

BULLETIN of The Empire State Postal History Society

Volume 42, Number 3

December 2009

2010 MEMBERSHIP MEETING SCHEDULE:

January 30 Regional Meeting, 2pm, Clarion Hotel, 3 Watervliet Ave., Albany, NY in conjunction with Cover Mania 12.

March 6 Regional Meeting, 2pm, VFW Leonard Post, 2450 Walden Ave., Cheektowaga, NY in conjunction with BUFPEX.

May 15 Annual Meeting, 1pm. ESL Sports Centre, Monroe Community College, Rochester in conjunction with ROPEX.

May 29 Regional Meeting (tentative), 2pm, Crown Plaza Meadowlands Hotel, Secaucus, NJ in conjunction with NOJEX.

Sep-Nov Fall Regional Meeting (tentative) in conjunction with a Syracuse-area bourse.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It's been a busy fall and early winter. I've been in "over my head" since the end of summer and I'm late once again with my copy for the *Bulletin*. Don't blame the editor or anyone else other than myself because you are reading this in January 2010 instead of December 2009.

Before I review the events of the past four months I want to congratulate our *Excelsior!* editor, David E. Williams, for reaching his goal of preparing *Excelsior!*, a semi-annual journal, for publication on a quarterly basis beginning with the March 2007 issue in June 2008, to get it back on track with the September 2009 issue published in the month of its date.

Wait a minute! Was the September 2009 *Excelsior!* really mailed to members this past September? NO. It wasn't until mid-November that David had enough copy to put together a decent-size issue (minimum 30 pages). You should have the September 2009 issue by now, but you received it in late December or early January.

Don't blame David Williams for your receipt of the September 2009 *Excelsior!* three months late. The blame here lies with the great majority of Society members who have yet to contribute an article to our journal. So I'm not the only one late with copy for our periodicals. Please don't follow my example; do it now!

(continued on Page 3)

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Members listed in a continuation of this report on page 13
 have been dropped for non-payment of dues

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE (continued)

Mailed with this *Bulletin* you will find a sheet entitled *Annual Timetable for Publishing ESPHS Periodicals*. Keep it handy and refer to it often. It may be wishful thinking to some extent, but it does provide the schedule we need to keep if we want our periodicals received by the members in the month in which they are dated. For the health of the Society, this has to be a vital and desirable goal!

The next issue of *Excelsior!* will be dated March 2010. Write an article and send it to the editor by February 1. If you can't get it done by then, send it as soon as you can and David will put it in the September issue if March is filled.

Many hands made light work for ESPHS at StampExpo400 in Albany September 25-27. Taking turns at our booth were myself, Brian Levy, Bob Bramwell, George Fekete, Ada Prill, David Przepiora and Frank Braithwaite. Our two Executive Board members residing in Albany, Carl Blazejewski and Maris Tirums, made arrangements for an excellent Friday evening meal with private room at a local restaurant attended by ten members and two guests.

In addition to those listed above, members George DeKornfeld, Steve Resnick, Nancy Foutz, Steve Matte, Doug Penwell, Tom Post, Caroline Scannell, Jack Flannery, Elliott Bristol, Glenn Estus, Modest Oprysko, Bill Hart, Bill Bauer, John Nunes, George McGowan, Bob Harris, Elwyn Doubleday, Walter Orton, Art Groten, Don Tocher and John Wright either signed in at the booth or attended the show as a dealer or exhibitor (apologies to anyone missed).

In addition to holding its fall membership meeting on the opening day, ESPHS sponsored David Przepiora's Power-Point presentation titled *Buffalo Postal History* preceding the fall meeting, and, on the second day, sponsored a talk by Diane DeBlois and member Robert Dalton Harris entitled *Empire State Inside and Out: New York Postal History in Context*.

Both events received good attendance and offered new and valuable insights into NY postal history. See Bob Bramwell's page 7 article in this *Bulletin* regarding the DeBlois/Harris talk. Many thanks go to David, Diane and Bob for their informative contributions to the Society's participation in StampExpo400.

At the conclusion of the fall membership meeting Bob Bramwell, our new *Bulletin* editor, and Glenn Estus, our immediate past *Bulletin* editor, each entered the ESPHS annual Kenneth R. deLisle 4-Page Exhibit Competition. These were the only entries, and the fact they were both from present or recent *Bulletin* editors was pure coincidence. Both exhibits were well thought out and well presented. Deciding which one to vote for was not an easy decision; the balloting ended in a tie with no "OT" and no Award. Both entrants are encouraged to enter their exhibits in the 2010 competition. Before leaving StampExpo400 I would be remiss not to credit the work of Society Board Member John Nunes, as President of the sponsoring organization (FNYPs) and dealer bourse manager of the Show, and Society member Al Starkweather, public relations and graphics manager, toward the Show's success. Thank you, John and Al.

