

The Alaskan Philatelist

The Journal of the Alaska Collectors Club • American Philatelic Society Affiliate No. 218



www.AlaskaPhilatelic.org

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The Alaskan Philatelist

The Journal of the Alaska Collectors Club

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Membership information and sample issues of this journal are available from the Secretary/Treasurer. Price of a sample issue is \$2.00 (stamps OK). Membership levels are as follows:

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Peter Tompkins..... Thomas Tonozzi
Dirk van Gelderen..... Angela Watson
Jim Zuelow

Letter to The Club

Hello,

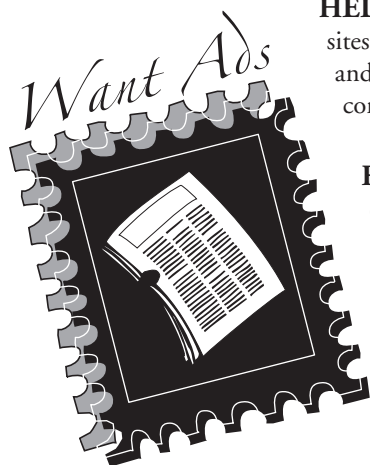
I am a postcard collector. I will exchange postcards with Alaska people. I collect stamped (posted) postcards with assorted stamps on back: Art, ethnic, views, nature, landscape, etc. I will reply to all persons that write me. Thanks and best regards,

Anselmo OLIVA
Espanoleto, 5 - 7C ida.
28932 MOSTOLES (Madrid) • Spain

AWARDS

Colopex 2000—Silver-Bronze
Colopex 2002—Silver-Bronze
STaMpsHOW 03—Silver-Bronze





HELP WANTED: Enjoy working with computers and web-sites? The ACC NEEDS YOU to help keep our website current and appealing! Check our site at www.alaskaphilatellic.org/ and contact VP Angela Watson for more information.

FOR SALE: "Grandfather's Collection" Beautiful Alaskan covers, mostly older, 7 hand colored/ drawn cachet with each order. Nice Alaskan covers. 35 covers \$110.00 Guaranteed. Victor Schwez, 10519 Casanes Ave., Downey CA 90241

INFO: ACC member Bob Beeman would like to hear from any member who could inform him about past ACC member Paul E. Smith, ACC Member 165, who previously lived at 305 Waldman Drive, Park Forest, Illinois 60466. Smith had, in 1966, been active in promoting the issuance of a stamp commemorating the 100th Anniversary of the Purchase of Alaska with then Senator Paul H. Douglas of Illinois.

HELP WANTED: I am looking for information about the Anchorage Contract Station 11. I never found anything about it and I do have the numbers 10 and 12 and the existence of Number 11 is then logical. Dirk van Gelderen, Voorkade 74, 2771 ZB Boskoop, Netherlands. Email: info@esveld.nl

WANTED: Any old postal cards or covers from the Chitna, McCarthy, Kennecott area, 1890 - 1950. Please send list to: Thomas Kinzer, P.O. Box 107, Chitna, AK 99566-0107

HELP WANTED: I am looking for mint and used postcards depicting ALASKA LIGHTHOUSES. Russell Bartlett, 5 Saint Clare Street, Braintree, MA 02184-8239

WANTED: Any era postal cards (government preprinted stamps, not picture) used in Alaska. No philatelic, please. Don Glickstein, 1300 University St. #9G, Seattle WA 98101. Email: glickwolf@earthlink.net

WANTED: Censored civilian mail from Alaska and Western Canada from World War II. Eric Knapp, 4201 Folker Street, Unit C102, Anchorage, AK 99508. Email: eknapp@gci.net

WANTED: Mail from the gold rush era Alaska forts. Eric Knapp, 4201 Folker Street, Unit C102, Anchorage, AK 99508. Email: eknapp@gci.net

LOOKING FOR JFK FDCs: I notice that my interest in the 5-cent JFK commemorative stamp issued nationally appears on your web-site. So I ask: Do you have or do you know anybody who might have any 5-cent JFK FDCs from Alaska (i.e. covers postmarked May 29, 1964 with the 5-cent Kennedy stamp? By the way, two more cities can be added to this list: Moose Pass and Seward. Contact Henry B. Scheuer at 800-444-1155.

TAP DEADLINES

ISSUE	DEADLINE
1st Quarter	February 1
2nd Quarter	May 1
3rd Quarter	August 1
4th Quarter	November 1

Alaska Philatelic Cover Catalog Volume 1 & 2

Volume 2 of the Alaska Philatelic Cover Catalog, covering the Alaska Collectors Club, the Gastineau Philatelic Society and the Northern Lights Stamp Club is now available.

The catalog features illustrations of all major and minor covers issued by the three clubs.

The catalog is 8 ½ x 11 loose-leaf format punched for a three ring binder.

