



The Maine Philatelist

Vol. 32, No. 1

July 1999

Whole No. 116

Dog teams once provided winter mail service in Maine

By Bruce L. Corey
Of Westbrook

Fred B. Fowler had been visiting Oquossoc every year since he was very young. In this wild, rugged region, he developed a great love for the outdoors. He married in 1912, settled here, and in 1921 opened the doors of the F.B. Fowler Store. It carried a line of sporting goods unequalled in the region. Traveling by canoe and dog team to the far reaches of the Arctic, Baffin Island, Hudson Bay and Labrador, he brought back the best and most unusual items to stock his store. He always kept huskies from Baffin Island and Labrador.

In November 1932, postal officials started a search for a mailman who could get through the 11-mile, snow-covered wilderness to Kennebago (Grants Post Office) twice a week. Fred Fowler, with his well-trained team of seven huskies from the north, took the job and Maine Dog Team Route 1392 was in business. (See Figure 1)

Grants was located on the northwestern shore of Kennebago Lake and was home to about 50 people during the winter. However, it was the "big town" to about 500 lumberjacks who labored through the long winter months in the far reaches of the back country in these parts of Franklin and Oxford counties. With no road out during the winter and Oquossoc 11 miles south through woods and deep snow, they really looked forward to the arrival of the mail by dog team.

This post card from Grant's Camps (Figure 2) shows Fred

Fowler and his dog team after arriving with the U.S. mail.

Soon the surrounding area was harvested and the lumberjacks moved on. In the mid-1930s, the year-round population of remote camps was moving to larger towns. With drastic population decreases, most camps closed in the winters, but reopened as soon as the ice was out. The Great Depression was in full swing and beginning to take its toll in the Rangeley Lakes region. Tourism was way down and many hotels were closed or only open for a few months.

Post offices at Barker and Mingo Springs were closed in 1934; Haines Landing, South Rangeley and Mountainview in 1935; and Indian Rock in 1936. The dog team mail continued through all this but would have stopped when Grants became a summer post office. It has been stated that this was the last dog team mail route in the lower 48 states.

Continued on page 3

Ooops!

Your overworked and vastly underpaid (the former true, the latter false unless you want to contribute to his retirement fund) Editor *forgot* something. It's the first time in his long life that it's happened, you understand -- forgetting something.

Seriously, the spring issue of the journal should have carried the annual dues renewal notice, and I forgot it. Dues are \$5 per year and memberships run from July 1 through June 30 each year. Check your address label on the back page. If it shows (6-99) on the upper right, you must renew now. I haven't removed anyone from the rolls yet and won't until you have time to send Bruce some money! Renew today by sending a check or money order, made out to the Maine Philatelic Society, to:

Mr. Bruce Hazelton
PO Box 67A
Cumberland Center, ME 04021

It's MPS election time once again

Inside this issue of *The Maine Philatelist*, members will find an election ballot. Four members of the Board of Directors, including three officers, are up for election this year. Half of the overall Board of Directors stand for election every other year. Those incumbent Board members standing for re-election are Bruce Hazelton of North Yarmouth, Everett Parker of Greenville, Robert Turmelle of Waterville and Robert Vear of Waterville.

There are positions available on the Board of Directors, and nominees should be listed on the election ballot. Please be certain the person has agreed to serve if elected.

The Maine Philatelist is published quarterly by the Maine Philatelic Society, Inc.

The purpose of the Society, a non-profit Maine corporation, is to promote philately in the Pine Tree State. Membership is open to anyone. Membership applications are available from the Secretary, listed below. Dues are \$5 per year.

A Life Membership is also available.

Contact the Secretary for details.

Articles for publication should be sent to the President/Editor at address below.

OFFICERS

President

Everett L. Parker (1999)
 HC 76, Box 32
 Greenville, ME 04441-9727
 (207) 695-3163 (Voice and Fax)
 email - eparker@moosehead.net

Vice President

Robert Turmelle (1999)
 8 Birch Street
 Waterville, ME 04901

Secretary

Bruce Hazelton (1999)
 P.O. Box 67A
 Cumberland Center, ME 04021

Treasurer

Rick Stambaugh (2000)
 16 Elmwood Ct.
 N. Berwick, ME 03906

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Richard Warren of Cushing (2000)
 Ray Gagnon of Lewiston (2000)
 Jim Foote III of Manchester (2000)
 Bob Vear of Waterville (1999)

PUBLISHING SCHEDULE

The Maine Philatelist is distributed to members in January, April, July and October of each year. Below is a list of deadlines for each issue and the anticipated mailing date. While deadline for copy (articles) is firm, the anticipated mailing date is just that -- a "best guess" of mailing.

