

BULLETIN



OF THE EMPIRE STATE POSTAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Volume 54, Number 2

June 2021

President's Message

Society Members: it is with a sense of relief that I write to you as the Covid-19 vaccination plan is well underway. My healthcare colleagues, friends and more importantly my family, have all had their second inoculation. And while life may be getting a little easier and back to routine, we must continue to be vigilant.

I would be remiss if I did not mention my sadness with the passing of my friend Drew Nicholson. I recall my first face-to-face meeting with Drew after many years of correspondence by mail and phone. My wife Kathleen and I had just built a home in Pawling, NY a few miles north of Drew's homestead. When we relocated from NYC in 2002, Drew and Linda welcomed us to the community, to their home and he shared with me his passion of NYS history and Dutchess County postal history. I was quickly captivated and have been ever since. Please see page 4 for our *in memoriam*.

And while we will not be all together this summer at the many NYS Stamp Shows, I am looking forward to seeing our Officers and Directors at our virtual 2021 Annual Board Meeting. This shall be held on Saturday, June 26 from 4:00 PM to 5:30 PM and the Agenda is on page 4. While it is not the same as being together, it is an opportunity to see one another, converse about the current state of our Society, and discuss our future plans to grow and share.

Our Society is in good stead, with member support and volunteers who contribute to our success. We would like to hear from more of you on how you can support that success. What would you like to see? Why not submit an article or two on your favorite subject for publication in the *Excelsior!* and/or *Bulletin*? Why not share a presentation, monograph or exhibit for posting on our website (www.esphs.us)? Do you have any back issues of our journals to complete the online series?

All of the above shall ensure that our Society continues to grow, attracts new members, and advance the knowledge of the postal history of New York State by means of educational and historical research. I'd be most pleased to hear from you.

Sincerely,

Charles J. DiComo, PhD | *President, ESPHS*

+1 (914) 450-3791 or charlesdicomo@gmail.com

Published Quarterly by the Empire State Postal History Society

APS Affiliate #28

web site www.esphs.us

Officers:

President: Charles J. DiComo, PhD ('21)

charlesdico@gmail.com

Vice-President: David Przepiora ('21)

djprze@hotmail.com

Secretary: George McGowan ('22)

geolotus2003@nycap.rr.com

Treasurer: George DeKornfeld ('22)

docgfd@twc.com

Regional Representatives:

Northern: Gerald Wiley

Upper Hudson: Maris Tirums

Mohawk: *vacant*

Lower Hudson: *vacant*

NYC/LI: Frank Braithwaite

Leatherstocking/Catskill: *vacant*

Central: Bob Davison

West Central: *vacant*

Southern Tier: *vacant*

Western: David Przepiora

Directors:

('21): Brian Levy, Maris Tirums

('22): John Cali, Vacant

('23): Bob Bramwell, Heather Sweeting

Advertising Manager:

George McGowan (email above)

150 Burden Lake Rd.

East Greenbush, NY 12061-3602

Bulletin Auction Manager:

Bob Bramwell

rbramwell@nc.rr.com

PO Box 4150, Pinehurst, NC 20374

Publications Committee Chair:

Vacant

Web Developer & Designer:

Charles J. DiComo, PhD

charlesdico@gmail.com

1298 Hammock Way, Lancaster, PA 17601-4695

Excelsior! (Semi-Annually) March and Sept.

Jeff Stage, Editor

nyspostal@gmail.com

215 Westminster Ave

Syracuse, NY 13210

Bulletin (Quarterly) March, June, Sept. and Dec.

Lawrence Laliberte, Editor

largin1@verizon.net

15 Sunset Hill Ct.

Carmel, NY 10512-5027

EXCELSIOR! DEADLINE

The deadline for the [September 2021](#) issue of *EXCELSIOR!* is [July 15th](#) or earlier if possible.

As an incentive, submitting a one to four-page article will get you a one year extension on your membership and a five-page article will get you a two year extension. Just think – if you write regularly for *EXCELSIOR!*--you'll have the potential of earning free membership for life!...And think about how you will enrich yourself and others. Submit questions or articles to Jeff Stage at nyspostal@gmail.com

Secretary's Membership Report

Deceased Members

Drew Nicholson
Pawling, NY

Les Byrnes

New Member

Thomas X. Casey
Richmond, MA

UPCOMING EVENTS:

