Wisconsin Association of Philatelic Societies

The 1932 Formation at Fond du Lac

“At the invitation of Branch 11 representatives of a half-dozen clubs and collectors from a dozen or more cities gathered at Fond du Lac on March 19, 1932, to observe the third anniversary of the branch. More than 100 “stamp fans” attended the banquet session at which the Wisconsin Association of Philatelic Societies was organized and the first formal proposal made for observance of Wisconsin’s Tercentenary in 1934.”

From the program of the 39th SPA Convention
held at Fond du Lac, August 17, 18 & 19, 1933

One Frame Exhibit

The goal of this exhibit is to illustrate the beginnings of the Wisconsin Association of Philatelic Societies, now the Wisconsin Federation of Stamp Clubs, through the showing of philatelic commemorative material and other philatelic and historical ephemera.

I. Founding Of The Fond du Lac Club

II. The 1932 Banquet

III. The Early Years And The 1934 Tercentenary

IV. Commemorating The WFSC, 1956 & 1982

This material is presented here to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the founding of the WFSC and to honor those that began this organization and thereby established a great Wisconsin philatelic legacy which we enjoy so much today.
Founding Of The Fond du Lac Club

“When a little group of collectors met at the YMCA in Fond du Lac one night in March, 1928, and organized the Fond du Lac Philatelic Society, the list of stamp clubs in the state was increased to three. The only other societies in Wisconsin at that time were the Milwaukee Philatelic Society, a well established chapter of the APS, and the Appleton Philatelic Society, organized the previous November.

Toward the close of its first year the society applied for an SPA charter and became Branch 11.”

From the program of the 39th SPA Convention held at Fond du Lac, August 17, 18 & 19, 1933

1928 Commemorative first flight C.A.M. No. 9 cover signed by postmaster Thomas Watson. No doubt, the Fond du Lac club was involved in this during the first year of their existence.
1931 Cover with show cachet for the Second Annual Banquet of the Fond du Lac Philatelic Society, March 12, 1931. The show was held at the Hotel Retlaw. The cover is addressed to Verne P Kaub, then president of the club.

Period lithograph from hotel stationery of the Hotel Retlaw. The plaza hotel, built in 1922, still stands and is used as a hotel today. This hotel was the site of many early shows in Fond du Lac.
The 1932 Banquet

This 1932 cover with show cachet for the Third Annual Banquet and First Air Mail Show, held March 19, 1932, at Hotel Retlaw, is autographed by members of the Fond du Lac Philatelic Society.
The 1932 Banquet

1932 show covers with cachets
federation of clubs formed for Wisconsin

Collectors’ Societies Of State Move To Press Observance of tercentenary Commemorative Stamp Issue Will Be Asked To Honor Nicolet, Other Pioneers

Meeting at the Hotel Retlaw on Saturday night at invitation of the Fond du Lac Philatelic society, which was observing its third anniversary, stamp collectors from nearly a score of Wisconsin cities organized the Wisconsin Association of Philatelic Societies.

One of the principal aims of the association will be to press a movement launched at the meeting to secure issuance of a set of commemorative postage stamps during Wisconsin's tercentenary year, 1934.

Jean Nicolet came to Wisconsin and made treaties with Indian tribes in the vicinity of Green Bay in 1634 and it was suggested that the tercentenary of this event would be a suitable time also to honor the Father Jacques Marquette, Claude Allouez and other French explorers and missionaries who followed Nicolet and opened the great Northwest.

For an airmail commemorative stamp to accompany the proposed set it was suggested that a suitable design might include a picture of the arrival of the first white man at Green Bay in a canoe and the landing of one of the mail planes that fly daily from Milwaukee to the site of Old Pt. Howard, first white settlement in Wisconsin.

Historical societies and civic and fraternal organizations will be asked to cooperate with the collectors' association in taking such steps as may be necessary to secure congressional and postal department approval of the suggestion.

In seeking this cooperation, it was explained, the association will assure the other organizations of the support of stamp collectors and stamp societies in such other observances of the tercentenary as may be considered advisable and proper.

