

the Revealer

QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF THE

ÉIRE PHILATELIC ASSOCIATION

Vol. 75 No. 2

Whole No. 319

SAMRADH

SUMMER 2025



ISSN 0484-6125

www.eirephilatelicassoc.org

Affiliate No. 21—The American Philatelic Society • Affiliate—Federations of Philatelic Societies of Ireland



2025

**Eire Philatelic Association
75th Anniversary**

In the Summer 2025 issue:

- p. 3. President's Message
- 4. Membership Report
- 5. Minutes of the 2025 Annual General Meeting
- 7. Irish Coins and Philately
- 12. First Day Cover Project Update
- 13. Cork Ship-letter Handstamps (part 2)
- 18. EPA 75th Anniversary Celebration
- 21. The Irish Brigade of Philatelic Exhibitors



THE REVEALER

www.eirephilatelicassoc.org ISSN 0484-6125

Published quarterly by the Eire Philatelic Association: Membership dues are as follows: U.S. (\$20.00); Canada/Mexico (\$25.00); all other countries (\$30.00) by cheque or money order to EPA, PO Box 116 Maple Shade NJ 08052. **Dues may also be paid by Paypal to EPADUES@aol.com**

ELECTED POSITIONS: Officers:

President: **ROBERT BENNINGHOFF**, PO Box 116, Maple Shade, NJ 08052. eparmb@gmail.com

Vice-President North America: **MICHAEL S. CANAVAN**, 44 Lakeshore Dr., Garnett, KS 66032. michaelscanavan44@gmail.com

Vice-President Europe: **BRIAN WARREN**, brian.warren2@upcmail.ie

Directors:

BRIAN CALLAN **TIM CAREY** **RICHARD KELLY**
PHILIP KANE **MICHAEL O'REILLY**
RAYMOND MURPHY **TIMOTHY O'SHEA**

APPOINTED POSITIONS:

Secretary/APS Representative/Chapter Coordinator: **JOHN B. SHARKEY**, 1559 Grouse Lane, Mountainside, NJ 07092-1340. jsharkeyepa@me.com

Treasurer: **JEAN BENNINGHOFF**, PO Box 116, Maple Shade, NJ 08052. eparmb@gmail.com

Editor: **STEVEN FRIEDENTHAL**, 3 Lindbergh Crescent, St. Albert, Alberta T8N 2S8 Canada. stevefr1@telus.net or eparevealer@gmail.com

Editor Emeritus: **LIAM MALONE**. liammalonedc@gmail.com

Auction Manager: **MICHAEL O'REILLY**, 16691 S 18th Way Phoenix, AZ 85048 AuctionManagerEPA@gmail.com

Auction Manager Emeritus: **BOB KEMPER**, 1301 Willow Bud Dr., Walnut CA 91789. Epa-auction@roadrunner.com

Advertising Manager: **RICHARD KELLY**, kellyrd@sbcglobal.net

Special Offers/Librarian/Historian: **TIMOTHY O'SHEA**, 58 Porter Street, Granby, MA 01033-9516. Toshea1@comcast.net

Youth/School Program Managers: Ireland: **PHELIM O'NEILL**, pfoneil@gmail.com. USA: **RICHARD KELLY**, kellyrd@sbcglobal.net

Address and email changes should be sent to the Treasurer Jean Benninghoff at eparmb@gmail.com

CHAPTER COORDINATORS

The Association Secretary provides Coordinators with names and addresses of new members. Coordinators welcome new members and invite them to join the local Chapter.

Commodore John Barry Chapter

Members reside in NJ, NY, PA Coordinator: John B. Sharkey, 1559 Grouse Lane, Mountainside, NJ 07092 jsharkeyepa@me.com

James Hoban Chapter

Members reside in MD, VA, DC Coordinator: Liam Malone liammalonedc@gmail.com

John McCormack Chapter

Members reside in CT & MA Coordinator: Timothy O'Shea 58 Porter St, Granby, MA 01033- 9516 toshea1@comcast.net

Lone Star Chapter

Members reside in Central TX Chapter is currently inactive, please contact the Secretary if you wish to volunteer for this position.

Northern California Chapter (NORCAL)

Members reside in Northern CA. Chapter Coordinator: Needed

Southern California Chapter (SOCAL)

Members reside in Southern CA Coordinator: William A. O'Connor, 3803 Foxglove Lane, Fallbrook, CA 92028 waoconnor@aol.com

DEADLINE FOR ARTICLE SUBMISSION

Winter: November 15; Spring: March 7;

Summer: June 7; Fall: September 15

Each Issue published about a month after above dates

The Revealer ADVERTISING RATES

	Size (inches) Approx.	Per issue	4 issues (contract rate)
Full Page	7.4 X 9.7	\$160	\$550
Half Page Horizontal	7.4 X 4.9	\$90	\$320
Half Page Vertical	3.6 X 9.7	\$90	\$320
Quarter Page	3.6 X 4.8	\$50	\$180
Eighth Page	3.6 X 2.5	\$30	\$105

Camera ready copy required – Contact Richard Kelly at kellyrd@sbcglobal.net

Dues in the Association with Quarterly Journal delivered as follows:

	Annual Sep - Aug	Life Membership
Electronic version only - worldwide	\$20.-	\$400.-
Printed copy with electronic – U.S. only	\$30.-	\$600.-
Printed copy with electronic – Outside U.S.	\$35.-	\$700.-

Family memberships are the same as a single membership

From The President – Robert Benninghoff



Jean and I wish all members a Grand and Bodacious summertime. We will be travelling to Ireland in late June with our children and grandchildren to join family and Friends to Celebrate our 50th Wedding Anniversary at the Strand Hotel in Limerick. Several ÉPA members will be joining us and we will share some photos in the Autumn issue.