Prices:

Volume 2:

\$25.00

Volume 1, Revised Edition:

\$25.00

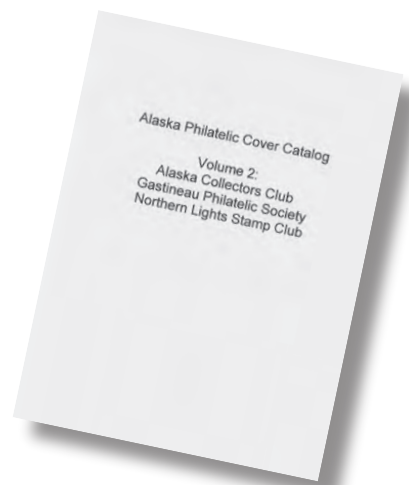
Original Volume 1 Update:

\$3.00

(All prices are postpaid)

For orders or more information, contact:

Eric Knapp
4201 Folker St., Unit C102
Anchorage, AK 99508



President's Message

by Jim Zuelow (jimzuelow@aol.com)

Your Alaska Collectors' Club Board has been having an email meeting for the past several weeks. I'm glad to report that 100% of the directors and officers are taking part (plus Auction Manager Terry Shaw & Anchorage Philatelic Society President Dave Schwantes)! So far, we have addressed the topics of the 2008 & 2009 ACC Sustaining Member Covers, and are now considering changes to the terms of office for the officers and directors. IF any changes are approved by the Board, they would go to the membership for a ye or nea vote in accord with our current Bylaws which are found on our website at www.Aaskaphilatellic.org (the current Catalog of Alaska Statehood Postmarks, 1959-1999 is found at www.alaskacollectorsclub.nl. If you would like to be included, just contact any member of the Board or myself. We need YOUR ideas!

Some current members of the ACC have contacted me recently expressing their interest in a census of early Alaska covers and cards from 1867 through 1899. Guess what? One of our contributing members and former officer, Bob McKain of Pennsylvania, began compiling such a census over 15 years ago. The results of his first efforts were published in The Alaska Philatelist in 1994-95. In his own words: "The list is rather self explanatory. It goes by town, the date of the cancel, the type as listed in Helbock's Postmarks of Territorial Alaska, the reference where the cover was last reported, is there an illustration in the reference, the price realized in auction --- if known ---, and the addressee or other pertinent data from the cover/card itself to identify the item."

Bob's research covers Afognak through Yakutat, plus US Post Office in Alaska, and the early RPO's. You can find the results of this census in past TAP issues as follows (my summary):

Part 1: Afognak - Dyea, TAP# 165, Vol 30, No. 1, pp 14-17.

Part 2: Eagle - Kenai, TAP# 167, Vol 30, No. 3, pp 71-74.

Part 3: Ketchikan - Roberts, TAP# 169, Vol 30, No. 5, pp 127-130.

Part 4: St. Michael - Wells Fargo, TAP# 172, Vol 31, No.2, pp 41-45

Hopefully, Bob will be able to publish an updated version of his original census in a later edition of TAP. If you have a cover that might not be included in the earlier census, please contact him at 57vette@comcast.net.

This brings me to the last "news item" of this issue. ACC Secretary-Treasurer & TAP Editor Eric Knapp has been working on a comprehensive index of past TAP issues. As I understand it, he plans to issue a CD index of TAP subjects & topics under the auspices of the ACC. The details of this arrangement have not yet been worked out between Eric and the other members of the Board. However, once they have, such an index will

Secretary Treasurer's Report

Eric Knapp (eknapp@gci.net)

Summer is rapidly waning here in Alaska. The leaves are changing color and are starting to fall off. It has been raining al day today and I suspect there will be snow on the mountains when the clouds lift. Fall is arriving and then onto winter fun.

The news of Sarah Palins selection as John McCain's running mate has made for a couple of real surreal weeks here. It is kind of fun to watch the nations and the worlds press talk about Alaska, and even get a few things right. The photo below is my small claim to fame. It was taken at the Polar Lights first day of sale last October.

Jim Zuelow will be covering most of the club news so I won't try to add to it.

We have one new member this quarter. Please join me in welcoming our new member.

#700: Michael Noreika, Worchester, MA

Collecting interests: Expeditions and Explorations, Literature, General History and Geography.

Until next time, happy collecting.



be extremely valuable to all current and future ACC members. The Alaska Philatelist has been and remains THE source of information about Alaska's postal history and closely related areas over the years. Having the ability to easily access the information contained in the past issues of TAP will contribute to the success and growth of the Alaska Collectors' Club.

What are your suggestions concerning the ACC?

Jim Zuelow

Events to Celebrate 50th Anniversary of Alaska

The following is a list of official statehood events between now and the 50th Anniversary on January 3rd. Updated information can be found at the Official State website (www.gov.state.ak.us/ASCC/events.php)

Oct. 4, 2008 – The Forum of Young Alaskans. A statewide conversation of the youth and young adults from around Alaska coming together to discuss the pressing issues and current challenges facing their generation. The Forum is based in three major hubs (Anchorage, Juneau and Fairbanks) as well as smaller hubs around the state.

October 16-18, 2008 – Alaska Historical Society Annual Conference. AHS has partnered with UAA to present a multi-disciplinary conference themed Alaska Visionaries: Seekers, Leaders and Dreamers. Paper presentations, panels and speakers will fill this weekend which culminates on Alaska Day with an exciting statewide civic conversation and special guest lecture. University of Alaska Eight Stars of Gold event. Contact Maggie Grega at 786-4851.

