

THE SRSC NEWSLETTER

*The Santa Rosa Stamp Club: Promoting the study,
knowledge, and enjoyment of stamp collecting.
APS Chapter 1584*



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Editor's Note

Dennis Buss

Before we get too far away from the holiday season, our newsletter features a one-act play entitled "A Christmas Past - Memories of a Stamp Collector" written by Steve Brett. The original intention was to enact the play at our holiday luncheon. However, conditions at the restaurant were not conducive to such a plan. I trust you will have no problem in imagining the scene that unfolds below. The Newsletter concludes with the last part of my series of articles on the ways of collecting worldwide stamps. If you are not already a worldwide collector, I hope the articles might encourage you to take the plunge.

A Christmas Past - Memories of a Stamp Collector

Steve Brett

The setting: Anywhere, U.S.A - in the Year of Our Lord 1956

Edna: The Spouse

Ralph: Father and stamp collector

Junior: Age 12

The Play:

Edna: Well, I think our Thanksgiving meal went well this year. Better than last year.

Ralph: I think it was better last year.

Edna: How can you say that?

Ralph: It was at your sister's, that's how. By the way, is your brother still here or did he finally leave?

Edna: You don't like my brother do you?

Ralph: Last time he was here there was a stamp missing from my Famous American Series. I saw him lurking around my stamp albums and poof- the 10-cent Alexander Graham Bell was gone. How did he know it was the most valuable one?

Edna: I told him to take it. He had to pay his electric bill right away or they'd turn off his lights.

Ralph: I'd like to turn off his oxygen. Well, you have to be thankful for small things. Thank God he didn't need an airmail, you'd probably give him one of my Zeppelins.

Edna: As a matter of fact, he did need an airmail. I only gave him the 65 cent one. He said it was just a letter.

Ralph: You gave him my C 13?

Edna: No, I told him to take them all in case he had other things to airmail.

Junior: Mom, I think Dad needs some water. And quick!

Edna: Go over to his stamp desk - there are some glasses with punch in them.

Junior: You mean the glasses on the coasters?

Edna: I don't know if they're coasters—they may be what he calls plate blocks. But, they keep the glasses from making rings on the desk.

Junior: I better get two glasses of punch for him...he's turning colors and gagging.

Edna: He always has an excuse to not help me clean up.

Later in the Living Room

Ralph: So it's settled, I'm not paying for your Brother's trip to Disneyland so I can buy another set of Zeppelin's, right?

Edna: And a set of coasters. We ran out of plate blocks at our ma-jong game on Wednesday.

Ralph: I don't think we'll need the coasters. I'm going to use pictures of your parents as coasters. You used more of my plate blocks as coasters? Next you'll tell me that you used my stamp sheets as placemats.

Edna: Don't get smart. Stamp sheets are only useful to wrap Junior's sandwiches.

Junior: I don't think there are any pictures left of your parents. Not since dad bought the Hibachi.

Edna: O.K. let's get down to business. (To Ralph): What do you want for Christmas this year?

Ralph: A restraining order that keeps you 100 yards from my stamps.

Edna: No really, what do you want this year?



Ralph: Well when I was at Gimbels with you last week, while you were trying on corsets I went over to the stamp department and something I've dreamed about for years was there.

Junior: You mean Loretta Young?

Edna: Don't be silly. He only dreams about stamp mounts.

Ralph: (under his breath) ... and other mounts.

Edna: I heard that! The last thing you ever mounted was a 3-cent Whistler's Mother.

Ralph: (To Junior) Amen to that, son.

Junior: That's why I'll never join a stamp club.

Edna, Ralph and Junior are now in the den surveying Ralph's stamp hobby desk and corner.

Edna: So how do you think you can fit this Minkus or Stinkus Master Global Hoo-Hah album? There's no space for anything here. You've squeezed us all out of this den with your collecting mania!

Junior: I can't even set up my Lionel's here anymore.

Ralph: (to Junior): Son, you're too old to play with trains. You should get into stamp collecting. That's for people your age.

Junior: And you're too old to read Leg Show magazine. And I'm not 70 yet. I can wait to collect stamps for a while.

Edna: What does Leg Show have to do with stamp collecting? And Junior's right, stamp collecting is for people like you - too young for assisted living and too old to mount anything that is still sitting up and taking nourishment.

Ralph: (to Edna) you don't have a high opinion of stamp collectors do you?

Edna: How can I when I married to one?