ISSUE COVER DATE	DEADLINE FOR COPY	JOURNAL TO PRINTER	ANTICIPATED MAILING DATE
January	Dec. 15	Dec. 30	Jan. 15
April	March 15	March 30	April 15
July	June 15	June 30	July 15
October	Sept. 15	Sept. 30	Oct. 15

Maine stamp club meetings



Stamp clubs in Maine are invited to become members of the Maine Philatelic Society. We will publish, free of charge, meeting information and locations.

PORTLAND STAMP CLUB

The club meets on the second Wednesday of each month at the Maine Veterans Home, 290 U.S. Route 1, Scarborough. The meeting starts at 6:30 p.m. and usually ends about 8:30 p.m. Nonmembers are invited to attend.

WATERVILLE STAMP CLUB

The club meets on the first and third Friday from September to May and on the third Friday only during June, July and August. Meetings are from 6:30 to 9 p.m. at the Kennebec Valley Technical College (KVTC) on Western Avenue in Fairfield (Exit 35 of Interstate 95). For information, call 872-5107. Nonmembers are invited to attend.

BELFAST STAMP CLUB

The club meets on the third Thursday of the month at noon. The location changes each month. For information, call Dick Gerry, president, at 866-3583.

YORK COUNTY STAMP CLUB

The club meets on the second and fourth Thursday of each month beginning at 7:30 p.m. at the Sanford Masonic Hall, Elm Street, Sanford. Usual events include raffle, auction, presentations, refreshments, and an occasional visit from a stamp dealer. Dues are \$5 per year. For information, contact Secretary Tracey Levasseur, 329 Ross Corner Rd., Shapleigh, ME 04076.

UNION RIVER STAMP CLUB

The Union River Stamp Club meets the first Thursday of each month at the Ellsworth Library, beginning at 7:30 p.m.

UNITARIAN-UNIVERSALIST STAMP CLUB

The Unitarian-Universalist Stamp Club has members throughout the U.S., and you don't have to be a Universalist to join. For information, send a business size SASE to George Barner, 8 Arlington Street, Kennebunkport, ME 04046-6343. Mr. Barner also edits the club's newsletter.

AUGUSTA STAMP CLUB

The Augusta Stamp Club meets every first and third Tuesday at the Buker School from 6:00 to 8:30 p.m. Nonmembers are invited to attend. For information, contact Ray Gagnon, 23 Sylvain Ave., Lewiston, ME 04240.

Winter mail service was once provided by dog teams in Maine

Continued from page 1

This 1933 map of the Rangeley Lakes region (Figure 3) shows the post offices and the area covered by dog team mail.

As soon as Mooselookmeguntic Lake froze over, Upper Dam was completely cut off from mail delivery. With a winter population of 76, postal officials began to hunt for someone to deliver the mail by dog team. William

Meyers of Grants, a good friend of Fred Fowler, took the job. Thus began the second dog team mail route in Maine: Bemis to Upper Dam.



Figure 1: U.S. dog team mail route 1392, Fred Fowler, driver. Taken from a photocopy.