We had a great Annual General meeting at The St. Louis Stamp Expo in March (details are found in this issue). Some important items from our AGM.
(a) Annual Dues will remain the same for 2026, due mainly to the continued success of the ÉPA auctions. Thank You Michael O'Reilly, Auction Manager!
(b) We are planning to continue with four Issues of The Revealer per year - BUT- We will make a final decision at the end of the year. Steven NEEDS

articles short or long – The decision on how many issues of The Revealer we publish per year will depend on how many members help out with the Autumn and Winter Issues.

(c) 2026 Dues envelopes will go in the mail in late July. Please pay promptly *and save Jean time chasing you for dues.* **Note** – Members sending in a donation with their dues will receive a special souvenir card mailed by me from STAMPA in October.

We are planning to meet in Boston in May next year as part of the BOSTON 2026 USA International stamp show and we will hold our next Annual General Meeting at BALPEX 2026 in early August.

Finally, I have a limited number of souvenirs cards / envelopes celebrating the ÉPA 75th Anniversary.

--see below --. I will send them to members upon request at no charge while supplies last – let me know by item number and include your address. Contact me at rmercero@aol.com

Figure 1



Figure 2



[Envelope and Card from ÉPA 50th Anniversary with Stamps and cancels marking the 75th Anniversary. The Envelope is signed by members attending the Board meeting.]



Figure 3: Front and Back of a Postcard made by Brian Warren, with Irish Stamps on the front and USA Stamps on the back. Cancelled with a Special An Post postmark and the St Louis

I hope to see Everyone at STAMPA 2025 – October 9 to 12 in Dublin. The EPA will have our second 75th Anniversary celebration during the weekend, including a Friday night dinner.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT – Summer 2025**New Members**

3051 Stephen Fergusen, Dublin, Ireland
 3052 Barbara Horter, Union, MO
 3053 Nathan Esbeck and Family, Maplewood, MO
 3054 John Moran, Newburgh, IN
 3055 Jeffrey Carr, Champaign, IL
 3056 Gary Durfee, St. Charles, MO
 3057 Rusty Shoaf, Lafayette, IN
 3058 Foster Miller III, Annapolis Jct., MD
 3059 Dave Mulholland, Dublin, Ireland
 3060 Tommy Graham, Dublin, Ireland

New Address

2904 Adrian Healy, Skibbereen, Co. Cork, Ireland

New Email Address

3052 Barbara Horter, blhorter@gmail.com
 3053 Nathan Esbeck, Nathan.esbeck@gmail.com
 3054 John Moran, gtmoran@aol.com
 3055 Jeffrey Carr, drjvcarr@gmail.com
 3056 Gary Durfee, gdurfee@sbcglobal.net
 3057 Rusty Shoaf, rusty.shoaf@rshoaf.com
 3058 Foster Miller III, fmillerfdc@gmail.com
 3059 Dave Mulholland, dave.mulholland@anpost.ie
 3060 Tommy Graham, thomaskevingraham@gmail.com

Resignation

2947 Reid Michaels, Sante Fe, NM

Deceased

1197 Patrick J, Ryan, Sr., Universal City TX
 1977 Robert J. Joyce, San Antonio, TX
 2813 Ed Waterous, Merrillville, IN

Unable to Locate (please contact Secretary at jsharkeyepa@me.com)

2883 James Woodward, Green Cove Springs, FL
 3041 Charles Phibbs, Ann Arbor, MI

Dropped for non-Payment of Dues

Thirteen members have been dropped for non-payment of dues.

Membership Status

Membership as of February 25, 2025	250
New members	10
Resignation	1
Deceased	3
Unable to locate	2
Non-payment of dues	13
Life members	29
Complimentary mailings	10
Membership as May 30, 2025	243

JBS 5/30/25

2025 Annual General Meeting of the Éire Philatelic Association March 22, 2025 at the St. Louis Stamp Expo, St. Louis MO

Minutes

Our AMG was held in-person and via Zoom starting at 11:00 at Central time. Bob thanked all of the staff and officers of the ÉPA who keep this fine organization functioning.

Our AGM had 16 in attendance. The first order of business was a moment of silence for one of our deceased members, John Madigan, member number 1337.

Secretary's Report – John Sharkey

The Secretary determined that a quorum was present. The Minutes of our last AGM (October 5, 2024) were approved. The Secretary indicated that the ÉPA membership has held steady during the last fiscal year at 250 members, including 29 LIFE members. We picked up 5 new members at this show (two more on Sunday). The EPA has moved its non-profit corporation status from California to New Jersey. Bill O'Connor was thanked for his many years as our CA representative. Our website (www.eirephilatelicassoc.org) currently does not have an operational login procedure. Until this problem is resolved, members are not required to log to access the website. Just Google Eire Philatelic Association. Souvenir cards were prepared for our 75th anniversary and are available through our Secretary. The Secretary receives many inquiries about collection disposal. He always encourages people to join the EPA and sell their material through our auction. Information on collection disposal through our auction is available through the Secretary. Please send an email request for a copy (jsharkeyepa@me.com).

