APS: The First Century

by Robert L.D. Davidson

Larry Shoemaker’s tenure as president of the APS began in Norfolk in 1955 with good news and bad news. The good news was that Society membership, despite a large number of “drops” for failure to pay dues, had increased to more than 11,500. The bad news was that Ethel McCoy’s block of four of the 1918 U.S. Airmail Invert, Scott No. C3a, had been stolen from the exhibit. It would be more than twenty-five years before single stamps from this block reappeared.

The convention in Norfolk also celebrated the issuance of the 30-cent Lee stamp of the Liberty issue. The Confederate Stamp Alliance, a unit of the APS that was meeting during the Society’s annual convention, was interested in making the Lee issue contemporaneous.

Shoemaker was a good ambassador for the Society and for philately in general. He traveled widely and, as a gifted speaker, he was regularly sought after. In April/May 1956, he was a member of the jury at FIPEX, the great international exhibition in New York. The APS had a booth at FIPEX, and it was estimated that as many as one-quarter of the Society’s membership was present for all or part of the show. Among the guests in attendance was Col. Spencer Crosby, APS member No. 184.

The St. Louis convention in 1956 noted that a referendum on raising APS dues to $4 had been defeated, but that continuing services were demanded by the membership. A new translation service was inaugurated, and more definitive programs for attacking phony issues and thefts of stamps were announced. All of these required funds, but the membership did not believe them worth another dollar a year!

By June 1956, Society membership reached 12,000, where it hovered for the next few years.

In January 1956, Charless Hahn was forced by other duties to resign as editor of the AP, and David Lidman was prevailed upon to take up the task once again. For the next four years, Lidman, a busy newspaperman, demonstrated his great support of the Society by serving it.

One of the strong units of the APS, the “U.S. Three-Cent 1851–61 Society” (now the U.S. Philatelic Classics Society), held a meeting in 1956 at the National Philatelic Museum in Philadelphia that was attended by many of the distinguished in U.S.

philately. This was probably the last time such giants as Ashbrook and Chase participated in the same meeting. Both passed away during the next few years. Interestingly, Dave Lidman was also editor of that year’s Museum Book, which carried accounts and articles of these collectors.

In April 1957, the Post Office Department created a “Citizens’ Stamp Advisory Committee” to be consulted on new issues, design, worthiness, etc. Among the first appointees were APS members Harry Lindquist, Franklin Bruns, and Sol Glass. This committee still meets today, and many Society members have served on it over the years.

President Shoemaker was active in international affairs and reported to the convention in Tampa on the FIP, in which the APS was now an active member. At a meeting in Stockholm, Shoemaker and Sol Glass had been the Society delegates, the latter being elected a member of the ruling “Council.” Bernard Davis had attended a FIP meeting at Helsinki, and other Society members were also beginning to take a greater interest in international philately.
A major change in the by-laws approved at the Tampa convention in 1957 permitted mail balloting of all members. Membership had now reached 12,500, but soon declined. In one year, a gain of 1,000 new members was offset by losses of 1,051! These were not the only losses: there was much alarm over reports of a series of burglaries, robberies, and thefts of various kinds. Delegates again demanded that the Society institute an insurance program. There were no immediate results.

Some of the frauds and thefts were first identified by two strong APS-member dealers, Robert Siegel of New York and Raymond Weill of New Orleans. The stolen material had to disappear sometime, and individual philatelists and dealers all cooperated with the FBI in the effort to prevent and punish.

During 1957, the first “Spring Meeting” of the APS, then called the “Mid-Year,” was planned for the following year in Cleveland, with the always willing and able Garfield-Perry Stamp Club as host. It was to prove so successful that a Spring Meeting became a traditional entry on the Society’s calendar.

At this time, J.E. Guest, who had been head of the Sales Division for many years, came under attack. Members had a number of concerns, among them what was considered to be an excess amount of profit from the undertaking. It was decided to move the division to State College, where the executive secretary would assume responsibility for its operation. The executive secretary was authorized to provide space and staff to accommodate this new assignment.

Guest and some of his friends objected — strenuously — but the move was fully accomplished by 1959. The Board of Directors asked Guest to send his records for auditing, but he declined to submit them. He was then suspended from membership and later expelled (1960).

