

THE PREXIE ERA

The Bulletin of the BIA 1938 Presidential Series Committee



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NOTES FROM THE (NEW) CHAIRMAN.....

Prexies are my life! (Not really — I just wanted to express my enthusiasm at being appointed chairperson of the 1938 Presidential Series Committee.) It's quite an honor to try to follow the footsteps of the two previous chairman: Steve Suffet and Roland Rustad.

Indeed, we have quite a Committee. Not only are we about 115 members strong, but at last count at least 12 of us are exhibiting our Prexie material at national shows and regularly winning high awards. This is occurring despite the attitude of some judges who, as recently as five years ago, thought 20th Century material to be a "poor cousin" to the "classic" material from the 19th Century. Thanks to everyone for the wonderful job you've done educating judges and others through your exhibits, written articles and just general enthusiasm!

And thanks to John Grabowski and especially our contributing members, we have a solid newsletter (*and hopefully more frequent — Ed.*), one of the best communication vehicles of any BIA committee.

But enough patting ourselves on the back — ever onward!

A key area we need to focus more on is research and writing. With Prexie collector and (Grand Award) exhibitor Len Piskiewicz as the new editor of our parent BIA's "The U.S. Specialist", I earnestly encourage you to start writing all those Prexie Era articles you've been thinking about.

I sincerely look forward to meeting as many of you as possible at FLOREX and other events.

Jeff Shapiro

EDITORIAL CHATTER.....

Many apologies to all members for the long lapse in putting forth this newsletter, the last issue being in Sept., 1998! It's been a tough year.

First off, I was drawn into 30 hours/week of school bus driving due to a severe local labor shortage. This will not be repeated. Then the investment biz, my main occupation, went wild (the most volatile markets I have seen in over 30 years!) and that continues to consume a lot of time. Also, I spent considerable time reorganizing and successfully simplifying my business. On top of everything else came the explosion in communications and computer technology which forced my return to school to update those skills!

Hopefully my affairs will be less hectic in coming years and, among other things, I can get the Prexie Era newsletter back on a more regular schedule of 3 to 4 issues per year. This will be an abbreviated issue just to let you know I'm still alive, followed by a normal issue next month.

John Grabowski

PREXIEPEX X: FLOREX, NOV. 5-7.....

Our annual meeting will take place at FLOREX in Orlando this fall. We will have a seminar, followed by a cover swap probably Friday afternoon — more details in the next newsletter. Exhibit info is available from J. Pullin, 2837 Wright Ave., Winter Park, FL 32789-6161.

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THE PREXIE ERA ON DISPLAY.....

There's quite a bit of exhibit reporting to catch up on this time. Please remember to send the Editor a note or short e-mail if you know of any Prexie Era exhibits (he is not as clairvoyant as he used to be!)

BIA Annual Convention at AIRPEX XXIII, Dayton, OH (September 25-27, 1998):

"U.S. Presidential Series Postal History: Rates & Usages, 1938-1960", Steve Suffet, Gold + Rollie Rustad Award + Postal History Society Award

"Collecting Prexie Postal History", Jeffrey Shapiro, Vermeil

"The Philatelic Legacy of Martha Washington — the First, First Lady", William Rader, Vermeil

"Postal Uses of the Prexie Coil Stamps", John Grabowski, Silver

THAMESPEX at New London, CT (October, 1998):

"Collecting Prexie Postal History", Jeffrey Shapiro, Grand Award

METROPEX at St. Paul, MN (October, 1998):

"Postal Uses of the Prexie Coil Stamps", John Grabowski, Grand Award

FLOREX at Orlando, FL (October, 1998):

"Collecting Prexie Postal History", Jeffrey Shapiro, Gold

BIA Annual Convention at ROMPEX 99, Denver, CO (May 14-16, 1999):

"The Prexie Coils", William DiPaolo, Gold + BIA Walter W. Hopkinson Award

"Usages of the Presidential Issue of 1938", Leonard Piskiewicz, Gold + APS Medal of Excellence, 1940-80

"Usages of the 3-cent Thomas Jefferson Presidential Series", Millard H. Mack, Silver-Bronze

Great effort everyone, keep up the good work!

CHECK OUT THIS WEB SITE.....

Anyone found a particularly good website for Prexie Era material or knowledge? How 'bout sharing it with the rest of us — just send an e-mail to the Editor at:

minnjohn@alum.mit.edu

A COUPLE OF QUICK NOTES FROM STEVE SUFFET.....

#1 The Precancel Stamp Society (PSS) reports that there are 2,835 different Bureau of Engraving and Printing precancels (sometimes affectionately called "Buro's"). A few of them, such as the 1.5c coils precanceled "MACON GA." and "WACO TEXAS" (with the state name spelled out), are more rare than the inverted Jenny! But most Prexie Buros are pretty plentiful. Nevertheless, it takes an awful lot of patience to assemble a complete set.

