

# THE ALBUM PAGE



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President: Steve King

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Vice-President: Stephen Brandt

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A Personal Letter Sent via Diplomatic Pouch page 11



Story of the Ill-Fated SS *Stanvac Melbourne*  
Pages 6-9

## THE OREGON STAMP SOCIETY

Founded in 1916

APS Chapter #0068-008234

Member of the Northwest Federation of Stamp Clubs



## Oregon Stamp Society

4828 NE 33rd Ave  
 Portland OR 97211-7058  
 OSS Message Phone Number:  
 503-284-6770

*The Album Page* is published 12 times per year by the Oregon Stamp Society Foundation.

A subscription to this award winning newsletter is included as a part of the annual membership dues (regular \$28, associate and youth memberships \$26). For a membership application, write to the OSS at the above address.

**Opinions** expressed in features and columns in this publication are solely those of the authors and do not represent those of the Society. OSS is not responsible for the accuracy of any information presented here.

### ABOUT OUR CLUB

Regular meetings are held in the OSS Building, 4828 NE 33rd Ave. on the second Tuesday of each month at 2 PM and the fourth Tuesday of each month at 8 PM, unless otherwise stated in the monthly calendar.

**The Rose City Stamp Fair** is an official OSS function and is held at the OSS Building on the second Saturday of each month from 9 AM to 3 PM.

**The Stamp Collector's Corner** also is an official OSS Bourse, and is held on the fourth Saturday of each month from 9AM to 3 PM.

*Visitors Are Always Welcome*

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## OSS Board of Directors

### President:

Steve King  
 email=> skvk47@gmail.com

### Vice Pres.:

Stephen Brandt 503-297-7869

### Secretary:

Dennis Ladd 503-428-2845

### Treasurer:

Eric Hummel

### OSS Directors 2020-2023

Ula Mae Neligh  
 Charles Mathews  
 Doug Sponseller

## OSS Administration

### Collectors Corner Mgr. (alternate):

Charles Mathews 503-730-7197  
 email => cwmiii@comcast.net

### Property Manager:

Ula Mae Neligh 503-284-4294

### Rose City Stamp Fair Manager:

Charles Mathews 503-730-7197  
 email => cwmiii@comcast.net

### Sales Manager:

Vacant

### Album Page Editor:

Dennis Ladd  
 email mandodennis69@comcast.net

### APS Representative

Michael Bloom

## OSS News

### Annual General Meeting and Elections

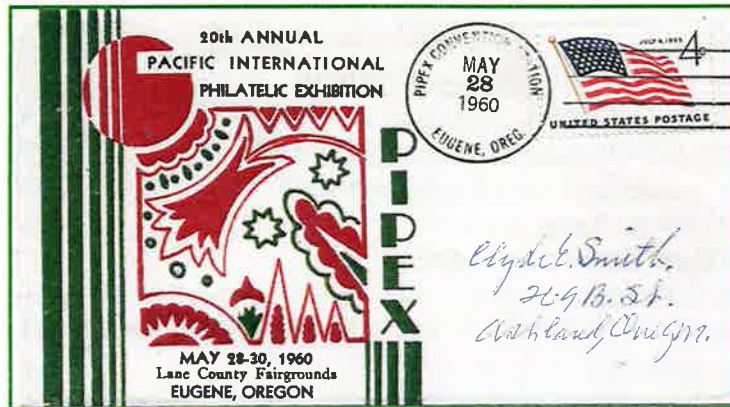
In accordance with the OSS Constitution, we will hold our Annual General Meeting (AGM) at 8:00 p.m. just prior to the Membership meeting of May 23, 2023.

There is one item on the agenda for the AGM – the election of certain Officers and Directors. As of this notice, all candidates are unopposed. The positions and candidates are:

President	Steven King
Secretary	Dennis Ladd
Director	Doug Sponseller

At the conclusion of the AGM, we will begin the regularly scheduled membership meeting.

