

L A M B D A
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J O U R N A L

THE QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF THE GAY & LESBIAN
HISTORY ON STAMP CLUB, ATA STUDY UNIT NO. 458
AND AMERICAN PHILATELIC SOCIETY AFFILIATE NO. 205

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American
Philatelic
Society

Certificate of
Affiliation



GOOD NEWS! GLHSC HAS BEEN ACCEPTED AS AN AFFILIATE OF THE AMERICAN PHILATELIC SOCIETY (APS). OUR AFFILIATE NUMBER IS #205. This brings to two major philatelic organizations with which GLHSC is now affiliated. Please support both groups and be sure to mention that you're a member of GLHSC.



The Lambda Philatelic Journal is published quarterly by the Gay and Lesbian History on Stamps Club (GLHSC). GLHSC is an official study unit of the American Topical Association (#458) and an affiliate of the American Philatelic Society (#205).

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 \$6 per calendar year for US, Canadian and Mexican residents; \$8 or 10 IRC per year for all others.

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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.

Date of Journal:

January-March
April-June
July-September
October-December

Material needed by:

December 15th
March 15th
June 15th
September 15th

The views expressed in the journal are those of the writers and do not necessarily represent those of the Club or its members. Any comments or letters should be addressed to the Editor at the address listed.

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A Stamp for Michael

by Harley

My good friend Michael Bidner (1944-1989) played a key role in the April 1991 issue of a sheet of AIDS stamps from Terra Candella. During the last five years of Michael's life, his love of stamps and his extensive involvement with artistamps (a term he originated) found unique focus. At the time of his death, he had accumulated over ten thousand artistamps from around the world and was preparing a publication of this material in the form of a philatelic catalog similar to Scott's. His collection included everything from philatelic local post issues to individual hand-painted stamps. We shared an intense passion for anything remotely resembling a stamp. An attempt is now being made to see this project through to publication.

Through my involvement with this project, I have been trying to get a related project off the ground here in San Francisco. I have proposed a two part program to the San Francisco AIDS Foundation. First, I would like to organize an international artistamp exhibition on the theme of AIDS. I have a file of over 2,500 artists worldwide put together over the almost two decades of work with mail-art and stamp art. From the work submitted to this exhibition, I would select a number of designs and issue a sheet of stamps or seals to be sold to the public for use on their mail. We should have an annual AIDS seal issued in the same manner as the Easter and Christmas seals. In addition to being a viable way to raise money, this would be an excellent way of keeping AIDS in the minds of people all across the country and beyond.

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In order to more clearly illustrate my proposal, I issued this sheet of stamps in the philatelic form of a semi-postal (see cover). Using a stack of gummed paper I had bought from a printer, I laid out a sheet of 35 stamps with a different collage vignette for each stamp. In my many years of issuing stamps for Tristan Local Post and Terra Candella, I've used a wide variety of means of production. I have utilized etching, painting, erasure prints, collage, single color xerox, separate color xerox, color xerox, offset printing, four color separation and now the Canon Color Laser copier.

First I lay out my format and mount a background pattern cut from my collage papers. Then I do a page of collage on a grid reflecting the final size of the stamp vignette. The grid aids in composition and insures that each stamp, when cut from the sheet, will have a variety of polychromatic pattern. The vignettes are then mounted on background papers. In the case of this issue, a rubber stamp was used to imprint each stamp with the country name. "AIDS" and the value were added with press-on type. This is a very laborious process and the use of a computer with a laser printer is much more efficient. Then you are ready to trot off to the copy shop and print as many copies as your pocketbook will allow. I follow governmental and philatelic practices for all my Terra Candella issues. I only process FDC's on the day of issue and keep a record of how many sheets are printed.

I am very tenacious and plan to keep working to interest the San Francisco AIDS Foundation in the AIDS seal project. I think that an exhibition of stamps, local post issues and artistamps on the theme of AIDS could have an impact on the public similar to that of the Names Project Quilt.

Gay Postal History: Barney Frank

The final installment of this series is on another Congressman from the State of Massachusetts. The first two Congressmen were forced to leave public office upon disclosure of their sexual preference. The third Congressman had a different outcome, though his ordeal began much the same as the other two. The fourth, and final Congressman, had a much different chain of events.

The closet was still "home" for Barney Frank while he was a Massachusetts state representative. Unlike others who were gay yet did not acknowledge this fact, he was very supportive of gays and lesbians. In the 1980 elections, he was elected to the US House of Representatives. His district covered the Boston suburban area of Newton and Fall River.