10th Northeast Postal History and Ephemera Show

Albany, New York

July 17 & 18, 2021

Polish Community Center, 225 Washington Ave. Ext. Albany, NY

Melville Coin, Stamp and Collectibles Show

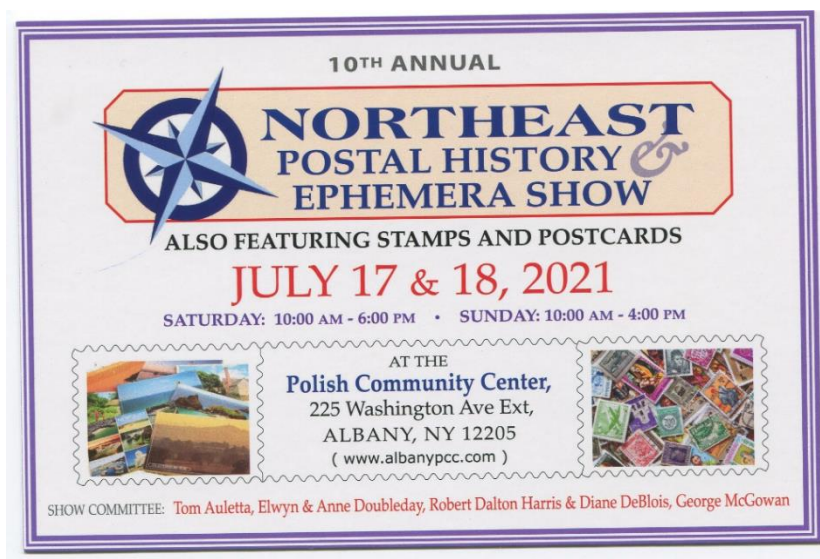
Melville, New York

Jun. 13 & 27, Jul. 11 & 27, Aug. 8 & 22, Sep. 12 & 26 2021

Catapano Engineering Hall, 585 Broadhollow Rd., Melville, NY

Hours: Sun. 8-2. Info: George Schulteis (516)557-7096

Information obtained from iStampshows.com Please verify before going.



BULLETIN DEADLINE

DEADLINE – The deadline for the **September** issue of the **BULLETIN** is **August 20th**. The editor is always looking for short (1/2 page, 1 page, 1 ½ page or 2 page) articles to fill spots in the **BULLETIN**. Submit to largin1@verizon.net. Larry Laliberte



DREW NICHOLSON 1940-2021

September 29, 1940 – May 5, 2021

Drew Nicholson, 80, passed away Wednesday, May 5, 2021 at the Candlewood Valley Care Center in New Milford, CT.

A 57-year resident of Pawling, NY, Drew was born in the Bronx on September 29, 1940 to Seymour and Audrey (Zurwella) Nicholson. Drew attended SUNY at Oneonta graduating in 1962. While there he met Linda Whiteside and they were married in Hicksville, NY on August 17, 1963; she predeceased him on March 5, 2020.

Drew was a high school teacher for the Pawling Central School District for 34 years retiring in 1996. He served as the Pawling Village Historian, a library trustee and board member, and a member of the Pawling United Methodist Church. He was a compassionate person who was always there to help in a time of need. Drew was also an avid Yankees fan. *Continued on page 6*

Board of Directors Meeting

Saturday, 26 JUNE 2021

Video Conference via Zoom

Facilitated by Dr. Charles J. DiComo

(Meeting shall start promptly at 4:00 PM and end by 5:30 PM)

Zoom Video Conference Line to be Emailed to Officers and Board

Topic	Discussion Leader	Time
1. Information: Opening Remarks	DiComo	4:00-4:03
2. Decision: Approve Board Minutes 23JUNE2020	Przepiora	4:03-4:05
3. Information: Treasurer's Report/Budget	DeKornfeld	4:05-4:10
4. Action: Approval of Budget	DeKornfeld	4:10-4:12
5. Information: Membership Report	McGowan	4:12-4:17
6. Information: Advertising Report	McGowan	4:17-4:22
7. Decision: Future Meeting Locations	ALL	4:22-4:25
8. Update: <i>Excelsior!</i> Report	Stage	4:25-4:30
9. Update: <i>Bulletin</i> Report	Laliberte	4:30-4:35
10. Auction Manager Report	Bramwell	4:35-4:40
11. Action: Open discussion on Publications Committee and future plans for housing books	DiComo	4:40-4:45
12. Action: Awards Committee Report & Future Plans	DeKornfeld	4:45-4:50
13. Action: Website Report & Future Plans	DiComo	4:50-4:55
14. Action: The Mid-Atlantic Federation of Postal History Society's and the ESPHS joining as a founding member	DiComo	4:55-5:00
15. Other Business/Remarks for the Good of the Hobby, open Discussion	ALL	5:00-5:25
16. Closing Remarks	DiComo	5:25-5:30

All agenda items are annotated as: **Decision** - those requiring a Board motion and action. **Action** - those requiring follow-up action but not a Board decision per se. **Information** - those that are for information only.

