

Philosateleia Raffle Winner

By John Walter

I have been a subscriber to Kevin Blackston's monthly stamp blog for a few years. Each month he has a "giveaway" prize to a subscriber who responds to his most recent blog. I was the winner for September.

In the September blog he writes: "I recently acquired multiple mint sets of the Winston Churchill memorial stamps issued by the Bahamas in 1966. I don't need all of them, so one set will be the subject of this month's giveaway!"

He further describes the set as "Bahamas Scott 224-227 Winston Churchill, set of four, mint. Includes 1/2p, 2p, 10p, and 1-shilling values. Gum may show tiny disturbed spots or other minor blemishes." A nice set of stamps.



But the way Mr. Blackston sends the giveaway is unique. He prints his own local stamps which he uses on all his outgoing mail. On the right is the "cover" with my raffle prize.

I want to describe the interesting elements of this fascinating cover.

First is the clear sprayed-on postmark from the Rio Grande District in San Antonio with the "Thinking of You" cancel.¹

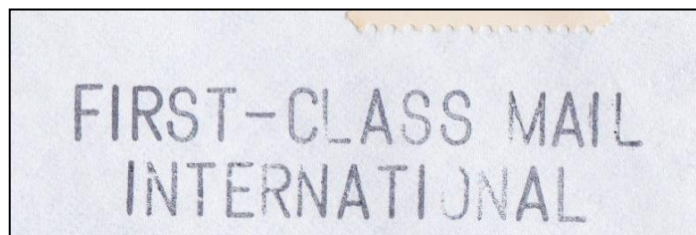
What is this at the top of the cancel?

An enlargement did not help, but removing my eyeglasses revealed the words "Mail a smile."

The postage stamp used is from the recently issued (June 13) Enjoy the Great Outdoors set issued at Incline Village, NV. The next stamp is Kevin's Philosateleia Local Postage with an American Flamingo and the value of 1s with a cork cancel. First Day for the local was June 22, 2020. Pretty nice so far.

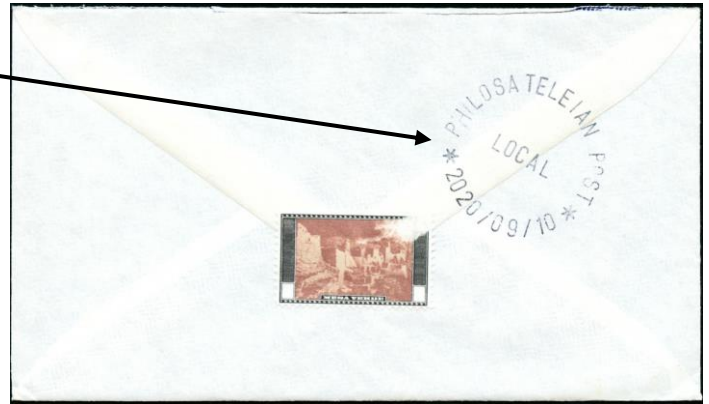
But what is that handstamp below the local postage stamp "FIRST-CLASS MAIL INTERNATIONAL" with the last word crossed through? It turns out that is Kevin's new handstamp for International mail debuted on January 6, 2020.

Before that date Kevin "was using a handstamp reading 'Via Air Mail / Par Avion,' but since there is not actually a specific airmail rate from the United States, the change in wording seemed appropriate."²



But wait, there is more to this cover. On the back is Kevin's new local Philosateleian Post postmark which debuted on June 20, 2020.² Along with that local postmark is a Cinderella stamp with the word "Mesa Verde." He describes the new postmark:

"The old format included the date in two-digit year/month/day format with the word words "PHILOSATELEIAN" and "POST" above and below the date, respectively. In contrast, the new format wraps "PHILOSATELEIAN POST" around the top of the postmark with the word "LOCAL" in the middle, and the full date in four-digit year/month/day format at the bottom."



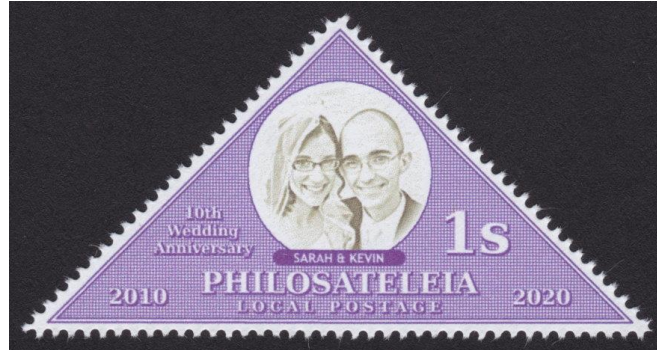
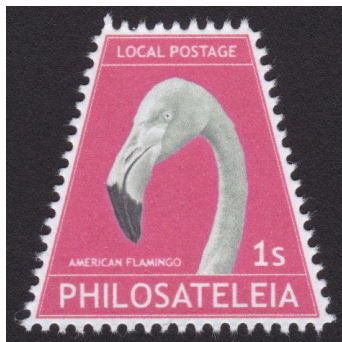
Kevin's website is a treasure drove of free album pages. Each quarter he publishes album pages for the new U.S. stamp issues. <https://www.philosateleia.com/album/>

References:

1. Jay Bigalke, editor Linn's Stamp News, Philatelic Forwards, January 13 and Sept, 15, 2020 issues.
2. <https://www.philosateleia.com/blog/>

John Walter is the editor of the Post Boy and stamp club webmaster. He collects U.S. used postal stationery, Japan, People's Republic of China, some U.S., and U.N. stamps and covers.

Addendum:



These are two of the latest Philosateleia Local Postage stamps produced by Kevin Blackston. The one on the right is for his 10th Wedding Anniversary. He sells the local postage stamps for a nominal fee. He also has a First Day of Issue cover mailed to himself when a new local postage stamp is issued.