

APS-ATA NATIONAL SHOW 2019

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For the second year in a row, the American Topical Association (ATA) partnered with the American Philatelic Society (APS) to host a joint stamp show. The APS and ATA are the two largest philatelic organizations in the United States. Each organization has traditionally held an annual national-level stamp show: APS StampShow and ATA National Topical Stamp Show (NTSS). These shows are held in different cities around the country each year.

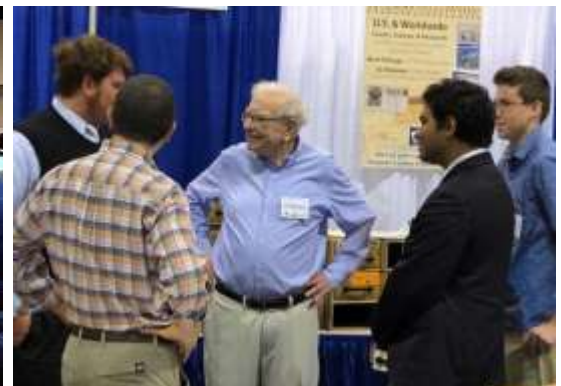


A large crowd assembled for the Military Working Dog first day ceremony. Many more arrived after this photo was taken.

Last year, the two organizations held a hugely successful joint show in Columbus, Ohio, and that provided the motivation to try another one this year in Omaha, Nebraska. The show took place at the CHI Health Center, an immense convention and arena facility, in Omaha on 1–4 August 2019.

The show featured 64 dealers, six auction houses, and 849 frames of exhibits. In addition to the dealers and exhibits, the activities included meetings and presentations by several of the more than 30 societies that attended the show, annual general meetings of both the APS and ATA, receptions, tours, and many other activities such that it was not possible to participate in all of them.

The cooperation and coordination between the APS and ATA continued to be excellent. The ATA Show Manager, John Hamman from Florida, reported that both societies contributed to the planning and execution of the event. The APS, as the larger organization, provided the majority of the effort, which included rental of the venue, coordination of the dealer and exhibitor participation, and much of the advertising. The ATA provided volunteers and support for exhibits, presentations, publicity, awards, and the Youth activities area, as well as assisting in many other areas.



Warren Buffett at YPLF booth (Jerry Sims photo)

Both the APS and ATA had large booths next to each other at the show entrance that were continually interacting with visitors. Nebraskan investor Warren Buffett visited the Young Philatelic Leaders booth on Sunday. Apparently he is a topical collector. The ATA gained 35 new members during the four-day show.

Attendance figures at the show are unknown at present, but from my unscientific observations, the quantity each day seemed lower than last year's exceptional show. Nevertheless, the show was well attended each day and actually seemed to be crowded on Thursday and Friday. Responses from dealers that I heard were all positive and at least one reported that this had been his best show ever in terms of sales. It appeared evident that attendance by a combination of traditional and topical collectors added a lot of energy to the event.

The success of these past two joint events has resulted in agreements between the two organization to continue hosting joint shows in the future. In fact, even prior to this show, the ATA and APS had signed agreements to hold joint events in Hartford, Connecticut, next year and in Rosemont, Illinois, in 2021. At the show this year, they signed another agreement to jointly sponsor a show in Sacramento, California, in 2022.

The success of this joint venture has attracted a third partner for the show next year in Hartford. The American First Day Cover Society (AFDCS), which produces its annual Americover show, will combine it with the other two to form a triple event next year. Each of these three shows is a World Series of Philately (WSP) accredited event, so the exhibits will be split into three sections each with their own set of awards and Grand Award winners. Of course, the APS StampShow is also the venue for the annual Champion of Champions competition in which the Grand Award winners from each of the 30 WSP compete for the Champion of Champions prize.

The Hartford show should be a very large event and the plan calls for two show hotels to accommodate all attendees. It is strongly recommended that you make your reservations as soon as the arrangements with the venues are announced so that you can be assured of a room. This year the show hotel was sold out well before the event.

On Thursday at noon, the US Postal Service held a First Day of Issue ceremony for the Military Working Dog (MWD) booklet stamps. The booklets contain five blocks of the four stamps showing the common breeds of military working dogs: Dutch Shepherd, German Shepherd, Labrador Retriever, and Malinois. The standing room only ceremony was treated to some inspiring and touching remarks by speakers with personal experiences and connections to MWD animals. MWD Morty, a German shepherd, and his handler, SSgt Blake A. Radey, from the 55th Security Squadron at nearby Offutt Air Force Base were a popular attraction at the event.

