



# The Masonic Philatelist

VOL. 19

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NO. 6



Brother Richard E. Byrd (then Commander) being honored in 1928 by Brother Franklin D. Roosevelt (then Governor of New York). See article within by Dr. Irwin M. Yarry—"Masonry and Polar Expeditions."

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VOL. 19 NO. 16  
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Membership . . . . . Carl E. Pelander  
545 Fifth Avenue, New York 17, N. Y.  
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## *By the sign of the Gavel*

It is now more than half of a year since I took office as President of our Club, and it has been both hectic and interesting.

We went into the ASDA Show in November, and it again was very gratifying to see us emerge as one of the best stamp clubs in the country. While at the Show, we spoke to many Masons who had never heard of us,—most of them within 50 miles of New York City. This is now being rectified by more publicity. We are also copy-writing the Masonic Philatelist so that original research that Masons have put into this magazine for the past

## ★ MEETINGS ★

First Friday of Each Month  
Collectors Club Building  
22 East 35th Street, N. Y. C.  
Sixth meeting Feb. 1, 1963  
Prof. John N. Myer will speak  
and show Colombia.

25 years will be protected, and not used for topical handbooks and check-lists without our permission.

The Masonic Stamp Club of New York wants to thank men like Brothers Harbeson, Loke, Mirt, Herst, Bruns, Chester Wing, Yarry, Brooks, Glaser and Greenebaum for the great work they have done on Masonic research, as well as so many others that it would take pages to list them.

There remain a few problems which I hope will be resolved in the last part of my year, which will give us more flexibility to do the things we contemplate.

Our attendance has never been better and our programs have been the best in years. I want to thank the members of the Club for being so loyal to me at the ASDA Show and through our programs of fiscal year 1962-1963.

—Shelton W. Osterlund.

## MASONIC CACHET

Bro. Nicholas G. Koutroulis, President of the recently formed Louisiana Masonic Stamp Club, advises that the Grand Commandery, Knights Templar, of the State of Louisiana is celebrating this year its 100th anniversary. The Grand Commandery's session will be held in New Orleans on April 7-9. In connection with this event, a special cachet will be issued, printed in colors, and will be cancelled on the first day of the Grand Session. This cover will sell at 25 cents each or five for one dollar. Orders must be received before April 5th. After that date orders should include a large self-addressed stamped envelope. Mail orders to Bro. Koutroulis at 4659 Sandalwood St New Orleans, La.

## HAVE YOU PAID YOUR DUES?

Treasurer Joseph Munk would be glad to receive dues from the few members who have not as yet paid him. In this connection, Joe says that he realizes that there are often good reasons for delay.

## Masonry and Polar Expeditions, Part II

By Dr. Irwin M. Yarry



**Most Worshipful Gay H. Brown presenting Distinguished Achievement medal to Admiral Richard E. Byrd on May 6, 1947. Most Worshipful Charles Froessel is in center.**

(See previous article in November 1960 issue of *The Masonic Philatelist*)

One of the earliest attempts at surveying the Antarctic Regions was made by the First United States Exploring Expedition during the years 1838 through 1842, headed by Commander Charles Wilkes, U.S.N., which forth with six vessels for its exploring mission around the world. The full report of that expedition is recorded in Wilkes' writings entitled "Narrative of the U.S. Exploring Expedition during the years 1838, 39, 40, 41, 42." During the year 1840, his vessels, the "Peacock," "Porpoise" and "Vincennes," spotted the land mass which Wilkes claimed to be a continent.

During this same period and in the same area, a French expedition under Dumont D'Urville, aboard the "Astrolabe," was engaged in similar exploration. Upon the return trip of Wilkes to New Zealand, he learned of the pending voyage of the British expedition under Capt. James C. Ross of the "H.B.M. Erebus" and "Terror." Wilkes wrote to Ross on April 5, 1840 (a copy of this letter is noted in the Appendix of Wilkes' "Narrative . . ."), describing the land mass of the Antarctica Continent and its position. This became a matter of subsequent dispute, since Ross later discredited the area by writing that he "sailed over this pseudo-continent" and disclaimed the existence of any land in

that area.

After returning to the United States, Wilkes was court-martialed, but the charges were later dropped. On January 10, 1960, a feature story vindicated Wilkes on the correctness of his claims, in which his maps were redrawn by Australian explorers which checked the sightings of the early expedition with modern (1947) photographs taken by American planes and flight logs during Operation Highjump under Admiral Richard E. Byrd, U.S.N.