Once in Washington, it appears that Frank began to slowly open the door. His coterie began to grow. Visits to gay bars became more frequent. And, he was still a very strong supporter of gay and lesbian issues. By the mid 80's, most people who knew Barney Frank knew or suspected that he was gay.

1987 was to be an important year for Frank. Gary Hart, who was running for President, was forced to drop out of the race. This was due to Hart's affair with Donna Rice. The press went on a frenzy,

delving into politician's private lives. The Governor of Ohio was said to have had three affairs. Reporters then began to question Jesse Jackson on his relationships. Then, Connecticut Representative Stewart McKinney died of AIDS. He was married at the time and the father of five. Upon his death, it was discovered that he had had several gay relationships. It was at McKinney's funeral when Frank decided to publicly acknowledge his being gay. "I don't want to leave the impression that I am embarrassed about my life."

During a May 29, 1987 interview with the Boston Globe, Frank said, "If you ask the direct question: 'Are you gay?', the answer is: Yes. So what? I've said all along that if I was asked by a reporter and I didn't respond it would look like I had something to hide, and I don't think I have anything to hide."

Barney Frank was the first US Congressman to openly acknowledge that he was gay. The others were all forced to make this admission. Frank's coming out marked an important moment in gay history.

Rep. Frank has since been re-elected to Congress. His sixth term began after the 1990 off-year elections. He is currently on several House committees: Banking, Finance, Urban Affairs; Government Operations; Judiciary and The Select Committee on Aging.

The House of Representatives currently has two members known to be gay. The Senate has none. Of the four members covered in this series, it appears that public acceptance is growing. However, both members that were forced from office represented Southern states. Reps. Studds and Frank come from a much more liberal state. One day, all of America will discover that a person's sexual preference does not affect their ability to be public officials.

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, DC 20515

PUBLIC DOCUMENT
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Forwarding and Address
Correction Requested

Barney Frank
M.C.



For further reading:

The Boston Globe, May 30, 1987.

The Advocate, July 7, 1987

Newsweek, June 15, 1987

Neil Miller, In Search of Gay
America: Women and Men in a Time
of Change, The Atlantic Monthly
Press, 1989.

Illustrations:

Scott No. 2341, 2011

Lesbians on Stamps at the
National Lesbian Conference

by
Judith Beckett

A National Lesbian Conference!
What a great opportunity to
increase the number of lesbian
members in the Club. At any rate,
Joe Petronie thinks it's a great
idea, and so do I. I write to the
wimmin in Georgia who are
organizing this thing and rent a
space with a table and two chairs

in the marketplace for a donation
of ten dollars. Though I will be
at the conference from early
Wednesday afternoon until late Sun-
day morning, I plan to spend only
two hours on Saturday at my table
soliciting new members.

I spend the weekend before my trip
putting together an exhibit of
sorts. I ravage my stock books and
albums, pulling out any material
related to lesbians on stamps.
Soon, I have a collection that
includes Anne Bonney and Mary Read,
Eleanor Roosevelt, Emily Dickinson,
Bessie Smith, Anne Frank, Martina
Navratilova, Willa Cather and Dr.
Mary Walker. I add a cover from
GLHSC's Gay History Series with a
quote from a letter written by
Florence Nightingale espousing her
skill as a lover ("..no woman has
excited passion among women more
than I have."). I also add all the
material I can find relating to
Keith Haring's controversial 1989
Lesbian and Gay Pride cancellation
and Jesse Helm's vituperative
response to it. I add a maximum
card from that celebration
picturing Radclyffe Hall and Una
Lady Troubridge perched side-by-
side on a garden wall.