Treasurer's Report – Jean and Benninghoff reported that the ÉPA is in good financial shape, largely due to the hard work of our Auction Manager Michael O'Reilly and the generosity of our members through donations. Donations of \$4000 have paid for the production of our souvenir cards and costs associated with our current AGM. In spite of inflation and rising postal rates, we are in good financial shape and will not be raising our dues for 2026.

Auction Manager's Report - Michael O'Reilly

Michael reported that our auctions have been very successful. We normally have 70 active who both consign and donate material. The lots, which number 550 to 600 per auction, are estimated to bring in \$5000 to the EPA this fiscal year. Plans are underway to scan selected lots and put them on our website. Michael indicated that he has sufficient material to continue our four auctions per year but asked members to actively participate in the auction by consigning, donating and buying material. This is a major fund-raising activity for our fine association.

Please send in material for our auction.

Awards Committee Chair – Mike Canavan

The President awarded the **President's Award** to Brian Callan for his many years of dedicated contributions to the ÉPA and his contributions to exhibits on Irish material. For this show, Brian travelled from Cork and exhibited 26 frames in two exhibits, which won two major awards. Two **Mercer Bowers Awards** were also presented. The first was presented to Tim Carey, a first-time exhibitor at a National show for his two-frame exhibit "The Indestructible Irish". The second award was presented to Trevor Brock for his exhibit "German East Africa 1890-1927". Waterford glasses were presented to the awardees. Mike reported that he will form committees for the three EPA awards, which will be announced in Fall 2025. Mike continues to serve as our

Zoom Manager and forwards links to our members for *The Revealer* and the auction. The President thanked Mike for all his hard work.

New Business -

The Revealer

The President indicated that due to rising costs and the shortage of material, consideration may be given to cutting the journal back to three issues a year. The IPC has taken this route and try to keep the total number of pages the same. Due to our stable finances, a decision was made to keep the journal at four issues per year. However, the Editor needs material to fill these four issues. Please consider sending material for publication. Even short notes on “my favorite cover” are welcome.

Future ÉPA General Meetings

There were plans to have our 2026 AGM in conjunction with Boston 2026. However, the requirement to staff a society table for eight days, as well as the cost of Boston hotels have required us to change our plans. Tentative plans are to have our AGM in conjunction with BALPEX 2026, which will be held at the BWI Marriott hotel. The show, which is accessible by car, air and Amtrak, will be held August 7-9, 2026. Second option is NOJEX, October 2026. Check our website for updates.

Stampa 2025

Our European Vice-President, Brian Warren, gave an update on Stampa 2025, which will be held in Dublin October 10-12. The celebration of the 75th anniversary of the EPA will continue at this meeting and a special EPA dinner is planned. This show is renowned for the quality and quantity of its Irish exhibits.

AGM Presentation

Our meeting concluded with an illustrated presentation by member and exhibitor Brian Callan entitled “Graf Zeppelin LZ-127 South America Airmail 1930 to 1937.” Thank you to Brian for this wonderful presentation.

Respectfully submitted,

John B. Sharkey,

ÉPA Secretary,

March 27, 2025

Regular Public Auctions in Dublin

**Please write or call for a copy of the next
catalog**

Want lists serviced.

Expertization service.

Literature list sent on request.

MacDonnell Whyte Ltd.

102 Leinster Road Dublin 6 Ireland Tel:

+353 1 4977449 Fax: +353 1 4977440

Email: mdwltd@eircom.net

Raven Stamps

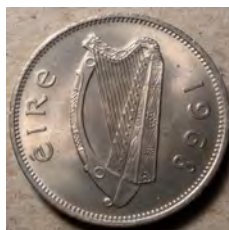
**12C Washington St. West, Cork, Ireland
For all your Irish Stamp requirements**

(Callers by appointment only)

Tel + 353 87 2574309

Website: www.ravenstamps.com

e-mail: ravenstamps@gmail.com



IRISH COINS AND PHILATELY

JOHN B. SHARKEY

Irish coins have been issued over the centuries by a variety of local and national authorities, the ancient provincial Kings and High Kings of Ireland, the Kingdom of Ireland (1541-1801), the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland (1801-1922), the Irish Free State (1922-1937), and the present Republic of Ireland. Since 2002, the Republic of Ireland has minted Euro coins, featuring symbols such as flax and the harp. This article will concentrate on the coinage used by the Republic.

Starting in 1978, the Department of Posts and Telegraphs, now An Post, has issued postage stamps showing a variety of Irish coins and has often included an actual coin as part of the first day cover. These are called philatelic numismatic covers (PNCs). In addition, many first day covers have privately been produced in conjunction with the production of new coinage. As many philatelists are also coin collectors, this article will review how Irish coins have appeared on the stamps and first day covers of Ireland.