This begins our BYRD STORY, for it was just 100 years later that the Second United States Exploring Expedition sailed from Boston, in November 1939, aboard the "North Star," which had been named after a famous polar vessel of the 1850's. This Expedition was under the command of Admiral Byrd, our Brother Mason.

Richard Evelyn Byrd was born October 25, 1888, in Winchester, Virginia, of a famous family which settled in Virginia in 1674. Young Byrd, thrilled by the fascination of geography, travelled around the world at the age of 12, and became attracted to the search for new lands. He enrolled at Virginia Military Academy at the age of 15, where he spent two years, and then a year at the University of Virginia, before obtaining admission to the U.S. Naval Academy.

A major accident incapacitated him, but he continued in the service for five years, after which he was forced to retire. Recalled to service during World War I to a desk job, our restless Byrd asked to be trained in the flying service at Pensacola, Florida. His major interest now centered on flying the new Dirigible NC1 to Europe, as well as developing several special instruments for greater accuracy in air navigation, the bubble sextant, a sun compass and a drift navigator, while stationed at Halifax, N.S.

After the War ended, he returned to Washington, at which time an attempt to fly the Atlantic was being prepared. Byrd assisted in organizing the Navy Bureau of Aeronautics. In August 1921, he was assigned to London to help navigate the newly acquired ZRII Dirigible for its first flight to the United States. A fortunate train delay on his way to Howden prevented his meeting the tragic end that destroyed this airship and killed nearly all aboard on this test flight.

Byrd was next assigned to the Shenandoah for its North Pole trip, but this flight was cancelled by President Coolidge, — another big disap-

poinment to air-minded Byrd. Being still on the retired list, a promotion to Lieutenant-Commander enabled him to ask the support of Edsel Ford and John D. Rockefeller, Jr., both of whom had backed him on previous occasions for a try at an Arctic flight. About the time, Donald B. MacMillan, another polar explorer as well as Brother Mason, asked the Navy for two planes, and the request of Commander Byrd brought our two Masons together in a joint effort for an Arctic flight. Several trial flights were made over Greenland, with the help of Floyd Bennett, a friendship which enabled Byrd to learn the intricacies of flight from the Navy's greatest aviator.

It was not until 1926 that Byrd and Bennett raised the funds to attempt the feat of flying over the North Pole, an epochal event which stirred the admiration and imagination of the world on May 9, 1926, and made them both international heroes. Honors were showered on Byrd and his personal qualities made him beloved by all. He next sought for means to make Atlantic travel by air safer for regular service.

Imbued as he was with a great love for flying, his plans now reached out for the one remaining undiscovered territory, the Antarctica,—an expedition which would require a vast sum of money and supplies. Preparation for this attempt to open the mysterious continent of 5,000,000 square miles, and money to finance this, were soon available. On December 2, 1928, the expedition left Dunedin, New Zealand, with the heavily loaded "City of New York" in tow by the "Eleanor Bolling" for 2000 miles to the ice pack, where the Norwegian whaler "Larsen" took over. Reached Discovery Bay to the Bay of Whales, where unloading took place for towing over the ice to a safe inlet. Byrd with four pilots, including Bernt Balchen and Harold Gatty, both also Masons, made several exploratory flights. The final plans completed for the flight over the South Pole, with constant contact by radio, the news was flashed to the waiting world on November 28, 1929, that the South Pole had been crossed. Vast areas were photographed and mapped.

In 1933, Byrd, now Admiral, returned to Antarctica with the "Jacob Ruppert" and the cutter "Bear." This trip covered vast areas and mapped out new tracings and contour lines of this large continent. Remaining at the base 125 miles south of Little America,

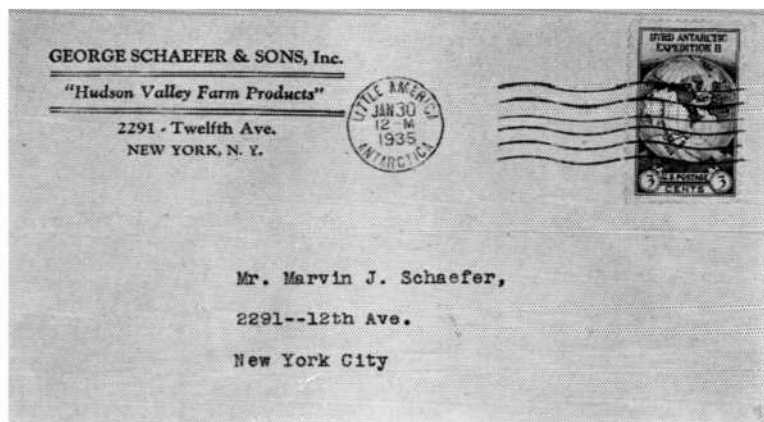
he almost was suffocated from fumes from a faulty chimney, and was therefore unable to make the planned flights.