Those who peruse the AP of this period will observe that there was much friction over many issues. George Linn, founder and editor of the popular Linn’s Stamp News, was constantly on the attack about the Society’s failure to do more about thefts, and he even insinuated that some of the prominent members knew more than they told. In 1960, Charles Cratsenberg appointed Linn to serve on the new “Stamp Theft Committee,” along with Pat Herst and Henry Spelman.

In November 1957, Frank Bruns became director of the Post Office Department’s Division of Philately. This was the first of a series of important roles in philately for this fine member.

Cratsenberg was almost unanimously elected in 1957, then re-elected in 1959, for an active four-year tenure. His vice presidents for all four years were Californians Joseph Clary, Charles McKeown, and Fred Thomas. All would later fill other elective offices in the Society, Thomas becoming president in 1961.

These few years — 1957 to 1961 — were a kind of watershed of APS membership, for many of the great names in the Society died. Along with Ashbrook and Chase, the following names illustrate the extent of the loss: “Doc” Davis, Hugh Clark, Steinway, Max Johl, Brazer, Steeg, Bertram Poole, Corwith Wagner, Max Ohlman, Thomas Doane Perry, Steve Rich, Hugh Barr, Harry Konwiser, Morris Fortgang, and Past Presidents Hennan, Wilhelm, and Flowers.

But replacements were on hand. Names such as Tinsley, Ter Braake, Birkinbine, and Clyde Jennings appeared on the roll.

And while I’m listing names, it might be well to list those in attendance at a surprise party for Elliott Perry held in February 1958. Imagine this assemblage of contributors to American philately and the APS: Sandford Arnold, Lester Brookman, Maurice Blake, Herbert Bloch, John Boker, Maj. Gen. C.H. Bonesteel, John Britt, Dr. Chase, Ezra Cole, Eugene Costales, Hiram Deats, Edith Faulstich, Morris Fortgang, Bernard Harmer, David Lidman, Herman Herst Jr., Burleigh Jacobs, Mrs. Ethel McCoy, Henry Meyer, Robert Siegel, Tracy Simpson, George Sloane, George Turner, and the Weill brothers. Perry must have been completely thrilled by the attendance of this superb company, and by all the gifts and accolades he received.

As mentioned above, the APS Spring Meeting became a fixture after the first one in Cleveland in 1958. A ballot was submitted to the membership for a dues increase from $4 to $5 (which subsequently carried), and Admiral Jesse Johnson took over responsibility for developing the slide program more extensively. George Blizil continued his efforts at furthering our international participation and regularly reported his efforts in the AP.

Edward Willard, a State College attorney and a long-time member, wrote nine thorough articles on stamp theft, which helped to establish the stamp theft committee mentioned above. Willard, Society attorney, later became president (1965–69).

The 1959 election was an interesting one. Cratsenberg was re-elected for a second term, and Bernard Davis of National Philatelic Museum fame edged out Blizil and Zollman in the race for the position of international secretary. Results of a spirited contest for directors-at-large were as follows:

- Jim DeVoss: 3051
- J.E. Guest: 2744
- George Turner: 2673
- Sol Glass: 2315
- William A. Aichele: 2223

The three winners were obviously DeVoss, Guest, and Turner, but Willard ruled that the former APS sales director was “not in good standing” and therefore was ineligible to hold office. President Cratsenberg asked Admiral Johnson from the previous board to continue in office until Guest was reinstated or a new appointment was made. As we know, Editor David Lidman was later named to the office.

The by-laws were thoroughly revised by a special committee and edited sharply by Judge Albert Marris, a federal judge from Philadelphia and a Society member for many years. Members voted in favor of the revisions by mail ballot, 4,212 to 147.

This result, while evidence of widespread approval, was challenged as being invalid because of the requirement that changes to the by-laws could be effected only by a vote of two-thirds of the membership. At the time, 6,500 ballots were needed to meet this requirement, and only 4,802 members had participated in the mail balloting. A legal ruling permitted the members present at the 1958 APS meeting to vote unanimously for the revisions,
which were then declared adopted. No further challenge arose.

This was not the only matter that stirred up controversy. In 1957, the board had decided that the APS committee would no longer exercise rare and very valuable stamps, but would instead contract such material to the expertizing service of the Philatelic Foundation in New York. Some well-known members had grave misgivings about this change, and went so far as to consider a "recall vote" on the officers. The 1960 convention in Portland, Oregon, voted to sustain the change, however, and the matter was settled for the time being.