Pre-Decimal Irish Coins

In 1926 the government of the newly founded Irish Free State formed a coinage committee to plan for a new Irish coinage. The chairman of the committee was the Irish poet William Butler Yeats, shown in **Figure 1** on a medal on a 52p stamp (Hibernian C 691) with other Nobel Prize winners and a view of the Nobel medal. It was decided that the Irish harp would be used as the national symbol on the coinage as it had been since the 1530's and that the reverse designs would feature a series of animals important to Ireland's mainly agricultural economy. The designs were by Percy Metcalfe, a young British medalist. Eight denominations were designed and produced and the first coins of each denomination were struck and issued dated 1928.



Fig.1: Irish poet William Butler Yeats, Chairman of the Irish coinage committee, shown on the 52p stamp of 1994.

The design chosen for the common obverse was of a 16 string Irish harp modeled on the 'Brian Boru' harp in Trinity College Dublin. The legend Saorstát Éireann (Irish free State) surrounds, and the date is divided either side of the harp. The denominations were the farthing (quarter of a penny), the halfpenny, the penny, the three-pence, the sixpence, the shilling (12 pence), the florin (two shillings), the half-crown (two shillings and six pence). Shown in **Figure 2** is the halfpenny on its last day of usage, July 31, 1969. The cancel is Dublin and the postage pence, with eight ½ pence stamps (Hibernian C22 and D35). The animal chosen for the halfpenny is a sow with

piglets. The pig was a very important animal in Irish rural life. Most families kept at least one animal which was fed on the kitchen refuse and other vegetable and animal scraps. Last struck in 1967, it was demonetized on

December 31, 1969 along with the half-crown. This set of coins is considered “pre-decimal” coins, which were issued from 1928 to 1969.



Fig. 2: Philatelic numismatic cover commemorating the last day of use of the halfpenny on July 31, 1969.

Courtesy David Brennan

In June 1937 a new constitution declared the Free State a sovereign republic with the name ‘Eire’ and this name appeared on the next coins issued in 1939. Minor modifications were made to the design of the harp and also to the reverses of the half-crown and the penny. In 1942 pure nickel for the sixpence and three-pence was abandoned in favor of a copper-nickel alloy. By 1943 the rising price of silver made it uneconomic to mint coins of 0.725 silver (the half-crown, florin and shilling) so no shillings were minted that year, and of the half-crowns and florins minted very few went into circulation. No further coins of these denominations were produced until after the 1950 Coinage Act which specified the same copper-nickel alloy for these coins as was being used for the sixpence and three-pence.

Irish Decimal Coins

In 1978, the Department of Posts and Telegraphs issued a set of four stamps celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Irish currency since the foundation of the independent Irish state in 1922 (**Figure 3**). The stamps were issued in denominations of 8p, 10p, 11p, and 17p. Of the eight coins issued, four are represented on the stamps: the half-crown, depicting a horse; the florin, depicting a salmon; the penny, depicting a hen and chickens; and the farthing, depicting a woodcock. These are decimal coins, which were issued from 1969 to 2000.



Fig. 3: First Day Cover of the 50th anniversary of the Irish currency of 1928.

The Irish government decided to follow the international trend and adopt a decimal currency instead of the pound/shilling/penny system in the mid 1960s. ‘Decimal Day’ was February 15, 1971. The new decimal 5-pence and 10-pence coins were identical in size and of equivalent value to the previous coinage, introduced in 1969, and the older counterparts were not demonetized. The new 50-pence piece was introduced in 1970. Decimal bronze coins were issued in 1969 and 1970 in sets of decimal coins to familiarize the population with the new coins. The bronze coins design of the coins was a bird in a Celtic style with Celtic knotwork. The design of the five-pence was taken directly from the previous shilling. The design for the ten-pence was taken directly from the previous florin. The twenty-pence was introduced in 1986. The fifty-pence was introduced as a seven-sided coin. The pound (£) coin was introduced in 1990, replacing the pound note which had become too low a value to be cost effective as paper money. The design for the pound coin is an Irish red deer. The design is very much in the style of Percy Metcalf’s design for the 1928 coinage and was executed by Tomas Ryan. The Irish pound coin was only produced for 10 years, from 1990 to 2000. Shown in **Figure 4** is a cover containing a 1990 1£ coin, produced by An Post. The Dublin cancel reads ‘BONN PUINT NUA’, new Irish coin, and ‘LA CHÉAD EISIÚNA’, first release date, June 20, 1990. The £1 stamp (Hib. D152) was issued in 1990. The cachet shows three old one-pound Irish banknotes: the plowman note, 1929-1953; a series A note, 1928-1977; and a Queen Medb (Maeve) note, 1976-1993.



Fig. 4: 1990 Philatelic numismatic cover with the £1 stamp and coin.

On April 3, 1997, An Post issued another PNC commemorating the “Millennium of Irish Coinage”. The coin is a reproduction of the first coin minted in Ireland, the silver penny issued by the Norse Sihtric III, King of Dublin, in 997 A.D. The coins featured on the envelope are as follows (from left to right):

- Nickel 3d (1928)
- Silver ½ d – Prince John as Lord of Ireland (after 1190)
- Gun money half crown (prob. Copper) – James II (1689)
- Silver Groat – Henry VIII, Lord of Ireland (after 1534)
- Copper 1/2d – George I (Woods Coinage) (1723)
- Copper-nickel 50p (1971)
- Copper-nickel 1£ (1990)



Fig. 5: Cover with a Dublin cancel on a 32p stamp showing the Dublin silver penny (Hib C812), the Millenary of Irish Coinage

Irish Millennium One Pound Coin

An Post, in celebration of the new millennium, produced a PNC of an edition limited to 20,000 copies. This £1 commemorative millennium coin was specially commissioned by the Central Bank of Ireland and features on the reverse side, an image of the Broighter Boat and two stars representing the two millennia and the ability to navigate. The obverse is similar to the normal £1 coin depicting the Irish Harp and bears the date 2000.