Was Early Event

Importance of the proposed tercentenary observance is best understood when it is considered that the arrival of Nicolet at Green Bay was an event which took place in the same 30-year period which witnessed the first French settlement at Port Royal, Nova Scotia, in 1605, the first English settlement at Jamestown in 1607, the French settlement at Quebec in 1608, the first Dutch settlement in New York in 1613 and the Pilgrim’s settlement at Plymouth in 1620, it was declared by former State Senator William A. Titus, a curator of the Wisconsin Historical society and author of a number of books on Wisconsin history, who was one of the guest speakers at the banquet.

Several of the states first admitted to the Union formed by the 13 colonies were entirely unknown, unexplored, for a century after the daring and resourceful French Pioneers had explored and mapped Wisconsin, doing the work so accurately that the first maps which show Lake Winnebago indicated its dimensions within a mile both ways of the measurements taken by government engineers more than two centuries later, Mr. Titus declared.

Other aims of the state federation of stamp clubs will be to encourage frequent interclub affairs and to have all one state banquet and exhibition each year, to assist in the organization of clubs in cities where the collectors are not now organized, and to disseminate information of particular value to Wisconsin collectors.

In sponsoring unassisted the state federation of clubs, the American Philatelic association, for the southern section, and M.F. Hatch, president of the Appleton Philatelic society, for the northern section of the state.

Each club affiliating with the state association will name one director, and these directors, with the officers, will constitute the executive committee.

Dr. N.P. McGay, Cleveland, president of the S.P.A., H.C. Carpenter, Cincinnati, sales manager for the American Air Mail society and the air mail division of the S. P. A. and L.A. Burmeister Jr., Milwaukee, president of the International Philatelic association, were among the guest speakers at the banquet.

In addition to these societies the American Philatelic society was represented by Mr. Achtenberg, who came as the personal representative of Dr. Clarence Hennan, Chicago, president of the society, who was unable to attend. His absence was introduced, speaking briefly on the value of hobbies.

When the Zeppelin airship Akron was launched a few months ago a banquet was given at which 10 men were honored for experiments or achievements primarily responsible for the building of the Akron, and Turney Gratz was one of these men. His work had been that of developing markets and commercial uses for helium gas and was considered an important factor in making possible the building of the giant airship.

Tell of Exhibit

J. Max Golding, prominent Chicago collector of air mail stamps and covers, who was principal exhibitor at the stamp exhibit held in connection with The 1932 Banquet

Support is Urged

Support of the national societies for the association is urgent effective and in urging the issue of the suggested commemorative post-age stamps was promoted by the official representatives of the societies.

Hugh T. Gratz, Louisville, Ky., business educator who has been making this city his headquarters for several weeks, gave a highly amusing account of how he flew a plane at Mattoon, Ill., 22 years ago, without having had previous experience or instruction of any kind.

Part owner of an early day plane which had been purchased for the purpose of making exhibition flights at county fairs and community gatherings, Mr. Gratz was persuaded to attempt a flight when the aviator hired for the first contract appearance of the plane failed to appear.

To save the contract fee, $500, and avoid a suit threatened against the plane owners if the machine failed to fly, Mr. Gratz undertook the job. It was necessary for him to raise the plane at least a foot above the ground for a distance of 100 feet to fulfill the contract.

By a coincidence Mr. Gratz' son, Turney Gratz, Madison, associated with him in the educational work, played an important part in development of aviation in another field. He was present and introduced, speaking briefly on the value of hobbies.
The 1932 Banquet

the banquet, told a number of his most interesting experiences in the course of 50 years of stamp and cover collecting. He is an electrical engineer who learned his profession under a brother of Count Zeppelin, builder of airships, and a close friend of the count, of Dr. Hugo Eckner, commander of the Graf Zeppelin, and of other noted flyers.

In addition to showing the choicest items from his vast collection of historical and pioneer air mail covers, Mr. Golding brought with him for exhibit a highly specialized collection of stamps of Rumania from the first issue to date, principal items of which were displayed under approximately 250 square feet of plate glass laid on tables.