As I watched the many photos being taken of Morty and his handler, I jokingly mentioned to the non-commissioned officer-in-charge that Morty was really famous now and would never be able to work undercover again. The sergeant laughed and told me that Morty, who sports a floppy ear, had just returned from a deployment in the Middle East and that everyone there knew all about the dog with the "floppy ear."



MWD Morty & handler

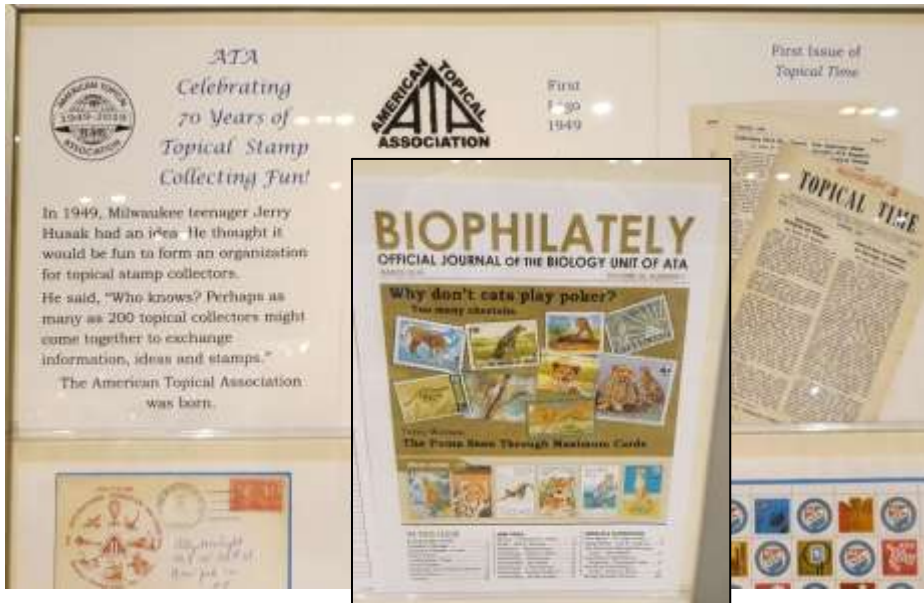


The ATA celebrated its 70th anniversary as part of the show festivities. The Friday show cancel (see page 170) marked the event. The ATA displayed several exhibit frames devoted to the organization. One showed historical artifacts from the ATA files and included an image of the March 2019 edition *Biophilately* journal cover. A birthday cake helped celebrate the anniversary at the ATA President's Reception on Friday evening.

The ATA held their annual meeting of the Board of Directors on Tuesday and Wednesday before the show opened. Look for a complete report in an upcoming edition of *Topical Time*. Much of the agenda and discussion dealt with the "changing of the guard" as new officers and a new Executive Director were set to take office.

Dawn Hamman, from Venice, Florida, was elected as the new ATA President taking the place of Dale E. Smith from Kansas City, Missouri, who had served as President for the past three years. She officially assumed the office

following the Annual General Meeting on Friday afternoon. Also, Jennifer L. Miller attended as the incoming Executive Director (see page 169) as she transitioned to take over from Vera Felts, who retired at the end of August. Felts accepted a consulting contract offered by the ATA to run through the end of the year to help coordinate and smooth the transition. The meeting was so well attended that more chairs had to be brought in to the large room.



In addition to Hamman as the new President, Jeffrey Hayward from Staten Island, New York, was elected as the First Vice President, and Jack Congrove, from Fort Lewis, Washington, was re-elected as the Second Vice President. Also, Dale Smith continued to serve on the Board as a Director and Christopher Dahle from Cedar Rapids, Iowa, was re-elected as a Director.

At the APS General Meeting on Saturday, our Unit President, Laurie Ryan received her 25-year membership pin from APS President Robert Ziegler.

The Biology Unit held its annual meeting on Saturday at 11:00 AM in the convention center presided over by President Ryan. Twelve members were present including members from Belgium and Canada. There was no business conducted, as is usual for this meeting. Ryan and other officers provided news and information about ATA activities and plans for the shows in the coming years.

One of the other themes at the show was the celebration of the 150th anniversary of the completion of the Transcontinental Railroad. The Union Pacific company, which is headquartered in Omaha, was a show sponsor and they arranged to have their steam locomotive No. 4014 "Big Boy" on display at a rail spur only about one quarter mile from the show.