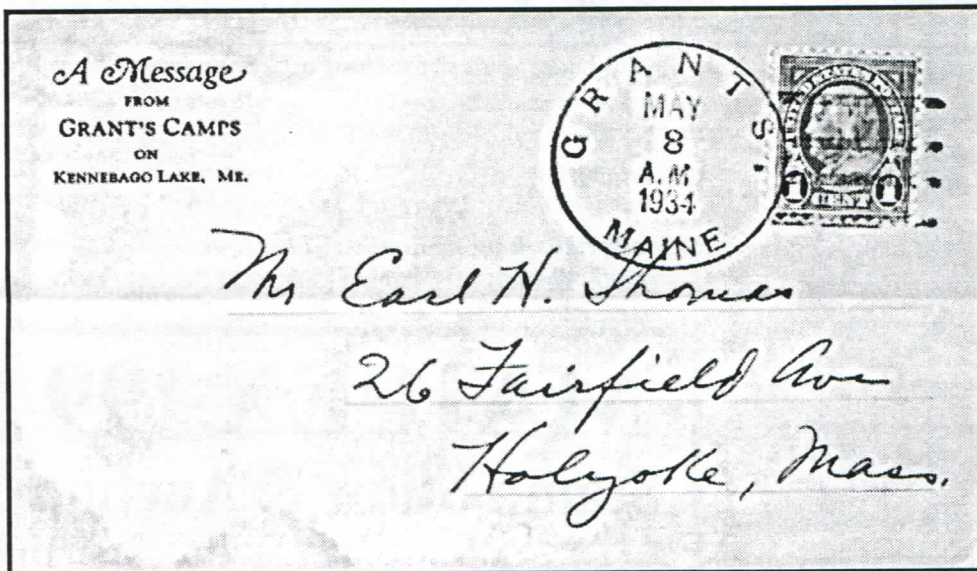
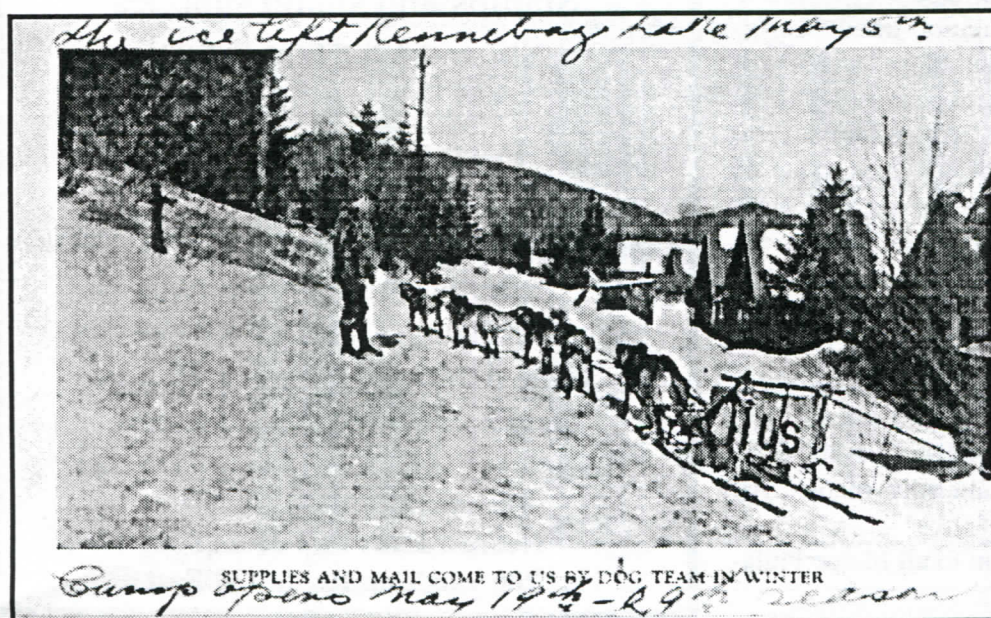


Figure 2: Postcard from Grants showing Fred Fowler and dog team



In the best of conditions, it was a seven-mile run across the lake to Upper Dam. Conditions could be very dangerous at times and the trip was sometimes much longer. For two winters Meyers made these runs to the population in and around the Upper Dam House. He decided not to continue a third season (1934-35) due to the closing of the Bemis Post Office in September 1934 and the now longer run across the ice from Oquossoc.

Malcolm Grant, manager of the Upper Dam House, signed up for the dog team mail run, now Oquossoc to Upper Dam. Using a team of four dogs, he carried the mail twice a week for two winters. He went across a lot of seasonal thin ice and only missed the trip once. When necessary, he carried a boat lashed to the dog sled in case he could break through. At times, the boat saw a lot of use. Large ice cracks made it necessary to put the dogs in the boat or in the water. The lead dog would swim and climb out on solid ice when the others had a much more difficult time.

