



# Lambda Philatelic Journal

Publication of the Gay & Lesbian History on Stamps Club

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The **Lambda Philatelic Journal** is published quarterly by the Gay and Lesbian History on Stamps Club (GLHSC). GLHSC is a study unit of the American Topical Association, Number 458, and an affiliate of the American Philatelic Society, Number 205. GLHSC is also a member of the American First Day Cover Society, Number 72.

The objectives of the club are:

To promote and foster an interest in the collection, study and dissemination of knowledge of worldwide philatelic material that depicts:

- ▶ notable men and women and their contributions to society for whom historical evidence exists of homosexual or bisexual orientation.
- ▶ mythology, historical events and ideas significant in the history of gay culture.
- ▶ flora and fauna scientifically proven having prominent homosexual behavior.
- ▶ even though emphasis is placed on this aspect of stamp collecting, the Club strongly encourages other philatelic endeavors.

**MEMBERSHIP :**

Yearly dues are \$8.00 per calendar year for U.S., Canadian and Mexican residents; \$10.00 or 12 IRC per year for foreign residents to help defray the higher postage costs.

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The Lambda Philatelic Journal thrives on philatelic articles original or reprinted and alternative viewpoints for publication. Members are also encouraged to place free advertisements of philatelic interest. The Editor reserves the right to edit all materials submitted for publication.

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# Development of Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual History Stamps

by Julie Murphy

It began as a project for my design class at the Cleveland Institute of Art. The instructor presented us with her objectives for a set of four postage stamps. I took to it immediately.

When each of us was asked a week later to present our themes for the stamp project to the class, I waited quietly on the outside of the group, knowing and strongly believing in my thematic choice. I also knew that I'd be outing myself the moment I spoke.

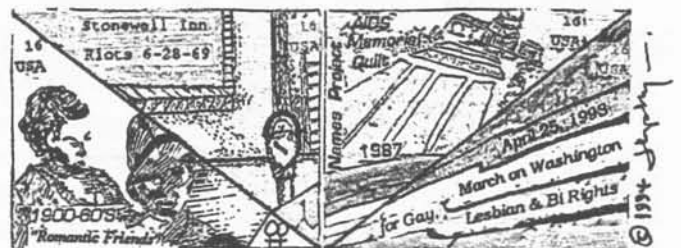
"My stamps will be on gay and lesbian history," I clearly stated. The room fell dead silent. The instructor's eyes registered several responses, but settled on one that relayed pride to me. I felt a lot of support from her. However, I also reminded myself that my classmates, nearly all of whom are half my age, would need about a week before they'd speak to me again. I was a pariah for exactly that long. I was OK with them after that (kids are so understanding...).

We had 5-6 weeks to complete the stamp project. I checked out every single book all the local libraries had on anything to do with gay, lesbian and bisexual history. I utilized our small and struggling gay and lesbian archives at the Western Reserve Historical Society. From these sources, I went to work on the images I was going to use, what shape I wanted them to be, size, color use, etc. It was the most excited I had been over any project I'd been assigned all year.

In my research phase, which was most of the project, I connected with Meme Bowling of the New York City Public Library. She mentioned Ed Centeno's name and GLHSC. Ed and I played phone tag for some time. I was buoyed by his interest. However, between school deadlines, critiques and the rest of reality seeping in, I lost my zing with the project.

I still loved the project and was thrilled that my history would have, at least, one set of stamps done on it. My friends were excited about the project. A local historian who's with the Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Historian Society was interested in a finished set for the National Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Historians group. She said they may be willing to push the post office to do them in conjunction with their push for a Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual History Month. Even with all of this upbeat support, I lost my enthusiasm.

My original concept changed little through the stamps' development. I wanted to start with a butch/femme lesbian couple of the 20's or 30's. I used an image from a local gay and lesbian newspaper. The second stamp was to be of Stonewall to commemorate the 1969 riots. The third was to recognize the AIDS crisis and the Names Project AIDS Memorial Quilt as it was laid out in Washington, DC in 1987. The fourth was to be of the 1993 March on Washington. Popular gay, lesbian and bisexual symbols of each time period were to be included, along with the usual concerns for all stamps: price, size, shape, etc.

