

The World Stamp Show – 2016 Javits Convention Center, New York City

MSCNY Article No. 81

The World Stamp Show, held in New York City May 28 to June 4, 2016, was a great success. Brother Michael Bronner, our Club Administrator, was involved in the administration of the event and our Club had an information table that he looked after.

The information about the show provided on Wikipedia is noteworthy, so it is provided here:

World Stamp Show-NY 2016 was the United States' once-a-decade international celebration of stamp collecting. It took place at the Jacob K. Javits Convention Center in New York from May 28 to June 4, 2016. This was the first international stamp show to be held in New York since FIPEX in 1956.

The show brought together stamp collectors, dealers, exhibitors, postal administrations and societies from around the world together to sell, buy and discuss all aspects of the hobby known as philately. Between 250,000-300,000 visitors were expected to attend the show during its eight days. The show was a continuation of a series of international philatelic exhibitions that have taken place in the United States approximately every 10 years since the beginning of the 20th century, typically in a year ending in 6 or 7.

Brother Bronner displayed copies of our quarterly publication and other Club items. Many visitors stopped by and picked up one of our handouts. Dr. Bronner

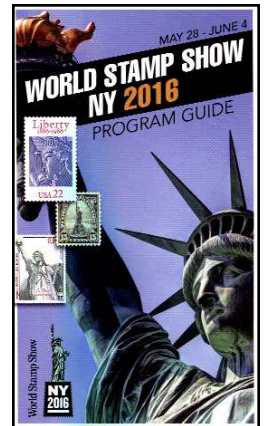


The Javits Convention Center.

gave a presentation on Masonic Philately at a special session, and reported that all went exceedingly well, with considerable interest expressed in our hobby.

During the course of the show, Brother Bronner took (or had taken) photographs, which are presented on the following pages.

Thanks are extended to Brother Bronner for his time and dedication relative to both the show itself and in representing our Club at this very significant event.



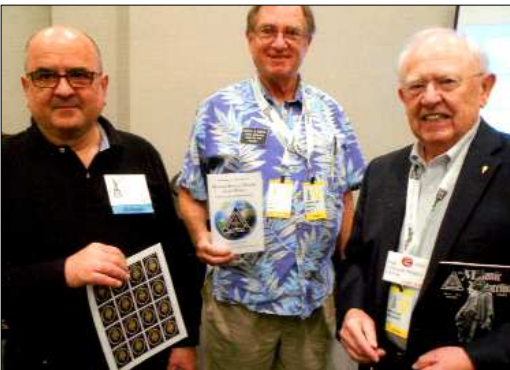
The WSS event Program Guide cover. More than 200 stamp dealers attended; almost 70,000 pages of stamp exhibits were presented, and there were over 78 postal administrations from different countries represented.



Brother Bronner at The Masonic Stamp Club of New York table.



A major attraction at the show was a real 1918 Curtiss "Jenny," the plane on the famous US inverted stamp.

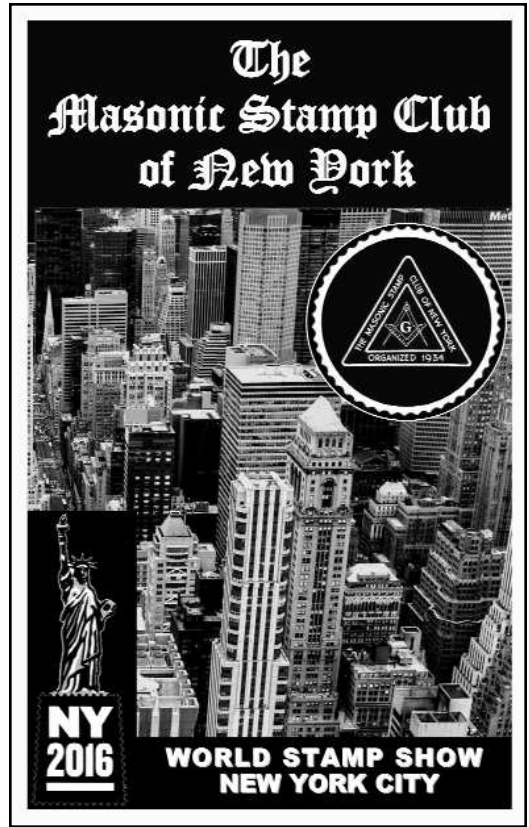


(Left) Two visitors and Brother Bronner posing with MSC items. (Right) A visitor highly engrossed in one of our quarterly magazines.