Along with the intramural squabbles, there was the "Shananah Affair," which involved a great many U.S. philatelists in a get-rich-quick scheme in Ireland. The collapse of that company filled the philatelic press of the time, including the *AP*. Total losses to collectors were in the neighborhood of $7,500,000.

Dave Lidman again retired as *AP* editor at the end of the 1960 fiscal year, and Jim Chemi began his tenure as editor. Both men devoted much space in the journal to romantic accounts of the Pony Express, which observed its centennial that year. John Foxworth succeeded Chemi as editor of the "Who? What? Where?" chapter news column.

The National Philatelic Museum, which had been so important a factor in U.S. philately during the 1950s, was finally merged with Boston's Cardinal Spellman Philatelic Library, which was renamed the Cardinal Spellman Philatelic Museum. Bernard Davis was unable to "swing" his great idea any longer.

Among the noteworthy items of the day was the sale of a U.S. 2-cent "Black Jack" — used, in superb condition, with large even margins — to a New York collector for $700! The "ordinary" price of a used stamp in very fine condition was about $10 at the time. Condition was as always a prime reason for premium price, but signs of the inflation of the 1960s and '70s were becoming apparent.

In 1961, for the first time, full-page ads appeared in support of the various candidates running for Society office. It was a hotly contested election. Californian Fred B. Thomas outpolled Kenneth L. Rice, his opponent on the presidential ballot, by only ninety votes. A Washington, D.C., slate of vice presidents that included Edward Conger, Paul Plant, and George Turner prevailed over an Arizona group by roughly 600 votes. This was one of the closest elections in the history of the Society, and indicated lively interest and awakening concern in the APS.

Jesse Johnson was elected secretary by a plurality of 250 votes, while for treasurer, Leon Gedaly had a winning margin of fewer than fifty votes. Bernard Davis's election as director of international affairs was unopposed, although he was persuaded to run only at the last minute. Even the directors-at-large seats were hotly contested, with DeVoss, Lidman, and Emerson Clark being elected, the last by only 200 votes.

Prior to the Society's seventy-fifth anniversary meeting in Chicago in August 1961, the board named Musser director of the Sales Division, and appointed Jim DeVoss, a director-at-large, assistant sales director. This was the beginning of DeVoss's long and valuable service in the central office.

So a new regime took charge, one that would bring the APS into a fast-moving new era with many problems, many failures, but also many brilliant successes. The watershed was very real indeed.

Fred B. Thomas.

Fred Thomas' tenure was a healthy one for the APS. Among the accomplishments of his term, perhaps none was greater than the appointment of Jim DeVoss as executive secretary (a title later changed to executive director). This was one of the most fortuitous "marriages" in the history of the APS.

DeVoss, a graduate of the University of Iowa, began his career in the army in 1941 and served for twenty years, retiring as a full colonel in 1961. A philatelist from his youth, he was active in local stamp clubs wherever his military assignments took him, almost always as an officer. He founded the Pentagon Philatelic Society in 1947 while stationed in Washington, D.C.

That same year, he became international secretary of the APS, beginning a long interest in the Society's relationships abroad and with the FIP.

He was a founder of NAPEX, the National Philatelic Exhibition in the nation's capital, and is an authority on the stamps of the Canal Zone. This and his outstanding service to the APS brought him two Luff Awards, truly a remarkable achievement.

For many years, he was a member of the Board of Directors of the American Philatelic Congress, serving as an officer and as editor for that group. He was elected director-at-large of the APS in 1959 and re-elected in 1961, but resigned the position after accepting the central office role.

Among DeVoss's many achievements during his tenure as executive secretary was the revitalization of the APS Sales Division. A $50,000 deficit was erased, and the Sales Division was put solidly in the black. During his twenty years in office, Society membership increased from fewer than 13,000 to more than 50,000.

We will have more to say about DeVoss in the course of this history, but no accolade can do him the honor he deserves for his splendid achievements during his term of office.

Jim Chemi of Arizona, a regular contributor to The American Philatelist and a former writer for metropolitan newspapers, was named to succeed Dave Lidman as *AP* editor when the latter again had to resign. Chemi's tenure lasted until his untimely death in 1976. As mentioned above, Lidman continued his service to the Society as director-at-large.

Also during these years, Joe Clary headed a committee that prepared a Convention Manual. This was widely distributed, and proved particularly instructive to clubs contemplating entertaining an APS convention. A program for the accreditation of judges was established, and continues today. The "Black Blot" awarded to questionable issues was widely appreciated.