Fig. 6: Year 2000 PNC commemorating the £1 millennium coin.

This cover continues the millennium theme of An Post and the coins featured in the design are the copper 1d, silver Florin 2s, copper nickel 50p, silver nickel 20p & copper-nickel £1. The stamps shown are the 50p (Hib D150, 1990) and 52p (Hib D151, 1991), both stamps showing the Broighter Boat.

Irish Euro Coins

INTRODUCTION OF THE EURO



Fig.7: These 30p Euro stamps (part of a 16 stamp sheet) of 1999 shows the €1 coin commemorating a single European currency.

The euro (€) came into being in cashless form on January 1, 1999, when twelve European Union Member States, including Ireland, formed an Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) and permanently locked the exchange rates of their currencies against the euro.

On January 1, 2002, the seven € banknotes and eight € coins were put into circulation. **Figure 8** shows one of a limited edition of 7000 PNCs which incorporates the new €1 coin, commemorating the introduction of the euro currency. The designs on one side of the euro coins are common to all the countries in the euro zone and reflect the unity of the European Union. The national side of the coin features Ireland's national emblem – the harp, the word 'ÉIRE', and the year of issue, surrounded by the twelve stars of the EU flag. In addition, the cover features three stamps issued to commemorate Irish coinage from 1928 to 2002: 38c-reverse of Irish £1 coin (Hibernian C1134), 41c-reverse of 50p coin (C1135), and the 57c-reverse of the 1d coin (C1136).



Fig. 8: PNC showing the €1 and £1 coins commemorating the new Euro currency.

Another limited-edition PNC (7000 issued) was released by An Post on January 1, 2002 with the £1 Millennium coin and the €1 coin. The cover, shown in **Figure 9**, also commemorates the introduction of the euro currency on January 1, 2002. Note the two different cancellations; one dated December 31, 1001 for the £1 coin and the cancel LA A DEIRIDH DÍOLA, last day of sale, and the other dated January 1, 2002, with the cancel showing first release date. The stamps are from the definitive series, Birds of Ireland. Both stamps feature the Blackbird design, one denominated at 30p and the other at the new 38c euro value equivalent. The Millennium £1 coin features a reproduction of the Brighter Boat, an Iron Age model ship of beaten gold in the National Museum of Ireland collection. This was the last Irish coin to be issued before the introduction of the Euro currency.



Fig. 9: PNC showing the £1 Millennium coin and the € 1 coin; another commemoration of the new currency.

In 2007, Ireland issued a €2 common coin for general circulation, together with the other countries of the Eurozone, commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the Treaty of Rome, followed by a €2 coin in 2009 celebrating the tenth anniversary of the birth of the euro currency in 1999. Many other commemorative coins continue to be produced by the Central Bank of Ireland to the present day. However, to my knowledge, no additional philatelic numismatic covers have been produced since 2002.

References and Further Reading

Éire; Coins of Ireland; Irish Euro Coins, en.wikipedia.org. Retrieved at various times 2024

A Guide to valuing all your old Irish coins. <https://irishcentral.com/roots/history/a-guide-to-valuing-all-your-old-irish-coins>.

Ireland Department of Posts and telegraphs and An Post; various FDC and PNC inserts.

Modern Irish Coinage (1928 to date). <http://www.irishcoinage.com>.

P. Seaby, and P. Frank Purvey, *Coins of Scotland Ireland & The islands*, Seaby Publications Ltd., 1984.



UPDATE:

FIRST DAY COVER PROJECT

This is an update on the first day cover project we announced in 2023. During 2024 we amassed over 2,000 images, making us feel that we have every FDC with a cachet. So far this year we laid out images on pages and added descriptions and completed the first draft. We anticipate five sections: overprints, definitives, airmails, commemoratives, and Europa. Because of the volume of Europa topic FDCs a separate section makes sense. We also present information about cachet producers and illustrators. The information we provide about the subjects on the stamps is purposefully uneven, because we believe some subjects are less known. We dove into Wikipedia to learn more about Evie Howe and other stamp subjects, into serious history books in our libraries, and into websites devoted to other subjects such as Ballintubber Abbey. Some of you have already expressed interest and if you think you would like to purchase a hard copy book, please let us know. We anticipate publishing the book around March 2026. We have not yet researched any part of publishing a book, so we know nothing about the costs at this point. Please contact us at: ireland-first-day-covers@googlegroups.com with thanks, the Editors: Phil Kane, Ireland; Willie Mackle, Canada; and Liam Malone, United States.

COUNTY CORK SHIP LETTER HANDSTAMPS IN THE 18TH AND 19TH CENTURIES (PART 2)

Brian Callan



Figure 8: Pernambuco to London via Cove 1842.