In an unfortunate scheduling conflict, the Big Boy ceremony was held at the same time as the Biology Unit meeting. Incoming ATA President Dawn Hamman, who is also a Unit member, was one of the speakers at this event.

The Union Pacific Big Boy is the only operational engine of the 25 that were built. Only eight still exist. It was built in 1941, and is the largest operational steam locomotive in the world. Its overall length with its tender is almost 133 feet (40.5 m). The locomotive itself weighs 762,000 lb (345,637 kg). With the tender, the total weight is 1.25 million lb (566,990 kg).



Laurie Ryan receiving 25-year award



Union Pacific No. 4014 "Big Boy"

The show Celebration Banquet was held on Saturday evening at the Omaha Hilton hotel adjacent to the convention center. This event was where the honorary awards and the major exhibiting awards were announced and presented. The ATA Distinguished Topical Philatelist award, which is the organization's highest honor was presented by President Hamman to Aimee Devine from Janesville, Wisconsin. See *Biophilately*, Vol. 68 (2) for a description of Aimee's contributions to the ATA.

The APS inducted three persons into its Hall of Fame. One of these was ATA founder Jerome (Jerry) Husak. The others were Thomas J. Alexander and Michael Mellone. Husak was a teenager when he started the ATA in 1949.

The Luff Awards are the most prestigious given by the APS. This year the recipients were Thomas M. Lera, R. Timothy Bartshe, and Kathryn J. Johnson.

Personally I think the ATA awards, and especially the Biology Unit awards outshone the awards given by the APS and the other societies.

Only two of the Biology Unit awards were given out by the jury. Roger Van Laere, a Unit member from Belgium, received a Large Vermeil award and won the Biology Unit First Place award for *Atlantic Puffin: Icon of the Isle of Lundy*.



Biology Unit 1st Award

In the APS Open exhibition, Robert J. Faux won the Grand Award for *Postal History of the 1861 United States 24-cent Adhesive*. Behruz Nassre-Esfahani won the Reserve Grand Award for *Persia, Qajar Postal Stationery, Issued 1876–1925*.

The Open Single Frame Grand Award went to Mick Hadley for *Uses of the 1908 U.S. Coils*. The Union Pacific Most Popular Award in the APS StampShow went to Rick Gibson for *Smokey Bear Issue of 1984*.

In the NTSS exhibition, Norman F. Jacobs, Jr. won the Grand Award for *Tennis – From Game of Kings to Sport for All*. Unit member Dawn Hamman won the NTSS Reserve Grand Award for *Backyard Chickens – Raising Chickens at Home, Then and Now*.

The NTSS Mary Anne Owens One Frame Grand Award went to Mark C. Maestrono for *Men's Gymnastics: Dressed to Win*. Edward Bergen received the NTSS Most Popular Award for *Walt Disney's Second Super Star: Donald Duck*.



Biology Unit 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Awards

Susan B. Jones, also a Unit member from Illinois, received a Vermeil award and won the Biology Unit Second Place for *The Coelacanth and the Comores*.



Biology Unit 2nd Award



NTSS Grand Award



NTSS Reserve Grand Award



Mary Anne Owens One Frame Grand Award

The APS StampShow is the venue for the World Series Multi-frame Champion of Champions Award. This year there were 30 competitors entered, the Grand Award winners from each of the WSP shows since the last C-of-C in 2018.

The winner for 2019 was Dr. Yamil H. Kouri, Jr. representing FLOREX 2018 for *The First Postal Issues of Spanish Antilles*.

In the Literature exhibition, our own Associate Editor, Michael Kogan, received a Large Vermeil for his website www.paleophilatelie.eu in the Electronic Media division. Wayne Youngblood received a Large Gold for *Topical Time* in the Journals division.



SR-71 at SAC Museum

On Monday after the show, the ATA offered an all-day tour that included visits to the Strategic Air Command Museum, the Mormon Trail Center, and the Durham Museum. Each venue offered interesting and fantastic attractions. I had never actually seen a B-36 in person. It is the largest mass-produced piston-engine aircraft ever produced. Only five still exist.

Next year the joint APS-ATA-AFDCS show will be held at the Connecticut Convention Center in Hartford, Connecticut, on 20–23 August 2020. The APS is polling its members for a new, more descriptive and inclusive name for these joint shows. Send them your suggestion by 12 September.