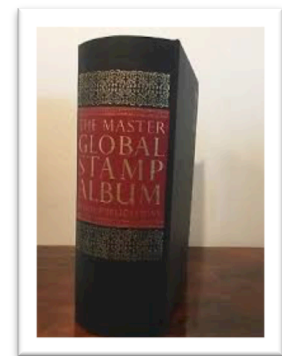
Christmas Morning -Around the Tree

Ralph: You both must love me. You bought me a Minkus Master supplement. You must have used up all the money in your change pot to buy this for me.

Junior: No dad, it's on the layaway. Mom put down the deposit and you have to make the next 14 payments.

Edna: As you always say, dear, "it's the thought that counts."

Ralph: And speaking of thoughts, open your gift. I put a lot of thought into it.



Edna: Oh, I've wanted this for years. It's the Betty Crocker thimble collection curio. Now I can display my thimbles.

Ralph: I'll bet it is strong enough to support my new Minkus Album.

Junior: DAD, DON'T DO IT.

KABOOM!

Ralph: Thank God the thimbles weren't on it.

Edna: Thank God I have ten days to return your new stamp album.

Junior: I'm getting my Lionels out of the closet. I'm going to have a lot of room to run them now. And, while I'm at it, I'm going to get the doghouse ready.

Edna: My brother has it at his house.

Ralph: Don't tell me he also mailed it there.

The End



The Ways of Collecting Worldwide Stamps, Part 3

Dennis Buss

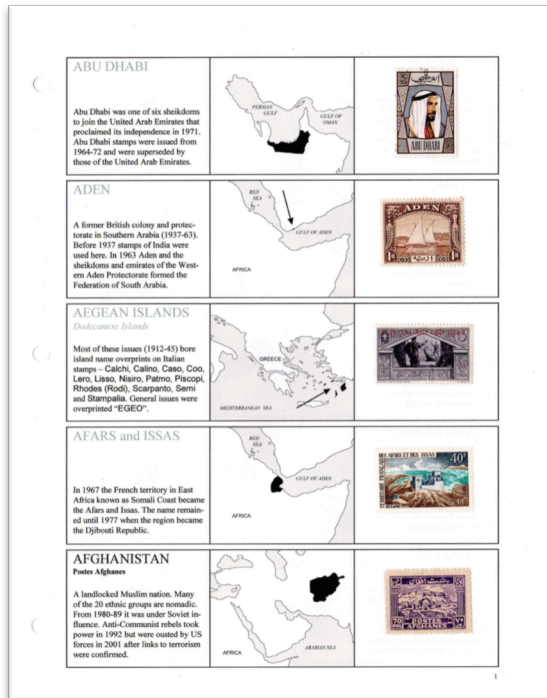
Single Specimen Worldwide Albums

In Part 1 of this series of articles I discussed the advantages and disadvantages of using the Scott International and Minkus Global multi-volume albums that cover stamp issues from 1840 to the present. In Part 2, I discussed why some collectors favor using worldwide albums that are confined to a single time period such as 1840 to 1940. In this final part of the series I will explain why some collectors find the single specimen album an attractive choice. Collecting a single stamp from every country is both interesting and surprisingly challenging. It is the polar opposite of the “collect them all” ambitions of the comprehensive worldwide collector. In 2013 the Smithsonian Institution National Postal Museum published *A Stamp for Every Country Album*. It answers the question – *why not just collect one stamp from each stamp issuing entity?* This is how the editors of the album put it: “Start a collection of almost 800 stamps—one from every country in the world that has produced stamps, including many countries that no longer exist.” In addition to space for at least one stamp per entry, the album also includes geographical and historical information for each of the countries listed. The collector is free to select any stamp from a particular country. You can



make it more interesting by trying to find a stamp that you believe best reflects the character, history, geography or important figures from that entity.

The Postal Museum album groups existing countries into regions – North America, South America, Europe, Africa, Asia, Australia, and Antarctica. The last set of pages are devoted to entities that either no longer issue stamps such as Austrian offices in Crete, Transkei, the Allied Military Government in Germany, etc. Often referred to as “dead countries,” finding stamps from these areas often provide a challenge for the collector. Locating stamps from the Colombian states of Bolivar and Santander will be significantly more difficult than finding a stamp from modern Colombia. In addition, the album also has spaces for stamps issued by international organizations such as the UN, the World Court as well as governments in exile. The album can be downloaded free from the National Postal Museum website. It consists of 135 single sided pages that you can print out from your computer.