The many Masons who were present at Little America, convened at a lodge meeting of the newly constituted Antarctica Lodge No. 777, Grand Jurisdiction of New Zealand on February

5, 1935. A reproduction of the Tyler's Register for the first meeting of this Lodge will appear in our next issue.

It has been also recorded that of the 82 members of this Second Expedition to the Antarctica, 60 were Brother Masons.

(to be continued)



Cover illustrating commemorative stamp issued for Byrd Antarctic Expedition II and type Little America cancellation.



Also official cachet which was used, combined with San Francisco receiving mark.

## MASONRY IN RUSSIA

By Wessel M. Lans



In 1759 Andrej Nikivorovic Voronihin was born as a son to Baron A. N. Stroganov and his serf, Marfa Ceroeva. Under these circumstances, the boy could not assume the name Stroganov, but registered with the family name of the office clerk, N. S. Voronihin, another serf of the Stragonovs.

At first Adrej studied iconography and went in 1777 to the School of Art in Moscow. In 1786 he went abroad and remained there several years, visiting Switzerland, Germany and Paris. After his return to his native country, he became especially famous for his part in building the Cathedral Kazansky. He died in 1814.

Voronihin was initiated around 1780 in a Lodge of the Reichel System (Swedish) and received his second degree in a Lodge of the Elagin System (English). He joined the Lodge "Perfect Concord" in 1786. In Paris he also proved to be an ardent Mason and was especially interested in the mysticism of Saint-Martin (1743-1803). He did not become a Master Mason until 1810 in the Lodge "United Friends." In 1960, Russia honored this great architect with a stamp on which his portrait and the Cathedral Kazansky are shown.

The above facts are taken from the book mentioned in an earlier part of this series, "Le Repertoire Biographique des Francs-masons Russes."

### LAKE ERIE CHAPTER NO. 2

January Meeting of Lake Erie Chapter #2.

The regular third Wednesday of the month meeting of the Masonic Stamp Club, Lake Erie Chapter #2, of Cleveland, Ohio was held at the Masonic Temple, 3615 Euclid, on Jan. 16th.

Nine members attended the Dutch Treat dinner at the Masonic Temple Restaurant before the meeting.

The meeting was called to order by

Pres. Richard Jaeger at 8:00 p.m. with 18 members and the speaker for the evening present.

On account of the absence of Bro. Edgar Kroehle 33, at our last meeting, he was installed as our Treasurer this meeting. After installation he gave the Treasurer's report to date.

We were saddened by the death of Bro. Benjamin Kittinger. A short memorial service was held in his memory.

Bro. Pahl reported on replies from the Crippled Children's Hospitals for the stamps sent at Christmas time.

Bro. James Lambert conducted the regular monthly auction, assisted by Bro. Ray Runt. Many purchases were put in the supplies to be sent to the Crippled Children's Hospitals.

Business meeting adjourned at 8:45 after which the speaker, Mr. Grant Ricksecker, '62 President of Cuy-Lor Stamp Club was introduced. His subject: The Story of Tristan Da Cunha and its Postage.

Harry A. Pahl, Corresponding Secy.

### MUSINGS OF AN "OLD HAS BEEN"

#### Article No. 4

"I have spread myself too thinly." Like most stamp collectors, I started in my youth, never did have much money, but did have an interest and a number of friends. Of course my collection was a general one, not very large or expensive, in fact the highest priced stamp was a used 10¢ 1869 that cost a quarter.

Well I went to college; then a war; then marriage, and the stamps were dormant for 25 years. One day an orphaned nephew of whom I was very fond wanted to get a cub scout badge, and became interested in stamps. I found my boyhood collection, minus duplicates due to a younger brother, so had to go out and buy lots to help the young interest sprout. Well, the result was that I fell for stamps again, and the next thing I knew I was buying "this and that" for my collection. Soon my 2,000 odd had gone to 20,000 and still a general collection. I was collecting anything that looked like a stamp—precancels, fair stamps, freaks, re-venues and cancellations. All this from more than 100 foreign countries. Then some foreign countries started producing new issues with abandon.