Entire letter from Pernambuco, Brazil to London, back stamped with black Cove CDS on 4 June 1842 (JU 4 1842) and red Dublin diamond on 5 June 1842 (JU 5 1842) with a London arrival on 7 June 1842. Letter has **COVE/ SHIP-LETTER** and manuscript 8d (distinctive Cove hooked 8) which was the *all in* rate per ½ oz. Letter face is also endorsed as carried *per Prince Albert via Cork*. This ship letter handstamp was used from 1835 to 1844 (the identical handstamp with red print was used 1814 to 1834 and in blue from 1846 to 1850).

Figure 9: Montevideo to London via Cove 1843.

Entire letter from Montevideo, Uruguay to London, sent on 28 December 1843 and back stamped with black Cove CDS on 14 March 1843 (MR 14 1843) and red Dublin diamond on 15 March 1843 (MR 15 43) with a London arrival stamp on 17 March 1843. Letter is stamped with alternative black two line handstamp **COVE/ SHIP LETTER** and manuscript 8d (Cove hooked 8) which was the *all in* rate per ½ oz. established in the 1840 Act. Letter face is also endorsed as carried *per Holywood* and has boxed double framed cachet in black **FORWARDED BY C & W.D. SEYMOUR & Co., COVE of CORK**. The ship handstamp shown is not recorded by Feldman & Kane, Robertson, Tabart, although this appears to be the most common ship handstamp used after 1843. Reference has been made by Robertson to the **COVE/ SHIP-LETTER** hand stamp (Figure 8) sometimes not having a clear centre dot when applied but this is a different handstamp. This 44mm handstamp is well described in Hinneburg-Murphy reference and has two forms measuring 44mm or 48mm, recorded in red between 1814 to 1824, in black for 1835 and in blue from 1836 to 1850.



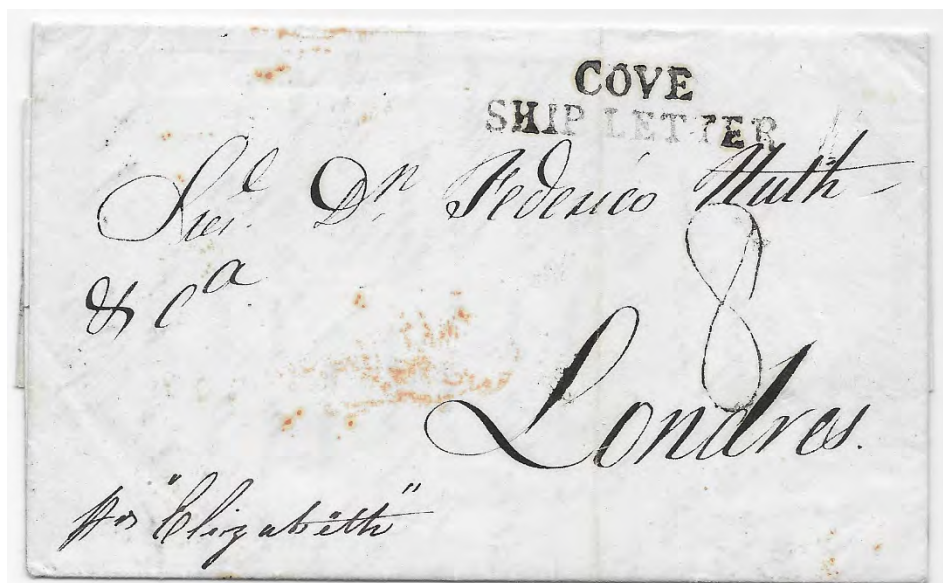


Figure 10: Buenos Aires to London via Cove 1845.

Entire letter from Buenos Aires, Argentina to London, sent on 1 April 1845 and back stamped with black Cove CDS on 13 May 1845 (**MY 13 1845**), a red Dublin diamond on 15 May 1845 (**MY 15 45**) and a London arrival date stamp on 17 May 1845. Letter is stamped with the 44mm black handstamp **COVE SHIP LETTER** and manuscript 8d (hooked 8) which was the *all in* rate per ½ oz. Letter face is also endorsed as carried *per Elizabeth*. This letter is one of the Huth correspondence of

1820 to 1850, of which 10,000 letters are known to Fredrick Huth in London but only 320 come from Irish ports and 200 of these came via Cove.



Figure 11: Mauritius to Bordeaux via Cove 1848.

Entire letter from Mauritius to Bordeaux, sent on 6 June 1848 and back stamped with Cove CDS on 30 June (**JU 30 1848**), London CDS on 1 July (**JY 1 1848**) and Bordeaux receiving CDS on 6 July 1848 (**6 JUL 48**). Letter face has blue two line **COVE/ SHIP LETTER** with blue manuscript 8d rate and a red framed **COLONIES & ART 13**. The latter mark was applied by the Foreign Branch of GPO in London and it relates an 1843 Anglo French Convention which applied to unpaid or in sufficiently paid mail passing through Britain to France. Art 13 in particular refers to timeline January 1846 to December 1855 and the bulk rates for mail. Letter face also has oval forwarding agent cachet for **GAY ROU FILS PORT LOUIS**. This blue ship handstamp is also not recorded by Feldman & Kane, Robertson, Tabcart but was described by Ray-Smith.



Figure 12: Mauritius to Bordeaux via Cove (now Queenstown) 1851.