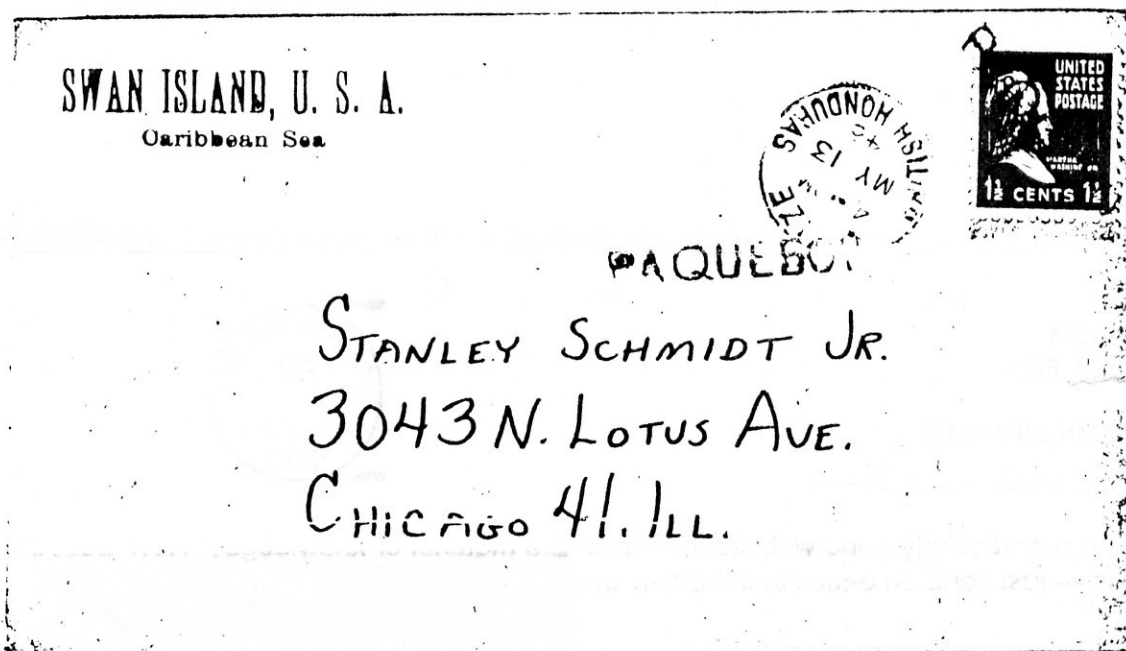
As of October 1998, nine PSS members reported owning all 2,835 Prexie Buros. Another twelve reported owning all but one or two.

So how many do you have in your collection? Do you have any of the really scarce ones? Could you send us pictures to run in this newsletter?

Are there any members who collect Prexie Buros used on cover? We would love to hear from you also!

#2 Prexie Usage From Swan Island:

Swan Island, which is actually a pair of small islands in the Caribbean northeast of Honduras, was a U.S. possession from 1863 to 1971. It was ceded to Honduras in 1971. Swan Island had no post office, although it was the site of U.S. weather, navigation and communications stations. Outgoing mail would be picked up by any passing ship and deposited at the next port-of-call. U.S. postage was required, and if the port-of-call were other than a U.S. port, such mail would be handled as paquebot mail. The 1946 third class cover pictured below (domestic rates applied) was dispatched from Swan Is., through Belize, British Honduras and on to the U.S. The "SWAN ISLAND, U.S.A." corner cachet was more than decorative — it served to indicate that the U.S. postage was proper at the port-of-call — otherwise the cover may have been treated as unpaid, especially if it were carried by a non-U.S. ship.



The late Roland Rustad's collection contained a similar first-class cover. It was sold at Rich Drew's Chicagopex '97 auction for \$575 + the buyer's premium. That sale made me feel quite a bit better about paying \$60 for my third-class example (which I thought was a high price at the time) early in 1997!

PREXIE ERA MATERIAL IN ISSUES OF "THE UNITED STATES SPECIALIST".....

"U.S. Special Treaty Letter Rates, 1908-1953", Anthony Wawrukiewicz, December, 1998

"Uncommon Use of Solo 25c Prexie: 1948 Emergency Service to Palestine",
Jeffrey Shapiro, June, 1999

"Presidential Issue Usages — 1/2 cent", Leonard Piskiewicz, July, 1999

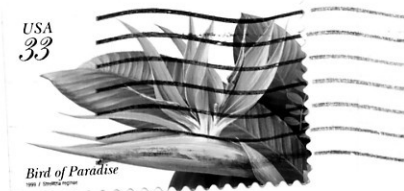
THE U.S. SPECIALIST IS SEEKING PSC MEMBER VOLUNTEERS.....

Len Piskiewicz, newly appointed editor of "The U.S. Specialist", is seeking our help to create a series of articles identifying and illustrating the solo uses of Prexies. The first article, written by Len, appeared in the July issue (see above note). Volunteers have been positioned for the first few stamps (through the 4.5c value), but that still leaves the need for an additional 25 volunteers, give or take a few. Now is your chance to help our PSC, help Len and help our parent organization, the BIA. What's needed are a few solo frankings examples for each stamp and a brief discussion of the rates (already compiled in our past newsletters), plus any additional that you may care to add. Len will be only too happy to provide advice and encouragement. You may contact him at 951 Rose Court, Santa Clara, CA 95051, or more directly at (408) 241-4626 or his e-mail: lenp@pacbell.net.

Please help!!

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