Shown here is the cover of our Club handout. We provided a brief history of the Club and an explanation of Masonic Philately. About 400 copies were distributed.

Our Club also participated in FIPEX, Which was held in New York April 28 to May 6, 1956. The full details on this event are featured in the May/June 1956 issue of *The Masonic Philatelist* ((Vol. 12, Nos. 9 and 10) .

A postage stamp commemorating this event was issued on April 30, 1956 (during the show).



Would That Ever be Wonderful!

In the course of the WSS, Brother Bronner kept me informed of events, and later sent me a Program Guide—an 84-page booklet with remarkable coverage and listings of the show. One could visit a postal administration from numerous countries and even purchase stamps issued by the country selected. What were termed “gems of philately” were presented, and along with other displays, the visitor viewed stamps worth many millions of dollars. The show was truly international and lived up to its claim of “The greatest stamp show on earth.”

Reflecting on this, I thought about the

Masonic Order in the USA and how every state in the union has its own remarkable Masonic history and artifacts that trace its long journey from the early 1700s to the present time. I have personally seen some Masonic artifacts, and have written about others: the St. John’s Lodge Bible, the portrait of George Washington in Masonic regalia, the Meriwether Lewis Masonic apron, to name a few. Some Grand Lodges have collections of Masonic medals/regalia that belonged to very famous Freemasons, and I would say that all Grand Lodges have photographs (even daguerreotypes) of very early Freemasons who measured signifi-

cantly in the history of the United States. Indeed, one of our largest “treasure troves” is in the Robert R Livingston Library and Museum in New York City. On top of all of this, we have the Scottish Rite museum in New York.

Collectively, the Masonic Order in the United States has many of the rarest and most coveted artifacts in the world.

In my musing, I thought how wonderful it would be if our Order held a massive presentation at the Javits Convention Center in New York City along the lines of the WSS show. In our case, Grand Lodges would be individually showcased with their individual finery and illustrated history. My mind wandered a little and I thought about Texas. Can you imagine the display that state would provide? Brother Jim Dougherty in Texas sends me material from time to time, so I have gained some insights here.

I think the benefits derived from a show of this nature would be quite significant. In the first place, it would give the public a first hand look at what Freemasonry is all about. At this time, public knowledge is mainly derived from ridiculous television documentaries. Such are created by non-Masons (producers, researchers and journalists) who have no idea what they are talking about and use Freemasonry as a sort of “hook” to snag viewers—it is always implied that some sily “secret” has been uncovered.

In the second place the show would arouse interest in the Masonic Order. Of course, we do not solicit new members, but there is nothing wrong with providing information. Such is done now on numerous websites. Effectively the show would be a “physical” website, but with the really

big difference of physical artifacts and direct interaction.

Such an event could also include presentation of private Masonic related collections (stamps, coins/tokens, postcards and so forth). Furthermore, Masonic supply companies would be asked to participate.

The objective of the World Stamp Show was to arouse and maintain interest in philately. There was no admission charged so the dealers, stamp societies, presenters, and postal administrations paid for the event through the fees they were charged to participate. One will appreciate that the event required a lot of planning, coordination and cooperation; about 500 people volunteered their time to bring about the show.

It is highly doubtful the Masonic Order would be about to provide the show I envision without a professional planner—we just don’t have the expertise.

Again, as I have pointed out previously in another connection, the cost to provide a show would likely require diverting funds from charitable pursuits; and here we have a Catch 22 situation. If our Order does not immediately start to reverse the trend in declining Masonic memberships, our funding for any purposes is going to simply dry up. By the time you turn off the lights tonight, we will have lost about another 137 members (effectively a lodge).

Yes, a show would be WONDERFUL (perhaps call it FREEMASONRY FOREVER). I am sure many of you are saying “Dream on Brother Murphy,” and I am sure that a dream is all this will amount to; but you now know that we have the goods and the knowledge necessary to make a dream come true.

Christopher L. Murphy, BF