



**July**  
**August**  
**September**  
**2021**

THE NEWSLETTER OF  
**GHSS**  
**FOUNDATION,**  
**INC.**

**EDITOR - JAY STOTTS**

Copies of this newsletter are distributed to all Houston Philatelic Society members. Send articles for publication, classified advertising (Free !), news of members, exhibit award information or anything else of general interest to GHSS Foundation, Inc. members to:

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## **HPS Schedules In-Person Meeting & Auction**

The Houston Philatelic Society has scheduled its first in-person meeting since the COVID-19 pandemic began in March, 2020. The meeting will featured a called floor auction. Because we have been unable to schedule our previous location at the West University Methodist Church, we will have a new, temporary meeting location for this first meeting:

**Date and time:** Mon., July 19, access at 6 p.m., meeting at 7 p.m.

**Location:** Pat H. Foley Company, 1200 W. 34th Street, Houston

### **Auction Rules:**

- You must be a paid-up member to participate in the auction
- A limit of two personal lots per seller and philatelic in nature
- Any number of donated lots on behalf of HPS or GHSS
- Bring small bills to pay exact amount for lots you purchase (bidding is in whole dollars.)
- See page 6 for other specific rules

Start preparing your lots for sale and we'll see you there.

## **Preparations Are Under Way for Greater Houston Stamp Show 2021**

The GHSS Foundation, Inc. is currently in the middle of making preparations for our annual show, the Greater Houston Stamp Show. It will be the most significant public philatelic event in Texas this year. Ron Strawser, GHSS Chairman, said "We intend to make this year's show everything that past Greater Houston Stamp Shows have been."

Since the 2020 GHSS show was cancelled due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, there's a lot of work ahead for the members of the Houston Philatelic Society to support the GHSS Foundation, Inc.'s effort to sponsor and support the show.

The most important activities for us to plan, execute and staff are the setup, the food concession and the Beginners' Booth. These are three hallmarks of our show and need the support of a staff of volunteers to successfully execute. Twenty-eight dealers have already committed to come and they will bring more than a year's worth of extra preparation, so the bourse portion of the show will be successful. We need to make sure we feed the dealers and their customers over the lunch hour and we need to continue the efforts of our Beginners' Booth to support and grow the hobby in the Houston area.

(continued on page 2)

## Upcoming Philatelic Shows & Bourses ....

*Editor's Note: As many people have now received their COVID-19 vaccines, the Texas area philatelic scene is starting to return to the old normal. We hope you have an opportunity to attend an upcoming event in person or will support one of the local stamp shops with a visit. ....*

### July 9-10, 2021

**Houston TSDA Bourse.** Crowne Plaza Hotel, 7611 Katy Freeway (I-10 West, south side feeder road.) Bourse hours are 10-5 on Friday and 9-4 on Saturday. Web site: [www.tsdastamps.com](http://www.tsdastamps.com).

### August 12-15, 2021

**The Great American Stamp Show.** This is the annual show sponsored by the American Philatelic Society. The show will be held this year in Chicago at the Donald E. Stephens Convention Center, Rosemont, Ill. This show is co-sponsored by the APS, American Topical Assoc. and the American First Day Cover Soc. See the APS web site for more details .

### September 17-19, 2021

**Greater Houston Stamp Show.** Humble Civic Center, 8233 Will Clayton Parkway, Humble, TX. The Houston Show will resume this year after a one year hiatus in 2020. This will be a full show as in previous years. We will sponsor our annual single frame color competition and the color is Brown, which was to be the color for 2020. We have signed up 28 dealers and will have an 80+ frame philatelic exhibit. Other details are included in this newsletter.

### November 5-6, 2021

**Houston TSDA Bourse.** Crowne Plaza Hotel, 7611 Katy Freeway (I-10 West, south side feeder road.) Bourse hours are 10-5 on Friday and 9-4 on Saturday. Web site: [www.tsdastamps.com](http://www.tsdastamps.com).

### November 12-13, 2021

**2021 Mid-Cities Stamp Expo.** Grapevine Convention Center, 1209 S Main St, Grapevine, TX, 76051. Friday 10-5 and Saturday 9-4.

### GHSS Preparation (continued from page 1)

The details we are planning for 2021:

**Location:** Our 23rd year at the Humble Civic Center, 8233 Will Clayton Parkway, Humble.

**Dates:** Friday, Saturday and Sunday, Sep. 17-18-19.

**Times:** 10 AM to 6 PM on Friday and Sat., 10 AM to 4 PM on Sun.

**Parking and Admission:** They're FREE.

**Set-Up Day:** Set-up day (Thursday, September 16th) is extremely important for us because at 10am on Friday morning the show opens to the public. We hope to have as many HPS members as possible to volunteer on Thursday because the list of tasks includes setting up the exhibit frames, mounting mail-in exhibits, making final room arrangements for the dealer booths and assisting with their move-in and set-up for the Beginners' Booth. We usually work between 1 PM and 6 PM. Show Chairman Ron Strawser will be soliciting volunteers for tasks all four days. In the past, he has supplied volunteer sign-up sheets and as soon as in-person HPS meetings resume, we expect that these sign-up sheets will be available.

