

JANUARY 2016

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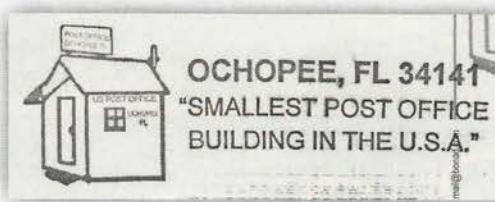
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THE AMERICAN PHILATELIST

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erage of Israel with yearly new issues, Bale issues four separate catalogs (bale-catalogue.com), but none are issued yearly, rather on an irregular basis.

The website shows the following as current: *Holy Land Specialized, Ottoman and Foreign Post Offices* (1840 to 1918, most recent edition, the second, was 2008); (British) Palestine Mandate (1917 to 1948, the most recent edition, 10th, was 2010); Israel catalog (1948 to present, most recent edition 2013); and Israel Postal History (2012).

Fred Korr

Oakland, California

Cuba Produced Christmas Postage Stamps in 1951

I enjoyed reading the December issue of *The American Philatelist*. Christmas themed philatelic topics are of great interest to me.

I wanted to report that the article by Richard D. Martorelli, "Christmas Stamps and Postal History," caused some waves at the most recent club meeting of the Cuban Philatelic Society of America (cubapsa.org), in Miami, Florida. Many of the members of the club are Cuban born and lived in Cuba and were philatelic collectors of Cuban stamps at the time these stamps were issued.

Martorelli's article reads: "In December 1951, Cuba printed two postal tax stamps that depicted a poinsettia and the word 'Navidades' Spanish for 'Christmas season.' "

We dispute the statement that these were issued as postal



Cuba Christmas stamps (Scott 469-470) from 1951.

tax stamps. These in fact were the first national postage stamps issued expressly for use on Christmas greeting cards.

These stamps became very popular not only in Cuba but

Letters to the Editor Continued on Page 103.

Contact *The American Philatelist*

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Have a suggestion for an article? Write to the above mailing address or e-mail aparticle@stamps.org.

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vices for new collectors through some amazing volunteers around the country. To find or become a mentor, go to: stamps.org/mentor-service.

— Provide financial support. Especially with our youth programs, so many members kindly give of their time and their wallets in order to make these programs available. We recently received hundreds of donations for the Stamps Teach program with just one request. If you would like to donate, please go to: stamps.org/online-mail-or-phone.

The one area we will be adding that

will, hopefully, be meaningful for our members is in the area of on-demand videos. If you've ever visited the Khan Academy or watched a TedTalk or even a do-it-yourself video on YouTube, you know there is a vast amount of information at your fingertips any time.

By developing those resources both in short videos and longer presentations, we can document and retain hundreds of hours of knowledge and teaching that will be available to you and other collectors for years to come.

We hope you will take us up on the education challenge and help us serve

you and the rest of our APS membership. Tell us what you think and contact me at scott@stamps.org.

I also receive letters from members around the country and respond to all of them. Please feel free to share your thoughts in writing to American Philatelic Society, Attn: Scott English, 100 Match Factory Place, Bellefonte, PA 16823.

Thanks for the thousands of APS members who give so much of their time and knowledge to advance collecting and teach our community.

We look forward to increasing those opportunities in 2016 and beyond.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Letters to the Editor Continued From Page 12.

abroad, so much so that folks would send their greeting cards in bulk from all over the world to Cuba to have these stamps affixed to the envelopes. The cards were then mailed out from Cuba with these stamps attached, a practice that went on for several holiday seasons. Many of the cards came from the United States because the U.S. did not have a Christmas stamp issue at the time and did not issue its first until 12 years after Cuba did.

I believe the statement that these were "postal tax stamps" may have come about from the fact that 25 percent of the proceeds of the sale of these stamps was contributed to the Communications Employees Retirement Fund. But there is no doubt among our club members that these were regular issue stamps. These stamps were also such a big hit in Cuba that a special first-day of issue pictorial cancellation was created for them.

For the ultra-curious, the outer frame of the stamps was engraved and printed by the Security Bank Note Co. of Philadelphia. The center was then printed in Cuba.

Peter M. Abreu, Cuban Philatelic Society of America
Miami, Florida

Editor's note: Apologies from the editor who added information about worldwide Christmas issues to Richard Martorelli's story. The *Scott Standard Postage Stamp Catalogue*, Vol. 2, lists the Cuban stamps as postage, Scott 469 and 470.

Author's Story Based On Outstanding Research

I thought the Battle of the Falklands article in the December edition was, overall, an outstanding piece of research. Although I am not particularly a collector of material from that event, I have walked out to the battle monument in Stanley, capital of the Falkland Islands. It stands in some lonely splendor on a point overlooking the harbor at the west end of town. I have also walked along the shore of Cumberland Bay

on Robinson Crusoe's Island. You cannot see the remains of the German warship Dresden but there is a monument in the local cemetery for the German sailors that were killed.

It should be mentioned that there is quite a bit of [philatelic] material available of the Dresden. There are many postcards both of the period and more modern. You can find prisoner of war mail from the German internees in Chile. And, the postmaster on Robinson Crusoe's Island has created a number of cachets about the Dresden.

Steve Pendleton
Visalia, California

British Navy Defeated by U.S. Forces in 1813–1814

Albert-Friedrich Gruene's article in the December issue, "Battle of the Falklands, 1914," was a very interesting and well-researched article. The depths that the author delved to discover the identity of the writer of a postcard far surpasses any that I have ever tried.

However, he has made a common mistake about British naval history, the same mistake made by Erik Larson, author of *Dead Wake, The Last Crossing of the Lusitania*. The battle off the West coast of Chile was not the first disaster the British navy suffered after the triumph of Trafalgar in 1805.

The British Naval Forces in North America suffered two major defeats in the War of 1812: at Plattsburgh, New York, also known as the Battle of Lake Champlain, and the Battle of Sandusky, known variously as the Battle of Put-In-Bay or the Battle of Lake Erie, just west up the coast of Lake Erie from where I am sitting.

Myron Palay
Lakewood, Ohio

Editor's note: In 1813 at Put-in-Bay, the British lost 41 sailors, its commander was permanently disabled and all six ships were captured. The forces battled a year later on Lake Champlain, where the British were again defeated, with 168 sailors killed and four ships captured.