While the comprehensive collector attempts to obtain as many worldwide stamps from as many different countries as possible for his or her collection, the single specimen collector would appear to have a much easier time of it since only one stamp is needed from each entity. But that is the rub – how many stamp-issuing entities are there? In 2005, Terra Nova Publishing issued the *Single Specimen World Gazetteer Stamp Album*. No longer in print, that album provided spaces for just 606 different entities, about 200 less than the National Postal Museum album. This difference signifies that there is little agreement on how many different stamp-issuing entities actually exist or have existed. For example, we can compare the entries contained in the major stamp catalogues. The Michel catalogue lists 2702 distinct stamp issuing entities

whereas Scott lists 2115, Stanley Gibbons lists 1754 and the French Yvert & Tellier catalogue lists 2198. Those numbers are considerably higher than the totals found in the National Postal Museum and Terra Nova albums. In effect, these albums are actually abridgements since a more comprehensive treatment would require 900 to 1400 more spaces for stamps. Of course, there is nothing to prevent the collector from adding extra pages to accommodate these stamps.

For the collector who may specialize in a country or topical collection, the single specimen album is an ideal way to maintain a sideline worldwide collection. Perhaps you want to recover the nostalgia of your childhood collecting years without committing to a more

ambitious, if not distracting, worldwide collection. A single specimen collection enables you to do so without great expense or significant time commitments. Several years ago when I was working on my Terra Nova *World Gazetteer Album* I enlisted the help of a few stamp dealers from a local bourse I used to attend. The dealers were almost as enthusiastic about my single specimen project as I was, especially when it came to tracking down nice examples of stamps from the dead country category. Worldwide collecting has room for dabblers including those who favor printed albums.

Non-Printed Worldwide Albums

Keijo Kortelainen, a Finnish worldwide collector and proprietor of the *Stamp Collecting Blog*, concluded that printed worldwide albums are not only too expensive but also too constraining for someone who wants to build a comprehensive worldwide collection. Why not use stock books or stock pages to create your own worldwide album? Using this free-form approach your album grows as you acquire stamps.

This method is not, however, an invitation to a disorganized and haphazard worldwide stamp collection. It makes little sense to place stamps randomly as they are acquired without at least considering country of origin and date of release. Even though stock books or stock pages might be cheaper than a multi-volume worldwide album, the serious collector needs guidance to build and organize the collection. A worldwide stamp catalogue is essential to the task. American collectors typically rely on the six volume worldwide Scott catalogue. British and European collectors use the Gibbons or Michel catalogues. The catalogue not only provides a means to correctly identify a stamp with a specific number, it also provides a rough estimate as to value.

As the collector acquires more stamps undoubtedly he or she will need to move stamps around in the stock book or acquire stock pages to accommodate the new additions. One might argue this constant rearranging of the stamps is rather tedious. However, this problem is offset by the ability to easily insert varieties or formats for which the printed album may have no space.

Members may recall Ron Thurner's stamp collecting autobiography that appeared in the June 2016 newsletter. He stores his stamps in Vario stock pages that are then placed in three-ring binders. According to Ron, his binders take up 55 linear feet of shelf space! In addition, he identifies each stamp with the appropriate Scott number that he also records in a computerized database. Keijo Kortelainen, mentioned above, houses his collection in stock books. Each stamp is recorded with a Michel catalogue number in his database and then placed in a color-coded stock books organized by geographic region.

In conclusion, the fascination of collecting worldwide stamps remains an enduring attraction. You can be as ambitious as you desire. You can choose to collect a single specimen from every country or you can embark on a brave attempt to collect every stamp ever issued. Regardless, of your worldwide collecting goals you can find a suitable printed album to meet your needs or you can enjoy the flexibility of the stock book/stock page method to house your collection. But whatever you do, do not throw your stamps into a shoebox or stuff them in glassines. Sort them out and show them off in a stamp album!

Many of the points made in this three part series on the ways of collecting worldwide stamps were derived from outstanding internet sources. I highly recommend the following websites for information and advice about collecting worldwide stamps:

The Stamp Collecting Blog

<https://www.stampcollectingblog.com>

Big Blue

<http://bigblue1840-1940.blogspot.com>

Filling Spaces

<http://globalstamps.blogspot.com>

The Stamp Community Forum

<https://www.stampcommunity.org>

Smithsonian National Postal Museum

<https://postalmuseum.si.edu/stampgallery/everycountryalbum.html>



SRSC

The Santa Rosa Stamp Club meets on the first Tuesday of the month from 6:45 pm to 9:00 pm at the Finley Community Center, 2060 W. College Road, in Santa Rosa. Membership dues are \$20 per year. Following a discussion of club business matters, the meetings feature a philatelic presentation and a member auction. For further information about the club visit our website at <http://www.santarosastampclub.org/home.html>

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Members are encouraged to submit articles for the Newsletter. Whether it is a short piece about an interesting stamp or cover in your collection, a more extended article on some aspect of philately or your stamp collecting autobiography, your submissions are welcome.

See Dennis Buss, the Newsletter editor.