At the end of October I was able to attend the 4th Annual Blount Postal History Symposium jointly sponsored by the APS/APRL and National Postal Museum and held this year at the American Philatelic Center in Bellefonte, PA October 30 - November 1.

The theme for the 2009 Symposium was *Post Office Reform*. Society members were involved with two of the 12 papers presented at the Symposium; Diane DeBlois and Bob Harris delivered a paper entitled *The Sunday Mail Controversy Paves the Way for Postal Reform* and David Straight followed with "*The Undersigned, Citizens of the United States, respectfully represent that...*" *Putting a Human Face on Post Office Reform*. DeBlois/Harris and Straight have been involved with the Postal History Symposiums from their beginning in 2006, Straight as co-chair representing the APS and DeBlois/Harris as presenters. Their papers, as well as all others given at the 2009 Symposium, can be downloaded at postalmuseum.si.edu/symposium2009/index.html.

It was a stimulating weekend, and would have been so even without the U.S. Philatelic Classics Society show *U.S. Classics*, complete with a 12-dealer bourse and 34 exhibits of classic U.S. stamps and covers, held at the same time and in the same building as the Symposium. Attendance was strong at the Symposium, probably because of the added attraction of the Classics Show.

Please write the dates of our 2010 meeting schedule from Page 1 (some tentative) on your calendar right away and make plans to attend one or more. I hope to see you there! Happy collecting in 2010!

Al Parsons (alatholleyrd@aol.com)

INVITATION RECEIVED FOR MULTI-STATE EXHIBITING COMPETITION TO BE HELD AT NOJEX MAY 28 – 30, 2010

The official announcement and invitation to compete in the next Sweeting Award multi-state postal history exhibiting competition has been received from Bob Rose, President of the New Jersey Postal History Society and NOJEX Chair.

The competition will be held at NOJEX 2010 on May 28 – 30, 2010 at the Crown Plaza Meadowlands Hotel in Secaucus, NJ. NOJEX is an annual WSP show. The state postal history societies in New England, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Ohio are invited to compete for the Sweeting Award, named in memory of Charles H. Sweeting, a founder and first President of the Empire State Postal History Society.

According to the invitation received from Rose, a dinner will be scheduled for all Society exhibitors and visitors on the first day of the show, Friday, May 28; one or more programs touching on collecting state postal history will be held at the show, and a table for visiting societies will be available to sign up new members and to sell literature.

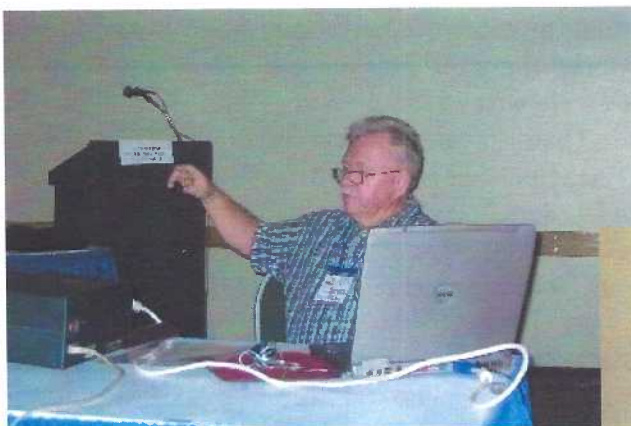
An effort will be made to schedule an **ESPHS regional meeting** at NOJEX 2010. Secaucus is easy to reach from Manhattan and NOJEX draws many of its visitors from New York City and Long Island. **The time and date for this meeting, if it can be arranged, will be announced in the March Bulletin.**

ESPHS members: if you already have a postal history exhibit, please be sure to enter it at NOJEX 2010. Even if it's not NY postal history it can still earn points for the ESPHS team towards the Sweeting Award. If you don't have a postal history exhibit at this moment, NOW is the time to get your feet wet. Take the plunge: ESPHS needs you on the team!

To learn more about NOJEX, the Sweeting Award competition, and to download an exhibiting prospectus and entry form, please go to njpostalhistory.org.

