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The *Postscript*
Tallahassee Stamp & Cover Club
1904 Nanticoke Cir
Tallahassee, FL 32303

President's Message *from Mike Francis*

On January 31, 2008 TSCC founding member Homer Black passed away. Homer retired as Professor Emeritus of the Florida State University School of Accounting. Homer was an avid stamp collector and relished going through stamp mixtures looking for stamps he needed to fill up empty spaces in his stamp albums. He also believed in the concept of stamp accumulation which many of our spouses consider a classifiable disease. Homer will be missed by all of us.

On February 6, 2008, my wife Christine passed away after a rough bout of cancer. Many of you were able to talk with her at the annual Christmas party and she really enjoyed seeing you. She also took pleasure in seeing the club grow and meet the interest of its collectors.

All of your thoughts, prayers, phone calls and offers of help are greatly appreciated by me and my family.

Remember that April is time for our second annual Club Auction. Members should get their donated items to me or send me an image by email to drmikef@comcast.net (jpg image is preferred.) The items will be viewable at www.maf1.com/tscc after March 3.

We are looking for articles for the *Postscript* so publication can continue uninterrupted. It would be interesting for some of you to write about your collecting habits and foibles. Email me your articles, drafts, or ideas at drmikef@comcast.net and I will be more than happy to help you.

Time again to sign up for presenters for the club meeting. We need four more presenters to complete the schedule for 2008. Give me a call, email me or catch me at the March meeting if you would like to present at the meetings. Presentations usually run from 10 minutes to one-half hour. Mike

THE *Postscript*

Tallahassee Stamp & Cover Club

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Alaska Charity Cinderellas *by Dr. Mike Francis*

According to *Linn's World Stamp Almanac*, "A Cinderella is a stamp-like label that is not a postage stamp. Cinderellas include seals and bogus issues, as well as revenue stamps, local post and other similar items."

Some of the more popular Cinderella stamps are Christmas seals which started in Denmark in 1904. Also, cinderellas issued at the various world stamp expos over the last hundred plus years are very popular. These, and other such items, are of interest to many philatelists because they all have the appearance of postage stamps, used in conjunction with valid postage or placed on the same letter or package, and some are considered valuable.

Although revenue stamps are classified as cinderellas, many collectors consider revenues to be just like stamps, used for some valid government purpose. Therefore many do not consider revenues as cinderellas. One of the few exceptions to this is the Belgium Railway Parcel Post Revenue stamps that were used on some railway postal deliveries. Other than the U.S. Scott specialized catalog, revenues are not listed in the Scott worldwide catalogs. Belgium Railway Parcel Post stamps are the exception and listed in Scott catalogs under Belgium.

The three main purposes for issuing cinderellas are fund-raising, advertizing, and as a propaganda mechanism. Fund-raising stamps are mainly known as charity stamps such as Christmas seals. The following is an example of a very unique, one time charity issue that has more mystery surrounding it than any other charity stamp issue. The stamps involved are known as the Arctic Air Mercy Flight issues.

These charity stamps were purportedly issued to help fund an emergency flight of diphtheria serum to Nome, Alaska. Due to severe weather, the serum was delivered from Nenana to Nome by dog sled in the 1920s.



There were ten color combinations that exist on white paper and ten that exist on yellow paper as shown above. The stamps have a silver or gold (as shown) border around the outside edge. These

Meeting Dates & Presentations, 2008

March 11 — Mickey Dwyer
April 8 — Club Auction
May 13 — Dana Bryan
June 10 — TBA
July 8 — Mike Francis

August 12 — TBA
September 9 — TBA
October 14 — Annual Bourse
November 11 — TBA, Elections
December 9 — Annual Christmas Party

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NOTICE:

- The club has re-elected the 2007 officers to serve in 2008: Mike Francis, President; Mickey Dwyer, Vice President; Larry Sharp, Treasurer; and Becky Reese, Secretary.
- Reminder: 2008 annual membership dues (\$5.00) are due.
- Recent new member: Dick Bradley. Dick collects accumulations of stamps for the fun and adventure of finding, sorting and cataloging many different countries.
- In Memoriam: Professor Homer Black. Homer was born September 20, 1923 and passed away on Jan. 31, 2008.
- A special thank you to former member Ralph Hager for donating all his duplicate stamps to the club.

Alaska Charity Cinderellas *(cont.)*

stamps are not that rare and a set of 10 usually costs around \$75-\$80US.

The mystery is that no one knows when these stamps were actually printed, who printed them, and how they were placed on sale. To beat all, no one knows how much money was collected for "charity" and where the money was spent, if at all.

An article printed in the 3rd Quarter 2005 Alaskan Philatelist (page 47, author unknown) sums up the Arctic Air Mercy Flight stamps as a great mystery with no true facts to support any claims made about the stamps. The article takes careful aim at the theory that the stamps were needed to raise funds to fly the diphtheria serum from Nenana to Nome because it had only been a week from the time word about the Nome epidemic reached civilization to the time the serum was dispatched on the first leg of the dog sled operation.