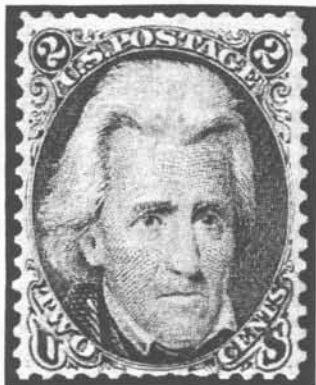


Because there was so much information that I felt was necessary to put on the stamps (our history being as unknown as it is to the world, and ourselves), the stamps were far too detailed. They were modified - MANY TIMES! The most difficult part was finding an image of the Stonewall Inn. I've taken what I've done from a lone image in Martin Duberman's book, Stonewall. The bar front was boarded up - not much with which to work. I couldn't afford a quick weekend trip to Greenwich Village to see it for myself.

I'm still in love with my idea (true sign of an artist, eh?) and the project itself. I was, however, disappointed with how the final images turned out. As Ed told me when we finally met at the Gay Games - It doesn't matter that they're not the end-all and/or ready for issuance. It's just important that someone start with the idea and let it take off from there. Someone also has to work on making it happen. And, that's where I've left it. I still laugh at the joy I would have should the set ever be issued, and I was able to send the first day of issue cancellation on a postcard to my mother!

\*\*\*\*\*

The author was born in Phoenix, AZ in 1959. She graduated from Cal State Northridge (now known as the epicenter of the January 1994 LA earthquake) with a B.A. in Child Development. She has worked 10 years with emotionally disturbed youth. She is also a certified electronic technician. Julie is now at the Cleveland Institute of Art pursuing her third degree - in Industrial Design. She would like to be a toy designer (children's or adult, she's not too sure!) She loves to travel, read trashy lesbian novels and proud of her bronze medal in softball from Gay Games IV. Currently single with little time to pursue the woman of her dreams, but maybe that woman will find Julie. Julie is very out and loves that most of all!



## My First Time Was With A Lesbian!

by Richard Lee Peavler

During my misspent youth, I accumulated hoards of stamps. Bright, pretty little things that I would hinge and stick in a big World Album. I would then sit and fret because there were still so many empty spaces left in the book. On one of those very rare occasions when I was actually minding my own business, innocently passing time, this great big old brute of a hunky U.S. #73 walked over to me and literally knocked me off my feet. Ohmagawd! The dreaded 2-penny, Andrew Jackson black. The infamous heart breaker, "Black Jack"! He grabbed me and swept me to heights of passion seldom seen outside cheap, sleazy romance novels!

Time has marched relentlessly onward, but my love affair with Black Jack has endured the tests. Early on, however, I learned that old Jack was a hard and cheatin' stamp. But hey, no one's perfect, so what the heck? At least I don't have to cook him breakfast!

While in college, I became great pals with a slightly older woman, who happened to be a lesbian. We knocked around and generally ran amuck everywhere together. One fateful day, I noticed an ad for a stamp auction being held in our fair city. I wanted to go, but I always hesitate to try out new things. So, I called my friend and coerced, I mean persuaded, her to go with me for moral support.

The day of the auction was one of Kansas City's famous late winter, early spring snowfalls. Great big, fat, fluffy white flakes plopped down from the sky and melt the moment they hit concrete and asphalt. However, they pile up on bushes, fences, trees; whatever is at hand, only to disappear in 24 hours with a blink of an eye. They transform a winter weary town into a magical fairyland. At the exact moment everyone is sick to death of looking at them, they vanish into memory.

We drove to Country Club Plaza, the first mall in the country, to one of the finer

hotels on the Plaza. (Please note: to say "plaza" correctly in Kansas City, you must use at least seven "ah's", as in plaaaaaaaza.) Well, at least I was moving up in the world!