WESSON "TIME ON BOTTOM" DUPLEX CANCELERS OF BROOKLYN, SYRACUSE, AND UTICA

By George McGowan

"Build a better mouse trap and the world will beat a path to your door" is a well known phrase attributed to Ralph Waldo Emerson. Actually, Ralph's words were more like this: Grow the best apples, make the best bricks, build the best wagons, and you will be a success.

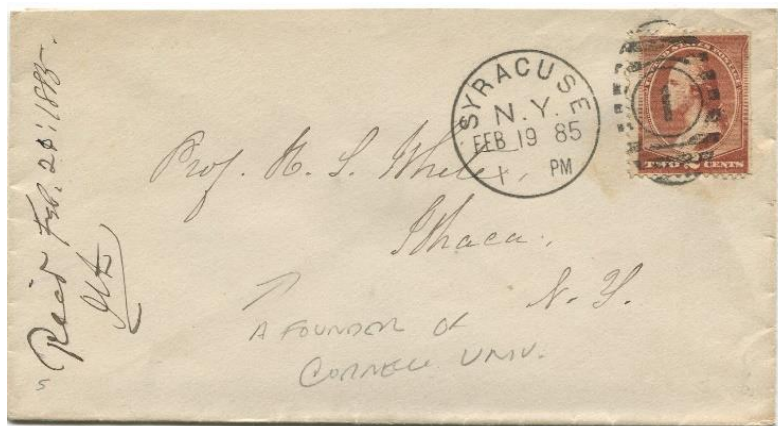


Figure 1.Wesson cancel from Syracuse with time stamp of 1 p.m.

From the American Revolution until the American Civil War, postal workers in big cities and small hamlets were able to handle the volume of mail with the traditional manuscript cancel and the metal and cork canceling devices of the day. After the mid 1860's things began to change and the volume of mail was increasing exponentially.

The reasons for the massive increases in the mail are many: Western expansion, lower postal rates, an increase in literacy, and dozens more. Canceling the mail had to be faster but how to

accomplish this was the question. The final result, as you know was the electric canceling machine. However in the years between 1865 and the twentieth century there were a variety of inventors who tried to build the better mouse trap, trying to sell their devices to postmasters, some were successful, many were not.

It was also about this time that the Post Office Department was becoming very concerned with timely delivery. Here is when the time of day, a new feature, was appearing in some canceling devices.

One particular device that became very popular was the duplex cancel. Early mail canceling required a two-step process, dating and identifying the town or city and obliterating the stamp. The duplex cancel did both at the same time. It wasn't the mechanization that was to follow but it was a success for many years.

One particular duplex cancel was developed by Walter D. Wesson whose patent is dated Jan. 1881. Postal historians have labeled his device "TOB" or "Time On Bottom" because it gives the time of the canceling at the very bottom of the circle. A warning, this is not the only canceler with the time in this position, but it is certainly the most successful.

Wesson's cancelers were used in 30 post offices in 11 states and two RPO routes. In New York, they were used at Brooklyn, Syracuse, and Utica. Interesting to note, these devices were used in medium and large cities.

Figure 1 is a nice example of the Syracuse cancel #1 dated Feb.19 of "85, (Syracuse had 4 different devices) the time of day was 1:00 PM.

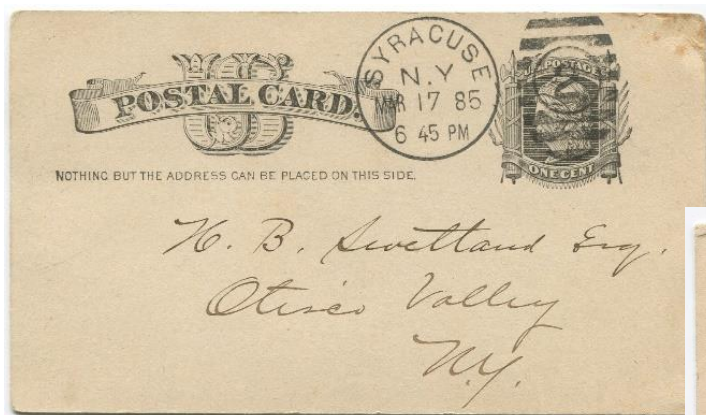


Figure 2. Another Syracuse cover cancelled at 6:45 PM.