## PRESIDENT'S CORNER



The Pacific International Philatelic Exhibition (PIPEX) will be held at the Monarch Hotel in Clackamas, Oregon at 12566 SE 93rd Ave., May 5-7. Portland Philatelic Exhibitions, on behalf of the Northwest Federation of Stamp Clubs, will host the event. PIPEX is an American Philatelic Society World Series of Philately event. Local sponsoring societies are OSS and the Salem Stamp Society.

The theme of this year's PIPEX is dedicated to celebrating the 100th anniversary of the opening of the Columbia River Highway. There will be a 34-booth philatelic dealer bourse, exhibits, and seminars, lectures, and meetings. Parking and admission are free. A banquet will be held Saturday evening. For more information see the PIPEX 2023 website.

OSS will have a society table at PIPEX as will the Webfooters Post Card Club and the Pacific Northwest Postal History Society. David Sell of the Webfooters will be making a presentation at noon on Friday using postcards to tell the story of the historic Columbia River Highway. The postal history group will hold their annual meeting and a presentation at 2:00 p.m. on Saturday. Larry Maddux, President, will be presiding. Both meetings and presentations are open to everyone.

We are looking for volunteers to sit at our society table to meet the public and tell the story of OSS and seek new members. Contact Ula Mae to sign up. Otherwise stop by to take a rest and visit with your fellow club members. I am looking forward to PIPEX and seeing many of you.

### Gary Hoecker: 40 Years a Stamp Dealer

OSS member and prominent local US stamp dealer, Gary Hoecker, was surprised by a visit from his family at OSS on Feb. 11. They presented him with a decorative cake celebrating Gary's 40 years as a stamp dealer. Standing with Gary is his grandson, Andrew.

Early in his career Gary, worked with McBride Stamp Auctions. He ran a longstanding bourse at a local hotel. Gary is a regular dealer at OSS and most major shows in the Pacific Northwest.

You can meet Gary at Rose City Stamp Fair held the second Saturday of every month at OSS.



Photo by William Beith

## YOUR ADVERTISEMENT COULD BE DISPLAYED HERE!!

### Advertising Rates

	1 issue	6 issues
1/8 Page	\$ 3.50	\$ 17.50
1/4 Page	\$ 6.00	\$ 30.00
1/2 Page	\$11.00	\$ 55.00
Full Page	\$22.00	\$110.00

Contact *The Album Page* editor

## Story of the Ill-Fated SS Stanvac Melbourne

By Steve King

Recently I acquired a packet of 16 airmail covers sent by a crewmember of a New York-owned steamship tanker operating in South America to his wife in Pittsburgh. What makes the collection significant is the covers were posted just before and after the Pearl Harbor attack and the entry of the U.S. into WWII. The history of the tanker vessel, *SS Stanvac Melbourne*, is important to telling this story.

James W. Bridges made trips into South America on the *Stanvac Melbourne* with stops at various ports. The ship was transporting petroleum fuel products. The sixteen covers' route began in Santos, Brazil in September-November 1941; then through the Panama Canal in December 1941; and then Peru and Chile December 1941-February 1942.



Fig. 1: Airmail cover posted on December 2, 1941 from the Canal Zone to Pittsburgh.

Our subject cover (Figure 1) was posted in Cristobal, Canal Zone, December 2, 1941 and sent via PanAir franked with Scott C10 and cancelled with the "Gateway of World Trade" slogan cancel.

The *SS Stanvac Melbourne* (Figure 2) was a 10,103 gross ton tanker with a hold capacity of 132,500 barrels. It was a Panamanian-flagged vessel home-ported in Panama City. It was built in 1941 by the Sun Shipbuilding and Drydock Co. in Chester, Pennsylvania and owned by the New York company, Socony-Vacuum Oil Co., later becoming Sonoco, the largest distributor of petroleum products in the nation.



Fig. 2: Steamship *Stanvac Melbourne*, a petroleum product tanker built in 1941 for the Caribbean and South American transport trade.

The 16 covers were flown out of South America via PanAir (Pan American Airways), then to Pittsburgh. The famed China Clipper flying boats did not fly into Central or South America. Other aircraft and crews were used on these routes (Figure 3).