Cover from Mauritius to Bordeaux, sent on 2 May 1851, showing a blue two line **QUEENSTOWN/ SHIP LETTER** and a double arc matching **QUEENSTOWN CDS** on 14 August 1851. Cover also has London CDS on 15 August 1851 on reverse and a red framed **COLONIES & ART 13** on cover face, as well as shipping agent's cachet **AUGTE PORT LOUIS (ILE MAURICE)**. The ship letter rate of 8d was applied at Queenstown but was subsequently recharged at 15 decimes in France. This blue ship handstamp was used from 1850 to 1853 (used in black from 1850 to 1853).

1873). The COVE CDS was changed to a Queenstown CDS in August 1849 but the blue two line **COVE/ SHIP LETTER** continued in use until late 1850 so a number of covers bear both Cove and Queenstown markings.

Figure 13: Cover to Chicago, via Queenstown 1900.

Cover carried from Dublin, sorted on the Dublin to Cork train and stamped with a clear Dublin & Queenstown TPO CDS on 16 July 1900. The 2½d SG 201 adhesive is tied by the one line PAQUEBOT handstamp.

Mail sorted on the Dublin to Cork travelling post office was taken directly by rail to Queenstown for dispatch by ship.

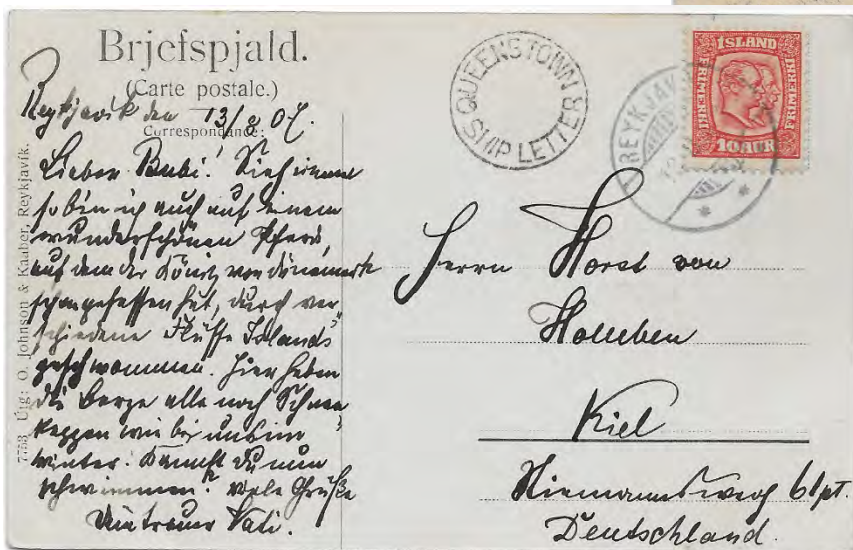


Figure 14: Card from Iceland to Germany via Queenstown.

Card has undated Queenstown handstamp reported by Tabart as used between 1904 to 1907, and is considered one of the rarest of the handstamps, with only five reported to date. This card would appear to be dated 18 August 1900 but year is very faint and may very well fall into the range quoted by Tabart. Either way, its rarity makes it a useful inclusion here.

Kinsale

Kinsale lies 25 miles south of Cork city and it has a long maritime history. It was where the English and French fleets engaged in 1380, the town was captured by the English forces in 1488, then captured by Spanish forces and retaken by the English in 1601. James II landed at Kinsale with the French army sent to support him in 1689. There was also formerly a royal naval yard which was relocated to Cork. The increasing importance of the harbour at Cove in the latter part of the 19th century led to a decline in the maritime commercial importance of Kinsale.

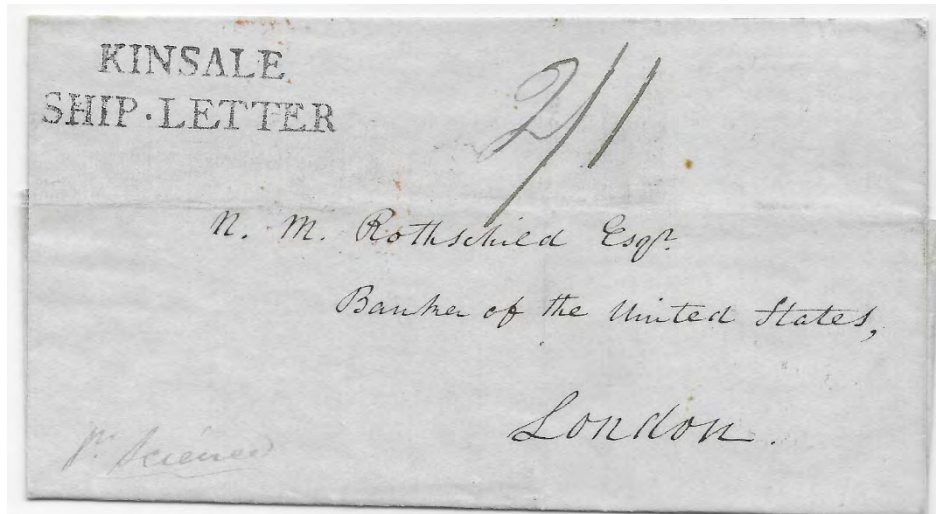


Figure 15: Guatemala to London via Kinsale 1836.