Ronald Dermott of Bald Mountain Camps had the mail contract during the 1936-37 season. Not much is known about his runs.

Glenwood Bennett of Haines Landing took over the mail run for the 1937-38 season. One day the ice was in great

shape, so he strapped on his skates and started south down Mooselookmeguntic Lake to Upper Dam with the mail. He later remarked, "I was so lamed up the next day, I went to bed. I made good time, but 16 miles on skates is too much for a man of my age."

In 1933 the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) started and completed construction on a 19-mile road to connect Oquossoc with Wilson's Mills by way of Aziscohos Lake. It went through Cupsuptic and Crockertown Township and into Wilson Plantation. Later, a five-mile side road was built down to the Upper Dam House. You would think that regular mail delivery methods would have made the job much easier. But it was still much faster by dog team. I am not sure when the last run was made on this route.

ENDNOTE

I would like to thank Graydon R. Hilyard of Ashland, Massachusetts for furnishing some of the information I used for



Figure 3: 1933 map of Rangeley Lakes area shows post offices and routes covered by dog team mail during this era.

this article.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Shirrefs, Herbert P. *The Rangeley Lakes - Jewels in the Rangeley Chain*. Bethel, ME: Bethel Historical Society, 1995.

Member's carto-philatelic collection in USM exhibit

MPS member Richard Gerry of Orono is exhibiting his carto-philatelic collection as part of an exhibit at the Osher Map Library and Smith Center for Cartographic Education at the University of Southern Maine in Portland.

The exhibit is part of a larger exhibition titled "Carto-Maine-ia Puzzles and Wraps and Oddball Maps" which will be available for public inspection through September 18, 1999.

The exhibition of map memorabilia is based on several collections, including that of Tony Naden, former owner of the Harvard Square Map Store. It showcases maps on all sorts of objects -- toys, jigsaw puzzles, parlor games, stamps, envelopes, greeting cards, postcards, napkins, placemats, dinner plates, table cloths, tea towels, tiles, trivets, bottles, lamp shades, hats, t-shirts, shower curtains, etc.

The Osher Map Library and Smith Center for Cartographic Education is located at 314 Forest Avenue in Portland. The telephone number is (207) 780-4850 (or toll-free, 1-800-800-4876). The website is <www.usm.maine.edu/~maps>. All events are handicapped accessible.

A flyer describing the event was sent to all Maine Philatelic Society members in the spring.

**MAIPEX '99
Stamp Show & Auction**

Sponsored by the Waterville Stamp Club

- Stamps and stamp supplies
- Show cover and cancel
- Giant board auction
- Postcards and covers
- Refreshments

9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Saturday, October 9, 1999

Table Auction Closes 12:30 p.m.

Oral Auction Starts 1:00 p.m.

Location: Carter Hall, Kennebec Valley

Technical College, Fairfield
Nearest Exit: Exit 35 on I-95,
200 yards on Route 139 East

PIONEER POSTCARDS

LINTON J. GROFF POSTMASTER PRECANCEL LINTON, Ohio 1881

by Bruce Nelson

America has been a country of innovative entrepreneurs. Even postmasters over 100 years ago were trying to make extra money as exemplified by Linton J. Groff, at Groff's Publication Office in Linton, Ohio. Not only was he the publisher of this ornate precancelled card, but he used the card to promote tools and supplies of the trade to be bought by postmasters elsewhere. Somehow he was allowed to border the address side of the card with ornate graphics as well as promote his own name in the 1881 datestamp as part of the precancel. This rare and desirable postal card (Scott Ux5) was recently purchased in a philatelic auction in Massachusetts.

Write to Bruce Nelson, P.O. Box 3565, Portland, ME 04104.

FOR ONLY ONE DOLLAR
WE WILL SEND THE
→ **ELEVEN ARTICLES BELOW** ←
POST-PAID.

