



Postmark Atlanta
Atlanta Stamp Collector's Club



Affiliate club #0357-031583
January 2021 Newsletter

As we emailed earlier, physical meetings are not being held until the public health danger is past. I've included many ways to connect with other stamp collectors online in this newsletter.

We are holding "virtual" Atlanta Stamp Collectors Club meeting the first and third Tuesday hosted by member Lloyd Nutter. Lloyd sends out a Zoom invitation a couple days before the meeting. If you do not get an invitation for the meetings, please contact Lloyd to make sure he adds you to his list. Emailing him: trains56@charter.net. Also, if you need to test how Zoom works, Lloyd will be glad to give you a test.

In December our meetings included discussions on the White Rajahs of Sarawak. We also discussed current post office mail delivery situation and whether to record our presentations to share with members who are not able to log in live.

Remember to renew your club membership for 2021. A member application is included with this newsletter.

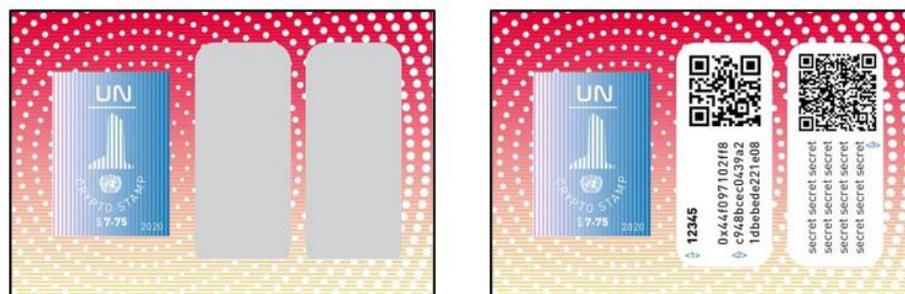
UPCOMING EVENTS

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| January 5, 2021 | 7:00 pm Atlanta Stamp Collectors meeting on Zoom. We will do a member show and tell. |
| January 19, 2021 | 7:00 pm Atlanta Stamp Collectors meeting on Zoom. The presentation will be by Mel Coe. |
| February 2, 2021 | 7:00 pm Atlanta Stamp Collectors meeting on Zoom. |
| February 16, 2021 | 7:00 pm Atlanta Stamp Collectors meeting on Zoom. |

Crypto Stamps – Collecting in a Brave New World

By Steve Swain

Tokens. Digital wallets. Ethereum blockchain. Crypto stamps. George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*? Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*? Maybe a bit of both. It is 21st century philatelic terminology and stamp collecting most recently promoted by the United Nations Postal Administration.



The above images are a crypto stamp (miniature sheet) issued November 24, 2020 by the UN. The left image shows the \$7.75 blue stamp that can be detached and used for postage. Two “scratch fields” are to the right of the stamp. Behind these scratch fields – the right-side image - are codes that provide access to the stamp’s counterpart, or twin, stored in a digital wallet within the Ethereum blockchain. A crypto wallet is a small program that enables your computer’s browser to securely communicate with the Ethereum blockchain on your behalf.

Without getting lost in the weeds about the Ethereum blockchain, it is essentially a virtual database, i.e., a computer network data management and storage method. A blockchain is a continuously growing list of records, called blocks, which are linked and secured using cryptography. Thus, “crypto” stamps.

Simply stated, a crypto stamp can be used not only as an ordinary postage stamp for sending items in the mail, but it functions simultaneously as a virtual collectible image if you choose to do so. The creation of the digital stamp image and your ownership, collecting, exchanging and trading of the digital stamps is recorded and managed virtually.

After purchasing a crypto stamp and activating its digital twin (a token), physical stamp albums are not needed to collect the stamps. The stamp images are kept in your digital wallet, i.e., your virtual stamp album. Posting images of stamps on eBay or other websites to be traded or sold is not needed. Your stamp images are maintained and managed virtually for anyone to see with your permission.



The United Nations was not the first to issue crypto stamps. On June 11, 2019, the Austrian Post released the world's first blockchain crypto stamps with a unicorn as the primary image on a set of five with different colors, seen above.

That issue was followed on June 25, 2020 with a set of four Austrian crypto stamps, shown below. Each stamp shows the head of an animal: a honey badger on a red background, llama on a green background, panda on a brown background, and dog on a blue background.



The 2020 Austrian crypto stamps are made available in colorful foldouts, as seen below.



On September 9, 2020, Croatia issued its crypto stamps in six sheetlets, one seen below on the left. The right-side image is one of the six crypto stamps after being removed from the sheetlet.



Even though the virtual platform for crypto stamp collecting is promoted as the most advantageous method, your collection could still embrace the “classic” collecting strategy of organizing the various unused crypto stamp sheetlets in an album, removing the stamps from the sheetlets to include in a mint stamp collection, or collecting the crypto stamps used on mailings.

A review of the stamps planned to be issued in the next several years by the US Postal Service does not include any crypto stamps. For now, your crypto stamp collecting will focus on foreign issues. Tokens. Digital wallets. Ethereum blockchain. Crypto stamps. Happy Collecting in a Brave New World!

If you order from Amazon (and who doesn’t nowadays). The AmazonSmile program donates to charities if you order through smile.amazon.com or turn on AmazonSmile in the shopping app. I support American Topical Association Inc. and was recently notified that so far they have donated \$1,057.38 to ATA with various members who have added them as their supporting charity.