The Boeing 307 Stratoliner entered service for Pan American Airways July 1940. It is likely our cover collection was flown on the Boeing 307. The image of a four-engine plane on the covers matches the design of the Boeing 307 (figure 4).

The fifth cover by date was airposted December 8, 1941 in Talara, Peru, the date the U.S. declared war on the Empire of Japan. War was declared on Germany on December 11.



Fig. 3: Airmail cover posted from Talara, Peru on December 8, 1941, the date of the declaration of war on the Empire of Japan.

President Roosevelt signed an Executive Order on December 19, 1941 establishing the Office of Censorship. U.S. censor stations were established for examining foreign mail destined for the US in Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands, Panama, and the Canal Zone.

(continued on page 8)

## Story of the Ill-Fated SS *Stanvac Melbourne*- continued

The earliest US censored cover in the collection is postmarked Jan. 19, 1942 from Chile (Figure 4). Another from Peru is postmarked Feb. 18, 1942 (Figure 5). It is likely these are some of the earliest dates recorded for U.S. censored mail from these countries.



Fig. 4: Early U.S. censored cover from Chile, postmarked January 19, 1942.



Fig. 5: Early U.S. censored cover from Peru, postmarked February 18, 1942.

On April 12, 1942, German submarine U-203, operating off the coast of North Carolina torpedoed the *Stanvac Melbourne* traveling in ballast and unescorted enroute from New York to Aruba, NWI Curacao. On board was a complement of 40 crewmembers and eight U.S. naval armed guards. Three crewmembers were lost while abandoning ship. The ship was crippled but not sunk. Repairs were undertaken at Charleston, SC and the ship returned to service July 2, 1942.

A second attack, this time by German submarine U-515 off Trinidad occurred Sept. 12, 1942. The one year-old ship again was in ballast and unescorted enroute from Brazil to Aruba. The ship was sunk. Her complement included 40 crewmembers and nine U.S. naval guards. One crewmember was lost. We do not know the status of James Bridges at the time of the two torpedo events. It is likely he was aboard but his name did not appear on the lists of crewmembers lost.

The Master of the *Stanvac Melbourne* was Andrew T. Lagan who survived both attacks and, after losing his vessel, became the master of the *Motor Tanker Brilliant*, also owned by Socony-Vacuum Oil Co. Lagan did not survive his third torpedo attack. On November 18, 1942, enroute from New York to Belfast carrying 90,704 barrels of fuel oil, the German submarine U-43 attacked and fatally struck, but did not sink the *Brilliant*.

The ship limped into St. Johns, Newfoundland, arriving November 24, 1942. The ship, while undertow to a repair facility, encountered heavy seas and broke apart. The forepart immediately sank carrying Master Lagan and ten others to their deaths.

In 1943 and 1944 in the North Atlantic, all three of the attacking submarines were sunk by U.S. and British naval forces. The majority of the crewmembers on U-203 and U-515 were rescued by the attacking forces. All 55 crew members on U-43 perished.

A *Stanvac Melbourne II* was built and operated from 1947 to 1960.



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### The Northwest Philatelic Library

The NPL is a 501(c)(3) corporation, independent of the  
OSS & OSS Foundation. Gifts are tax deductible

The Library is open to and serves the  
greater Northwest public.

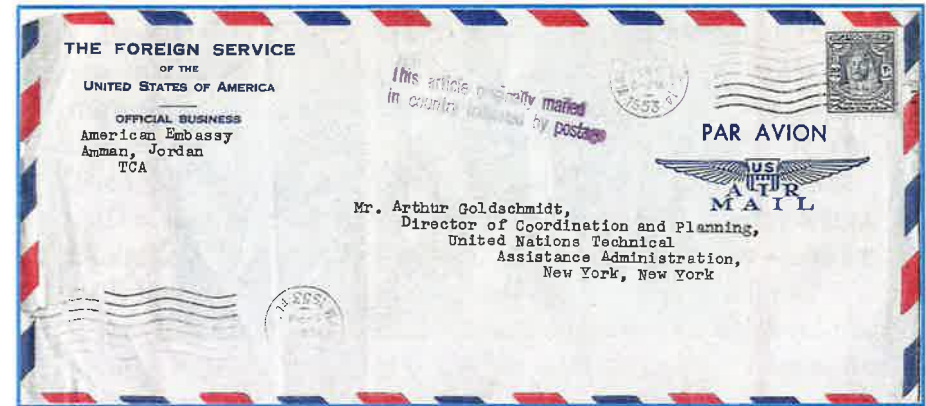
Individuals do not need to be members of the NPL or OSS to  
use the Library. Proceeds from your gift assures the future of  
the NPL and its ability to serve the public and OSS members.  
The NPL will find good homes for all of your material. Lesser  
materials are donated to youth outreach, **FIRST STAMPS**.

