

# ***BULLETIN*** of *The Empire State*

*Postal History Society*

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## **UPCOMING EVENTS:\***

### **NEW YORK- Buffalo Area March 4-5, 2017**

BUFFPEX 2017, VFW Leonard Post, 2450 Walden Ave. Cheektowaga.  
Contact George Gates, 716-633-8358.

### **NEW YORK April 13-15, 2017**

ASDA Stamp show, The Hilton, 1335 Ave. of the America,  
New York City. Contact Dana Guyer, 800-369-8207  
Bourse only

### **MASSACHUSETTS- Boxborough May 5-7, 2017**

NE Federation of Stamp Clubs, Holiday Inn Boxborough Woods  
242 Adams Place, Boxborough, Mass.,

\* From American Philatelist

## **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

Good hunting in the New Year.

*David Przepiora*

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**BULLETIN DEADLINE**

**DEADLINE** – The deadline for the March issue of the *BULLETIN* is **March 1**.

Larry Laliberte

### **Secretary's Membership Report**

#### **New Members:**

Reid Kilon, 1468 No. Alabama St., Indianapolis, IN, 46202-2526. Collects Oneida Co. especially Utica and New Hartford.

Michael Gutman, 53 Carter Dr., Framingham, MA 01701

#### **Deceased Member;**

May 20, 2016 – Dr. Joseph Rowbottom III



### **OUR NEW WEB SITE**

2016-10-14...The Empire State Postal History Society today launched its new and improved website. The site has a clean look and feel, with a New York State theme, clearly shown in the unique header scenes. It is easily navigable via the top menu and drop downs, with a scrolling bar

on the homepage displaying New York State postal history. There are sections for the Society's publications currently available in print for purchase, past BULLETIN newsletters, and the EXCELSIOR!. Additionally, there are links to our postal history affiliate sites, the history, rules and scoring of the Sweeting Award, past and current Auctions, along with a number of other features.

Webmaster and Board member Dr. Charles J. DiComo was excited to take on this project with approval by the Board two months ago. With the assistance of a coder and designer, the new site was launched. "We now have the security of a new host and content management system that is easy to administer, and I am excited about adding much more content over the next weeks and months", Charles relayed. "Please feel free to use the "Contact Us" form on the web site ([www.esphs.us](http://www.esphs.us)) to share your ideas and thoughts and features you would like to see!"

## Collecting New York State Pointed Fingers By George McGowan

As many of you know, before around 1860 unclaimed letters were forwarded to the Post Office Department in Washington for disposition. (regulations of 1855 sec 121-124, pp 21-22) There, if the writer could be determined the letter would then be returned with a fee charged.

The concept of the “return address” came about gradually when the charging of postage according to the number of pieces of paper ended. The use of envelopes then gradually came into use until the mid 1850’s when almost all mail was enclosed in envelopes. Businesses began printing advertisements on these envelopes which naturally included addresses of the businesses.

The concept of the return address developed and led to a regulation from the Post Office Department basically stating that the writer needed to specify that the letter, if unclaimed, should be returned and would be charged a fee.

Early “return to writer” markings were manuscript or simple straight line or circular hand stamps. According to Leonard Piskiewicz in his book Chicago Postal Markings and Postal History, pointing hands appeared in the late 1860’s. The collecting of pointed hands has become a popular auxiliary marking to postal historians and collectors worldwide.



Figure 1 (left): The postmaster of White Creek, NY (Wash. Co.) in 1891 probably didn't have much call for a commercially made hand stamp so he or she improvised a pointed finger.

Figure 2 (Right): I particularly like the stamps that contain the name of the post office, in this case, Schenectady, NY.



Figure 3 (Left): This example is from a station, Richmond Hill, Jamaica, NY.

Excerpts herein taken from Leonard Piskiewicz's Chicago Postal Markings and Postal History.