

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Greetings once again with the hope that all enjoyed the festivities which come round once a year in December and just before the start of another New Year. I passed my 80th birthday on December 7th and have to take a written test to renew my driver's license – just like being back at school swotting up with the “official driving manual”. I can imagine how embarrassing it would be to fail!

Unfortunately, I have some bad news regarding our stalwart publisher and ‘past president’ Fran Hammond. Fran sent an e-mail to Chris Dahle and myself informing us that she has been diagnosed with lung cancer of an aggressive nature and will obviously have to soon give up mailing out the journal issues. Fran has been a stalwart supporter of the Biology Unit and has worked hard for the Unit over the years. So, as a result, we are seeking someone to take over the mailing of the journal. Usually, I send the completed issue to Fran, she runs off the appropriate number of copies and then puts them in envelopes, takes them to the post office and mails them. We desperately need someone to take on the job, which is not very difficult. Please let either Chris or myself know, so that we can make arrangements for some transfer of funds to cover the costs. {Soon after I had prepared this, I found out that Fran had passed away on January 27. An obituary taken presumably from a Cortez newspaper is on the following page.]

Occasionally, there are letters in the American Philatelist regarding the disposal of collections of postage stamps. In a number of cases, the owner has felt cheated by the dealer and has not received fair value for his material. Most of us who collect will at some point find ourselves in the position of needing to reduce our stamp holdings or sell everything (horrible thought!). I have been gradually reducing my collection and thought that some members might be interested in what I have found. I have been collecting the area known as Rhodesia for many years, including separate collections of Northern Rhodesia, Southern Rhodesia, Rhodesia & Nyasaland and Rhodesia proper. I collected mint and used material in the best condition I could find and included covers and postal stationery, since I planned on creating exhibits. My exhibits included “Rhodesia – British South Africa Company (BSAC), 1892 to 1925”, “Southern Rhodesia – 1925 to 1965” and “Rhodesia, the U.D.I. Period, 1966 to 1980”. While thinking about disposing of some of the material, I realized that I had never exhibited used stamps, except as they appeared on covers or to illustrate errors. Nor had I exhibited Northern Rhodesia and did not plan on doing so. The used material (except for the BSAC) was in black stock sheets so I went to the library, where they have the latest Scott catalogs and listed all the current prices. From there it was simple to come up with a total figure and when I offered it to a dealer, he said he could go to one-third of catalog. Since much of the material had been purchased a number of years ago, when the catalog prices were lower, I figured this was not a bad deal. [continued on the next page]

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Currently, I am working on the mint material, which is mostly hinged and dealers will pay one quarter of the Scott value. Once again, however, a lot of it was purchased some years ago when prices were quite a bit lower, so I will sell it at that price. I figure I have had my money's worth out of collecting what I have sold and the pleasure of assembling it and could now try something different.

My main aim in getting rid of some material is that I do not want my children to be lumbered with trying to get rid of an asset that they have absolutely no knowledge of. Much better for me to take care of disposal and they will reap the benefit. Needless to say, I have not stopped collecting, as my early Rhodesia receives new material whenever I can find it or have some spare funds available. Also, I have not done anything with my thematic material (insects) as I plan on reworking my exhibit at some point. It has won two gold medals and must be changed before it can be shown again. I did go to the trouble of cataloging the butterflies and moths and was somewhat pleasantly surprised at the result. If any members wishes further information or help, please do not hesitate to contact me.

This issue contains the usual mix of new issue listings and I took the trouble to send a message of thanks to all the sub-editors for their hard work during the year to facilitate another volume of Biophilately. In some ways, I wish we could get a few more articles on some of the subjects instead of just new issues, but I have asked this question at our meetings at the annual ATA show and the answer always seems to be "leave the journal as it is". So there is another year to look forward to and I hope that very shortly we shall have a volunteer to do the mailing!

Until next time - Alan J. Hanks

Obituary for Fran Hammond.

Fran Hammond passed away January 27 at her home in Cortez from cancer following a brief illness. She was 87. Even though she lived in Cortez only eight years, her quiet friendliness, desire to contribute, and drive to experience all she could led her to many friendships in the community. Fran was born in Dayton, Ohio January 7, 1924 to Morris Stanton Miller and Gladys Bookwalter. She grew up in a farming family, attended college in Miamisburg, Ohio and occupational therapy school in Philadelphia. Upon completion she followed her spirit of adventure and moved to New Orleans where she met her husband, Dean Hammond. They lived in Kentucky, Wisconsin, Nebraska and Colorado as Dean served in the Army and traveled through his career as a physician. They spent almost 40 years in Ogden, Utah before Dean passed away in 2000. She had one daughter, Sheryl Merritt, who now lives in Dolores. Fran was active in Girl Scouting and P.E.O. She loved golf, bowling, Bridge, crafts and gardening. After moving to Cortez, she jumped in with both feet, volunteering at the Methodist Thrift Shop and serving on church committees, participating in water aerobics, bowling leagues, golf and P.E.O. She organized social outings in the community including a Bridge club and dine out groups for church. She had a passion for butterflies, collecting butterfly stamps from around the world. Fran is survived by her daughter, Sheryl Merritt (Ed.) of Dolores, her grandchildren, Jason Merritt (Ashley) of Arvada, CO. and Kylene Bruski (Tony) of Parker, CO: her great-grandchildren, Kiera and Triston Bruski, and her sister-in-law, Wanda Couch. In lieu of flowers, donations may be sent to First United Methodist Church of Cortez, the Cortez Cultural Center, or to Hospice of Montezuma.