In January 1962, a brief history of the Society's first seventy-five years was published by Lidman, with the assistance of Dan Vooyos, president of the Philatelic Literature Association. Bob Murch campaigned to clean up the "deluge" of questionable new issues.

In October 1963, the annual convention was held in Mexico City, with at least 400 members in attendance. Thomas and the Washington Board of Vice Presidents began their second term. The headquarters moved to larger facilities in State College, and several assistants were appointed in the Sales Division. Among them were Joseph Sousa, Jesse Boehret, Henry Smith, Frank
Sente, and, finally, current sales director Gordon P. Wrenn.

In 1964, DeVoss and James Beal began a study of the fraudulent philately of one Raoul Ch. de Thuin, a resident of Mexico. At the Denver convention in 1965, a committee chaired by DeVoss and made up of Beal, Gene Tinsley, and George Turner was appointed to go after de Thuin and put him out of business. With the cooperation of U.S. authorities, a deal was made to buy out the forger. The Yucatan Affair, published by the Society in 1970, tells the story of this brilliant coup.

During these years, the Society lost more of the great personages from its earlier days. Among these were Col. Spencer Crosby, who died at age ninety-four; Past President Shoemaker; O. H. Walcott; August Dietz Sr., the great Confederate authority; Henry Chalonier; Gen. Bone-steel; and the grand old gentleman who was the last surviving charter member, Hiram Deats. Deats was eulogized by Philadelphia dealer-collector Phil Ward in the AP of July 1963:

Hiram Edmund Deats, the last surviving founder of The American Philatelic Society, whose membership number was 36, died March 16, 1963, in the Union Forge Nursing Home near Stanton, N. J., where he had been a patient for two weeks. He was 92 years old, having been born in Stockton May 20, 1870. As a boy he lived at Pittstown and moved with his family in the late seventies to Flemington Junction, where he remained until the end. He was a philatelist, numismatist, farmer, businessman, banker, collector, historian and private citizen and did exceedingly well in each capacity. He was president of the A. P. S., then known as The American Philatelic Association (1904-1905). His preacher spoke of him as "a man who espoused fellowship. You met him on the street and he always had a quip and a twinkle in his eye. And you all will remember the expressions for which he was so well known".

He graduated from Peddie Institute at Hightstown in 1891, was made a trustee the following year and held the honor until his retirement in 1962. He was also trustee of Bucknell University. In 1952 he was awarded an honorary Master of Arts degree from Rutgers University. The citation began: "Historian, philatelist, educator, elevator of standards of rural living. For more than half a century you have given unstintingly of your time and your talents to the betterment of agriculture, of culture, and indeed of every aspect of life in your home county of Hunterdon."

As to his philatelic activities, Mr. Deats started collecting when he was six years old, at which time he began to accumulate the stamps that came on the family mail. From that time on he retained every stamp, every cover, and put aside numerous items that he obtained from his post office as well as from friends. He made a very important collection of United States issues and part of this was exhibited at the Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893. This collection, which later included most of the United States varieties from the Postmasters on, was sold over 50 years ago by the New England Stamp Co. He, however, continued his interest in stamps and I met him for the first time at the A. P. S. convention in Atlantic City in August 1909.

I recall the date for several years ago, when I was making one of my frequent visits to his office in Flemington, he gave me a group photograph of the Atlantic City convention. In the picture we note John Luff, E. B. Sterling, Charlie Severn, Joseph Steinmetz, Percival Parrish, Henry Mudge, W. C. Stone, F. R. Cornwell, Gen. Coolidge and many more of our members who were in attendance. During the next ten to fifteen years I frequently met Mr. Deats, at the conventions, in New York, Philadelphia and elsewhere.

About 25 years back we were in New York and had lunch together, when he suggested that we should get together as he desired to dispose of his philatelic holdings. Frequent trips to his home then brought to light his numerous holdings. He had purchased the effects of Jos. R. Carpenter, the successor to Butler & Carpenter, who printed our revenues of the Civil War period. He also purchased ten carloads of waste paper from the Treasury Department around the turn of the century. He built eight or ten little two story houses on his farm to house his accumulations. When I started to dispose of his vast holdings I was able to acquire and place in his behalf his philatelic library, one of the largest in existence in private hands. This I sold to the Free Library of Philadelphia. He had about every philatelic book published, local and foreign, files of most of the publications, all of the early auction catalogues mostly priced, as well as numerous coin literature. In the early days he purchased two of most everything, so I acquired his duplicate library.