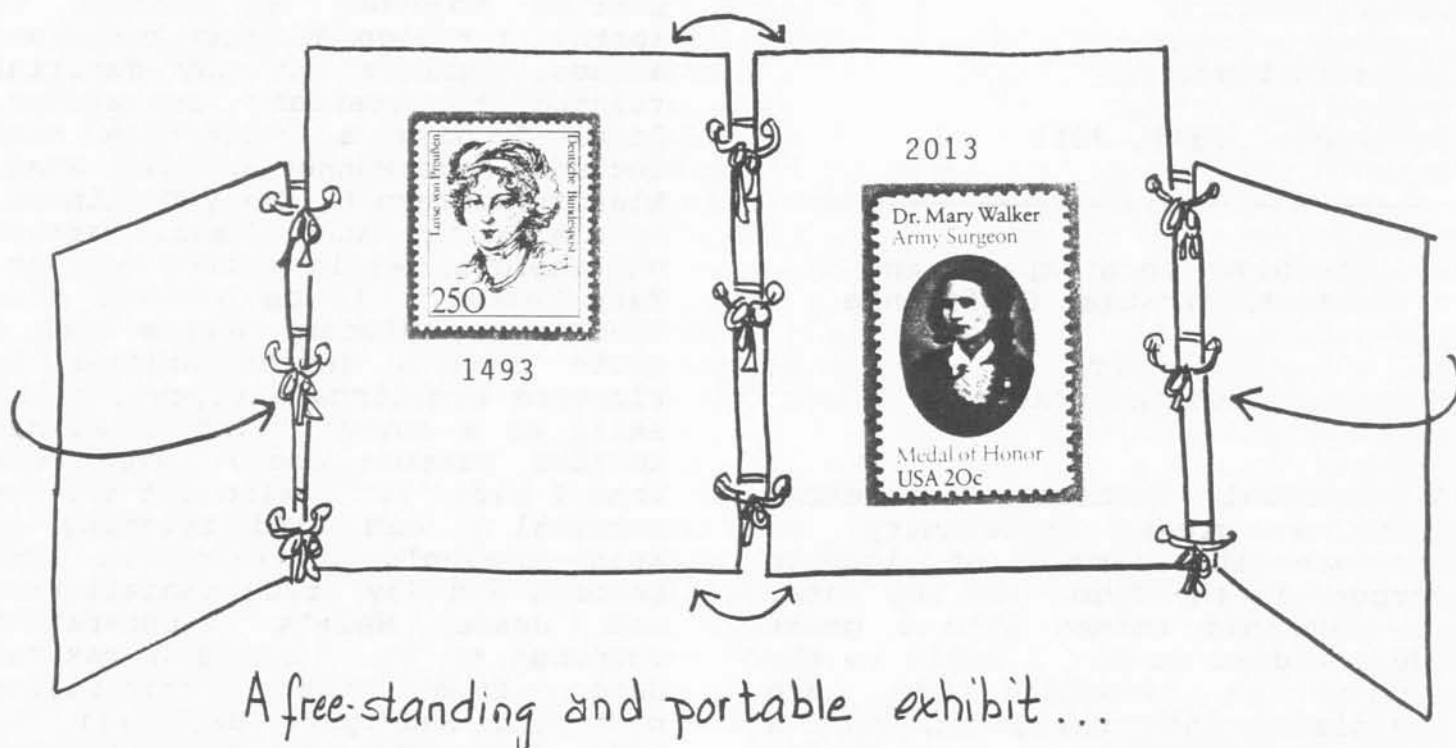
To construct the exhibit, I use four pieces of 1/8" thick poster board from the art store. I cover them with pieces of colored paper that complement the stamp designs. The two center pieces are 25" x 16". The two pieces on either side are shorter, 18" x 14". I lace the four of them together with beige yarn. Now the exhibit can be folded up on itself for travel. It is also free-standing, a problem I've been struggling with for some time.

Once all the stamps are attached with mounts and the covers with drafting tape (a thoroughly unsatisfactory method: more on that later), I add lettering cut from philatelic journals or letter by hand. For instance, I copy the red and blue lettering off an Anne Frank stamp from the Netherlands and clip several titles from articles that Joe has sent me in the past. A copy of Richard Thomas' column "Who's Who on Stamps" devoted to Dr. Mary Walker is clipped from Linn's Stamp News.

It is pasted next to an FDC and her 1982 commemorative US stamp.

All the material on Jesse Helms (articles from the New York Post and headlines from our local paper) are pasted right at the top of the exhibit where they are apt to catch the political eye. Also at the top, a maximum card with the Lesbian and Gay Pride cancellation featuring two bare-breasted women boxers and the words "We'll Always Be...". Another eye-catcher, to be sure!

At the last minute, I add a poem by Emily Dickinson: "Wild Nights - Wild Nights!/Were I with thee/Wild Nights should be/Our Luxury!. Futile-the Winds-/To a Heart in port-/Done with the Compass-/Done with the Chart! Rowing in Eden-/Ah, the Sea!/Night I but moor-Tonight-/In Thee!" She wrote this for the woman who would later become her sister-in-law, Sue Gilbert. (Hot!) The exhibit travels to Atlanta in a cardboard portfolio, checked at the airport



with the baggage and sealed in a cardboard box.

I am discouraged soon after my arrival at the Radisson Hotel. Most of the wimmin I see seem to tend toward the downwardly mobile and all of the workshops on the schedule appear to be very political. For the first time, I ask myself the question: Is stamp collecting politically correct?



