Ed Piper – GP’s Greatest Historian

Ken Nilsestuen, Treasurer

Scott Tiffney, Librarian / Director of Information Services

American Philatelic Research Library

Garfield-Perry Stamp Club Virtual Meeting ~ August 6, 2020
“The hobby of stamp collecting extends over so wide a field, and has such varied aspects, that each collector may choose whatever particular field appeals to him, – the stamps of a particular country, or a particular period, or type – almost without limit; and yet I venture the statement that no matter how isolated or restricted his choice may be, the collected knowledge which is available to him concerning it, and which makes it of interest to him, must be disseminated in very large measure, if not entirely, through the medium of an organized philately.”

Frederick W. Green
Garfield-Perry Stamp Club
August 23, 1940
Frederick Himsel
Older than Piper but They were Contemporaries

Frederick W. Green
- Joined Garfield-Perry Stamp Club in 1926
- Club Vice-President 1929-1930
- Club President 1931-1932
- Club Librarian-Archivist 1934-1941
Frederick Gets Organized

A Tedious Manual Process

Frederick W. Green

- In 1934 began indexing the mostly donated philatelic periodicals of the Club.
- Indexed 6 journal runs, some complete, up to and including 1941 issues.
What Frederick Indexed

Seven Years’ Effort

- American Journal of Philately 1868-1941
- The American Philatelist 1887-1941
- Collectors Club Philatelist 1922-1941
- The London Philatelist 1892-1941
- Pat Paragraphs 1931-1941
- Scott’s Monthly Stamp Journal 1920-1941
Along Comes Ed

An Active G-P Member

Emile “Ed” D. Piper

- Joins Garfield-Perry Stamp Club in 1935
- Club Vice-President 1943-1944
- Club President 1944
- Library Committee 1939-1941 and 1943-1947
- Club Historian-Librarian 1940-1969
Ed’s Membership Application

Admitted as Number 602
The Membership Ledger

Members 600 through 1032

Opened to Sol Glass, Former BIA President

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The Membership Ledger

Members 600 through 1032

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Ed Gets Started

Had Been Club Historian – Librarian Since 1940

Ed Develops His Method

- Endless little “cards,” 3” x 5”
- Handwritten notations from minutes, newsletters
- Separate attendance records
- Separate membership records
Ed’s Output – Club History

A Literal Shoe Box Full

Sample “Card“

In the February 1929 issue of “Garfield-Perry Club News,” the initial article appeared of a series on “Club History” by W.T. Barnum. The articles appeared in each issue to and incl Dec 1929 then one each in Feb, Mar, Jul 1930. The article in the July 1930 issue brought the notes up to the year 1916.
Ed’s Output – Club History

A Literal Shoe Box Full

Another Sample “Card“

1929

Cleveland Stamp Club Night (Oct 18, 1929)

This night saw a number of our old members returning after a long absence. Their presence was very welcome; and when you put into the shoe box another stamp, we probably never would have had such a meeting. Everyone present enjoyed themselves. The stamps exhibited by Bill Long and others were especially appreciated. The twenty-five members of the CSC certainly showed their esteem for Mr. McKey, who was presented with a roll call card. We have all of our guests enjoying themselves as much as we enjoyed ourselves.

26 Sep 1929
At some point Ed turned his little cards into typed summaries of club minutes

Created history, including number of attendees at each meeting, annual financial report

6” x 9” pages, several carbon copies

This page typed Dec. 13, 1943
Ed created separate little “cards” for each member
- Notes indicate these were later typed
- Included attendance, when they spoke, exhibited, became members or left
- Service on committees or as trustee / officer, etc.
Ed’s Output – Members’ Histories

End Product?

- Loose sheets in scrapbook have some typed member bios, mostly charter members
- This is the first page about George Worthington and his collection
- Probably more Piper stuff in our container
Ed Needs a Project

Had Been Club Librarian Since 1940

One Need Not Be Crazy, But It Helps

- Got caught up on G-P history around 1948
- Resurrected indexing project in 1949.
- Transcribed Green’s 8” x 11” pages on to 3” x 5” slips, using any scrap of paper at his disposal.
- Re-indexed Green’s original 6 journal runs, added 26 more journals and 2 books.

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Ed’s Output – The Piper File

Would You Believe 90,000+ of These?

The Piper File ~ Sample Card

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Ed’s Archival Quality Paper

Many are Blank, Many are Not

A Backside: Railroad Ticket Envelope….
More Archival Paper

There Are Hundreds Like This

....Bank Advertising Brochure....

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More Archival Paper

Vertical, Horizontal

….A Complimentary Calendar….
More Archival Paper

The Postal History He Sacrificed... 😊

....Personally Addressed Envelope....
More Archival Paper

Not All Postal History Will Be Missed

.... Postcard for the Salvation Army ....
More Archival Paper

Any Source at All...

....Advertisement for the Latest Baseball Books....

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Enough of the Archival Paper

It is Turning to Dust

....and an Advertisement for the Latest Facial Tissue.