Allen Johnson with the Button Gwinnett Stamp Club has created a Facebook Group for their club. Contact him to get invited to the group to see their process of buying and selling stamps. Ajrj1957@yahoo.com is his email.

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First Saturday of every month there is in person Stamp Trading at home of Don Laberteaux, 5008 Brandlwood Ct., Lilburn, GA from 9 – 11 a.m. Coffee, talking and stamps. Call Don at 770-381-7114 for details.

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Stamps on YouTube.

Recently APS asked one of their presenters Casey Jo White to share her favorite YouTube videos on stamp collecting. She created a list focusing on Art and Philately and Art. Check it out at <https://aps.buzz/CJYoutubeTO>

The 6 ¼ Cent “Rate of Convenience” By Steve Swain

Per the Act of Congress passed April 9, 1816, a single-sheet letter traveling less than 30 miles would require 6 cents postage. However, mailings exist that were posted 1816 - 1845 showing a manuscript postage rate of 6 ¼ cents, as with the example below mailed from Morganton, North Carolina. The mailings were during the “stampless” period, so the postmaster wrote on the cover the 6 ¼ cents rate to be paid by the recipient.



What was the reason for this unofficial postage amount? It was a “rate of convenience.” Foreign coinage was legal tender in the US, per an act of 1793. Economic hardship, such as the Panic of 1837, increased the use of foreign coins since US currency could be in short supply. The Spanish silver dollar was used in some parts of the US and the Republic of Texas through the mid-19th century and was equal to one US dollar. One real, also known as a ‘bit’, was 1/8th of a Spanish silver dollar, or 12 ½ cents US. Half of this denomination, the ‘medio real’, ‘½ bit’, or ‘picayune’, was valued at 6 ¼ cents. In British currency, 3 pence was also the equivalent of 6 ¼ US cents. The below left image is the Spanish medio real coin. The middle and right images are the front and obverse of the British 3 pence coin.



Sending mail at the 6 ¼ cents price was considered a “rate of convenience” because it matched a denomination of coins that customers would probably have readily available rather than 6 US cents.

Interestingly, in addition to mail marked 6 ¼ cents there are numerous bank notes issued for 6 ¼ cents from Connecticut, Washington D.C., Florida, Georgia, and Mississippi. Below is such a note issued by the Bank of Augusta, Georgia.



Were these notes issued for the purpose of paying the 6 ¼ cents postage rate? Research revealed that only Tallahassee, Florida notes were specifically associated with the 6 ¼ cents postage rate. Other notes at the 6 ¼ rate were designated to be used to pay for various “goods.” An 1837 note from the Baltimore City Hotel promised to pay the bearer in “mint juleps” (number of drinks not specified), while an 1814 Philadelphia note for groceries specifies one chest of tea and one hogshead.

The National Postal Museum continues to engage with the public during the COVID closure online at their YouTube channel <https://www.youtube.com/user/SmithsonianNPM>. The museum is interested in what needs to be collected to document life under COVID much like they have items from the 1918 Flu Pandemic era. If you have ideas or items contact the Chief Curator, Daniel Piazza at piazza@si.edu.

Arago change

If you have used the National Postal Museum site Arago to research stamps you will want to know that it has been replaced by “Search the Collection” at <http://postalmuseum.si.edu/search-the-collection>. This was necessary because the 14 year-old software was no longer supported.

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To encourage members and collectors to learn more about the APS, American Philatelic Society has lifted the members-only restrictions on accessing *The American Philatelist* online. Please feel free to share with your fellow collectors and encourage them to connect and learn more about all the great benefits. [Please access The American Philatelist here](#). If you are getting a print version of this newsletter, the full web address is: www.stamps.org/the-american-philatelist

Also there will be online Stamp Chat events using Zoom that you can access information on at this link: <https://stamps.org/news/c/news/cat/local/post/aps-to-host-live-stamp-chats-on-zoom-beginning-monday-march-23>

There are replays of these chats available on YouTube. The variety of subjects now available is amazing. <https://www.youtube.com/user/AmericasStampClub> is the link to check out all the stored Chats.

The Virtual Stamp Show 2020 included almost as many pages of exhibit as the 2019 live show. The improvement was the addition of a dynamic magnifier if you view full screen enabling closer inspection (especially of the pages at the top or bottom of the frames). To view these exhibits you can visit <https://aps.buzz/Exhibits>

You will be able to see Colin Clark's exhibit at #19 and Mel Coe's exhibits at #42 and #87

If you are interested in writing for our newsletter or presenting to our club at one of our monthly meetings, please contact me at the email below or Scott Holmberg at sdholmberg1@gmail.com with your ideas.

LeA Coe, Secretary

leacoe@bellsouth.net

Atlanta Stamp Collector's Club Membership

Membership includes our monthly newsletter with upcoming stamp collecting events in the area.

Annual Dues of \$12.00 entitles you to our monthly newsletter and participation in all club events. You can pay your \$12 dues to our Treasurer, Barbara Asher at the next meeting or mail to her at: Barbara Asher, 1633 Adelia Pl, Atlanta, GA 30329.

Name: _____

Mailing Address for Newsletter:

Email: _____ Phone _____

Are you a member of American Philatelic Society? _____

Are you a member of American Topical Association? _____

Stamp Collecting Interest _____

We want to have a list of members with their interests so that those who bring material to the auction know what other members are interested in.

If you would like the newsletter in email form rather than snail mail, let me know.

The newsletter is usually a PDF file and easily emailed.

LeA Coe, Secretary

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