One Complaint Book. (Cloth.) 50 Beautiful P. O. Note-Heads. (Printed from a Brand-name Paper.) One Set Cancellation Cards. One Calendar, 1881. One Copying Pencil. One Package Blotters.	One Rubber Stamp, like No. 1. One " " " No. 2. One " " " No. 3. One Card-Sign, "Lick your own Stamps!" One Card-Sign, "No Admittance!"
--	--

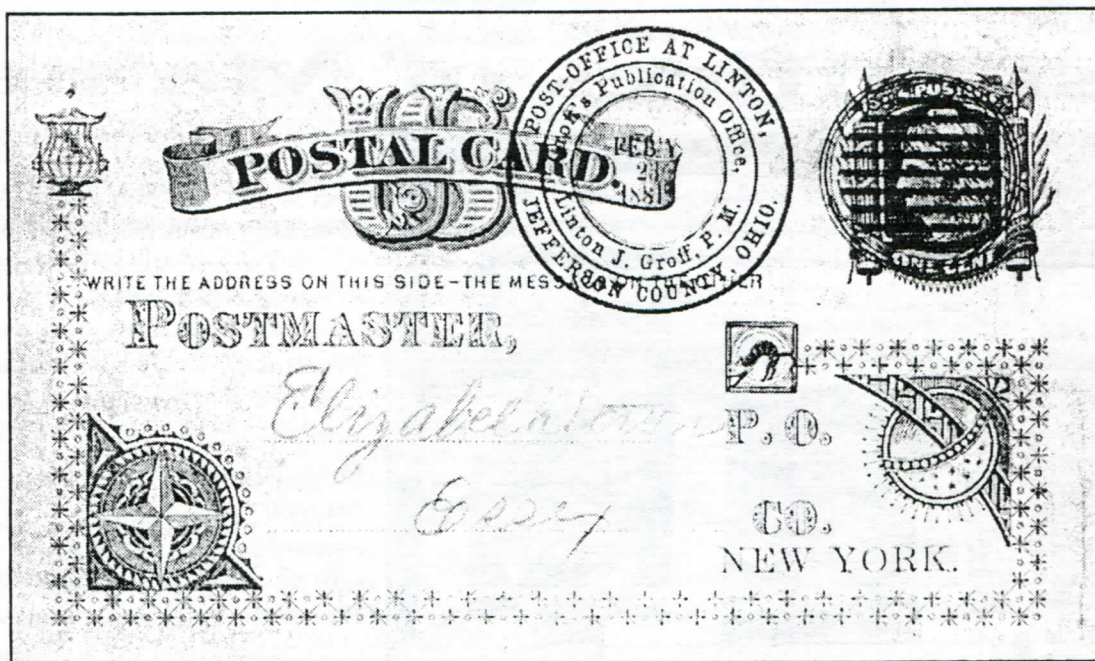
The first item alone is worth One Dollar, and the Stamps are worth another. In fact the outfit is the best and cheapest ever made. The Pencil will please all and you can't have too many. See that the address is correct on the other side of this card, and enclose it with One Dollar. Write all instructions on the card.

GROFF'S PUBLICATION OFFICE,
Wellsville, O., and Linton, O.

ADDRESS: **L. J. GROFF,**
PUBLISHER+OF+POSTMASTER'S+HELPS,
WELLSVILLE, OHIO.

NO. 1. ANY OF THESE STAMPS CHANGED TO ORDER
AN EXTRA PENCIL WILL BE SENT IN PLACE OF CARD SIGNS AND CALENDAR, IF DESIRED.
NO. 2.
NO. 3.