Brooklyn had seven cancelers and here is an example, **Figure 3**, of #C. Note the time, 10:30 PM. They must have worked until the day's mail was completed.

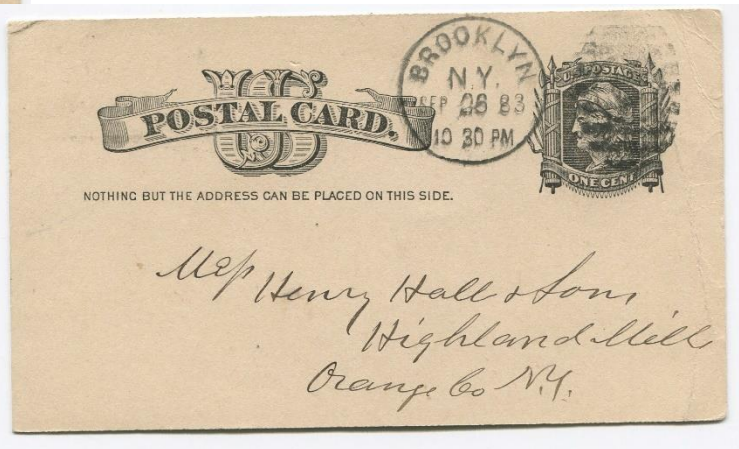


Figure 3: Cancel from Brooklyn with device #“C”.

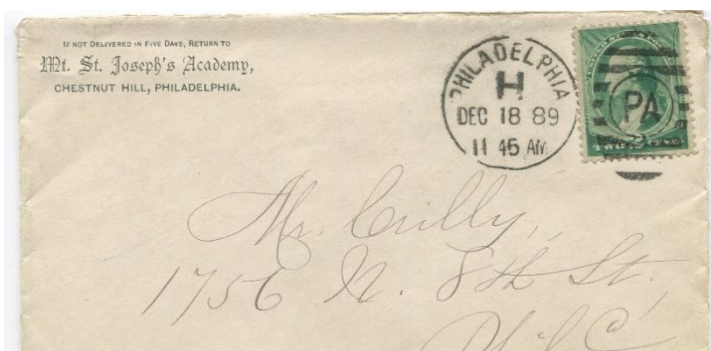


Figure 4: The Philadelphia canceller used from Station “H”. Note that the state designator is in the obliterator.

Wesson also made service cancelers, “received”, “not called for” “transit” etc. Brooklyn had a “REC'D” device. **Figure 4** is an example of Philadelphia’s Station H (Chestnut Hill).

With the success of the electric driven canceling machine, the duplex cancelers were victims of progress. Some of the devices had a long life, lasting well into the first decade of the 20th Century.

Nicholson continued from page 4

He is survived by his two children, Dennis and Denise, both of Pawling.

Collecting Germany was his lifelong passion, serving on the APS expertizing committee for that country. He also collected Dutchess County postal history with an emphasis on its postal routes. He was also a deltiologist collecting view cards of Dutchess County and patriotic themed cards.

Drew was a member of the American Philatelic Society, New York State Postal History Society, German Philatelic Society, U.S. Philatelic Classics Society, Collectors Club of N.Y., Putnam Philatelic Society and the Taconic Post Card Club among others. He occasionally gave lectures at those societies as well as local historical societies.

Our Society has lost an active member. He was on the Board of Directors, served as editor of the EXCELSIOR! for five years and was publications committee chair.

Donations in memory of Drew may be made to the Pawling United Methodist Church, 2 Dutcher Ave., Pawling, NY 12564.

NOTES FROM THE EXCELSIOR!'S EDITOR

Greetings to all from the editorial offices of the Excelsior! – which is basically my home office in Syracuse.

I hope you all had a great spring and have some fun summer plans – perhaps even a stamp show. I hope some of you will even make it out to the big Great American Stamp Show in Chicago. I likely won't make that show, but I am happy to report that the Excelsior! (Sept. 2020 / March 2021) has been entered into the show's literature competition. The competition is always high level so any recognition will be appreciated, but I am especially looking forward to judges' comments.

Don't forget, we have an Excelsior! right around the corner (please see separate notice about creating a reference story). We're looking at a final deadline for September submissions as July 15 (though earlier is better!)

In no particular order, here are a few story and writing tips for any occasion, including philately:

Don't Over-Capitalize. If It's Not a Proper Noun – Don't Capitalize It.

