

Stamp Tracks



NEWS AND
INFORMATION FOR
PHILATELISTS OF ALL AGES

Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla and Mexico's First Stamps and Postal Stationery

Member contribution by Doug Files

Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla (1753-1811) is recognized by Mexico as the “Father of the Nation.” He was a Roman Catholic priest, a college professor, and a leader in the Mexican War for Independence. During the early 1800s, Mexico was a colony of Spain. A revolt began in 1801 by peasants lashing out against the Spanish colonial government and the Viceroy who was in charge. On September 16, 1810, the liberal professor Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla gave a rousing speech, and then gathered an army of nearly 90,000 farmers as he marched across Mexico. Spanish colonial authorities were surprised at the size and the fervent nature of the protests. After a few skirmishes with Spanish authorities, the “peasant army” promoted Hidalgo to the rank of *generalissimo* and declared he should be addressed as “His Most Serene Highness.” Soon thereafter, the crowd attacked Spanish troops at the Battle of Calderon Bridge and were soundly beaten. Hidalgo took his surviving countrymen north, but one of his people told the Spanish where he was. Hidalgo was captured and executed for treason in July 1811. This instantly made him a martyr to the cause and Mexicans continued to rebel against the Spanish. Hidalgo was celebrated as the “Father of Mexican Independence” and his death rallied the people. Though a hero, he was not sainted, as this priest was said to have fathered children with three different women. Conservative bishops excommunicated him from the Roman Catholic church twice for his revolutionary activities.



Early Mexican postage stamps featuring
Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla

Images by Mexico Post, Public Domain, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=2438183>

Many years of low-level guerilla warfare followed during which up to one tenth of all Mexicans perished. But, eventually, the rebels wore down the Spanish colonialists, and King Ferdinand VII of Spain—who had been weakened by Napoleon Bonaparte—finally agreed to Mexican independence in 1821. Mexico thus became a constitutional monarchy. The new nation struggled and ten years of economic decline took a toll on the people.

The state of Hidalgo in Mexico is named for the famed martyr, as is Hidalgo County, Texas. Artist Diego

Continued on page 4





Postal History Foundation

920 North 1st Avenue
Tucson, AZ 85719
520-623-6652

www.postalhistoryfoundation.org

Email us at: info@phftucson.org

Officers:

Chair: Bob Davis
Vice Chair: Mike Wood
Treasurer: Ted Maynard
Secretary: Steven Hamann

Museum, Library, and Post

Office Hours:

Monday through Friday except
Federal Holidays
8:30am-2:30pm

Stamp Discovery Education Program

Lisa Dembowski
520-623-6652 x 102
education@phftucson.org
Education Assistant—Kat Wahl

Slusser Library

Librarian/Archivist: Valerie Kittell
520-623-6652 x 107
library@phftucson.org

Philatelic Sales

Monday — Friday
520-623-6652 x 101
Mike Wood
sales@phftucson.org
eBay sales: Bob Davis
ebaysales@phftucson.org

Book Specials from the Sales Department

Egyptian Revenue Stamps

by Peter Feltus

Online prices \$190-\$280 **Our price \$50** +shipping

The Postage Stamps of New Zealand Vol III

by P.J.G Collins, et al.

Online prices \$95 - \$290 **Our price \$25** +shipping

The Large Queen Stamps of Canada 1868-1872

by H.E. and H.W. Duckworth

Online prices \$108 - \$325 **Our price \$30** +shipping

Encyclopedia of Plate Varieties on U.S. Bureau Printed Postage Stamps

by Loran French

Online prices \$250 - \$450 **Our price \$75** +shipping

The Postage Stamps of New Zealand 1855-1873

by Robert P. Odenweller

Online price \$300 **Our price \$80** +shipping

From the Treasurer

**Many thanks to the 165 Members
who have renewed for 2024!**

**For those who might have misplaced
our letter.... no matter, we would like
to have you join us anew!**

Your dollars allow us to:

Support our active Stamp Discovery program
and the Slusser Library as we promote philatelic
learning and inspire future generations.

Please be generous as
you respond to our annual
renewal request.

The children, teachers,
and parents thank you!



Message from the Chair by Bob Davis



PHF table at the new Arizona National Show

New Arizona National Stamp Show

This past February 15-17, the Postal History Foundation participated in the new Arizona National Stamp Show. The Phoenix Philatelic Association and the Mesa (Az) Stamp Club worked together to quickly organize the show that has replaced ARIPEX. Beginning with no website, no mailing list, and little time, the organizers reserved the new venue at the Holiday Inn in Mesa, Arizona and created a worthy show.