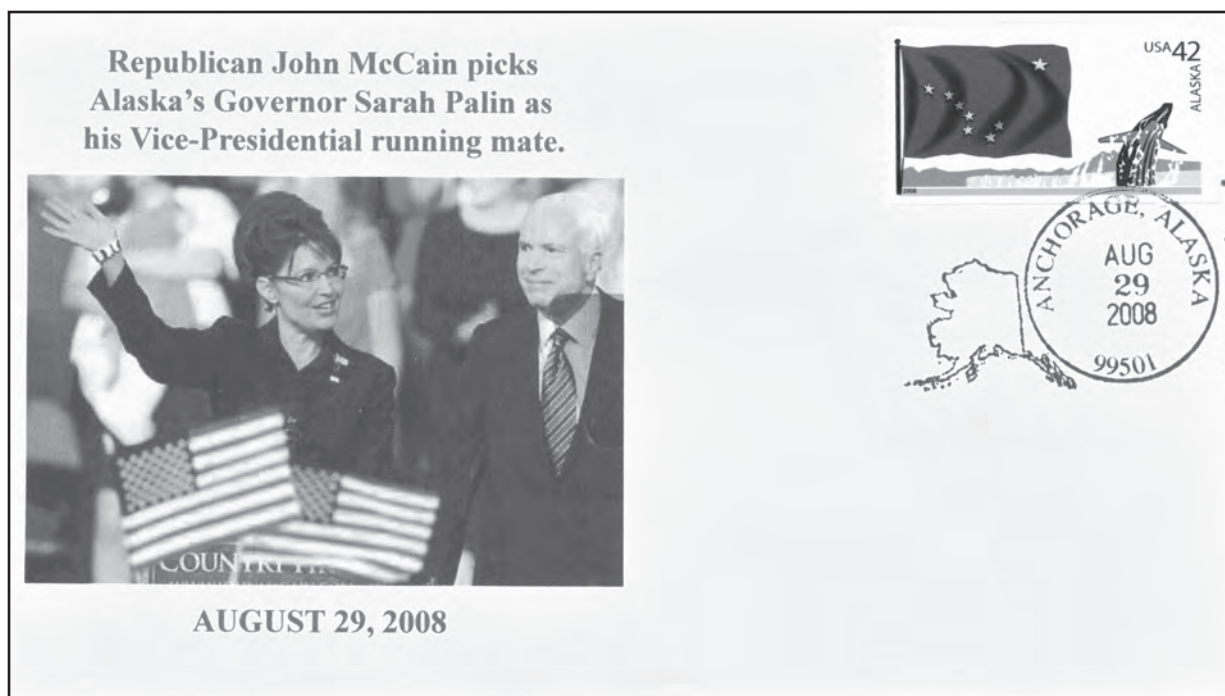
November 14th, 2008 – “50 Days to 50 Years”. Up-scale dinner at the Captain Cook Hotel honoring all of our Governors. Contact Anchorage Celebration Committee Coordinator Tenny Owens 277-7271.

January 3rd, 2009 – The 50th Anniversary Gala. National and International dignitaries have been invited to this historic event to be held at the new Dena’ina Convention Center. Contact Anchorage Celebration Committee Coordinator Tenny Owens 277-7271.

Jan. 3-6, 2009 – The Conference of Young Alaskans 2009. A select group of 55 youth delegates (16-25 years old) from across the state will be chosen to participate in three days of intense discussion and debate about the issues present in Alaska today and those we will face in the future.

January 3rd, 2009 – Commemorative stamp issued by U.S. Postal Service. The USPS unveiled the design for the 50th Anniversary of Alaska Statehood. The stamp features a photo of musher Dee Dee Jonrowe (although she is not recognizable). The location of the First Day of Issue ceremony has not been finalized. It will either be in Anchorage or Juneau.

Newly Available Cover



Sarah Palin cover is available for \$12 with the Alaska State Flag stamp, and \$10 for the United States Flag stamp from the Flags of our Nation coil. Contact : David Schwantes, 8148 E. 4th Ave., Anchorage, AK 99504 david41@alaska.com

Alaska Books Reviewed

by Eric Knapp

One of my goals for the year was to get my "to read" pile of books read. I have been doing pretty well and I thought I would share some of them with you. There will be other reviews in future editions. Or, if you have a book review, please send it to me and I will publish it.

Aunt Phil's Trunk, Volumes 1 – 3

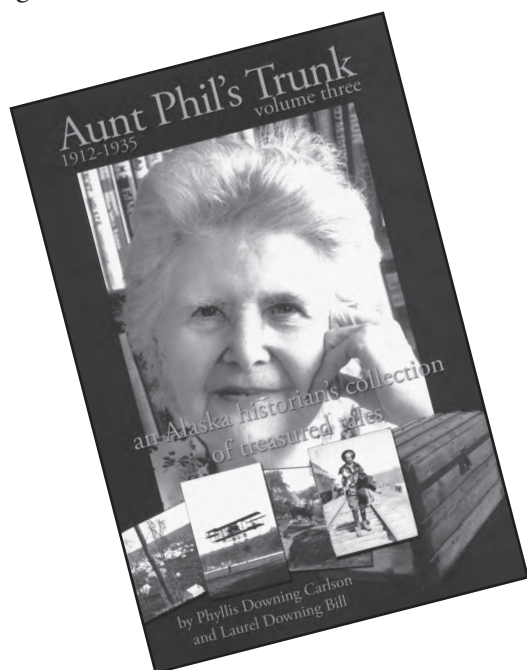
By Phyllis Downing Carlson, Laurel Downing Bill

Starting with a weekly column in the "Anchorage Chronicle" from 2002 to 2004, Laurel Bill has been taking the research of her late aunt, historian Phyllis Downing Carlson, and turning them into a series of great articles on Alaska history. These original columns were expanded on and turned into the start of this book series. The result is a great series of books on the history of Alaska.

Three of a planned four volume series have now been published. Spanning time from Alaska's pre-history to 1935, these three volumes tell Alaska's history in a fun and informative manner. Well known and unknown events are well covered. The books are well illustrated with a large number of period photographs.

These books are a fun way to get an education on Alaska's history. They are great fun and they taught this long time Alaskan things he didn't know. Always a good result in a book about history.

All three books are available at Amazon.com and at many great bookstores.



A Pocketful of History: Four Hundred Years of America—One State Quarter at a Time

By Jim Noles

As the 50 State Quarter program comes to an end it seems appropriate that a book should come out about it. Luckily the book is a good one. Jim Noles has written a book that is informative without being dry and fun without being too fun (if that makes sense).