**Exhibits:** We are now in the sixteenth year of our single-frame color competition. The GHSS single-frame exhibit is one of the best, if not the best in the country and it attracts exhibits from all over the country. You will see a strong showing this year of Brown themed exhibits. Brown was to be the color of the 2020 exhibit competition, but since 2020 was cancelled, Brown will get its opportunity in 2021. The multi-frame competition typically attracts national level exhibits as well as local exhibitors trying their hand at the craft of exhibiting.

**Dealer Bourse:** GHSS has already recruited 28 of the nation's best dealers to be in attendance, selling everything from worldwide stamps and covers to country and cover collections. We hope you have plenty of great finds from our dealers and please take a moment to thank them for attending GHSS when you shop with them. Look for a list of show dealers on the web site as we approach show time.

**Food Concession:** We firmly believe that having an on-site food concession is a key to supporting both our dealers and show attendees. The show is an all

(continued on page 3)

### GHSS Preparation (continued from page 2)

day experience and staying on the premises for lunch allows more time for shopping. We will need club members to help man the booth throughout the day each day, so consider volunteering for this station. This is one of the real keys to executing a return to the old days of the GHSS.

**Seminars and Meetings**: Our goal is to have, on Saturday, a full compliment of meetings and seminars. The complete list will be printed in the show program, so consult it for planned meetings.

**Awards Dinner**: A highlight will be our annual Awards Dinner. The dinner to be, as in the past, a Bar-B-Q buffet. Ticket costs are modest (\$22, and subsidized by the club). We have capacity for up to 50 and usually come close to selling out. Contact

Denise Stotts to reserve your tickets.

After dinner, the festivities start with a fun quiz based on Texas trivia and U.S. Brown stamps. We play until we have given out \$100 in cash.

The Exhibit award winners are recognized during the Awards Ceremony. The big awards this year will be beautiful glass pieces hand crafted from Houston Studio Glass. We'll conclude the evening with the ceremony to draw the single frame color for next year, always a unique and entertaining ceremony.

**Sunday**: There's still plenty of shopping opportunities on Sunday at the bourse. When the show closes at 4 PM, we need a good crew of volunteers to help with tear down. We disassemble the frames for shipment back to the storage facility. We also pack up the Beginners' Booth for storage.

*Enjoy all FOUR days of this show !*

## *A Cover to Copenhagen by Closed Mail via England*

*by Ardy Callender*

From June, 1868 to mid-1870, mail sent to Denmark could travel in the German Mail System either directly or as closed mail via England. As it was cheaper, most correspondence was regularly sent by the direct rate (13¢). However, towards the latter half of 1870 this rate became unavailable due to the Franco-Prussian War (July, 1870 to January, 1871). Thus after August of 1870, mail sent to Germany (and beyond) traveled by closed mail via England. In response to the elimination of the German direct rate, the closed mail rate was reduced to 13¢ in July, 1870; the equivalent cost of the previous direct mail service.

The Figure 1 cover is dated 20 September 1870, shortly after the elimination of direct rate service. Sent from Empire City, Colorado Territory, the single rate cover was addressed to a person named Theodor Chris-

tensen, Chopenhagen (Copenhagen), Denmark. The Empire City datestamp is weakly struck at upper left. It arrived at the New York City Foreign Exchange Office where it was rated and placed aboard the Guion Line Steamship *Wisconsin*. The *Wisconsin* departed on 20 September 1870 and arrived in Queenstown, England 30 September 1870.

The adhesives applied include a single 10¢ and two 3¢ National Bank Note Issues (without grill). Each are tied to each other by a smudgy Empire City



**Figure 1. A letter mailed from Colorado to Denmark.**

“Paid” handstamp. A red New York datestamp was struck just below the stamps at right. A strike of the red 2½ fractional credit marking is placed between the adhesives and the Empire City datestamp. 2½ cents represents the transit charge beyond Germany in Silbergroschen; 1 Silbergroschen = 2½¢.

Upon arrival in Queenstown, the closed mail bag crossed the English Channel and was put onboard a train at Verviers, Belgium. On the train headed for Cologne, the closed bag was opened, mail was sorted by destination and the cover received a red Wfco 1 marking, a restatement of the transit charge of 1 Silbergroschen. On the reverse is a Copenhagen receiving mark dated 21 October 1870.