ESPHS ACTIVITIES AT STAMPEXPO400 IN PICTURES

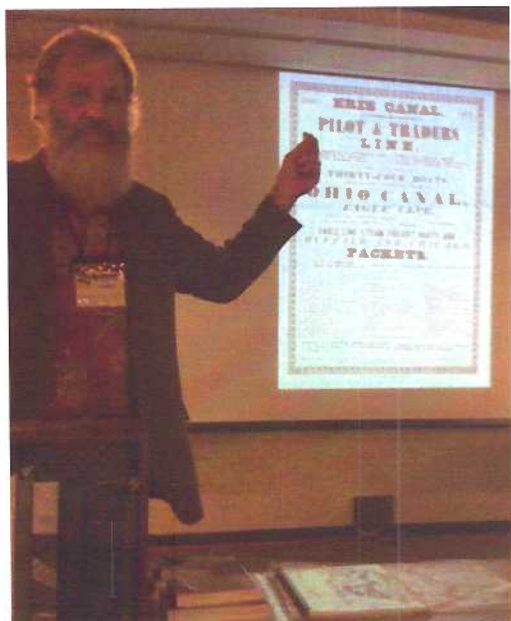
Photos courtesy of Brian Levy



David Przepiora presenting his *Buffalo Postal History* PowerPoint on Friday before the Fall Membership Meeting.



Al Parsons presents George DeKornfeld's *Best NYS Postal History* award garnered at ROPEX 2009.



Robert Dalton Harris makes good use of his research material. (Picture taken in low light.)



ESPHS members and guests assembled for dinner and conversation after the opening day Membership Meeting.

WILLIAM H. BAUER (1934 – 2009)

William H. (Bill) Bauer, a long-time member of the Empire State Postal History Society and a giant in the philatelic world for over 30 years, died unexpectedly on December 2nd at his home in Unadilla, NY. He was 75.

Bill spent most of his childhood in Unadilla and graduated from Unadilla Central School in 1952. After receiving his Bachelor's degree from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in 1956, Bill followed up with a Masters degree in Geological Engineering from the Colorado School of Mines in 1959 and worked 32 years as a geologist with Standard Oil of Indiana (name changed to Amoco in 1985, merged with British Petroleum in 1999) before retiring.

Bill started collecting stamps as a young boy and remained active in the hobby throughout his entire life. Wherever his work for Amoco took him, he became active in the local stamp club. By 1973 he was on the APS Board and remained there until 1985, serving two terms as President, 1981-1985. He was a founder of the APRL as well as a trustee from 1981 to 1987 and again from 1999 to 2005.

His interest in postal history centered on Otsego County in New York and Douglas County in Colorado. Although he started collecting and exhibiting Otsego County Postal History long before he retired and returned to Unadilla, his primary focus became Colorado Postal History, with his exhibit *Colorado 1858-1876 – Pre-Territorial and Territorial Periods* qualifying for the Champion of Champions competition at StampShow 1997.

His ten-frame *Otsego County, New York* exhibit took many Golds in national-level shows, including StampExpo400 in September, where he also took the ESPHS Award for the best NY Postal History Exhibit. Except for the first two Sweeting Award competitions, when he was on the jury, he agreed to enter his Otsego County exhibit to support the Society's exhibiting team.

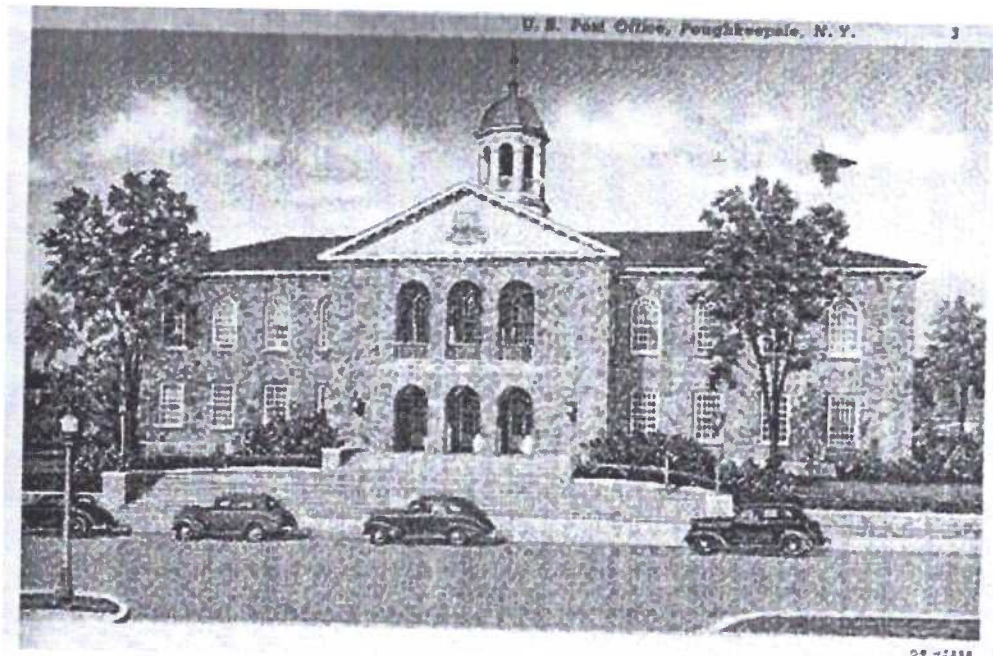
He was an accredited National and International Judge, chaired the committee responsible for the third edition of the *APS Manual of Philatelic Judging*, and taught an Exhibiting and Judging Course at the APS Summer Seminar in 1990, 1992, 1994, 1996 and 1999. More than once he answered the call to judge a local show in upstate NY.