Starting with an introduction describing how the program began. The idea came from Canada's Provincial quarters issued during the Canada 125 celebrations. It then gives a description of every coin and what it depicts, from Caesar Rodney (whom I had never heard of) on the Delaware quarter to King Kamehameha I on the Hawaii quarter.

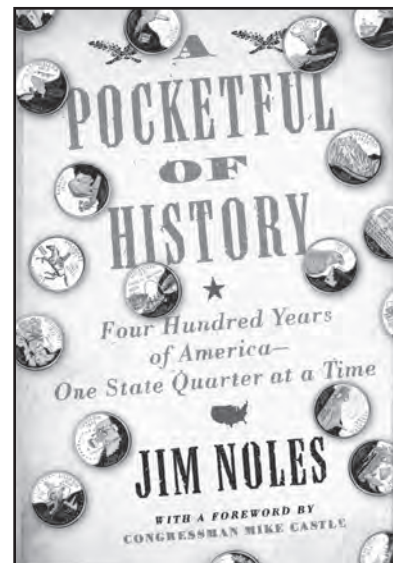
Noles then tells a story about each coin and how it relates. He takes the three quarters that depict bison to tell the story of the bison, their near destruction and their comeback.

He is not shy about talking about the designs he likes, the ones he doesn't like and the ones he just doesn't understand. He also briefly discusses the decision making process that each state took in creating the designs. He also lists the number of coins minted for each quarter for the coins completed up to the time the manuscript was typeset for the book. So far, the Virginia quarter had the largest mint run.

For the Alaska quarter, which depicts a brown bear, he talked with a man who was mauled by one. The man's final comment was that "the bear was being a bear."

I did find a couple of minor errors, but then every book has these and I suspect they will be fixed in future printings.

This is a fun book about the 50 State Quarters. A program which I admit has gotten me started collecting coins again, although not nearly as heavily as I collect stamps.



Newly Reported Cancels

reported by Robert Beeman & Steve Sims

Tatitlek, AK August 20, 1954: Newly reported Double Circle postmark (RB)



Circle, Alaska November 25, 1963: Newly discovered, recently reported 4-bars postmark on philatelic cover. (RB)



Douglas, Alaska ~ Unlisted Statehood Era Postmark
September 8, 1964: Newly found and nicely struck 4-bars postmark on philatelic cover signed by postmaster. (RB)



Afognak, Alaska November 19, 1963: Newly discovered double circle postmark on philatelic cover (RB)



Fort Richardson, AK May 28, 1964: Newly reported receiving mark (RB)



Kiana, Alaska ~ Newly Reported Statehood Postmark
January 8, 1964: Unlisted 4-bars postmarks tie 8¢ air mail postage to philatelic cover. (RB)



Chicken, Alaska January 24, 1964: Newly discovered and recently reported 4-bars postmark on philatelic cover. (RB)



Larsen Bay, Alaska ~ Unlisted Statehood Era Postmark
September 7, 1965: Newly discovered double circle postmark ties postage to philatelic cover. (RB)

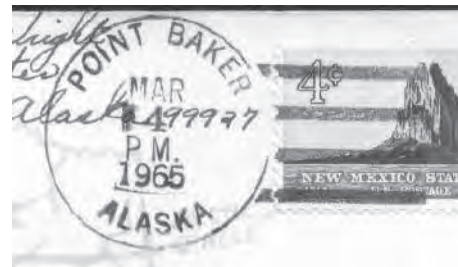


Newly Reported Cancels

Medfra, Alaska (DPO) ~ Newly Reported Statehood Postmark February 2, 1965: Nicely struck unlisted 4-bars postmark on philatelic cover signed by acting postmaster. (RB)



Point Baker, Alaska ~ Newly Reported Statehood Postmark March 4, 1965: Nicely struck unlisted 4-bars postmark on air mail cover. (RB)



Nondalton, Alaska ~ Unlisted Statehood Era Postmark February 23, 1965: Newly discovered double circle postmark ties 1¢ postage to air rate cover. (RB)



Rampart, Alaska ~ Newly Reported Statehood Postmark November 29, 1963: Unlisted Statehood era 4-bars postmark on philatelic cover (RB)



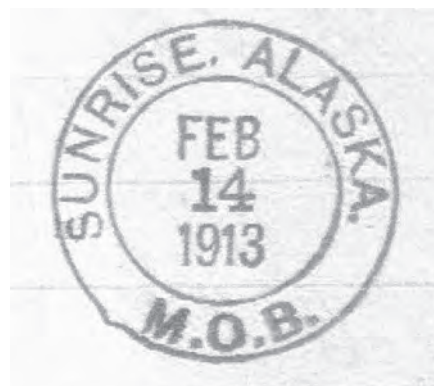
Nulato, Alaska ~ Unlisted Statehood Era Postmarks March 4, 1964: Shown below are a pair of previously unreported postal markings for the Nulato post office. Although the 4-bars is the only marking that ties postage to the cover, it is now known that the double circle hand-stamp on insert card was also available for use during this time. Both the cover and insert card are signed by postmaster, Simeon Mountain. (RB)



Sitka, AK – December 14, 1942: Unlisted double circle postmark. (SS)



Sunrise, AK – February 14, 1913: Unlisted Money Order Business (MOB) on enclosure. (SS)



Arctic Air Mercy Flight Label Mystery Revisited

by Eric Knapp

The website The Philatelic Database (www.philatelic-database.com) has a short article by William Cochrane.

The article discusses many of the points we have discussed in these pages as to where and when the labels were created.