On Thursday morning I jot off a worried postcard to the Editor. Perhaps stamp collecting is too bourgeois for this crowd, I write, only I'm not sure how to spell "bourgeoisie". I consult the beautiful dyke sitting next to me in the lobby of the Radisson. She has dark skin and long, coal black hair and flashes a smile that evokes all the romance of Anne Bonney and the wimmin pirates of the Caribbean. Unfortunately, she

doesn't know how to spell "bourgeoisie" either. Later, at a workshop on ageism, she slips me a small piece torn from a newspaper with the word "bourgeoisie" in the text. Be still my heart!

By Saturday morning, there are 3,000 dykes in attendance (according to the New York Times). The crowd is looking good and quite a bit more affluent. In fact, there are dykes of every imaginable description. A good many appear quite bourgeois, I decide, and my spirits rise. When I appear at the marketplace at 10am to set up my table, my neighbor to the left says, "Where have you been? You're listed as a merchant in this space and a woman has been looking for you here every day. She's really excited about your stamps!"

I set up the exhibit with a much lighter heart. I hang up the "Gay and Lesbian History on Stamps Club" banner my brother-in-law generated for me on his computer. I place 50 membership applications on the table, as well as 30 copies of Kathy Hall's pamphlet, "Lesbians on Stamps". I add copies of an article on Anne Bonney and several copies of Lambda Philatelic Journal and Linn's Stamp News.

Did I tell you I planned to stay for only two hours? Well, I'm there for almost five. My friend who has a booth down the aisle is amazed. I never stop talking. I have memorized at least one fact about each woman in my exhibit. When this fails, I invite them to kneel down beside me so that I can read them Emily Dickinson's poem to Sue Gilbert, which is in the very bottom right-hand corner of the exhibit.

All the while I'm talking, I am busy catching the covers and maximum cards that are dropping like ripe Georgia peaches from my exhibit in the humidity of the Radisson

Hotel. I have an extra roll of drafting tape with me so I can stick stuff back onto the posters, but it's more or less futile. I worry that my credibility may be seriously effected. One woman is so excited by the exhibit that she demands I sell her something. She is very disappointed that I have nothing to sell except memberships! Later, another woman stops by to inform me that what I need to hold my exhibit together are archival corners. She even tells me the name of the manufacturer. (Hmmm. This must be what they mean by networking!)

The enthusiasm for Lesbians on Stamps is over-whelming! The exhibit attracts archivists, artists and Lesbian historians. I meet wimmin who used to collect stamps and whose fathers, brothers and sisters currently collect stamps. Two gay journalists take information to write about us in their publications. A woman scolds me, reminding me not to "out" individuals whose families might be embarrassed by their inclusion, even if they have been dead for 100 years! They are excited by the beauty of the stamps and the historical potential of philatelic collecting and exhibiting. Keith Haring's cancellation and the Jesse Helms headlines do attract a lot of comment as I had hoped. Martina is a big hit as soon as she is noticed holding her Wimbledon trophy aloft on a stamp from St. Vincent.

Did I have fun? You bet. I handed out 37 of the 50 membership forms as well as all the handout material. When I returned to the marketplace Sunday morning to buy a last-minute gift for my lover, a woman approached me wailing, "Someone took my membership form from me yesterday! Do you have any more?"

All in all, the National Lesbian Conference was an incredible experience. I hope, if you didn't

attend, you've at least enjoyed a few of the philatelic highlights described in this article. It remains to be seen how many of my strange encounters of the philatelic kind will result in new memberships, but what the heck? Exhibiting at a National Lesbian Conference seems to be yet another great way for us to enjoy our hobby of collecting Gays and Lesbians on Stamps!

Note: National Lesbian Conference, April 24-28, 1991, Radisson Hotel, Atlanta, Georgia.



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The Art of Collecting Gays and Lesbians on Stamps

Collecting gays and lesbians on stamps is similar to collecting other topics. Yet, this topic has a major requirement that most others do not: lots of research. With most topics, the subject is clearly depicted on the stamp. While gays and lesbians and their works are portrayed on the stamps, one must first discover who is or was gay/lesbian.

The initial step of research is not easy. As most of us are aware, the majority of books either circumvent the issue or completely ignore it. Family members have been known to hide, change or destroy what they consider incriminating materials. In the case of Michelangelo, his family changed masculine pronouns

to the feminine in his sonnets. Biographers generally ignore the sexual orientation of their subject. Finally, many people in the position to be honored by a postal administration lead a double life, thereby clouding the issue for future generations. Thankfully, some of these practices are changing.