Bill was a prolific author for philatelic publications, president of the APS Writers Unit 1978-1981 and editor of the *Colorado Postal Historian* 1985-2009. With two other Colorado Postal History Society members, he published *Colorado Post Offices, 1859-1989* and was working on another reference work, *The Colorado Postal Encyclopedia*, at the time of his death.

In 1987 he received the APS Luff Award for Outstanding Service to the APS and in 1995 the Distinguished Philatelist Award from the U.S. Philatelic Classics Society. His life in philately was truly remarkable. He will be sorely missed, both in the philatelic as well as the Unadilla community.

Memorials may be directed to: APS, 100 Match Factory Place, Bellefonte, PA 16823-1367; Rocky Mountain Philatelic Library, 2038 South Pontiac Way, Denver, CO 80224; or Unadilla Historical Association, P.O. Box 808, Unadilla, NY 13849.

Mr. Musso spoke on the close relationship of FDR to the five WPA post offices built in Dutchess County, FDR's "home county." In fact, FDR was intimately involved in the site choice, design and construction "down to the minutest detail." As this is an interesting activity for a sitting President, and directly concerns the Poughkeepsie main post office, we propose to provide the reader with significant detail from the presentation and his book.



From *FDR and the Post Office* by Anthony Musso (pg 71)

The five WPA post offices in which FDR was actively involved were, south-to-north: Beacon, Wappingers Falls, Poughkeepsie, Hyde Park (FDR's home town) and Rhinebeck. All emphasized the Dutch Heritage of the Valley (and the Roosevelt's); they were all faced with stone and several were representations of important Dutch homes in the area. All save Wappingers Falls—which succumbed to latter 20th century growth—remain as operating post offices.

The Poughkeepsie post office, which opened on December 5, 1938, was "clearly destined to be Roosevelt's showplace." It was the largest of the five (32,900 sq-ft.) and was crowned by an ornate bell cupola, which contained a "48-in. tall, 3500-lb. bell" cast by Meneely and Company of Watervliet, NY.

The post offices all contained murals illustrating local landmarks, people and historic events. The murals were the result of a contest held by the Federal Arts Project (FAP) of the WPA. Three artists—Charles Rosen, Georgiana Klitgaard and Gerald Foster—won commissions to paint the five murals that grace the two floors of the Poughkeepsie post office. In the color photo reproduced on the following page, one can see a portion of the incredible WPA/FAP mural located on the wall above the Postmaster's office: "*The 1939 Poughkeepsie Waterfront.*" by Charles Rosen.



Interior of the Poughkeepsie Main Post Office with Quadricentennial participants (l to r) Anthony Musso, Nancy Cozean, George Lukacs, Robert Scelzo, Drew Nicholson

In the mural, the Mid-Hudson Bridge is seen at right, but the vast majority of the waterfront illustrated no longer exists, having fallen to post-WWII “progress.”

That FDR was intimately involved in all aspects of the five post offices is eminently clear from a memo he wrote suggesting corrections to the content of one mural: “The whaling ship on the left side is pretty terrible. The perspective of the two steamboats makes them appear too long. The wind in the sails of the four sailboats is coming from four different points of the compass.” (FDR was extremely knowledgeable of the sea and sailing!)

The audience was thoroughly entertained by the speakers, and they were amazed by the postal documents and postal history displayed in a half-dozen flat, table-height cabinets provided by Postmaster Scelzo for the occasion. Lukacs and Nicholson spent a considerable amount of time prior to and after the presentations discussing the significance of many of the items displayed; in particular a large photo array picturing construction of the Poughkeepsie post office, as well as advertising covers illustrating the huge number and variety of commercial and industrial businesses existing in the City during the 19th century. There is no doubt that the time and energy to set up the exhibition was well spent!

