely protects the stamps, however, this way feels like having another stock book. So, I tried using a Word Processor program- Word- to develop pages. This approach offered much flexibility and customization but it was very time-consuming as it required research about the stamp and development of the right size boxes for each stamp. Admittedly, I like having the little boxes as a guide for mounting stamps and keeping the right spacing. As an another approach the APS website has a link to free U.S. album pages - <https://stamps.org/Free-Album-Pages> - however, this only goes back to 2008 but includes some topicals/state pages. For example, the Nevada pages are very picturesque and informative and could be useful for a post office display- but did not meet my needs for more massive stamp storage.

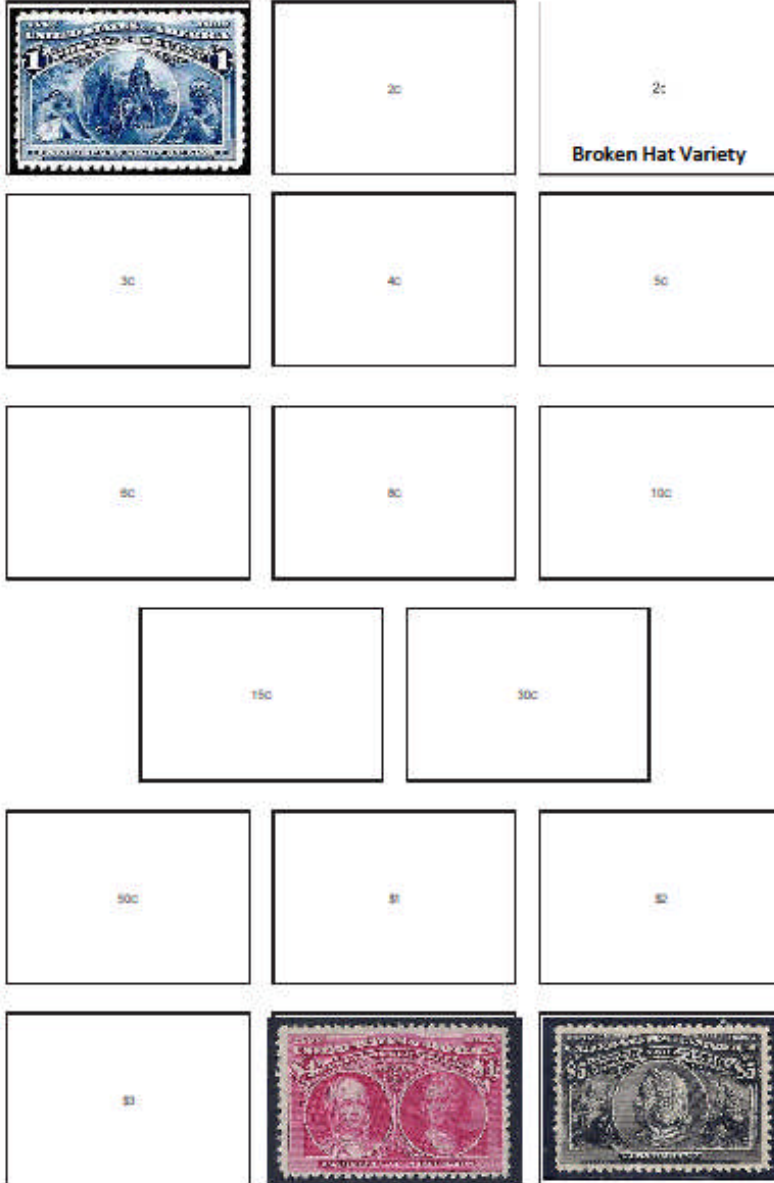
Since I was already using EZ Stamp to inventory my stamp collection, there is an add-on program called AlbumGen for \$65. This program has much customization available and includes the ability to create pages with color stamp images. However, it was found to be time-consuming to create just one page. Next up was AlbumEasy - <http://www.thestampweb.com/> - a free album printing program. This one allows much customization but requires good computer skills and some hard work. Probably good for exhibits but too much work for general collecting. Along the same lines as AlbumEasy we find Stamp Page Creator - <http://stamppagator.sourceforge.net/> - which produces fine-looking pages with stamp images, but it appears you need stamp images to make the pages. Again too much work for my purposes.

For U.S. stamps, a good website is <https://www.philosateleia.com/album/pages/>. They have pages for all U.S. stamps including popular BOB issues. Easy to use, but I didn't like all the large blank space between rows of stamps. But this may be able to be rectified by using a .pdf editor (see comments later on). An associated website site- <https://www.freestampalbum.com/> - allows for custom pages, but again lots of work.

The last method found and the one I use now is called Steiner Album pages - <http://www.stampalbums.com/>. This website allows the user to download pages for virtually every country, all years and has over 200,000 pages available. It is a subscription service costing \$40/year but allows unlimited downloads - so unless you need current year pages you can download every page for every country of interest thru about 2016 to have at your disposal. The pages are well designed and have appropriately sized boxes for stamps. However, I found that sometimes I didn't wanted everything displayed (like souvenir sheets) or that I wanted more stamps per page. Since the pages are in the form of .pdf files, they can be edited by using Adobe Acrobat (not the free reader version) which is expensive. I found that the .pdf file can be converted to PowerPoint which was included with my Word program by using a pdf to ppt conversion program similar to <https://smallpdf.com/pdf-to-ppt>. This allows boxes to be shifted or removed, changes to fonts, adding text, adding stamp pictures etc. An example of a modified Steiner page is shown below. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or suggestions.

The following image is an example for the 1893 Columbian Exposition stamps album page.

Columbian Exposition 1893 #230-245



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

<https://smallpdf.com/pdf-to-ppt>

Dave Parsons is a member and his collecting interests include U.S. used and BOB, Mint U.S. Commemoratives, Canada, Great Britain, Australia, New Zealand, Switzerland, South Africa and Liberia. He can be reached by email at da.parsons@gmail.com.