While reading the auction catalogue, I noticed that one of the lots was a cover posted with a strip of three U.S. #73's. I was off in a flash to view the lot. There he was! Justa layin' there, all sleepy eyed, daring me to come closer and closer and a wee bit closer. Well, I never! He knew better, though!

The auction started. The company had included a few lots that I thought were just slightly out of place. The Grand Comoro Islands? Who in Kansas City collects Grand Comoro Islands?! Being the first time at an auction, I really wasn't aware of what one did at one. I knew from movies that when I wanted to bid on something, I should hold up my number card, then let it down afterwards. Up and down. Up and down. Up and...really?

The auctioneer would ask for a starting bid on the next lot. If he failed to get it, he would ask if anyone wanted to open for "x" amount of money. If this strategy failed, he would ask, "Will anybody bid \$1.00?" That was when I discovered that my brain no longer had any control of my left arm. No, it was straight up in the air, feverishly waving my number card in a very "unsedate" manner. I bought the lot for a dollar. Then I bought another lot for another dollar. It became embarrassing. Now, whenever a lot failed to get a bid, the auctioneer (and everyone else) would turn and look directly at me and my waving hand.

By the end of the auction, I had picked up about a thousand dollars worth of stamps for a few dollars and one big ol' envelope tied to a strip of three U.S. #73's. This cost a bunch more than a few dollars! Oh, yes, I also discovered after the auction that I seemed to be a collector of the Grand Comoro Islands. How strange?!

My friend and I have drifted apart over the years. I have discovered the courage

to go to auctions by myself now. I have almost learned to control my left arm when it's around a card with a number on it. When I do go to auctions or stamp shows, and someone asks what I collect, I just look them dead on and say, "Why, Black Jacks, of course." It just sounds so damn butch!

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## Gay and Lesbian Update

It's official (more or less)! US Rep. Steve Gunderson (R-Wisconsin) has finally granted The Advocate an interview. During the interview, though not acknowledging his being gay, he did acknowledge living with architect Rob Morris, who is gay. They have lived together for the past 11 years. Rep. Gunderson's free frank should be added to your gay and lesbian collection.

Rep. Gunderson is the third openly gay member of Congress.

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St. Vincent & The Grenadines issued a \$1.00 stamp depicting Olympic diver Greg Louganis. This stamp was issued in June, 1994.

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Nicaragua released a sheetlet of twelve stamps. The stamps each depict a movie. It was released in conjunction of 100 years of motion pictures.

One of the stamps honors "Lawrence of Arabia". Another depicts "Ivan the Terrible" by Sergei Eisenstein. (See LPJ vol. 11, no. 2 for related article.)

\*\*\*\*\*

In a recent Linn's Stamp News, a reader wrote in to voice his opinion that someone living should not be permitted to be featured in a mailer's permit.

It appears that Merv Griffin was recently featured in a permit used on a postcard sent from his resorts. If I remember correctly, Merv Griffin was involved in a

suit where a man claimed to have been involved with Mr. Griffin for several years. These postcards, if you find them, could be an interesting item to have in your collection.

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Historian Paul Hardman recently published a book, *Homoaffectionalism*, which includes research on gays in the military. It also provides convincing evidence on Alexander Hamilton's homosexuality. Hamilton can be found on several United States issues.

\*\*\*\*\*

Italy issued a stamp featuring Frederick II on September 19, 1994.

\*\*\*\*\*

France issued a semi-postal stamp featuring Josephine Baker. Although born in the United States, she called France home. France was more tolerant of blacks in the '20's and '30's.

\*\*\*\*\*

Germany issued a 100 pfenninge stamp commemorating the 200th anniversary of the death of General von Steuben. The stamp is the first class rate for letters sent in Germany and Europe.

\*\*\*\*\*

Three recent cancels on General von Steuben:



\*\*\*\*\*

Thanks to our APO member. Most German cities have a "Christopher Street Day" celebration, but not all on the same day. Celebrations were held on assorted weekends and, it seemed, never more than two at opposite ends of the country conflicted with each other. Therefore, there could possibly be cancels from Munich, Nuernberg, Hannover, Hamburg, Stuttgart and Frankfurt. A copy of the Berlin cancel was pictured in the last journal.

