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Book Reports

Northwest Philatelic Library, Inc.



NPL Essay
EARMARKING YOUR PERSONAL
PHILATELIC LIBRARY

Charles Neyhart

The NPL Collection is made up of many things, but books and periodicals predominate. Books and periodicals are how we first connect to the public; subsequent services seal the contract. Building a useful Collection and making it available to a wide variety of users is the main thrust of what we do. Sometimes we buy books and subscribe to periodicals, but more often they come to us from outside sources as a donation.

ESTATE PLANNING

Many donations of philatelic literature to NPL have come from collectors' estates. All arrived more or less as an afterthought or postscript to dispersal, except for the intercession by informed NPL members. It need not be this way, nor should it. If you believe your philatelic library could be put to good use by NPL, then you might consider stipulating that conveyance as part of your formal estate plan. NPL will give full credit to the donation under applicable law.

My colleague Steve Chown has lately been exhorting you to organize your collections [*Book Reports*, July 2008 and January 2009]. It is good advice and something you should take to heart. While Steve's focus is on stamps, the literature in your personal philatelic library is subject to the same kinds of planning considerations, i.e., organization, recordkeeping, and communication to your heirs.

Some collectors have assembled considerable philatelic libraries, stocked with the classics and the requisite research materials. These collectors attribute as much psychic value to their libraries as they do their collections. These libraries represent a considerable financial investment. At the other end of the scale are those collectors who are perfectly content with a stamp catalog. I would think that the bulk of collectors fall between these two groups. Most view their libraries as an adjunct to their stamp or cover collections, and may have a modest but appropriate investment in the literature that directly relates to and supports their specific collecting interests. Just as a book should not be judged by its cover, a library should not be judged by its number of books. Each individual item of philatelic literature in one's "library" has its use – today and tomorrow.

Your estate plan comprises the methods and documents you choose to ensure that the property you own is sensibly transferred to your beneficiaries. Depending on your estate planning goals, a *will* could serve as the centerpiece of your estate plan or as a backup in a more comprehensive estate plan, such as a *trust*. It is likely that the disposition of your stamp collection has been added to your plan, but does that document also include your philatelic library?

THE TYPICAL NPL EXPERIENCE

NPL has been the recipient of many estate-based donations of philatelic literature. We have been more than happy to accept those donations in the spirit given. That NPL was the recipient in these cases was fortuitous, but, regrettably, not a foregone conclusion. With limited exception, NPL seemed to be the “default” solution. Moreover, with the same exception, the donated philatelic literature was merely part of the detritus of the stamp collection, that part that didn’t get sent off to an auction house, all thrown together with no organization or inventory record.

A good number of donations come to the “local stamp club,” which I presume to mean the Oregon Stamp Society. Executors have been directed to OSS by collectors, dealers, and even by the phone book. It is a useful “last resort” solution to the executor, who probably wants the material off the premises. But, since OSS is not a tax-exempt organization, the donation invariably gets passed onto NPL.

NPL generally will not reject a donation outright, although it does have the capacity to do so. Despite the manner and form of donation, NPL will carefully process the material, sort it and put it to its highest use. We would most certainly be pleased to accept a donation of philatelic literature that was well-organized and catalogued and dedicated to NPL in an estate plan.

DOES YOUR LIBRARY FIT NPL’S NEEDS

The NPL Collection is rather robust, having been built up over a long time, albeit mostly from donations by individual OSS members long before NPL was created and installed. That being said, the Collection is by no means complete. Periodically, we publish a section called “Filling Holes” in *Book Reports* that identifies important missing pieces in the Collection. NPL maintains an updated “Filling Holes” list for public viewing in the Library.

NPL currently uses its four “specialty” collections: U.S., Great Britain, Airmail, and Postal History, to help guide its book purchase program. But the budget for that program is modest to say the least. So, NPL is always on the lookout for good books, monographs, catalogs, and periodicals to add to the Collection. Out-of-print books are particularly important. Varied subject-based materials, like forgeries and stamp production, are good candidates for the Collection. NPL currently has over 175 journal titles, but most are far from complete.

The number of current *specialized* catalogs for individual foreign countries is disappointing. Likewise, the Stanley Gibbons and Michel catalog coverage is inconsistent.

NPL does not need or want older catalogs, particularly Scott. NPL's collection of Scott catalogs is current and comprehensive. You might find it better simply to donate these to a youth program or a public library. Similarly, NPL can only accept those auction catalogs that include a significant section devoted to philatelic literature, or are from a "named" auction based on a principal owner's collection being auctioned. Space constraints dictate the extent of this resource. NPL does not need past issues of *Linn's Stamp News*. Similarly, NPL needs only pre-1938 issues of the *American Philatelist*.

Please keep in mind that even if a donation of philatelic literature is not added to the Collection, it may have an alternate use to NPL. It is the policy of NPL to sell its duplicate literature. This is done in various venues, including auctions and bourses. Online selling may be a possibility. NPL uses these funds to support its programs, including literature acquisitions. In other instances, NPL will, in turn, donate duplicate literature to other philatelic libraries that have a need for it. Duplicate periodicals are often saved and used in the NPL Tear Sheet program. In some instances, however, NPL will make literature available to members through the "free shelf."