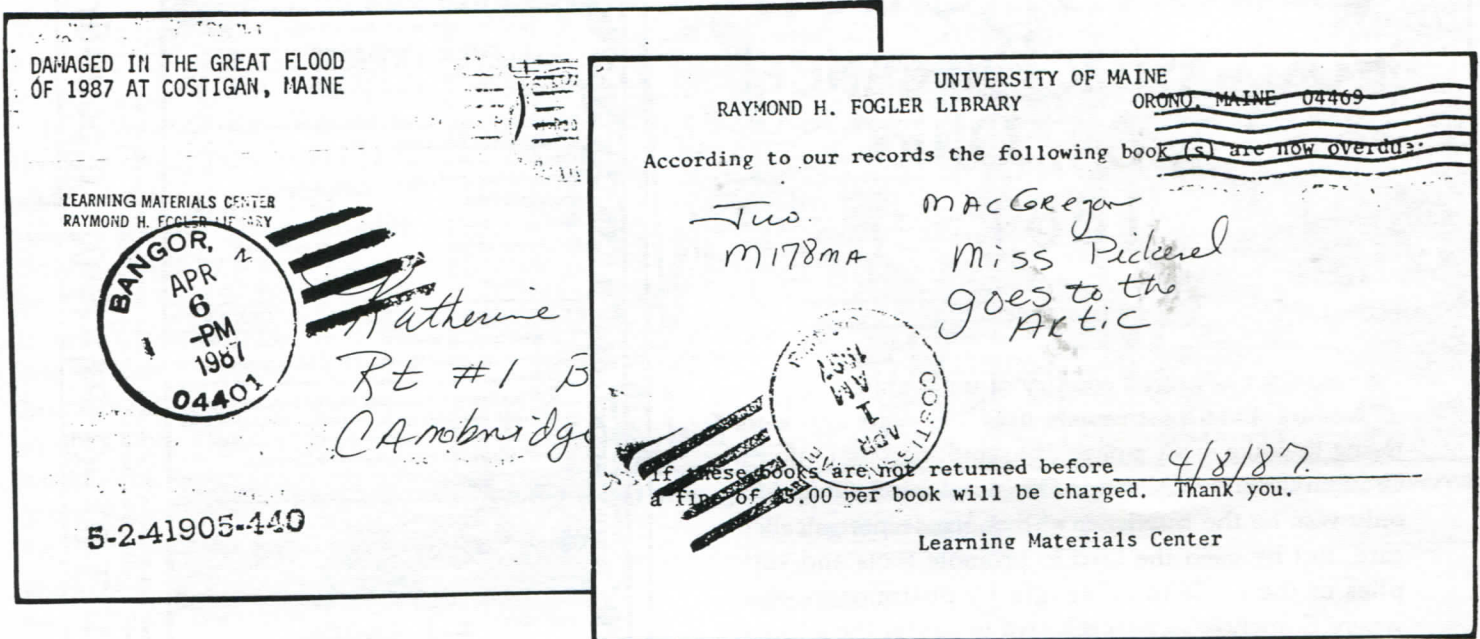
Opened by Mistake. Dead Letters. Illegible.



This side of card enlarged by 125 percent.

A postal history feature
by Rob Washburn
of Skowhegan

Maine Cover of the Quarter



The above postcard is the inaugural edition of "Maine Cover of the Quarter." Future installments will feature scarce, unusual and/or interesting Maine postal history. This time around, I am featuring an item from just 12 years ago, the year of the great flood. The front and back of the postcard (a library overdue notice) are both shown. It received a little water damage and a yellow post office label was applied to the left of the meter which reads, "DAMAGED IN THE GREAT FLOOD OF 1987 AT COSTIGAN, MAINE." The

card was sent from Orono, Maine on March 30, 1987 and was destined for Cambridge, Maine, Zip Code 04923. It got sent to Costigan, Maine, Zip Code 04423 in error, where it received the yellow post office label and a 4/1/87 backstamp. It then went to Bangor (4/6/87 cancel) before finally arriving at Cambridge. I doubt the library books got returned by the 4/8/87 due date. If you have a candidate for this column, please send a photocopy of your cover against a black background to Rob Washburn, P.O. Box 840, Skowhegan, ME 04976.

Post Offices of Maine

A regular feature



This photo shows the post office in Alna post office at an unknown date. The post office is in Lincoln County and was established on April 1, 1811. It is still operating. This photo was likely from the late 1940s or 1950s. It is "Josephson's General Grocery" and the Post Office sign is located under the store name. The owner sold Gulf gasoline (both "Good" and "No Nox"). Thanks to Secretary Bruce Hazelton, who loaned the photo. Do YOU have a photo of an old post office? Send it to the editor with as much information as you know about it.

Stamp paper features two Maine philatelic articles

During the spring, *Linn's Stamp News* featured two philatelic articles directly related to the Pine Tree State, one of which was a front page story involving MPS Secretary Bruce Hazelton.