With the help of member David Irick, we brought some of the philatelic items for sale (mostly covers) from the PHF. We were surprised at the fine turnout and had a very successful show. Our covers sold especially well with one buyer purchasing \$755 in 25¢ covers (OK some of the covers were 50¢ or 75¢ each). Another collector purchased over \$200 of the 25¢ covers. We also sold a number of collections and exhibits.

As with every show we attend, we receive donations, this year from 11 collectors and dealers. These flow into our Stamp Discovery and philatelic sales programs.

Next year (mark your calendars), the 2025 show will be February 14-16, again at the Holiday Inn in Mesa. Now that the two sponsoring groups have had the experience of running a show and have started a new website and mailing list, I am sure it will be bigger and better yet! We hope all will attend.

On another note, the PHF still needs more volunteers to donate a couple of days a week to help with many of the projects the Foundation is working on. Call, stop by, or inquire at info@phftucson.org.

Sales Department Specials

- **Individual World Wide Stamps** 50% SCV or less
- **US Mint Plate Blocks / US Booklets**
- **Foreign Gold Mines** 4 to 5 oz off paper \$25.00
- **Foreign Platinum Mines** 4 oz off paper SCV
\$0.50 to \$10.00 each stamp/set - \$135
- **Foreign Titanium Mines** SCV per stamp
\$10.00 minimum - no weight limit \$225.00
- **Discount Postage** — 40% discount of face
- **Postcards** — 25¢ each or 5 for \$1 unless marked
- **US Year Sets**
- **Collections**
- **Foreign Covers**
- **US and Foreign Singles and Sets**
- **Stock books and cards**
- **First Day Covers/ RPO Covers/ First Flights**

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- **Mounts**
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Miguel Hidalgo, *cont'd from page 1*

Rivera painted Hidalgo into his murals at least 6 times. The rebel priest's birthday is celebrated in Mexico as a national holiday. And the first stamps and postal stationery issued by Mexico celebrate the father of the nation's independence.

Stamps and Postal Stationery

The first Mexican postage stamps emerged in 1856. Five denominations ran from ½ *real* to 8 *reals*. Each imperforate stamp bore a brightly-colored portrait of Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla. Before being sold, most stamps were overprinted with the name of the district where they originated. The 1861 and 1864 issues also honored Hidalgo's sacrifice to his nation. Collectors should note that the Scott catalog warns that reprints and counterfeits exist for all these early stamps.



One peso gray Hidalgo stamp

Image by Mexico Post – in the Public Domain, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=2438183>



Detail of the Hidalgo postal stationery envelope. Scan from the author's collection.

The first Mexican postal stationery envelopes were issued on May 1, 1874. They included a 5-centavo brown-violet, a 10-centavo green and a 25-centavo blue envelope, all featuring a bust of Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla. The envelopes were printed by the American Bank Note Company in New York to specifications set by the Mexican postal service. The next six issues of Mexican stationery envelopes also showcased this hero of the revolution.

Thus, philately can not only highlight the heroes of a culture, but they can help preserve history. The author wondered sufficiently who this man was on Mexico's stamps and stationery to research and pen this article. Hidalgo will certainly be remembered by generations to come by virtue of his portrait being shown on the early postal issues of Mexico.

References

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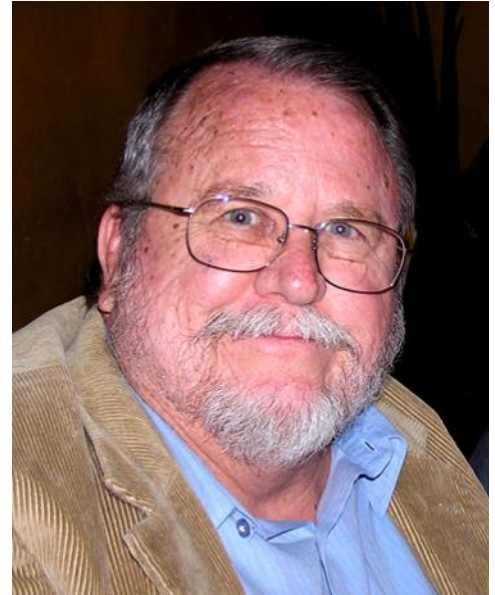
Library News

Valerie Kittell library@phftucson.org

Thank You, John Wynns

Arizona Ranger, member, and former volunteer John Wynns died October 2023. A former employee of Los Angeles Water & Power and naval Vietnam veteran, John was a third-generation Californian who moved to Tucson because he wanted to help and use the resources of the Postal History Foundation. He volunteered in the library. For the last several years of his volunteering, John was in charge of checking in and shelving journals. He enjoyed perusing the latest issues of journals that he did not subscribe to – though he did subscribe to many journals. In fact, John had an incredibly impressive library of his own. In a previous issue of *Stamp Tracks*, he described his home as being “stuffed” with stamps and books on philately. His library spanned the walls of three rooms.