\*\*\*\*\*

The ATA Americana Unit prepared several cards with the 11th Annual Gay & Lesbian Square Dance Convention cancel. The cachet is of the Statue of Liberty. The 1986, 22 cent Statue of Liberty centennial stamp was used. Copies are available for \$1 plus a #10 SASE. Send orders to:

Donald Brenke  
Americana Unit  
PO Box 179  
Washington DC 20044

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Antigua & Barbuda issued two sheets featuring country music. The male sheet features Garth Brooks and Clint Black, among others. Both have gay siblings.

The female sheet features gay favorites Patsy Cline and Dolly Parton. It also features Anne Murray, who has long been rumored to be a lesbian.

SONOMA

# STYLE

In Memoriam

USA  
29



AIDS  
AWARENESS

FEBRUARY 1994

That the Deafening Silence  
will one day end  
Do what you can.

## All I Ask Is That YOU Do What You Can

### A call to anger and action...

by Patrick Satterthwaite

(Reprinted, with permission, from *Sonoma Style*, February 1994.)

Seventeen years ago when I was shooting up heroin, cocaine, and anything else I could fit into a hypodermic syringe, and getting drunk eight days a week, I never imagined that one day I would be writing about my last seven years of being clean and sober and dealing with Human Immunodeficiency Virus.

I thought (and probably unconsciously hoped) that I would be dead by now. When I found out in 1986 that I am infected with H.I.V., I felt that someone had put a gun to my head and I didn't want any part of this attempt on my life.

I embarked on a series of life affirming changes and found that, though it took some effort, I could look at the proverbial glass as half full.

Shortly after I discovered that I was infected with H.I.V. - which most experts believe causes Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) - I met someone who greatly influenced my attitude toward having H.I.V. He was Ken McCune, and although he passed away over three years ago, his spirit and compassion and joy of living kindled my own spirit in dealing with H.I.V.

Some of you may remember Ken as the Santa Rosa teacher diagnosed with AIDS in 1986 who was completely open about his diagnosis. He used his position to educate anyone who was willing to listen (and some who weren't so willing) about AIDS.

Some months after I met Ken, the organizers of the first AIDS Candlelight Memorial March in Sonoma County were looking for a speaker and I asked Ken to do it. He jumped at the chance. The march was a small band of 60 or so

mourners that wended its way through Guerneville to the Face to Face offices on the west end of town. In the sadness and solemnity of that moment, I have forgotten much of what Ken said, but the gist of it was "Do what you can." Advice I took to heart.

I knew that I didn't function well in a closet - too confining and stifling - so to avoid any more stress in my life, I told my employer, the U.S. Postal Service, about my H.I.V. status. I was met with support and a willingness to accommodate my needs as much as possible.

Taking a cue from Ken, realizing that education is the key to prevention, I sought out avenues where I could put some of my energy. I participated in several "Educators with H.I.V." seminars, and later assisted organizing training sessions designed to put people with H.I.V. into such educational settings as schools, civic groups, and business and employee training sessions. But no matter how much I did, it just never seemed to be enough. You know, that old "Catholic Guilt" syndrome.

I've always felt that living in Sonoma County was a godsend because I felt comfortable about divulging my H.I.V. status. For the most part, that assumption has held true - the outpouring of respect and affection has far and away outstripped any negative responses. I think about friends and acquaintances in Indiana who are afraid to reveal their H.I.V. status because of fear of losing jobs, homes, friends, and even family. Not to say that Indiana in particular (or the Midwest in general) has a monopoly on bigotry, hatred, and other Rush Limbaugh family values. I'm sure we have our share here, but I find our climate less hostile.