The interesting thing that Mr. Cochrane points out is a possible source for the vignette. He notes that the artwork for the Arctic Air Mercy Flights labels (figure 1) is very similar to a series of stamps issued by Norway to



help fund a flight to the North Pole by Roald Amundsen (figure 2).

The Norway stamps, Scott #104-110, show a polar bear and airplane in a very similar format to the Arctic Air labels. He speculates that the Norway stamps inspired the design of the Arctic Air labels.

The question is still open as to who made the labels and why.



Back Issues of TAP

1959 - 1973: Computer scanned & edited copies

1976 - 1984: Quality photocopies

1984 - 2001: Originals & quality photocopies

\$10.00 for six issues or calendar year.

\$2.00 for single issues

Shipping charges: \$2.00 for first 6 issues, \$1.00 for each additional six issues or portion thereafter, \$5.00 maximum on any order. Limited quantities available. Refunds for those not available. Donations of back issues appreciated.



New PO Found!

Fairbanks Gold Rush Town Station

by Robert Beeman

A new Alaska post office has been identified and catalogued for Fairbanks Gold Rush Town. It is speculated that the Post Office Dept operated a staffed kiosk at the Fairbanks theme park for a single season during the summer of 1967. The known postmark dates range only from May 27 thru August 2, 1967. The author would be interested in hearing from anyone who may have more information regarding this postal station or if it operated at any time other than the summer of 1967. Please contact the author at bistrofil@comcast.net or the Statehood Catalogue editor: info@esveld.nl if you have updates or additional information regarding this office.

Duck Stamp Error Proves Embarrassing

WRONG PHONE NUMBER SENDS CALLER TO SEX LINE

Associated Press

WASHINGTON - People calling a federal phone number to order duck stamps are instead greeted by a phone-sex line, due to a printing error the government says would be too expensive to correct.

The carrier card for the duck stamp transposes two numbers, so instead of listing 1-800-782-6724, it lists 1-800-872-6724. The first number spells out 1-800-STAMP24, while the second number spells out 1-800-TRAMP24.

People calling that second number are welcomed by "Intimate Connections" and enticed by a husky female voice to "talk only to the girls that turn you on," for \$1.99 a minute.

Duck stamps, which cost \$15 a piece, are required to hunt migratory waterfowl. The government uses nearly all the revenue to purchase waterfowl habitat for the National Wildlife Refuge System. In 2006-2007, the latest figures available, duck stamp purchases brought in nearly \$22 million.

This year's stamps, which feature a pair of northern pintail ducks, went on sale July 1 and are good through June 30 of next year. The error will not be corrected until next year's duck stamps.

The Fish and Wildlife Service, which administers the program, printed about 3.5 million duck stamps attached to cards with the wrong number. An agency spokeswoman, Rachel Levin, said it would cost \$300,000 to reprint them.

"I don't know that it would be worth it to do a re-print," she said Thursday. "That's a lot of money we can be using for wildlife conservation. With all of the needs for conservation, it doesn't make sense to divert money away from an important cause." For those people who like to dial by letter, the card does include the proper 1-800-STAMP24.

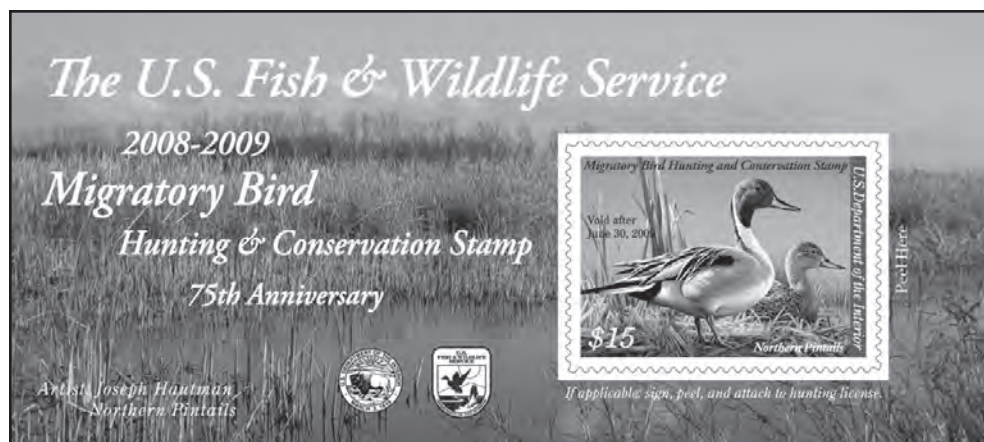
"As best we know, it was a typographical error that was not caught," Levin said, stressing that the stamps are still valid.

The agency first learned of the mistake a few days ago, when a duck stamp owner informed them about the glitch. Levin said the agency has not received any complaints.

The error, which was first reported Wednesday by Denver TV station KUSA, is limited to self-adhesive versions of the stamps. The moistened version, which is printed in much smaller numbers, does not come with a carrier card.

The government uses a contractor, Ashton Potter Security Printers of Williamsville, N.Y., to print the duck stamps. Levin said she did not know whether the error was made by the government or by the company. Ashton Potter's president and chief executive, Barry Switzer, said that the company was provided with the wrong telephone number.

"We reproduced the wrong number correctly," he said. "We regret this whole situation happened, but we did our job properly."



St. Terese, a Shrine AND a Post Office

by Steve Sims

Just north of Juneau is a Roman Catholic shrine dedicated to Saint Terese.

Saint Terese was born in France in 1873. She became a Carmelite nun at age 15 after appealing directly to the Pope to be allowed to join. She was considered underage.