Yes, I was "spread too thinly." This situation started to depress me, so rather than give up the hobby, I just cut off about 90 countries and forgot about United States stamps except for cancellations. They were not only very interesting, but also at that time not



too expensive. However prices soon started to go up, and as the supply is very limited, even cancellations became a "specialization" field.

Now that I am an "old has been," I'm really consolidating my stamps. I'll only have U.S. and cancellations, but I get as much fun out of the present holdings as I did when I was in the rat race trying to keep up with the printing presses.

### OUR JANUARY MEETING

A visitor, Bro. and Dr. Rex Taylor, of Community Lodge #1028, spoke about his trip as ship's dentist on the S.S. Caronia, and of his experiences purchasing stamps for a friend. He also told of meeting the philatelic agent, A. E. Mills, 29 Edward Street, Kingsgrove, N. S. W., in Sydney, Australia. These remarks were prompted by the fact that the first frame on display at our Annual Members' Exhibit contained a cover bearing cancellation of the S.S. Caronia.

We were also pleased to again welcome Mr. Hy Turkin who had addressed the club at a previous meeting on the subject of stamps of Greece. Also greeted was Mr. Kimmelman, noted for his outstanding revenue collection.

Bro. Sehlmeier introduced the members who were exhibiting. Bro. Reggel opened the exhibit by showing interesting material and covers from the "Around the World Cruise" of the S.S. Caronia; also covers with paquebot cancellations from different countries, all bearing British stamps. Bro. Salomon displayed some choice pioneer transcontinental covers from his extensive collection. Bro. Osterlund showed Charity stamps of Netherlands, and also a number of U.S. Revenue and Documentary stamps. Bro. "Pat" Herst, who always tries to attend when his busy schedule permits, gave some interesting comments regarding our President's stamps.

Bro. Sehlmeier, being a man of few words, limited his frame to two stamps, one being a cancelled copy of a \$10,000 Stock Transfer Tax stamp (highest denomination ever issued), and a \$60 similar type stamp. The latter stamp pictured Howell Cobb whose Masonic background was duly set forth. Bro. Peter Lee showed Christmas stamps of Norway; Bro. Albert Greck, Great Britain, a complete collection from Queen Victoria to Queen Elizabeth II.

Bro. Herman Herst then described his marvelous collection of French Balloon Post used during the Franco-Prus-

sian War. Bro. Yarry showed interesting items, Great Britain used abroad. Bro. Jose Rueff, a frame of stamps of his first eleven pages of Panama, Mint.

Bro. John Shelse had a collection featuring General Grant stamps with collateral material, some of which he had found in the attic of a dwelling which he had purchased a number of years ago. Bro. Swan showed stamps having color changes due to chemical action and gave us some good advice regarding being cautious in purchasing color changelings.

Bro. Nitzberg displayed a large collection of mint U.S. plate blocks. Bro. John Mirt was not present, but had sent in his collection of Masonic cacheted first day covers. These cachets had been prepared by him and contained a wealth of interesting historical information, as would be expected from Bro. John.

Bro. Herst concluded a wonderful evening by relating an interesting story concerning General Grant when he was a junior officer in the Mexican Campaign. He brought out the fact that the story was not generally known until it was found in a cover that was bought in a lot of first day covers by a dealer.

—Stanley A. Salomon.

### AMONG OUR MEMBERS

Bro. HAROLD GUNTER is recovering slowly from surgery, but unfortunately his beloved wife passed away recently. In view of this, Bro. Gunter is now temporarily located at the Oxford Nursing Home, 144 South Oxford St., Brooklyn 17, N.Y. He would welcome cards or notes, but is not able because of this to continue his good work on the "back issues" committee. Until recently, Harold had sent postal reminders to all local members of upcoming meetings, and we are very grateful for his splendid work.

Bro. ELIAS M. MIKKELSEN, who had been one of our very active local members, has not been seen for a long time and we missed him. We find the reason for his not attending meetings is that he has retired and settled in Norway. Any brother desiring to write to Elias, may address him at P. O. Box 606, Bergen, Norway.

At recent meetings of their respective organizations, Bro. JOHN SHELSE was elected vice-president of the Flatbush Philatelic Club of Brooklyn, and our numismatic Bro. PHILIP ROSENBAUM was chosen financial secretary of the West Bronx Stamp and Coin Club. Despite their other activities, these two members continue to attend our regular meetings. Congratulations!



**Admiral Richard E. Byrd holding the Distinguished Achievement medal which was presented to him at the New York Grand Master's Dinner on May 6, 1947.**