The author also debunks the theory of using flight since planes didn't really fly in the Alaskan winter. Also, at the time of the epidemic in Nome, there were only two planes in the territory, both open cockpit, and they were both sitting in hangers, disassembled. From a practical view, no planes could have been used to fly a mercy mission to Nome.

It is possible that these stamps were produced for a later mercy flight in the Alaskan Territory. The Alaskan Philatelist

author even speculates that the stamps could have been issued simply to make money and were not associated with any type of organized flight of mercy. Today, of course, we call this "fraud."

The bottom line is that the unknown author and others have no real idea who produced these stamps and for what effort. The interesting part of this mystery is that the stamps are well designed and are of a quality print technique. But, no printer in the world has admitted to running the stamps from their presses.

While using internet search engines to find additional information about the Arctic Air Mercy Flight stamps, very little was uncovered except for the fact that collectors do bid on these stamps for their collections and pay an average of \$5-\$6 each. There doesn't appear to be a used copy available anywhere. Of course, a used copy would have to appear on an envelope or parcel and be canceled by the U.S. or Territory Post Office. This fact lends credence to the theory that the Cinderella stamps were issued for profit motives and not for charity.

It is interesting to note that the Anchorage Philatelic Society, as late as December, 2007, is seeking information, as noted on their website, from anyone who might know something about the Arctic Air Mercy Flight Cinderellas. They are in the dark about these stamps as much as the rest of the world.

A Little Texas Post Office *by Dr. Mike Francis*

In 2005 my wife Chris and I were touring around Texas when we came upon a U.S. Post Office between Stonewall and Johnson City in the town of Hye, Texas. Hye Texas was named after Hiram ("Hye") Brown. Hye built the town's first post office in 1886. The current post office is across the street from the 1886 building. The U.S. Post Office is inside the Deike General Store. We met the Postmaster, Ms. Dorothy M. Beyer, had some coffee and a very interesting conversation. Dorothy gave us a tour of the very small office with its 60 or so P.O. boxes and pointed out that the Post Office had no electronic scales and that she was just learning how to use their first computer which she had installed less than 9 months before we arrived.

The Deike General Store was named after Mrs. Lina Deike who owned the store and became Postmaster in 1925. Her son Levi, one of nine boys who made up the famous Texas All-Brothers Baseball team, took over as Postmaster in 1934 and held that position until his death in 1996. Lyndon Johnson sometimes played with the team until the youngest Deike was old enough to play full time. Levi still is the second longest serving Postmaster of record in the history of the United States Post Office with 64 years. The longest was the Postmaster from Irondale, Ohio with 65 years.

What makes this post office unique is that, at the age of 4, Lyndon B. Johnson, mailed his first letter and in 1965 then President Johnson pulled one of those famous tricks by giving the Hye Post Office one-half day notice that he was going to give a speech from the front porch of the general store. Postmaster Dorothy

Identity Uncovered? *by Dr. Mike Francis*



Although there is no country name on this stamp, to the collector it looks like a revenue stamp with a European design. The word PORT on the stamp is a major clue. During the 19th and 20th centuries, many European countries and their colonies used the word PORT on their revenue issues mostly for the purpose of collecting taxes on various items or causes.

When checking in Linn's Identifier, under the word PORT, there is no match for the single word PORT therefore look under TE BETALEN PORT. Under these words you will find Netherlands, Netherlands Antilles,

Netherlands Indies or Surinam. In Dutch, TE BETALEN PORT means "TO PAY PORT" or to pay a tax.

Checking the Scott Catalogs for the European countries, you find out the stamp is a postage due stamp of the Netherlands, issued between 1947 and 1958. It is Scott J99 and is part of the last series of Postage Due stamps issued by the Netherlands. The mint value is \$.75 and used is \$.20.

To be sure the stamp is not one of Netherlands possessions, the Antilles postage dues are all light green in this series, the Indies 40cent is yellow green, and the issue from Surinam, formally Dutch Guiana, did not contain the 40cent variety.

Identify This Stamp



See if you can identify this stamp. Its identity will be uncovered in the next issue.

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A Little Texas Post Office *(cont.)*

Beyer, much younger at the time, told us about the scramble at the Deike General Store and Post Office to get security ready and that "there was a great fuss over a special announcement the President was about to make." In 1965, President Lyndon B. Johnson, from the steps of the Deike General Store and U.S. Post Office appointed Lawrence F. O'Brien Postmaster General of the United States.



Dorothy Beyer, Postmaster, Hye TX US Post Office



LBJ—Lawrence O'Brien photo with P.O. boxes in 2005



Hye Post Office, June 2005. All photos taken by Mike Francis

June, 2005, scales used to weigh parcels for the U.S. mail.



Dr. Hemanth Vasanthaiah is heading to India in May to visit family and friends and to let them see their new baby. If you have any extra stamps you don't need, he would like to take them back to his village to help get people interested in collecting and learning about the rest of the world.