Despite her desire for the dramatic and expansive, Therese developed a simple spirituality, based on childlike trust and confidence in God. The spirituality of her "little way" was not about extraordinary things - but rather about doing simple things of life well and with extraordinary love.

She died at 24 of tuberculosis. She was canonized in 1924. According to Donald Orth's Dictionary of Alaska Placenames, the shrine was completed in 1933 and named for Theres de Lisieux (1873-97). USPO records show that Rev. William Vasseur was appointed postmaster on June 11, 1938. The appointment of Rev. E.A. McNamara was made October 4, 1945, but rescinded January 14, 1946. William McIntyre, St. Theres' last postmaster served from January 14, 1946 until the office was closed on August 5 that same year.

For a short time the shrine had its own post office. The office was inaugurated on July 20 1938, by Postmaster General James A Farley. The post office was discontinued in 1946. The shrine and the old post office building still exist to this day.

The church issued a first day of post office cachet for the shrine. It is shown here as figure 1. This particular copy is signed by the Postmaster.

This fund raising letter was included in some of the covers. The full letter is shown in figure 2. This copy of the letter came from Steve Sims.

This is the text of the fund raising letter (actual scan of letter on following page):

HERE'S GOOD NEWS TO YOU AND FOR YOU

Twenty-three miles from Juneau, Alaska, on the shores of Lynn Canal, there is being built a retreat house and Shrine, to be dedicated as a permanent memorial to His Excellency, Most Reverend J. R. Crimont, S. J. D. D., our beloved Bishop of Alaska, who has so unselfishly devoted forty-five years of his life to the work of the Church and the people of Alaska.

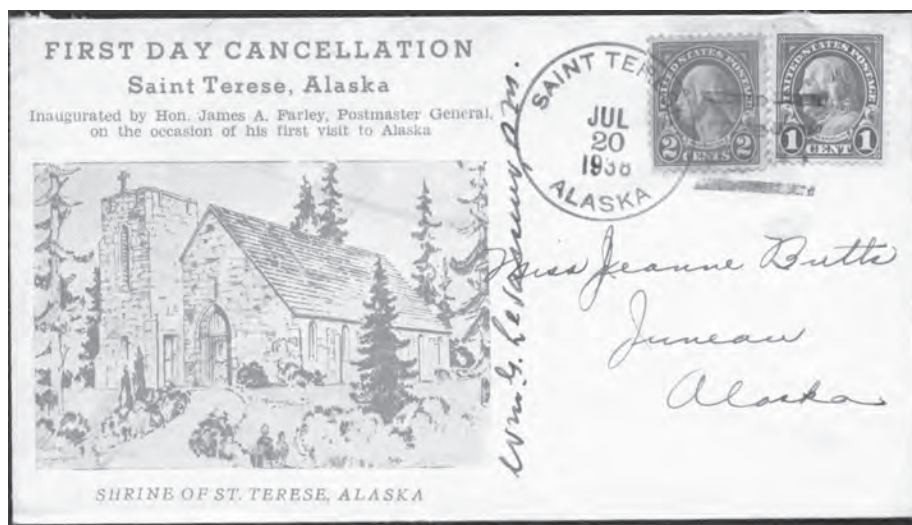
The retreat house when finished will contain ten living rooms, a chapel, social hall and kitchen. Accommodations will be available to anyone, irrespective of color, creed or race, and in fact at the service of all seeking the consolation of a retreat under experienced spiritual directors.

The chapel will be built of high grade stone, quarried adjacent to our property, and will be used besides a place of worship as a repository for a number of beautiful paintings which have been presented as gifts to the Shrine. These paintings are to be placed in the chapel as soon as it is finished. From Ireland we have received a beautiful set of vestments and other religious articles for the chapel.

We have been encouraged in our good work by the favors granted to those who contributed towards the building of the Shrine in honor of The Little Flower.

You can assist in the building of the Shrine by purchasing a stone to be placed in the Shrine building. Stones are sold from one dollar to five dollars each. Anyone donating one hundred dollars or more will have his name inscribed on the plaque to be placed in the Shrine with a perpetual remembrance at the Shrine in the holy sacrifice of the Mass.

*Please address correspondence to
REV. Wm. G. LEVASSEUR, S. J.,
Shrine of Saint Terese,
SAINT TERESE, ALASKA.*



Address Correspondence To
Rev. Wm. G. LeVasseur, S. J., Chancellor
SAINT TERESE, ALASKA

Under Direction His Excellency
Most Reverend
J. R. Crimont, S. J. D. D.
Juneau, Alaska