If the closed mail rate was 13¢, why was the envelope franked with postage totaling 16¢? Surely the sender did not intend to overpay by 3¢. Was the Empire City postmaster unaware of the recent rate/route structural changes that had taken place due to the War?

Empire City was established in 1861 during the Colorado Silver Boom in the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century. It is located west of Denver and had a population of 134 in 1890 (2019 population was 304). Due to its remoteness and questionable mail service, it seems probable that the postmaster did not enjoy the current informational updates in matters of postal affairs that more populous cities appreciated. At this time, most rural postmasters relied heavily on the *United States Mail and Post Office Assistant* a monthly periodical by J. Holbrook [1] published in New York City. This four page monthly newsletter kept local postmasters updated on postal law modification and current rate/route changes. The entire last page of each issue was devoted to foreign rate information in a column entitled “Table of Postage to Foreign Countries”.

There was considerable confusion regarding the payment of the direct rate during 1869-1870. Michael Laurence, in his book entitled *Ten-Cent 1869 Covers, A postal Historical Survey*, discusses German Mail and argues that the reason for overpayments was due to the formatting of rate listings reported in the *United States Mail and Post Office Assistant* prior to the closure of direct rate service [2].

A portion of the June 1870 “Table of Postage to Foreign Countries” listing is shown as Figure 2. Notice that the listing for “Denmark, via North German Union, direct” lists 16\* (cents) in the second column. The second column lists postage amounts for letters not exceeding ½ ounce. With numerous listings per page it is easy to see that postmasters would simply follow the column down under Letter Postage to the 16¢ entry. Unfortunately 16¢ was postage on unpaid mail not prepaid mail. Looking again at the Denmark listing one notices the additional comment (if prepaid, 13¢). The listing of unpaid rates in the “Letter Postage” column was also listed for closed mail via England (21¢ vs. 18¢). The situation was corrected in the August USM&PO Assistant.

It seems probable that the Empire City postmaster misread an earlier issue of the USM&PO Assistant (probably June issue) and quoted a 16¢ rate for direct mail to his customer. Even though the letter was overpaid for the previous direct mail rate, it still prepaid the new reduced closed mail rate via England.

**Endnotes**

[1] *United States Mail and Post Office Assistant*. (Chicago: reprinted by the Collectors Club of Chicago, 1975) Vol. 2, pp. 577.

[2] Laurence, Michael, *Ten-Cent 1869 Covers, A postal Historical Survey* (Chicago: Collectors Club of Chicago, 2010) pg. 217.

do do do (closed mail, via Eng.)	....	*20	8	12	12	h 8
Denmark, via North German Union, direct (if prepaid, 13c.)	....	*16	6	10	10	h 8
do do do closed mail, via Eng (if prepaid, 18c.)	....	*21	7	12	12	h 8
East Indies British, via San Francisco	....	10	2	8	8	....

Figure 2. A portion of the June 1870 “Table of Postage to Foreign Countries” listing.

## *A Cover to Brazil via American Packet*

by Ardy Callender

Between October 1870 and Brazil's entrance into the Universal Postal Union on 1 July 1877, two mail routes were available for letters dispatched to Brazil; a direct route (US/Brazil Treaty effective October 1870) and via England (US/British Treaty effective 1 January 1870). Letters sent prepaid via the direct route (American Packet) cost 15¢ per 1/2 oz. while those sent via England (British Packet) were 28¢ per 1/2 oz. There was only one departure per month (23<sup>rd</sup> of each month) for mail sent by the direct route while numerous dates were available for mail sent via England. Essentially the choice of route was cost vs. swiftness to destination.

A cover sent via American Packet is shown here as Figure 1. Opened roughly at the right, the date stamp indicates it originated in Avon, Connecticut on 22 August; a docket on the reverse establishes an 1871 year date. The following day it reached NYPO, where it was sent to the foreign mail department. The NYFM department always struck mail with their date stamp the day a letter was to be placed aboard an outbound steamship, so in this case "Aug 23". The date stamp was struck in red, partially over the black Avon date stamp at right.

A strip of five 3¢ 1870-71 National Bank Note Issue adhesives paying the 15¢ American Packet rate to Brazil are attached at top. Each stamp is neatly

canceled by a black two vertical and single horizontal stroke manuscript pen cancel at center. The cover is addressed in blue ink to Dr. A. S. Oberly, U.S.N, c/o. S.S. Portsmouth, South Atlantic Squadron, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. There are no receiving or transit markings on the reverse. As the cover was opened at the right, it appears the letter caught up with Dr. Oberly as the *Portsmouth* either reached port (Rio) or mail was forwarded on to the ship.