ESPHS MEMBERS ACTIVE IN EXHIBITING AT FALL 2009 UPSTATE NEW YORK SHOWS

Five ESPHS members entered a total of seven exhibits, six of them postal history, in the competition at StampExpo 400 held in the Empire State Plaza Concourse, Albany, September 25-27, 2009. The show was sponsored by the Federation of NY Philatelic Societies in conjunction with the New York State Hudson-Fulton-Champlain Quadri-centennial celebration.

ESPHS provided its suitably-engraved small Lismore Waterford Clock for the best exhibit of New York postal history and this was won by Bill Bauer with his 10-frame display entitled *Otsego County, New York*. This exhibit was the only one of the Society-member exhibits to take Gold. Bauer also received a magnifier from the sponsoring Federation for the "Best New York State Themed Exhibit."

George DeKornfeld and Alan Parsons both received Vermeil, the former for *The First 125 Years of Post Marks & Postal Markings of Hudson, New York* (five frames) and the latter for *Corning, NY Postal History Including DPOs Now Served by the Corning Post Office* (also five frames).

Silver medals were awarded to four exhibits by Society members: Glenn Estus for six frames of *Olympic Machine Cancels 1912-2004*; Walter Orton for each of two exhibits: (1) three frames entitled *Pioneer Telegraph Companies of the North East, Displaying Covers and/or Telegrams*, (2) 10 frames of *Proprietary "Battleship" Revenue Stamps of 1898 from Alpha to Omega*, and to Alan Parsons for a single frame of *19th Century Railroad Postal Markings Related to Steuben, Schuyler, Chemung and Tioga Counties, NY*.

Orton's exhibit of "Battleship Revenues" also received the American Revenue Association medal for the "Best Multi-frame Revenue Exhibit Earning a National Silver or Higher."

Two Society members had non-competitive exhibits on display: Robert Dalton Harris with *Choosing "Winged Globes" to Fly U.S. Mail Overseas During the Great Depression* (three frames) and Arthur Groton, two exhibits, *Promotion of U.S. Airmail by Government and Industry* (seven frames) and *Are We There Yet? Adirondack Hotels: The Classic Period to WWI* (10 frames).

At STEPEX 09, sponsored by the Elmira Stamp Club at the Big Flats American Legion Post October 16-17, Society member Ann Trigg took Gold for each of two NY postal history exhibits, *Wales in Erie County, NY* (one frame) and *Clarence Postal History* (two frames). The Clarence exhibit received the ESPHS Award as well.

Also at STEPEX 09 Glenn Estus and Alan Parsons received Gold for the same exhibits they entered at StampExpo400, and Walter Orton took Gold for his *Pioneer Telegraph Companies* shown at Albany three weeks earlier.

Parsons switched lanes and entered his five-frame exhibit of the 1929 Sullivan Commemorative, mostly first day covers, in SYRAPEX 09 at the Holiday Inn Carrier Circle, Syracuse, November 7-8. This time he got lucky and took Best-in-Show. There were 13 other exhibits in the show, but none by ESPHS members.



Our Society was founded in 1967 to advance knowledge of the postal history of New York on a regional and national level. It belongs to the Federation of New York Philatelic Societies and this entitles it to a page in the Federation's bi-monthly magazine, *Stamp Insider*. The following article was written by Society member Gerald F. Wiley for the ESPHS page in the November/December 2009 *Stamp Insider*.

Missent Mail Forced Name Change



The hamlet of Calcium, located in the Town of LeRay in Jefferson County about five miles from Watertown, originally was called Jewett's Corners. It was later named Sanford's Corners for John Sanford who became the first postmaster when the post office was established in 1829.

Madison Cooper, born in 1868, spent his boyhood on his family farm near Sanford's Corners. He later moved around the country holding various jobs before entering into the butter and egg business with his father in Minneapolis. There he invented and manufactured a cold storage and refrigeration system. About 1904 he moved his business to Watertown and then to Sanford's Corners.

A problem arose when some of the mail for the Madison Cooper Company was missent to Sanford in Broome County. As a result, the name of the post office was changed from Sanford's Corners to Calcium on May 1, 1911. Why Calcium? Calcium chloride was used in the manufacture of the Cooper refrigeration system.

A man of many talents, Cooper's interest in flower growing led to his establishing *The Flower Grower* magazine. He founded the Jefferson County Amateur Baseball League and built a baseball park at Calcium.

He also raised pigs. In a letter to a potential customer in 1917 he wrote: "I am anxious to get several of the swine men in this section interested in Tamworths as I believe they are the coming breed. They, of course, have a rather ugly appearance as the head is concerned, but otherwise they are fine."

None of Cooper's enterprises has survived, but the Calcium post office is still open.