As he had put aside every cover with stamp that came his way there were around ten to twenty thousand of these, strong in the Columbian issue. As he had hundreds of the 2c but few of the 3c, he started to put a 3c denomination on every envelope that he enclosed when he asked for information, consequently, he had an accumulation of this denomination as well as most of the higher values.

His collection of postals included numerous essays, proofs and the issued cards as well as complete sheets of several. He had possibly the finest collection of colonial, as well as the other early embossed revenues of the late 18th and early 19th century, including those issued for use in England, many of the 1862-1870 revenues, among them thousands of the common varieties. He had acquired the Butler & Carpenter proof book of Match and Medicine as well as many of the federal varieties. He had a wonderful lot of the proofs and essays as well as the Tax Paid stamps. His collection of thin foil revenue stamps has never been equaled. Similar descriptions would apply to his Cotton revenues, his Lock Seals and his Hydrometer stamps. I placed or purchased several tons of covers and stamps, strong in revenues, containing many pieces that I had never seen before.

Mr. Deats was fortunate in being able to dispose of practically everything philately while he was still active.

He, with George L. Toppan and Alexander Holland, produced in 1899 the Boston Book on Revenue Stamps of the United States, the most important publication ever issued on our revenue varieties.

He will be greatly missed by his numerous friends in all fields of activity.

New names began to appear in the AP as Mel Nathan, Fred Wolfe, Don Johnstone, Norton York, Leonard Hartman, James T. DeVoss, executive secretary of the AP from 1961 to 1981, is credited with overseeing the emergence of the APS as a force in international philately.
Maryette Lane, and Alex ter Braake produced articles.

The FIP had approved an international show for the United States in 1966. A first-hand participant in the events that preceded that 1966 International provided the following account of how SIPEX came to be. I could find no way to improve upon it. Thus:

The Association for [New York] Stamp Exhibitions ‘ASE’ fell into disarray and was unable to commence preparations for the International scheduled for 1966. Troubles with site arrangements and labor led to the conclusion that the philatelic community could not or would not support financially an exhibition as costly as the projections for the Manhattan location indicated. The ASE announced it had dropped plans for SIPEX.

National Philatelic Exhibitions of Washington, D.C., ‘NAPEX’, had another successful show at the Shoreham Hotel in mid-1964. The show had been such a financial success that the Board of Directors of NAPEX authorized the treasurer, Ed Conger, to put on a dinner at the Shoreham for the members and workers who had made the success of the show possible. Conger was a gourmet and a close friend of the Shoreham’s chef. The dinner was an outstanding success. At its conclusion, George T. Turner, the exhibits chairman, rose to his unsteady feet and proposed that the NAPEX group could put on the 1966 International. Horace Harrison, an interloping NAPEX board member from Baltimore, rose to say that he had seldom, if ever, agreed with Turner, but on this occasion and subject, he was in agreement. This informal dinner meeting of NAPEX authorized Turner to proceed to the coming FIP Congress in Europe to secure the auspices of the Federation Internationale de Philatellie for the proposed Washington location. The show was put on with barely more than one year’s lead time, surely a record.

Horace Harrison accepted the task of designing and procuring 2,400 exhibit frames. He engaged a respected commercial woodworking firm in Baltimore to aid in the design and production of a unit that could be erected by one person. The essential requirement was to reduce the glass covering to a manageable size and weight, and to have the frames assemble and disassemble easily with a minimum of extraneous pieces. A prototype frame was built from a design by Harrison with help from the Bruns Company engineer, Svend Yort and George Turner came to look at it. It was wobbly because of the play in the hinges which held the four legs together, hinged to a single block of wood at the top. George Turner, a chemist, said, “Why don’t you hinge the legs to each other?” Harrison said he was an experienced carpenter and had tried all summer in his garage and failed to hinge the legs to each other successfully. Bruns said it could not be done; it was a physical impossibility. Turner said, ‘Of course it can.’” Harrison said, ‘$20 says it can’t.” Turner said, “You’ve got a bet.” Three days later, Harrison got a package in the mail from Turner which contained four wooden legs hinged together at one end which could be opened out to form the stand for the plywood backs and glass. Harrison paid the $20, and with the fine Turner improvement, 600 units eventually were built.