John collected in a variety of areas. He started out collecting United States, US Possessions, and British Colonies. Later in life, he branched out to other countries. He was a well-read person, with interests in history world-wide. Each time a new stamp came out related to a historical event, John would purchase it in the PHF post office and then come over to the library, excitedly showing the stamp and providing context to the historical event.



One of John’s specialties was exhibiting. Between 2012-15, he won several Gold medals for two single-frame exhibits, one on Peru’s 1897 Lima Post Office issue of three stamps, and the other called, “Peru’s 12 Centavos Issue of 1905.” He had only started collecting Peru in 2010! “John loved his stamps. He loved exhibiting, and he was an expert at it,” said Bob Davis while reminiscing about John. John also served as exhibit chair for some ARIPEX shows in Tucson and Phoenix. If you are interested in seeing some of John Wynns’s exhibits, they are available on the internet. Google John Wynns Exhibits and a few sites will have them. Scroll down and find his name in the list and click on to enjoy, page by page!

Another philatelic achievement of John’s was in his earlier life: he was once a courier and clerk working for the United States Postal Service!

John continues his connection with the Postal History Foundation even after his death. His estate has generously donated to the Foundation his extensive library. Board members Bob Davis, Ted Maynard, and Mike Wood met with some of John’s relatives at his home, and, over the course of a weekend, selected approximately 300 books to bring back to the Foundation for the library. The librarian is currently inventorying the boxes and processing the donation. The books include, but also go well beyond, John’s initial scope of collecting. Geography covered in the collection includes all six continents (perhaps seven, if a polar philately book is discovered during processing!).

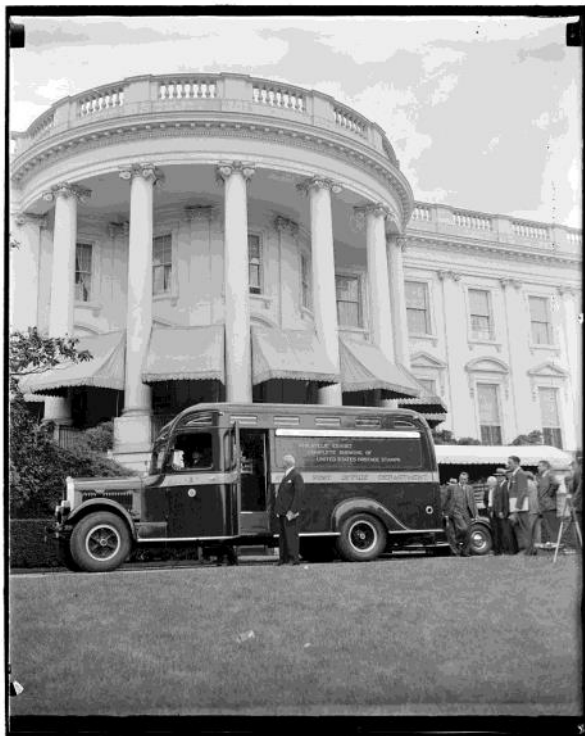
Not all books donated are needed by the library. These books will be listed for sale, some are already in this issue. The Foundation will miss John. We are very grateful for his membership and service over the years and his continued generosity through the acquisition of his books that meant so much to him.

Current Exhibit at the Slusser Library **Valerie Kittell** library@phftucson.org

Come on up to the Philatelic Truck!

In 1938, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt and Postmaster James A. Farley came up with an idea to encourage people, especially children, to collect stamps. A mobile exhibit: stamps on a truck that would drive across the country, stopping at schools, parks, and outside post offices.

The Post Office Department modified a 1931 mail truck to suit their purposes. For \$30,000 (about \$670,000 today), they completely reworked the interior to include glass exhibit cases and the provisions to hang frames on the sides. They even created a way to exhibit stamps on the outside, on the grill (of course not when driving!).



Postmaster General Farley at the White House in front of the philatelic truck before its first trip.
Courtesy Library of Congress.

The truck was outfitted with official stamps, commemorative stamps, coil and book stamps, airmail stamps, parcel post orders, and more. The commemoratives dated back to 1893, and “ordinary” postage stamps all the way back to the beginning, 1847. Along with a model printing press, the exhibit is said to have been worth \$1 million! That’s over \$22 million today!

The truck traveled first to New England, then came down south, and then drove back north again, venturing further west. The stops were scheduled to coincide with philatelic conventions. At some stops, thousands visited the truck. At other stops, it was only a trickle.

Postal clerk Ralph Davis was selected to be the docent, answering questions as guests came through. At night, if no secure parking could be found, Davis slept in the truck on top of the glass exhibit while the other driver slept in a hotel!