Many books now exist to help in the research. Several fall into the category of gay history. Jonathan Katz has been a leader in this field. Biographers of recent years seem to be more open with matters of sexual orientation. However, the urge to suppress or ignore mention of the fact is still quite strong. Most of us, however, have learned to read between the lines.

Another group of books that has appeared in recent years is that of almanacs or "lists". These books are usually composed of many small sections containing short stories and lists of who was, is or may be gay or lesbian. Some are filled with trivia.



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Scientific materials are also helpful in research. There have been many studies performed that shed light on sexual matters of many species. Two main problems arise with these materials: they can be boring to read for the average person and the sexual aspect is usually a minute detail in a lengthy article. However, some of the facts are intriguing.

Magazines and newspapers are other sources of information. Numerous gay and lesbian publications exist. Elton John admitted to being bisexual in the Rolling Stone. (He has since retracted his admission!) Grocery store "rags" are usually full of stories. Their reliability, however, is extremely low. The numerous lawsuits filed against them attest to the unreliability of their stories. On the other hand, one could argue that the plaintiff filed the lawsuit only to suppress what could be considered a hindrance to his/her career. Using the likes of the National Enquirer as a reference is not recommended. Other magazines would require using several other references.

Now that you have a list of who is, was, could have been and may be gay or lesbian or bisexual, you can rush out and buy the stamps! Life is not that easy! One bridge has been crossed, but one more exists. That is, which countries have honored these gays, lesbians and bisexuals.

Once more, reading is required. The easiest way to find the countries and stamps is to read the many stamp periodicals. None carries a gay/lesbian listing section. Therefore, you'll need to search the many topical listings or new issue listings for the person's claim to fame. An article on one subject may make mention of stamps that can be included in a gay/lesbian collection. It is helpful to be aware of your subject's associates.

Our topic seems to require much reading and research. There does not seem to be much time left for collecting the stamps. However, with all the research that goes into discovering who is, you should be able to add stamps, covers, postmarks and the like the average person would not have thought to add to a collection!

AIDS UPDATE

Tahiti, French Polynesia used a flamme (cancellation) from November 27 to December 1, 1989. "Stop au SIDA: Branchez-vous!" The announcement appeared in Le Monde des Philatelistes, a French philatelic magazine.

Switzerland used cancels for World AIDS Day on December 1, 1988. There were three versions, one each in French, German and Italian.

Vatican City had a cancel for the IV International Conference on AIDS held November 13 - 15, 1989. "Vivre, Pourquoi? le SIDA" (To Live, Why?)



Another cancel used by San Marino for their 1988 four stamp issue has been discovered.

LAST LICK LAST LICK LAST LICK

Birmingham, England used a cancel to commemorate the Gay City Centre Spring Festival in May 1970. Thanks to member in Florida for this information.

The 1992 Annual Convention of the American Topical Association will held at the Radisson Suite O'Hare Hotel in conjunction with World Columbian Stamp Expo '92 (WCSE'92) in lieu of the usual TOPEX. WCSE dates are May 22 to 31, 1992. ATA meeting dates are May 29-31, 1992.

The New York Times, June 16, 1991:

In response to a previous article, a reader wrote in stating that there have been gay Indian chiefs. He mentions that in more than 130 tribes in North America, a distinct "third" gender existed. Anthropologists have given this gender the name berdache. Berdaches were men or women who combined the work and traits of both sexes. Most were homosexuals. For further reading, try The Zuni Man-Woman by Will Roscoe.



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In response to the last editorial, a member wrote stating that the Netherlands has dedicated a memorial to the gays/lesbians that lost their lives in World War II. The monument, comprised of three separate triangles of pink marble, is located in the heart of Amsterdam.

Send between \$5 and \$10 plus sase. Receive catalog value 7 times what you send in good world-wide stamps. Both ancient and modern. Check or mint US postage acceptable. Send to Lin Collette, Box 1706, Pawtucket, RI 02862-1706

DUES FOR 1992 ARE NOW DUE. PLEASE SUBMIT \$6 FOR US, CANADIAN AND MEXICAN MEMBERS AND \$8 FOR ALL OTHER MEMBERS BY JANUARY 1, 1992. YOUR PROMPT ATTENTION TO THIS WOULD BE GREATLY APPRECIATED. SUBMIT DUES TO PO BOX 3940, HARTFORD, CT 06103-0940. THANKS.