These frames were a rousing success, used all over the East Coast for twenty years, 1,200 of them being reused at INTERPHIL in 1976 because the SIPEX board insisted that the clubs purchasing the SIPEX frames obligate themselves to make them available to the next International Show Committee.

Those who remember the three-foot by four-foot plate glass previously used to cover exhibits, and the miserable system of buttons to hold pages (still in use in certain Manhattan and Toronto frames), know the relief that swept through the exhibition committees.

The show was a financial success. All guarantees were paid in full and a small amount remained. The SIPEX Board continued to have an annual dinner meeting until the remaining profits could be disbursed to suitable non-profit stamp exhibition organizations. As the INTERPHIL ’76 Committee had not yet been formed, no cash went directly from SIPEX to INTERPHIL, but the wise provision of the SIPEX Board that purchasers of the frames at the conclusion of the show be obligated to make them available to the next International Show Committee saved the INTERPHIL Committee the expense of purchasing 1,200 frames in 1976.

The number of mistakes were few. Each person completed his assigned task with little or no supervision but assistance was freely granted when requested. It was a full-time job for George Turner who carried an extraordinary work load every day until the show was over. All contributed, but the success of the SIPEX show on such short notice is a lasting remembrance of George T. Turner.

— Horace W. Harrison

From the mid-1940s, the APS was blessed with superior leadership. In the 1960s, Edward L. “Ned” Willard was among that number. When he assumed office, he sought to move the Society into higher gear, and to better meet the needs of philatelists everywhere.

During his term (1965–69), APS membership rose in a fashion never before anticipated. To illustrate: The count was 14,000 members in 1965; by May 1966, 15,000 members; by January 1967, 16,000; by May 1967, 17,000; and so on until 1969, when the total was more than 21,000. This was a gain of more than fifty percent in four years!

It is necessary at this point to step aside and introduce a new theme: the establishment of the ill-fated National Academy of Philately. It would be untrue to enter into great detail here, but certain APS members, many yet living, were very much involved.

At the American Philatelic Congress meeting in Newark, New Jersey, in 1965, I, who was then president of that organization, was in serious discussion with Jim DeVoss about what the Congress should do to accomplish the many things that needed doing in the world of philately. Among the things we dreamed of was creation of an “umbrella” organization to draw all the various societies and elements of philately together. We talked of having a philatelic building, a lending library, a code of ethics, a common glossary, an educational department (attached to some university or college), insurance, and other matters many times previously discussed but never formulated or created.

Within the next few months, the board of trustees of the Congress decided to go ahead with plans for such an organization.

I was present when this decision was made, as were DeVoss, Vooy, Lidman, David Stump, Helen Zerke, Robert Brandeberry, George Turner, and Svend Yort. DeVoss even presented architect’s plans for a building. They were illustrated on the cover of the November 1968 issue of the AP.

The initial enthusiasm mounted as the full Congress endorsed the action and authorized the board to go ahead, if adequate financing were available. The AP included this report in the November 1968 issue:

Creation of a National Academy of Philately to encourage every constructive aspect of stamp collecting was undertaken by a group of distinguished philatelists meeting at Baltimore’s BALPEX show Oct. 5

Convened by Dr. Robert L.D. Davidson, president of the American Philatelic Congress, the group formulated plans to implement proposals worked out over the last two years by committees of the Congress council to provide greater unity for philately.

Plans discussed included a national headquarters building with a professional staff, library, congress of philatelic leaders, and an educational program to encourage new collectors.

Edward L. “Ned” Willard.
and provide future leadership.

All philatelic organizations, including the national societies, specialty groups and professional associations, would have a role to play in setting up and providing personnel for the Academy.

Although preliminary planning was under the sponsorship of the American Philatelic Congress, the Academy itself would be an entirely separate organization.

In introducing the panel which presented the Academy program, Dr. Davidson, president of Westminster College, Fulton, Mo., stressed the need for a broadly-based organization.

George T. Turner, Washington, D.C., reporting on the role of the proposed Academy in education, suggested a broad range of programs including affiliation with a university for training of philatelic classes for the individual collector in conjunction with an adult education program.

Alex Braake, Charleston, W. Va., reviewed possible forms of organization for the Academy; Robert Brandeberry of Wilmington, Del., listed possible categories of membership, and Earl Apfelbaum of Philadelphia stressed that every dollar would benefit from the centralized facilities available through the Academy.