The NPL is an all volunteer organization.

Contact: Isaac Oelgart 971.570.5889

## A Personal Letter Sent via Diplomatic Pouch

By Dennis Ladd



This cover, sent by an American embassy staffer, has a 1953 Washington, D.C. cancellation but carries a Jordan stamp (Scott no. 283). An article written by David M. Frye in the October 2018 issue of *Auxiliary Markings* explains the sending of personal mail via diplomatic pouch:

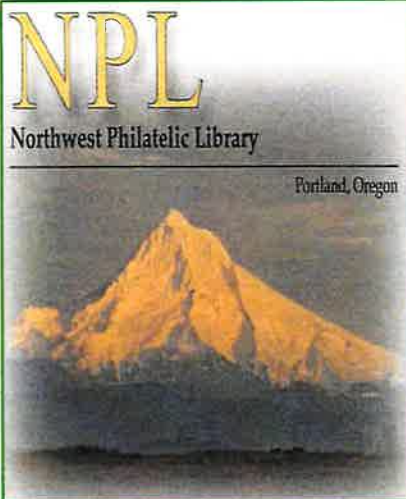
The practice at the time entailed such personal mail traveling from U.S. diplomatic offices in secured, diplomatic pouches sent as air cargo. Letters needed to bear current and sufficient postage for the country of origin. They received postmarks in Washington D.C. <sup>1</sup>

Note: 1953 was the year that King Hussein ascended to the throne at the age of 17. He ruled through decades of Mideast chaos until his death in February 1999.



Scott No. 283

<sup>1</sup> Frye, David M. U.S. (2018) Mail Traveling by Diplomatic Pouch Bears Thai Stamp. *Auxiliary Markings* vol. 15(4), 12.



### BOOK REPORTS

The Current Issue is  
Now Online at =>  
[www.nwpl.org](http://www.nwpl.org)

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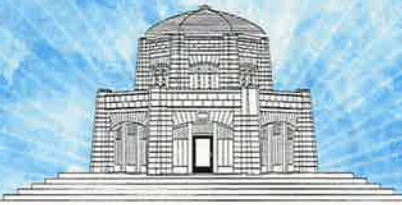
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THE NW FEDERATION OF STAMP CLUBS PRESENTS  
THE PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL PHILATELIC EXPOSITION

# PIPEX 2023

CELEBRATING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE  
OPENING OF THE COLUMBIA RIVER HIGHWAY



MAY 5-7, 2023

FRIDAY & SATURDAY 10AM-6PM SUNDAY 10AM-4PM

NEW LOCATION MONARCH HOTEL & CONFERENCE CENTER  
12566 SE 93RD AVENUE CLACKAMAS, OREGON

34 STAMP DEALER BOOTHS  
150 EXHIBIT FRAMES  
3 CONVENING SOCIETIES

AMERICAN HELVETIA PHILATELIC SOCIETY  
AMERICAN AIR MAIL SOCIETY  
PACIFIC NW POSTAL HISTORY SOCIETY

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UPTOWN STAMP SHOW OFFICIAL CORPORATE SPONSOR OF PIPEX2023

\*\*\*\*\*  
 Changed Your Phone # or Email Address?  
 Keep the issues of The Album Page coming!