As a result of fortuitous friendships and as a consequence of my employment by one of the nation's largest employers, the U.S.P.S., a friend was able to get an article about my efforts in AIDS education published in *Postal Life Magazine*, the U.S.P.S. in-house publication. Printed in September, 1991, that article effectively put AIDS education out there to postal employees nationwide. That still



didn't seem to be enough for me. You can lead a horse to water, as they say... and you can lead a postal employee to the written word but you can't make him or her read (Careful now! No jokes about mis-delivered mail!).

So, when the U.S.P.S. announced the issuance of the AIDS awareness stamp, I was ecstatic. I felt that many of my efforts had come to fruition... that AIDS awareness could now become a truly mainstream issue nationally.

Until the stamp, the only cohesive national effort at bringing AIDS awareness and compassion home has been The NAMES Project Quilt. But The Quilt is about memorializing the dead - It's about grief, loss, pain, suffering, and it's about compassion for those who are still suffering.

To me the AIDS Awareness red ribbon symbolizes the end result of the pain and suffering: The Action necessary to put an end to this epidemic. So I collaborated with a friend, Kate Bishop, a clothing designer/tailor who had helped me on an earlier project. She was eager to get involved, to design and make a NAMES Project Quilt panel with the AIDS Awareness Stamp as a part of the design. Her son, Elvin, volunteered to assist with the calligraphy.

I felt this was an excellent way to bridge the gap between AIDS Memorials and AIDS Action. But I also felt that somehow the people who still couldn't realize a vehicle for their pain, grief, loss, and suffering needed a way to acknowledge the loss of a loved one to AIDS. Although most of the panels in The Quilt are dedicated to a single individual, I envisioned a single panel that could be a sort of generic memorial to all those postal employees who have died from AIDS anonymously (and for that matter, anyone whose death from AIDS has remained a secret - for whatever misguided reasons). They, too, need to be remembered - their deaths have been part of the deafening silence that I hope the AIDS Awareness Stamp may help end.

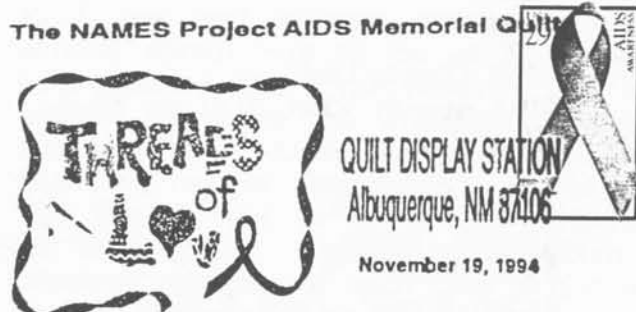
My hope is that the stamp will lead to awareness, that awareness will lead to

compassion, that compassion will lead to love, that love will lead to anger, and that anger will lead to action. That people will begin to wear the red ribbon, not as a token of sympathy, but as a symbol of their willingness to act - to "Do what they can."

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## AIDS UPDATE

Quilt Display Station cancel was used for the NAMES Project AIDS Memorial Quilt display in Albuquerque, New Mexico on November 19, 1994.



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France was scheduled to reissue the Europa AIDS stamp on December 1, 1994, in conjunction with World AIDS Day. It is printed se-tenant with a label showing the red ribbon and promoting the fight against AIDS. The reprint was printed by a combination of the intaglio and offset processes.

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Club member Phil Stager had an article on AIDS published in *The Canadian Philatelist/Le Philatliste Canadien*.



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LAST LICK

TOPEX '95 will be held June 16 - 18, 1995 in Sparks, Nevada. Sparks is a suburb of Reno. TOPEX will be held at the McCarran House, 55 East Nugget Avenue, Sparks, NV 89431. (Room reservations: 1-800-548-5788. Be sure to specify "TOPEX '95 to receive special rates.)

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PACIFIC 97 World Philatelic Exhibition will be held in San Francisco from May 29 through June 8, 1997. 1997 will mark the 150th anniversary of the issue of the first stamps of the United States. The last world exhibition in the United States was AMERIPEX 86, held in Chicago.

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HAPPY HOLIDAYS!