Most spectacular exhibit presented by the panel was an architectural concept of an Academy building prepared by the noted industrial architect, George E. Yurchinson of Rochester, N.Y. As explained by David Lidman, stamp editor of the New York Times, the 5 to 10 floor building would include rental space for stamp dealers and organization offices, a museum and exhibit area, lecture hall and a library with research rooms.

Methods of financing such a structure were explained by F. Burton Sellers, Tarrytown, N.Y., vice-president of the Collectors Club, New York. Cost of land, building, and endowments could run as high as $10 million.

Dr. Davidson, who retired as president of the Congress at its BALPEX meeting, was asked to continue for the present as acting chairman of an ad hoc committee formed to proceed with organization of the Academy. Committees on education, organizational structure, physical facilities, financing, philatelic trade, legal, publicity and society promotion were named. It was hoped they would be able to offer detailed plans for developing the Academy concept at a meeting to be held during SOJEX at Atlantic City, N.J., in April 1969.

At the time, I was involved in a major effort at my college to dedicate the Winston Churchill Memorial and Library, and felt that I could not then assume any role in the leadership of the new organization. The project suffered a real blow when DeVoss was advised by President Willard that he should not be involved in it while he was employed by the APS.

It is not necessary here to go further with the story of the Academy. What is important — and the reason this story is introduced — is that the APS began to accomplish many if not all of the goals of the Academy. The APS was much the more likely to succeed in these endeavors than any new organization, and Lidman, Voos, Turner, and I all were active in the APS leadership.

There had, for many years, been pressure to establish a Society library that would lend materials to members. President Willard began to push this idea, and the eightieth convention at Cincinnati authorized the board to go ahead. Dan Voos, new treasurer of the Society, had long been interested in philatelic literature.

He was a founder, long-time editor, and president of the Philatelic Literature Association. He accepted the challenge of raising an endowment of $100,000 for the library from 100 Founding Members at $1,000 each. All of the above-mentioned Academy members eventually became members of this select group.

Willard had surrounded himself with strong associates. George Martin, a Yakima, Washington, lawyer, became the generous and thorough Society attorney; he continues today as senior counsel to the APS. A special committee on insurance was formed, and it is well to enter here an account of that whole movement by one who has been most intimately involved, Horace Harrison:

In 1963, APS President Fred Thomas and the Board of Directors asked director Richard Canman of Chicago to investigate the possibility of a group stamp insurance plan for APS members. Incentive for this program came from the program offered by the Society of Philatelic Americans through a small, well run insurance company, Central Mutual Insurance Company of Van Wert, Ohio.

Mr. Canman, by 1965, had obtained a commitment from Lloyd's of London to offer such a policy which was substantially below the cost charged by most domestic insurance companies, but 35 percent higher than the SPA coverage. Regrettably, the commitment was announced to the membership in the AP before the cost of the coverage had been established. It was decided not to sponsor the program at the proposed cost.

Executive Secretary Jim DeVoss called me — I was then writing coverage for the APS Central Office at 211 W. Beaver Avenue, State College and had set up the self-insurance program for the circuits — and asked me to tackle the problem of developing a stamp insurance program which would be cost competitive with SPA's. DeVoss said he needed a program to place before the board at the 1965 Denver convention, then only thirty days away. Told that this was very improbable, if not impossible, DeVoss asked for something by the Portland, Oregon, Spring Meeting.

I made personal calls on more than forty domestic insurance companies before I finally found a senior underwriter willing to listen in detail. It developed that this man, working for the Kemper Insurance Group, was already a member of the APS, believed in its programs, and was willing to go to bat with senior executives for the proposed program. The senior vice president of the Kemper Group was an active stamp collector, and his son was a young member of the Kemper claims department. The vice president for claims was willing to assign ultimate supervision of all claims under the proposed program to this young man. Thus, if agreement to underwrite the program could be reached, consistent claims handling would be assured, an absolute essential for a successful group program of any kind. Terms and conditions of coverage were altered to the benefit of policyholders, references to coin coverages were eliminated, and a pricing based on Central Mutual of Van Wert experience with the SPA was developed. The Kemper Group agreed to write the coverage for a minimum of five years.