Small souvenir “posters,” really small pieces of paper, were given to guests. The first batch of stamp posters were

gummed, so that visitors could attach them to envelopes or other keepsake papers. Unfortunately, kids had other ideas. They started sticking them on all sorts of things after getting off the truck — other cars, poles, buildings, even the truck itself. To prevent further vandalism and waste, the rest of the batches were ungummed!

The truck traveled for a little over two years, stopping for holiday breaks. It arrived in Tucson on December 2, 1941, little knowing what would happen five days later. They were in Yuma when Pearl Harbor was bombed. The truck did continue for a few more days, venturing into California. After their scheduled holiday break, the truck did not resume its trip, due to the war. The truck was stripped of exhibits, which were sent back to Washington. The truck was left in Los Angeles and rotted away.

To learn more and see newspaper clippings about the Philatelic Truck, visit our [webpage](https://postalhistoryfoundation.org/visit/museum/rotating-exhibits/current-exhibit/) dedicated to this rotating exhibit at <https://postalhistoryfoundation.org/visit/museum/rotating-exhibits/current-exhibit/>.

Teen Travels the World from Cabin in the Woods

This article is written by a home school teenager who orders monthly from our education store. It is pleasure to receive letters and pictures from the many students that we serve. As I have said to students for over 15 years, you can travel the world via stamps and postcards.

The quiet solitude of northeastern Washington is definitely a different pace than the constant buzz of my hometown of Seattle. My parents and I moved inland from the Pacific Northwest two years ago. Our home is just a few miles from the Canadian border, nestled in the woods of the Colville National Forest. The nearest town with a population of just 5,000 people is a half-hour's drive away.

My name is Isabella, and I'm 16 years old. I've been homeschooled almost my whole life. Before we moved, I enjoyed swimming, tennis, and a teen program called Wilderness School. My homeschooled friends and I signed up for any class we could find – from learning how to sail, to performing in theater plays. Opportunities like that, however, are much harder to find in our new rural location. I often find myself with extra hours to fill in creative ways. I've taken up drawing and watercolors, and have been learning Spanish through *Duolingo*.

I really missed taking vacations like we had done before. My mom helped me find an exchange service called **Postcrossing**, which connects members around the world through traditional mail. We send off batches of postcards to mystery addresses, and postcards from far-off exotic locales appear periodically in our own mailbox. One day it could be from Taiwan, and the next week Portugal! It's always a surprise, and I'm excited to see unique stamps and cancellations from other countries. The prize of my collection is from Port Lockroy in Antarctica, the southernmost post office in the world.



Postcard from Port Lockroy

Last winter, a Facebook post pointed us to the Postal History Foundation's educational resources for students. Now every month we order a variety of topics and always make sure to include a "stamp mixture" to sort through. I've also begun to collect coins and paper currency from countries around the world.



I love comparing all the colors, shapes, and designs on the stamps. My favorites include animals and plants. Interestingly, the most distinctive stamps are often from the smallest countries! I always have a world map nearby so I can locate the tiniest islands. I plan to continue expanding my collection until I have a page for every country in the world, plus extra pages for countries which no longer exist.

One day I hope to be a traveler to these distant lands, but for now, my three binders of postcards, bank notes, and stamps have connected me to the world in a very real, hands-on way.

PHF Calendar

**Board Meeting April 27 at 9am
followed by the Annual Meeting
at 10:30am**

Visiting the PHF

Open M-F 8:30am - 2:30pm
with some exceptions.

At times the library and/or
museum might be closed on
the day of scheduled field
trips, meetings, and large
group tours. Please check the
online calendar or call
520-623-6652 x 100 or 107

Our online public calendar is
found on our website at:
postalhistoryfoundation.org

click on **Latest** → then click on
Event Calendar OR

[postalhistoryfoundation.org/
visit/calendar/](https://postalhistoryfoundation.org/visit/calendar/)

New Slusser Exhibit

**"Step Right in,
Let Adventures Begin!
The Philatelic Truck"**

You can visit our permanent and
rotating exhibits in person (see
Visiting the PHF, above) or online
at home by going to our website
and clicking

Museum → Permanent Exhibits
or

Museum → Rotating Exhibit →
See more

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Packets of mint stamps, lower
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New Members

Ralph Bennet
Roselle, IL

Doug Lawson
Albuquerque, NM

In Memoriam

John Wynns
Member, Ranger, Volunteer

Toke Norby
Member, Ranger

Gordon C. Morison
Member, Ranger

Ronald B. Roberts
Member, Volunteer

Ralph Swap
Member

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[postalhistoryfoundation/
about/stamp-tracks-
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Tucson Stamp Club

The club is currently meeting
at the

Fraternal Order of
Police Lodge on

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