Shrine of Saint Terese

PATRONESS OF ALASKA
SAINT TERESE, ALASKA



SHRINE OF SAINT TERESE, ALASKA

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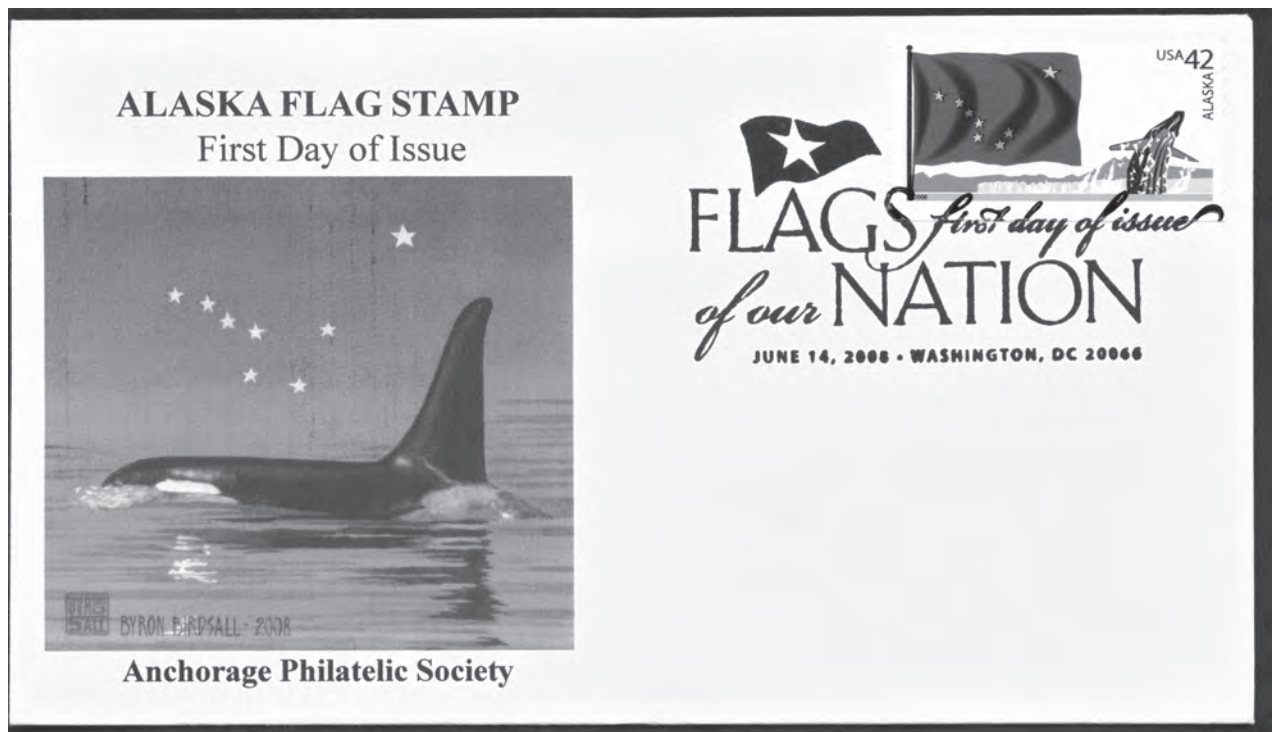
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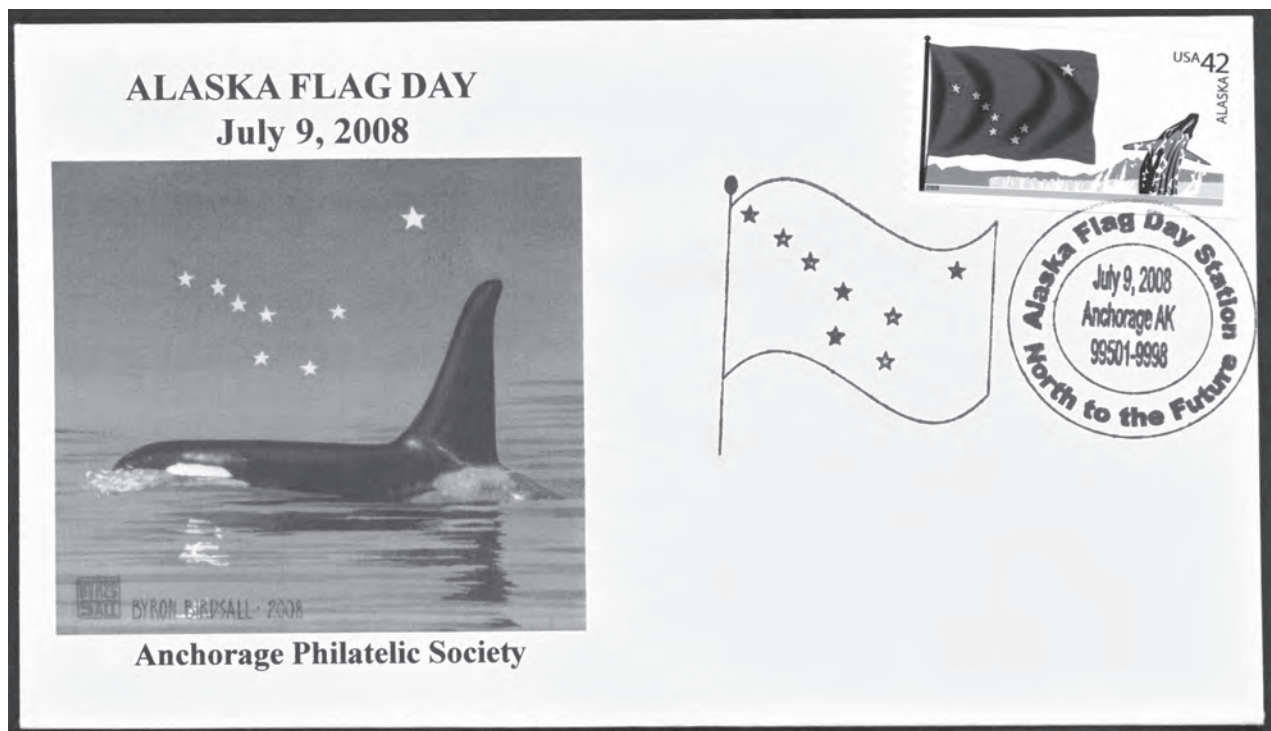
Please address correspondence to

REV. WM. G. LEVASSEUR, S. J.,
Shrine of Saint Terese,
SAINT TERESE, ALASKA.