Presented to the APS board and adopted at the Portland Spring Meeting, the first policy was issued in April 1966. Policies were issued for a three-year period with an option for annual installment payments. During 1966 there were 146 policies issued, and by the end of 1970 nearly 1,600 members were participating, despite the fact that bureaucratic red tape had prevented the program from being offered in New York, Massachusetts, Texas, and two other states.

Because the cost of administering the program was high and because less than 10 percent of the membership was participating by the end of 1970, Kemper had every reason to discontinue the program. However, the final decision to discontinue was caused by a severe loss in Chicago which occurred several days before Christmas.

The Kemper Eastern vice president was convinced the program could be made viable and used every effort short of pulling rank to have it continued. Many of the suggestions which he made I later adopted. Kemper declined to accept any new application while I sought a new insurance company to underwrite the program.

The SPA had lost its coverage due to some very severe losses in the 1966-68 period, so the pressure of competition was absent. APS President Daniel Voos supported my efforts to find a new carrier. With only three days remaining before the cancellation notices were to be mailed to 1,597 members, Bernard Duenzer, chief executive officer of Wohleich & Anderson, representing Adriatic Insurance Company, agreed to take over from Kemper on terms acceptable to me and the APS. Through the good offices of James Wilson, Kemper's Eastern vice president, the cancellation date was postponed for thirty days, to May 20, 1971, to give me time to contact policyholders. Making the requisite calculations for 1,597 insureds required a mammoth effort on the part of me and my assistant, Jacqueline Cunmiskey. My wife and daughter were enlisted in the effort, and the mailing was completed on time. Since Kemper was not going to reimburse the policyholders for the unearned premium until a later date, I had to arrange to borrow money to repay the unearned premium by the May 20 cancellation date. I put up my collection of Canada registered mail as collateral; Robert A. Siegel, the New York auctioneer, wrote a letter to my bank.
upon which I obtained a loan commitment. Fortunately, nearly 60 percent of the insureds agreed to continue the coverage, and I never had to borrow the money.

So long as Daenzer was running Wohldrech & Anderson, relations with the insurance carrier were excellent. When he retired, several senior underwriters also departed, leaving operation of the APS Stamp Insurance Plan largely in my hands, as committee chairman. By the end of 1971 participation was back up to 1,350 members. By 1975, over 3,000 were insured. With over 4,500 insured by mid 1977, the loss ratio was such that a rate reduction seemed appropriate. Under the new lower rates, participation jumped by 33 percent in two years and the loss ratio declined, permitting another rate decrease. Again, the loss ratio declined as more and more members participated.

In 1981, International Surplus Lines Insurance Company assumed the risk which Adriatic wished to drop.

In my final year as Insurance Plan manager, I implemented a substantial further reduction in the rates effective January 1, 1983.

The number of participants continued to grow. In 1982, due to my wife's illness, I began to seek a replacement as Stamp Insurance Plan manager. W. Danforth Walker took over the post on December 1, 1983, with 8,699 members participating in the Collector Plan and 609 in the Dealers/Chapters Plans. The transition was very smooth. I continue as chairman of the Insurance Committee, but am no longer involved in the day-to-day operations.

The American Philatelic Research Library had always needed funds and still does. In seeking a method to fund the day-to-day operations of the library, I called on my long-time association with Connecticut Mutual Life Insurance Company for assistance. Their Baltimore General Agent said that Connecticut Mutual did not provide a market for group term insurance. He referred me to Samuel Shriver of CMI as the best man in the business. A plan was prepared by Shriver and presented to the APS board at the San Francisco convention in 1977. Having secured the approval of both Dan Voogs and Jim DeVoss, I was surprised when the board rejected this proposal.

After a detailed submission to the members of both the APRL and APS boards, approval eventually was secured and solicitation of the APS membership was mailed in August 1978. The program was well received. After sufficient reserves were established, rate credits provided $35,000 to the library in 1980; $24,500 in 1981; $6,983 in 1982; nothing in 1983; $16,676 in 1984; and $40,165 in 1985 for a total of $123,415 in six years, an average of $20,569 per year. The supplemental health insurance plan has not been as well received, but the supplemental Cancer Expense Plan has gone over very well. Both have provided some support for the library as well as meeting the needs of some of our members for coverage.

The Willard administration took leadership roles in the contest with the Post Office Department over the discontinuation of the Philatelic Sales Agency, in seeing the de Thuin book to completion, in plan-

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