Open your free sample of Puffs and be one of the first to enjoy this new creation in facial tissues....so soothing on your skin.

In making these wonderful tissues, Procter & Gamble blends a formula of remarkable ingredients that looks and feels as smooth and velvety as...
The Piper File – Scope

English Only, Please

- English language U.S. and British journals.
- Includes references to articles of “permanent value” excludes those of “general interest.”
- Excludes news of individual stamp clubs and dealers.
- Includes large philatelic organizations (APS) and significant philatelists (Ashbrook, Luff).
What Ed Indexed

Partial List of Journals

- American Journal of Philately
- The American Philatelist
- American Philatelic Congress Book
- Collectors Club Philatelist
- Chronicle of U.S. Classic Issues
- Covers
- Cyclopedia of U.S. Postmarks
- Essay Proof Journal
- France and Colonies Philatelist
- Gibbons Stamp Weekly
- Linn’s Weekly Stamp News
- London Philatelist
- Masonic Philatelist
- Mekeel’s Weekly Stamp News
- Mercury Stamp Journal
- National Philatelic Museum Bulletin
- The U.S. One Cent Stamp of 1851-1857

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What Ed Indexed

Remainder of the Journals

- Pat Paragraphs
- Philatelic Gazette
- Philatelic Magazine
- Philately
- Philatelic Journal of Great Britain
- Postal History Journal
- Postal Markings
- Scott’s Monthly Stamp Journal
- Society of Philatelic Americans Journal
- Stamp Collecting
- Stamp Specialist
- Stamps
- U.S. Cancellation Club News & Quarterly
- Weekly Philatelic Gossip
- Ward’s Philatelic News
- Western Stamp Collector
A Few of the Originals

Of Course There Were Hundreds of Issues

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Ed’s Library Legacy

Piper Philatelic Index

Overview

- Detailed philatelic subject headings scheme.
- Includes cross references and multiple reference citing.
- 90,000+ index cards, 450,000+ references
- Donated to APRL by his family in 1974.
A Subject Card

Remember Manual Typewriters?

The Piper File ~ Sample Card

- Heading / Sub-headings
- Scott No.
- Article Title / Author / Journal (Acronym) / Notes
- Volume (Issue) / Page(s) / Date
- Citation Addition
- Citation/Proofreading Verification

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Ed’s Rough Draft
Handwritten Before It Was Typed

The Piper File ~ Sample Card

Heading / Sub-headings
Scott No.
Article Title / Author /
Journal (Acronym) /
Notes / Volume (Issue) /
Page(s) / Date
Citation Addition
Citation/Proofreading
Verification

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Why Should APRL Digitize?

Does Modern Electronic Search Supplant?

The Piper File ~ One Big Card Catalog

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A Sample Drawer

They Are All Full of “Cards”

The Piper File ~ A Few of the 90,000+
Why Scott Tiffney Started Project Isn’t Finished

The Piper File ~ Why Digitize?

- **Unique** – Rare, Comprehensive Philatelic Index
- **Access** – Reference Staff, Members, Researchers
- **Preservation** – Card Condition / Rarity / Historical

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The Scanning Project

Considerations

- Protocols
  300 dpi, Color, Readable PDF (OCR)

- Hardware
  Flatbed Scanners with ADF
  Overhead Scanner

- Software
  MS Access
The Output

What are the Deliverables?

- Searchable / Sortable Database
- Digital Archive of Index Cards
- Linkable Digital Index (Part of APRL Digital platform)
Problem Children

Really Hard to Make This Searchable
Preserving an Organized Philately
The Digitization of the Piper Philatelic Index

American Philatelic Research Library
Piper Philatelic Index

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Preserving an Organized Philately

The Digitization of the Piper Philatelic Index

The Piper File ~ Digitization

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Preserving an Organized Philately
The Digitization of the Piper Philatelic Index

The Piper File ~ Digitization

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Preserving an Organized Philately
The Digitization of the Piper Philatelic Index

American Philatelic Research Library
Piper Philatelic Index

Article Title
Canada's 1953 Coronation is Scarce in Plate Number Block Positions

Author
Bentham, Lorne W.

Journal Title
Western Stamp Collector

Volume
29
Issue
4
Page(s)
1/15/1955

Subject Heading
CANADA: 1953
Sub Heading
4c Coronation

Notes

American Philatelic Research Library
Piper Philatelic Index

Article Title
Canada Corner

Author
Vaughn, Gordon D.

Journal Title
Mekeel's Weekly Stamp News

Volume
84
Issue
172
Page(s)
03/1955

Subject Heading
CANADA: 1953
Sub Heading
4c Coronation

Notes
Top row of horizontal per

Scott #
Sc# 330

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Where Are We?

Lots of Progress

The Piper File ~ Digitization

- 59,000+ cards indexed (132,000+ unique citations)
- 31,500+ cards manually transcribed
- 8,500+ cards indexed via OCR
- 37,000+ scanned PDF card images
Homage to Ed Piper
A Massive Contribution to Philately

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The APS had nothing to do with this presentation, but everyone watching ought to be a member!