The article about the number of surviving stamps from the U.S. 2¢ Liberty Silkote experimental printing of 1954 being higher than suspected made the front page of the May 3, 1999 issue. Senior Editor Rob Haeseler reported that at least 150 more stamps "have come to light" following an April article about the discovery of two new Silkote plate blocks. The stamp in question, the 2¢ Thomas Jefferson, is rare, printed by the Bureau of Engraving and Printing on special Silkote paper which had been manufactured by the S.D. Warren Company at its Westbrook plant.

The entire print run -- 500 panes or 50,000 stamps -- was quietly placed on sale to the public on December 17, 1954 in the Cumberland Mills branch of the Westbrook Post Office. The stamp became known to collectors within two months after being placed on sale, but according to Haeseler, few collectors paid much attention to it. Soon, the price skyrocketed. In the 1999 *Scott Specialized Catalog of United States Stamps and Covers*, a mint single is valued at \$1,750.00. There is no value given for a plate block.

Bruce Hazelton entered the picture when *Linn's* learned he

had purchased a pane of the special printing. Hazelton purchased the pane from an 85-year-old man who reportedly was involved in the Silkote project in 1954. He had purchased it at the post office as a souvenir, Hazelton told *Linn's*.

Hazelton also owns the only known first day cover of the Silkote stamp. John Flaherty, owner of Pine Tree Stamps in Gray, acted as an intermediary in the sale. And it was Flaherty who acquired a half pane of the stamp last year from another S.D. Warren employee.

News of a new discovery on a Maine revenue stamp made headlines in the June 28, 1999 issue of *Linn's*. In that article, Editor Michael Laurence stressed the importance of knowing your stamps.

He cited an article in *State Revenue News*, journal of the State Revenue Society, in which a common Maine bedding and upholstery stamp used for decades actually had two different forms. On one, wording beneath the state seal was "Department of Health and Welfare." On the other, the wording, in the same location, was "Department of Labor and Industry." The labels were used on mattress tags to indicate compliance with Maine law governing composition of materials used to stuff mattresses and upholstered furniture. The news was first reported to MPS member Terence Hines, who is also SRS president.

THE CLASSIFIEDS

Classified advertisements are free to members. You may use this space to buy and sell, trade or swap. When sending an advertisement, please mark it for the Classifieds and indicate how many issues you wish it to appear. All ads will appear twice and be removed unless otherwise indicated.

WANTED

Father and 13-year-old daughter collecting U.S. postage on a limited budget. Looking to pay face or a little higher for newer issues, mostly Scott numbers 2000-2800. Please contact Robert Year, P.O. Box 501, Waterville, ME 04903-0501. (4-99)

Wanted: Portland, Greenwood and Albany ad. covers, postal history, postcards. Buy or generous trade for other Maine. Charles Brand, 2031-31st Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94116. (4-99)

Wanted: modern (since 1970) U.S. covers. I am especially looking for junk mail transportation coil PNC covers, Express mail, postage dues, insured mail, Certified mail, auxiliary markings, etc. Rob Washburn, P.O. Box 840, Skowhegan, ME 04976-0840. (4-99)

Check your collections, accumulations, etc., for Pitcairn Island stamps and covers. I'm looking for 1938 "Radio Established Over Pitcairn" covers with dates other than March 18. Also looking for Newfoundland covers. Everett L. Parker, HC 76, Box 32, Greenville, ME 04441-9727. E-mail to: eparker@moosehead.net. (4-99)

Wanted: Maine hunting and fishing stamps on license. Will pay a minimum of \$10 each for every license I need. Also want Maine (and other New England states) Old Home Week seals. Terence Hines, P.O. Box 629, Chappaqua, NY 10514-0629. (4-00)

Information needed to further research on Maine NARROW

GAUGE RPOs. Need RPO, month, day, year, train no. ME 4 BAR COLORED cancels, need P.O. name, month, day, year, time, color. Will respond to all information received. Bruce L. Corey, 108 Marilyn Ave., Westbrook, ME 04092-4624. (4-99)

Wanted to buy: Maine fancy cancels on cover or postal cards, stampless to 1920 only. Let me know what you have. Gil Roderick, 52 Fern St., Bangor, ME 04401. (4-99)