Born April 7, 1837, in Pennsylvania, Aaron S. Oberly graduated from Yale University in 1860 and was appointed Assistant Surgeon in the U.S. Navy on July 1, 1861. A month later he was commissioned and serving aboard the *USS Ohio*, the *USS Boston* and the frigate *USS Sabine*. Next he was assigned to the West Gulf Blockading Squadron stationed on the *USS Kineo* during the early part of the Civil War. On June 19, 1865 he was commissioned as Surgeon and after several other tours of duty was sent to the *USS Portsmouth*, cruising off the coasts of Brazil and Africa between 1869 - early 1872. Dr. Oberly became the Fleet Surgeon for the Asiatic Station in 1881-84 and retired from the Navy in January of 1889. Letters from his large correspondence are often encountered and provide examples of numerous routes, rates and destinations.

The *USS Portsmouth* was a wooden sloop of war built in Portsmouth, N.H. She was launched on October 23, 1843 and commissioned on November 10, 1844. She was initially sent to the eastern Mexican Coast but shifted to the Pacific at the start of the Mexican War, to safeguard the waters off the coasts of Mexico and California. Prior to the start of the Civil War, the *USS Portsmouth* patrolled the waters off Africa, suppressing the slave trade. After an overhaul in Boston and three years in the Pacific, it was off to Africa again in 1858 until the start of the Civil War. During the Civil War she was part of the Gulf Coast Blockading Squadron, capturing two blockade runners off the coast of Texas. A tour as a quarantine vessel, sentry duty off the coasts of Brazil and Africa, survey assignments in the Pacific and Latin America, the *USS Portsmouth* was decommissioned and assigned duty as a training ship in 1878. She left the Navy List in 1915 and was subsequently sold.



Figure 1.

**Additional Floor Auction Rules:**

- Lots should be described on a standardized auction sheet which is available on the club website and members must list a minimum bid for each of their lots.
- Members may enter "Club Lots", to be sold for the benefit of the Houston Philatelic Society or the GHSS Foundation, Inc. (Please state whether the lots are to be sold for the benefit of HPS or GHSS. (Only donations for the GHSS are eligible for tax deductions.)
- Auctioneer's decision on the identity of the winner and bid amount is final. When a lot is won, the Winner must call out their name so the recorders can accurately keep track of the auction results.
- All lots must be paid for that night before the winner can pick up the lots.

**Houston Philatelic Web Site:**  
[http://  
 www.houstonstampclub.org/](http://www.houstonstampclub.org/)

**Classified Ads:**

*Members may place philatelically related Buy, Sell, or Trade ads in The Perforator free of charge. HPS Dealer-Members may place free classified or feature ads in The Perforator at no charge as well. Member ads will run indefinitely until the advertiser requests a change or cancellation. Send copy to the editor.*

**Wanted:** U.S. unusual postal history material; 1887 large banknote issue, 10¢ through 15¢ Washington/Franklin issues. Also, U.S. 19th century green cancels. David Willig, Houston, TX. 713-201-2042. [cbhz3@hotmail.com](mailto:cbhz3@hotmail.com)

**Buy/Sell/Trade:** Texas Postal History. Email John Germann or phone him at 281-493-3938. [jghist@comcast.net](mailto:jghist@comcast.net)

**U.S. FACE VALUE POSTAGE** - Offered at 50% of face. Order any amount from \$25 to \$300 Face Value and receive a mixture of 5¢ to 30¢ values. Clean and fresh material. Send order with payment to: Jonathan Topper, 10480 Grant Road, Siute 117, Houston, TX 77070. Stamps can be mailed to you or delivered at the next stamp club meeting.

**Wanted:** Russian postal history, U.S. and international currency, coins. Also interested in buying oil and mining industry & transportation stock certificates. Email Vlad Andrus at [vladandrus@sbcglobal.net](mailto:vladandrus@sbcglobal.net)

**WANTED: Return Reply Envelopes** - with stamps, unused or used. Building my collection of Return Reply Envelopes with the objective of a presentation, display or exhibit on their use. These are the pre-addressed return envelopes usually enclosed with solicitations for donations, contributions, subscription renewals, etc., and usually included multiples or thematic stamps. Interested in all types, of any period. No reasonable asking price will be refused. Please contact: [RBajenski@Hotmail.com](mailto:RBajenski@Hotmail.com)

**A Word About The Houston Philatelic Society....**

Enjoy the fun of stamp collecting by sharing your interests with fellow collectors at an upcoming HOUSTON PHILATELIC SOCIETY meeting.

When : **pending future pandemic situation**

Where : **pending future pandemic situation**

Visitors and new stamp collectors are always welcome.

Officers: President: Paula Pedrick  
 Vice-President: Rick Barrett  
 Secretary: Jay Stotts  
 Treasurer: Larry Ballantyne  
 Past President: David Willig

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