Newly Available Covers



*First day of Alaska Flags of our Nation stamp -or- Alaska Flag Day cover featuring Alaska Flag stamp.
Each are \$3.00 plus an SASE.*



Both of these covers are available from: Anchorage Philatelic Society, P.O. Box 10-2214, Anchorage, AK 99510

Thank you to all who provided material to make this issue possible. They include: Jim Zuelow, Eric Knapp, Angela Watson, Steve Sims, Bob McKain, David Schwantes and Bob Beeman.

Special Cover for Joe Redington, Sr.

by Dave Schwantes

Joe Redington Sr. is known as the "FATHER OF THE IDITAROD". When he told people of his goal to run a sled dog race Anchorage to Nome, they thought he was crazy. However, in 1973 the first race was run. Joe didn't enter that race. He wanted to, but he had promised a \$50,000 purse, and he hadn't raised it, so he dropped out to continue to raise the money. He eventually mortgaged his own home to get the money.

He completed fifteen Iditarod races, and although he never won the race, he did finish as high as fifth two times. He hadn't run the race for a number of years before 1997, but decided to enter the 25th anniversary of the event. It was to be his last Iditarod. He developed cancer and passed away just two years later.

Joe became internationally famous for his Iditarod involvement, and aided many entrants from foreign coun-

tries in their first Iditarod competitions by teaching them the sport and supplying dogs for them. Joe had complete faith in the savvy and power of the Alaskan huskies. He even led the first dog-team expedition to the summit of 20,320-foot Mt. McKinley in 1979.

This special cover was made just for Joe. The large 25 represents the 25th running of the Iditarod Race. The 50 represents fifty years of mushing for Joe, and the 80 represents his age at that time. He carried just 50 of these covers over the trail, and signed each of them. I was lucky enough to be at the finish line on March 15th when he crossed to the cheering of hundreds of fans. Joe's name will forever be linked to this great race. He passed away on June 24, 1999, and this past February was inducted into the Alaska Sports Hall of Fame.



Cover for the 2008 Alaska State Fair

Send \$3.00 plus a SASE to:

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Email Request Yields Historical Perspective

Editor's Note: In response to an email request from our club president, Bob McKain writes of how his personal history intersects with that of the ACC.

----- Original message -----

From: Jimzuelow@aol.com

Bob McKain,

First, I want to thank you for the listing of Alaska Highway Construction Camps, the Brief History of the Alaska Highway, and listing of US units Engaged on the Alaska Highway Construction; these were great TAP articles & a significant contribution to the ACC!

ACC Director Dick Wood, Juneau, has expressed an interest in a census of pre-1900 Alaska covers. I know you published one in the TAP in 1995 or thereabouts. I don't know if you have this in a database that could be emailed, but Dick is interested. Eric Knapp has told us he has about completed his index of all past TAP issues. I think he plans to sell a CD version, most likely through the ACC (the details are not yet worked out). Have you been able to update the cover census?

Again, thanks for your many contributions to Alaska philately --- and I'll look forward to more in the future!

Jim Zuelow

PS: Would you consider writing an article about how and when you became involved with Alaskan Postal History?

Dear Jim,

Thanks so much for your kind words. History fascinates me and sometimes I go overboard when researching and as you know what floats one person's boat doesn't do much for the other person's. The most frustrating thing that most writers note is that once you put everything down and eagerly wait for additions and responses from the readers - nothing happens. Anyhow to move on. I have the Alaska pre-1900 cover synopsis on a floppy disk somewhere around the house. I updated it briefly after the series of articles but the formatting is probably shot by now. I think I used word. I'd be happy to pass it on or make a copy of what I have if someone wants info for research. Much of the additional data came from old time ACC members who are no longer with us. Seely Hall and George Hall were big time contributors along with many auction catalogs that I received

(when they were free). Right now I'm very interested in the Alaska Highway construction and covers from the military (1942-43) and civilian contractors.

Now - the personal side. I used to work for a large corporation headquartered in Pittsburgh that moved us from Pittsburgh to Raleigh to Seattle to San Francisco and then back to Pittsburgh in 1978 and they were bought out in 1986. It was when we lived on the west coast from 1973-78 that I got to Alaska twice and became fascinated with its postal history. I think I joined the club in 1976. About that time I also met Bill Helbock and still remain friendly with he and Cath to this day. We had both joined the ACC and I think Bill published the bulletin under his house name "Raven Press". We became officers in the club and about that time there were many problems with the current club membership i.e., poor delivery of TAP, missing funds, missing library items, lack of communication, etc. Bill and I were heavily into Alaska postal history at the time, so he proceeded to continue publishing TAP at a loss and we both contributed long articles to fill it up while begging current members to please send money and we would try to keep it going. Several old and original members also pitched in. We figured if the club died, it would be hard to resurrect.

I sold my Alaska collection thru Frajola years ago but the postal history of the State continued to fascinate me. I still have a voluminous collection of Branches and Stations although not updated for several years. I also have pretty large collections of Alaska and Western Canada APO's from WWII and was fortunate to have edited the Alaska section of Helbock's recent book of WWII censor markings. This got me started on the Alaska Highway research.

Well I guess I've rambled enough - you can use what you want in TAP but probably not advisable to air out the club's dirty laundry in TAP - there may still be some old wounds out there. I know I've had a few accusations made against me by those who did not know what was going on.

I am a professional engineer and am 64 years old. I grew up in Virginia Beach, VA and went thru school in that state. Having lived in Pittsburgh for 30 years now I consider myself a died in the wool Pittsburgh Steelers fan! I collect all postal history involved with Pittsburgh and its mail environs and have an extensive collection of all of the machine type cancels used in the City from 1872-1930.

If you need more from me let me know - always glad to help out.

Best Regards,
Bob McKain