This collection, never before shown in America, has won grand prizes at exhibitions in Bucharest and Paris, and is valued at more than $75,000, for which amount it is insured against fire and theft.

Exhibit Sponsored

Members of the Fond du Lac club sponsored an exhibit of 25 frames designed as an educational exhibit. Those who had one or more frames in this exhibit were Russell J. Broderick, Washington as shown on stamps and covers; Philo A. Foote, position blocks of U.S. stamps and U.S. commemorative issues; Harry Gossink, Waupun, precancels; commemorative stamps; Rev. C. M. Starkweather, North Fond du Lac, Wisconsin precancels and bureau prints; Carl J. Schroeder, Bavaria and Danzig; William Blank, Germany; Dr. Ralph S. Mills, Korea, U.S. offices in China and Chinese counterfeits; Shirley Jane Kaub, first day covers; Walter Webb, postal currency; Verne P. Kaub, position blocks of U.S. imperforate stamps; Junior Stamp club, dates and slogans on U.S. stamps, and Troop 13 Boy Scout Stamp club, requirements for merit badge in philately.

More than 1,000 envelopes or covers, of which nearly 400 were air mail covers, were sent through the mails being a special cachet applied by Branch 11 for collectors in many states. The cachet showed an outline of Wisconsin and cities where stamps are located were indicated. In addition to the date and other information relative to the all-state meeting the cachet bore the inscription "First proposal for observance of Wisconsin's tercentenary in 1934."
The 1932 Banquet

1930’s covers with return SPA cornercards for two of the early members of the Fond du Lac Philatelic Society, Verne Kaub and Philo Foote
The 1932 Banquet

THIRD ANNUAL BANQUET
AND FIRST AIRMAIL SHOW
HOTEL RETLAW
MARCH 19, 1932.

FOND DU LAC
GREEN BAY
OLD Ft. HOWARD
APPLETON
OSHKOSH
LAKE WINNEBAGO
RIPON
SHEBOYGAN
MADISON
SHEBOYGAN
MILWAUKEE

BRANCH 11 AT FOND DU LAC.
SPA. CAPITAL OF WISCONSIN.

FIRST PROPOSAL FOR OBSERVANCE OF WISCONSIN'S TERCENTENARY IN 1934
On to Wisconsin!

Thirty-Ninth
ANNUAL CONVENTION

Society of Philatelic Americans

Hotel Retlaw
FOND DU LAC, WISCONSIN

August 17, 18 and 19
1933
The Early Years And The 1934 Tercentenary

Cover with SPA show cachet, August 17, 1932
Thursday, August 17 was designated Michigan Day

In 1638, three centuries ago, the explorations of Jean Nicolet had taken him as far westward on the Ottawa-French River route as Maniciolin Island in Georgian Bay. The following year he passed through the Straits of Mackinac and Lake Michigan into Green Bay, opening the way for French exploration of the Northwest Territory.

Mr. H. C. Mackall
1100 First National - Soo Line Bldg.
Minneapolis, Minn.
The Early Years And The 1934 Tercentenary

Cover with SPA show cachet, August 18, 1932
Friday, August 18 was designated Minnesota Day

Cover with SPA show cachet, August 19, 1932
Saturday, August 19 was designated Wisconsin Day
The Early Years And The 1934 Tercentenary

Handmade cover welcoming visitors to Fond du Lac for the 5th Annual Stamp Banquet, March 16, 1934

Cover commemorating the 5th Annual Banquet at Fond du Lac and the Wisconsin Tercentenary 1634-1934
The Early Years And The 1934 Tercentenary

1934 Scott # 739 Wisconsin Tercentenary Issue
First Day Cover postmarked July 7, 1934 at Green Bay, Wisconsin

1934 Scott #739 plate block of six
Commemorating The WFSC, 1956 & 1982

1956 Silver Anniversary Commemorative Cover

1956 Silver Anniversary Commemorative Postcard
Commemorating The WFSC, 1956 & 1982

1982 50th Anniversary WFSC Homecoming Commemorative cover
signed by members of the Fond du Lac Philatelic Society

1982 50th Anniversary WFSC Homecoming Promotional Postcard