Send changes of your contact information to:

Oregon Stamp Society  
 4828 NE 33rd Avenue  
 Portland, OR 97211

Or email to:  
 ephummel@easystreet.net  
 or  
 oregonstampsociety@gmail.com

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A Plea to the Stamp Collecting Community from the Oregon Stamp Society Foundation.

Last year, OSS members saw a big improvement in the monthly Album Page newsletter. The color images are a vast improvement over the previous black and white images. Of course, this improvement didn't come without additional cost. The OSSF has agreed to cover this substantial additional cost.

The OSSF sole source of income comes from donations. Donations from people like you. We are reaching out to stamp collectors asking for donations to keep this project alive.

Any donation that you can contribute to the OSSF would be greatly appreciated. This could be cash or in-kind donations. Donations can be dropped off at, or mailed to, the OSS building.

Or please contact OSSF President, Dave Epps, at [depps55@gmail.com](mailto:depps55@gmail.com).

Let's keep the Album Page in color.

## Panorama Stamp and Coin

Win and Jeanette Ibert

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 email: [heinrich.auctions@gmail.com](mailto:heinrich.auctions@gmail.com)

## Local Stamp Shows

### *Rose City Stamp Fair*

**Sat. – May 13th @ OSS Clubhouse - 9 AM - 3 PM**

Attending Dealers in no particular order:

- ◆ Charlie Mathews - World Wide Stamps and some Covers
- ◆ Cyrus Markowitz – Covers, Covers, Covers.
- ◆ Bob Burger -Wide selection of WW Stamps & Better Covers
- ◆ Isaac Oelgart (NPL Store) -US/WW Stamps & Supplies
- ◆ Larry Weinstock - Postal History & Quality WW stamps.
- ◆ Steve Frumkin - US and Worldwide – Stamps and Covers
- ◆ OSS Store Sales (Side Room) - Postage, WW Stamps & Covers

**PLEASE CALL** to reserve a table with the show manager  
Charles Mathews (503-730-7197).

Call your favorite Dealer(s) ahead of time and ask them to bring  
items you are looking to add to your collections.

### *Collector's Corner*

**Sat. May 27th @ OSS Clubhouse - 9 AM - 3 PM**

If you haven't joined in on the fun, come and see the extensive  
stocks of stamps, covers and supplies of our regular dealers:

- ◆ Charlie Mathews - World Wide Stamps and some covers.
  - ◆ Ula Mae Neligh - 19th and 20th Century Used US.
  - ◆ Isaac Oelgart (NPL STORE) - US/WW Stamps & Supplies.
  - ◆ Larry Rothman – Liquidating Rainier Philatelic Stock.
  - ◆ Steve King - US and WW stamps; postcards; postal history.
  - ◆ OSS Store Sales (Side Room) - Postage, WW Stamps & Covers
- All OSS members may come and have a table to sell or trade  
philatelic items - there are space limitations - so . . .

**PLEASE CALL** to reserve a table with the show manager  
Charles Mathews (503-730-7197) or Isaac Oelgart (971-570-5889)  
The fee is only 10% of what you sell (up to a \$20 max. fee)

## May 2023

Sun.	Mon.	Tuesday	Wed.	Thursday	Fri.	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6 Webfooters Postcard Club 9:30 am – 2
7	8	9 General Membership Meeting 2:00 pm Library Opens 1:00 pm	10	11	12	13 Rose City Stamp Fair 9 am – 3 pm NPL 9 am – 2 pm OSS Board Meeting
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23 OSS Annual General Meeting 8:00 pm General Membership Meeting 8:20 pm Library Opens 6:30 pm	24	25	26	27 Collector's Corner 9 am – 3 pm NPL 9 am – 2 pm
28	29	30	31			

### Upcoming OSS Events

2nd Tuesday: May 9th 2:00PM General Membership Meeting  
Program to be announced

4th Tuesday: May 23th 8:00PM General Membership Meeting  
Election; Program to be announced

### Events Around Town

**Westside Stamp Club:** Usually the First Monday of each month.  
(Northwest Christian Church, 13405 SW Hall Blvd, Tigard) at 1 PM.