WHAT ARE YOUR OPTIONS?

To put dispersal options in context, I again revisit Steve's Chown's recommendations. How well do you know what is in your philatelic library? It may be hidden, spread out, or otherwise neglected inasmuch as it is probably used only as an adjunct to your stamp collection. So, the first step in any option is to organize your library and prepare a written record of it, at least its better items; that is, those items that have value, financial or otherwise. Inform the executor of the location and composition of your library.

I suppose that a quality philatelic library could go directly to auction. Indeed, classic literature sells well because it is in demand and difficult to find. But not all "old" literature is considered "classic" and a lot described as a "box" of philatelic literature [shorthand for a bulk sale lot] likely will not draw interest from bidders. The problem here, of course, is what happens to the literature that doesn't sell? Maybe it is physically returned to the executor, maybe a discerning auction house will see to it that it gets donated to a philatelic library, or maybe it just goes into the blue recycling bin. No guarantees.

Selling your philatelic library to a bookseller is a possibility, but I doubt your executor will relish this option. Selling options are limited; there is not sufficient demand except possibly from the few philatelic booksellers who might be interested in parts of your library. Not only will your library list be cherry-picked, the proceeds will not be commensurate with value. In the end, what will the executor do with the unsold items?

The other option is to donate your philatelic library. Public libraries are not prepared to manage donations of this type of material, but many philatelic libraries, especially NPL, are

so equipped. In addition, Northwest Philatelic Library, Inc. is a nonprofit, tax exempt organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Any contributions to NPL may be deductible as charitable contributions on the donor's tax return.

If you would like to earmark your philatelic library for transfer to NPL, it would be most efficient to do so through your estate plan regardless of its format. A few members have asked how to do this. If you already have an estate plan, then you would need to add an amendment or codicil to it that stipulating the earmark. A written record of your wishes should exist and be available to your executor. NPL does not provide legal advice or service, so it is best to discuss this with your legal representative.

One final point: Once you have formally earmarked your philatelic library for transfer to NPL, please let us know about it. We can, to the extent feasible, assist you or your executor by facilitating the eventual transfer to NPL.

I am grateful for the comments provided by Wayne Holmes and Janice Weinstock who reviewed a draft of this essay.

IN APPRECIATION

To those generous individuals who made recent significant donations of literature and financial consideration to NPL.

<i>Tom Adkins</i>	<i>Robert Campbell</i>	<i>Robert Delker</i>
<i>Rusty Garrison</i>	<i>Don Kennedy</i>	<i>Estate of Jerry Matson</i>
<i>Ralph Nafziger</i>	<i>Charles Neyhart</i>	<i>Larry Nix</i>
<i>Phyllis Redman</i>	<i>Orlie Trier</i>	<i>Wayne Weatherll</i>
	<i>Janice Weinstock</i>	

We THANK You FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

Northwest Philatelic Library, Inc.

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Contact: P.O. Box 6375, Portland, OR 97228-6375
 (503) 284-6770 nwpl@qwestoffice.net www.nwpl.org

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NEW LIT ADDITIONS

The following titles have been added, through donation and purchase, to the NPL Collection during the period October 1 through December 31, 2009.

1847 Issue of U.S. Stamps

1861-68 Issue of U.S. Stamps

1869 U.S. Pictorial Issue Register [1976-77, 1978 & 1982]

Aero Philatelist Annals – Russia

Affordable Foreign Errors on Postage Stamps of The World

Auction Catalogs [† denotes shelving in Subject area]

Acevado Collection of Puerto Rican Postal History†

British Empire Revenue Telegraph and Railway Stamps [1974]†

Collier Collection of Worldwide Used Stamps

Cunliffe Collection of Inverted Stamps of the United States and Possessions

Cunliffe Collection of Inverted Stamps of the World

Dauer Collection of Used U.S.

Furlong Collection of Mexico [1965]†

Geisler Collection of U.S. Carriers and Locals

Great Britain Revenue Telegraph and Railway Stamps [1974]†

Gross Collection of British North America

Gross Collection of Scandinavia

Gross Collection of Confederate States of America

Hansen Collection of U.S. Stamps and Covers

Hackney Philatelic Library [2003]

Jarrett Collection of Propaganda Covers

“Laila” Collection of U.S. Stamps

Long Collection of U.S. Proofs and Essays

Minerino Collection of U.S. Stamps

MLG Collection of U.S. Plate Blocks

Pauker Collection of Jewish Ghetto Posts of World War II

Quast Collection of Mexico [1960]†

Stevens Collection of Mexico [1971]†

Summit Collection of U.S. Encased Postage†

Waterlow & Sons, Ltd. Specimen Sample Stamps [1968]†

Wilson Hulme II Collection

“Whitpain” Collection of U.S. Possessions

Australian Bi-colored Dies

Australian and New Zealand Forces in New Caledonia, Tonga, British Solomon Islands, Fiji and Norfolk Islands

British Locals, Part 1 [CD]