Not every story has to be the definitive story on that subject. Focus is helpful.

Throw a few periods in there once in a while.

Minimize your use of italics (not needed most of the time) and quotation marks (usually just for direct quotes from a source; not used to emphasize a word or phrase).

Eliminate superfluous words and clauses.

Examples

totally destroyed really means "destroyed"

"I'd like to start this story by ..." (just start the story)

"In conclusion ..." (just conclude)

If you have trouble with your beginning, just write some of the basic material and then go back to the beginning.

When you can't think of something incredibly snappy and brilliant, just stick to the basics; get creative later.

If you find yourself going off the path into the weeds, better start chopping and head back to the path.

Try to keep things in order.

If you can, use active voice: try not to use "is," "was" and "were." ("The man was bitten by the dog" BECOMES "The dog bit the man.")

Try not to use words ending in "...ing."

Do not use symbols without a good reason, such as a web address or to show what symbol appears on a cover or stamp. Anything like the following should be written out: – + = < > #

Don't be afraid to use first person if you are writing about material you own and collect.

Try to consider what kind of a layout might result from your story and its accompanying images. It's best (though not always possible) to try and spread the placement of images out throughout the text. Especially try to consider an interesting image for the top of the story.

Jeff Stage, editor, Excelsior!

Treasurer's Tidbits & Awards Report, May, 2021

Membership renewals have been coming in with only a few members not yet heard from. A tip of the hat and a heartfelt 'Thank You' to members Alfred Carroccia, Michael Clark, John Dowd, Robert Juceam, J. Ogden Tyldsley Jr., Brian Levy, and (especially) Joel Harrington for their donations above and beyond their dues remittances! Our publishing costs aren't close to being covered by our dues so the Society can use all the help it can get!

Best *Excelsior!* article of 2020 by vote of the membership: And the winner is...well...me, for my 'Howdy From Hobart' article. Participation was a bit better this year with a little over 50% of the membership voting. Thank you to all the authors and voters. Keep those articles coming!

Respectfully,

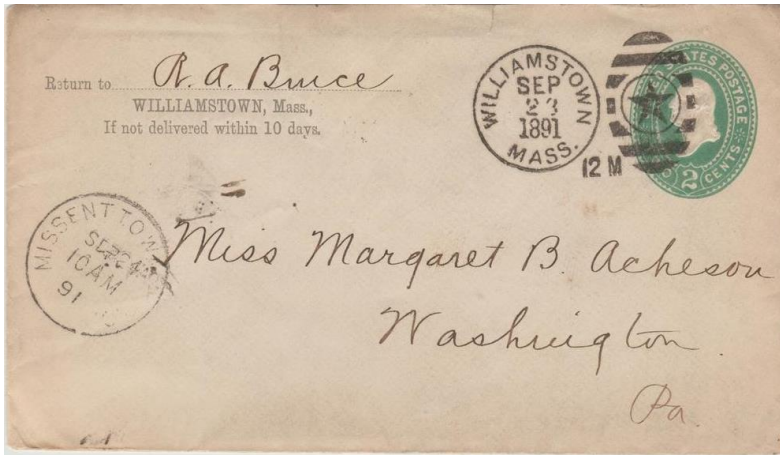
George F. DeKornfeld, DDS

Treasurer – Awards Chair

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

The editor of the United States Cancellation Club *NEWS*, Robert Conley, is looking for some help from Empire Stater's. He is proposing to do two related stories on Lockport, Niagara County - one for the USCC *NEWS* focusing on Lockport's fancy cancels and the role a certain postal clerk had in them, and the second story is a broader history of the PO itself, which will be offered up for the benefit of the ESPHS.

What Robert particularly needs is scans of any covers from Lockport from before 1901. They need not be particularly pretty or fancy or interesting...he is trying to match postal markings with particular time periods. And the more samples he has, the better will be his study. So, even an undated CDS is useful if the stamp can be identified.



There will also be a third story, again to be shared with the ESPHS, about "time-out" cancels which only five post offices ever used - one of those five was Lockport. For those readers who are not familiar with them, an example of a "time-out" cancel is shown here (note the between the CDS and the ellipse? That's what makes this a "time-out" cancel!). Lockport "time-out"s are particularly scarce, so an example from Williamstown, Mass is shown here.

So, please take the time to send in scans from

Lockport pre-1901.

Robert's email is uscceditor@mail.com. All emails receive a prompt response and all information used will be gratefully credited to its source.