Collector is looking for covers from Houlton Air Force Base Station. If you have same, please contact me. Telephone: 538-9788 (home) or 532-2291 (work). My e-mail is max@ainop.com Max Leigh Lynds, P.O. Box 761, Houlton, ME 04730-0761. (4-99)

FOR SALE

Precancel approvals: town and types 15¢, classics, 1922-26 general, bicents, prexies, perfins available. Buro approvals starting at 5¢. Good mixed precancel lots. 2,000-\$25.00; 10,000-\$110.00. Mixed buros, 2,000-\$25.00, 10,000-\$110.00. Dick Laetsch, 108 Ashswamp Road, Scarborough, ME 04074. e-mail: precancel@aol.com (4-99)

For sale: DPO, Macy, ME - Doane 1906 on PPC, Rarity 8. First \$75.00 takes it. Carl A. Burnham, RR1, Box 559, Limington, ME 04046. Telephone 637-2871. (4-99)

President's Message

By Everett L. Parker

Maine philatelists and philately is in the forefront of national news! As you'll read elsewhere, Secretary Bruce Hazelton made the front page of *Linn's Stamp News* during May with a story of the famous 2¢ Liberty series Silkote experimental printing. And a late June issue of the same stamp paper contained news about a new discovery on a Maine revenue stamp. This is encouraging news as we prepare for the year 2000 which is just over the horizon.

This organization will enter the new millennium with enthusiasm and excitement. We now have 225 members, a substantial increase from the 160 members we had four years ago. Several of you responded to my plea for articles and I now have several well-researched articles which will be used in several forthcoming issues. We're working on a program to bring several regional stamp shows to the Pine Tree State, and there's much more in the offing!

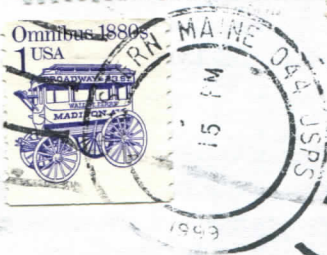
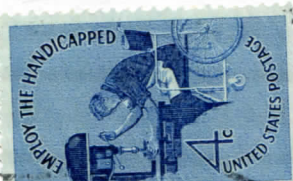
Would someone who is a member of the American Philatelic Society (APS) volunteer for a small task each month? Contact me if you're willing to spend about 15 minutes each month to accomplish this task. It could make a big difference in our membership. Curious? Contact me and I'll fill you in on the details.

Are YOU on the Internet?

In order to offer more rapid communications, we will publish e-mail addresses of Maine Philatelic Society members and officers ONLY if they wish to be listed. Please e-mail your address to the president to be included here. If you're not on the Web, look into it -- there are hundreds of sites worldwide to explore!

- George Barner = gbarner@cybertours.com
- Nancy B. Clark = nbc@Cape.com
- David Costain = dcostain@telplus.net
- Terry Drummond = bulldog@somtel.com
- Jim Forte = jimforte@postal.history.com
- Dan Goodwin = dgoodwin@psouth.net
- Terence Hines = THines@FSmail.Pace.edu
- Kelvin Kindahl = kanda@javanet.com
- Dick Laetsch = precancel@aol.com
- Max Lynds = max@ainop.com
- Paul R. Maynard = prmay13@juno.com
- Dave Muzzy = edmuzzy@ime.net
- Robert W. Olmsted = cal@americanletters.org
- Everett L. Parker = eparker@moosehead.net
- Phil Peverada = peverada@midcoast.com
- Jack Pooler = pooler@voyager.net
- Steven Pottle = sppride@aol.com
- Gil Roderick = destamps@acadia.net
- Roland Simard = manacorp@aol.com
- Rick Stambaugh = rickstambaugh@cybertours.com
- Henry G. Turnbull = AZNPTHGT@webtv.net
- Richard Warren = dickw@midcoast.com
- Edwin F. Whitney = edwhitney@clinic.net
- Kennedy L. Wilson = k-mew@midcoast.com

Maine Philatelic Society
HC 76, Box 32
Greenville, ME 04441-9727



TO:

(6-99) #549

Kindahl, Mr. Kelvin
29 Clark Street
East Hampton, MA 01027-2329

IMPORTANT NOTICE:

If (6-99) appears after your name on the mailing label, it's time to renew your dues!