California Town Postmarks [Vols. I & II]

Caribbean Mission

Chalon Two Pence [New Zealand]

Catalogs

“Commonwealth” Five Reigns Postage Stamps

Gibbons Australia Concise [1989]

Gibbons New Zealand Concise [1990]

Gibbons Commonwealth & British Empire [2010]

Gibbons Russia [1986]

Great Britain Revenues [1989]

Harris War in the Far East [1945]

Hurt’s Local [GB] Postage Stamps [1945]

Hoover Brothers Official Precancel [1932]

Michel Australia Specialized [1985-86]

Mosbaugh’s U.S. All Funds Seal Catalog [1979]

Sanabria World Airmail [1963]

Scott U.S. Specialized [2010]

Scott Standard, Vols. 4-6 [2010]

Unificado Especializado Sellos de Espana [2005]

U.S. Stampless Covers [1936]

Collect Fungi on Stamps

Collector’s Guide to Postal Stationery

Confederate States Five-Cent Green Lithograph

Congress Book 2009

Delivering Hope: FDR and Stamps of the Great Depression

Epic of Kusunoki Masashige

German North Atlantic Catapult Flights, 1929-35

Gold Fever

Historical Materials

Albemarle Stamp Collector [1914]

Ewen Catalogue of Adhesive Postage and Telegraph Stamps of the U.K. [1895]

Gibbons Catalogue of Envelopes, Wrappers and Lettercards Worldwide [1897]

Gibbons Catalogue of the World [1899]

Gibbons Catalogue of Stamps of the British Empire [1902 & 1903]

Gibbons Catalogue of Foreign Countries [1903]

Gremmel’s Comprehensive Catalog of U.S. Postage Stamps [1896]

Programs (Four – Seven) of the Great Britain Philatelic Congress [1912, 1913, 1914, 1920]

Senf Postwertzeichen-Katalog [1902-03]

Periodicals

American Philatelist, Vol. 1, nos. 1-5 [1887]

Collector’s Ledger

Montreal Philatelist

Philatelic Record [GB]

Japanese Occupation of China – Six Districts
 Overprinted Issues – Identification Key
 King George VI Large Key Type Revenue and
 High Value Stamps, 1937-53

National Philatelic Museum Programs

A.P.S. 1952 Convention
 Austria [1950]
 French Centenary Exhibit [1949]
 In Philately [1950]
 Ireland Exhibition [1949]
 Liberia [1950]
 Library [1956]
 Pan-Slav Stamp Exhibition [1949]
 Philosophy of Collecting [1952]
 Scandinavia Exhibition, Virgin Islands [1950]
 SEPAD [1954]
 Switzerland Exhibition [1949]
 Topical Stamp Exhibition [1950 & 1953]
 U.S. Perforation Centennial [1957]
 Women in Philately [1953]

Oregon 150, Official Collector's Issue
 Perforation Measurements of U.S. Stamps

Periodicals

Atalaya Cinderella Magazine
 Cinderella Philatelist
 Close-up [Czeslaw Slania]
 GB Journal
 Gibbons Stamp Monthly
 Philatelist [GB]
 Postage Stamp
 Revenue Journal of Great Britain
 Stamp Mail
 T.P.O. [Traveling Post Office]
 Trans-Mississippian
 West-end Philatelist

Plate Varieties of Japan's Cherry Blossom
 Stamped Envelopes

Pony Express

Post Office Mail Sent Across the Lines at the
 Start of the American Civil War, May-July 1861

Postal History of Christmas Seals

Postal Laws and Regulations [1893 & 1948]

Railroad Cancellations on Civil War Revenue
 Stamps

Seaposts of the USA

Ships on Stamps [Vol. 1, CD]

Stamp Booklets: Magic Carpet to Adventure

Stamp World 90 Souvenir Handbook

United States Postage Stamps [1922-25]

THE MATSON LITERATURE COLLECTION ... Continued

In the December 2009 issue of *Book Reports*, I described NPL's good fortune in receiving the philatelic library from the Estate of Jerry Matson. As you may recall, that library comprised 48 boxes of philatelic literature, about which 40 percent has been added to the NPL Collection. These additions included new titles to the Collection and filling in runs of existing periodicals. We received some titles of historical importance.

It was our intent to first offer duplicate periodicals to other philatelic libraries. Subsequently, 21 boxes of periodicals were sent to the Collectors Club of New York, San Diego Philatelic Library, Slusser Memorial Philatelic Library [Postal History Foundation], Western Philatelic Library and the Wineburgh Philatelic Research Library. All we asked in return was reimbursement for shipping costs. [Larry Spray and Don Overstreet helped me select materials and pack up the boxes. Tom Current supervised periodically and then led us on a scenic drive through Northeast Portland on the way to the post office.]

Our next step is to offer the duplicate non-periodical literature to the other philatelic libraries. This material comprises books, monographs, auction catalogs, price lists, and mixed ephemera. Currently, this material is confined to six boxes; it is a much smaller selection. We have kept an array of in-house saleable items, including a broad range of catalogs, which will be available for sale at appropriate events.