Cover from Guatemala to London, sent on 16 December 1836, with a red Dublin in transit diamond on 21 January and London arrival date stamp on 23 January 1837. Letter face is also endorsed as carried *per Science*. Cover has a black two-line **KINSALE/SHIP-LETTER** and a manuscript rate of 2/1. The rate is made up of 8d ship letter rate and 1/5 rate from Kinsale to London (including Holyhead Packet 2d and Menai Bridge toll of 1d). This ship

hand stamp was in use from 1781 to 1846., and in colours black, red, blue and yellow.



Figure 16: Jamaica to London 1834 via Kinsale.

Cover from Kingston to London, sent on 26 September 1834, with a London arrival date stamp on 28 November 1834. Letter face is also endorsed as carried *per Rival for Liverpool*. Cover has a yellow two line **KINSALE/SHIP-LETTER** and a manuscript rate of 1/10½, under franked by 2½d. This is the earliest recorded use of the yellow handstamp, previously recorded as only used in 1858.

Skibbereen

Skibbereen lies to the west of County Cork (south west of Ireland), 219 English miles from Dublin (167 Irish miles). It is situated on the river Ilen, which is navigable by smaller ships up to this point (three miles from estuary). While this was not a major maritime centre, it was the terminal point of the mail coach service from Dublin and was the first point of call for vessels sailing from the west. The deep water ports of Baltimore and Crookhaven provided good shelter from the weather, often the first sight of land after long Atlantic crossings. The law required letters to be delivered to the Post Office at the first port of call but Skibbereen was the Post Office where letters received their ship letter handstamp for this part of the Cork coast.



Figure 17: Buenos Aires to London via Skibbereen 1815.

Letter from Buenos Aires to London, sent on 22 December 1815, with distinctive red two line ship stamp **SKIBBEREEN/ SHIP LETTER**. Letter was sent from Skibbereen to London on the Waterford to Milford Haven Packet and is uprated to 2/6: Ship letter rate of 8d plus internal Irish rate of 8d for greater than 80 miles, plus 2d Packet charge, plus 1/- Welsh/English charge for Milford to London (258 miles), total of 30d or 2/6. This ship letter hand stamp was used from 1807 to 1832 (a version in black print was also used from 1791 to 1848).

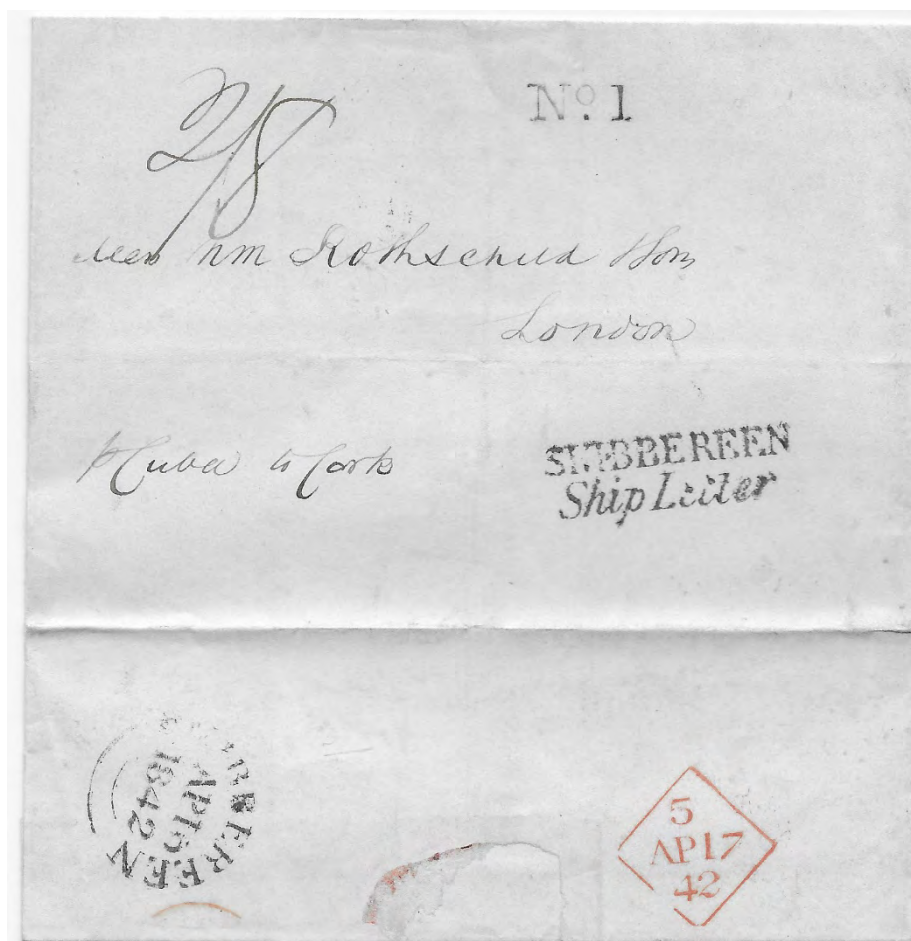


Figure 18: Havana to London via Skibbereen 1842.

Entire letter from Havana, Cuba to London, sent on 15 February 1842 and back stamped in Skibbereen on 16 April (**AP 16 1842**), with a red Dublin diamond on 17 April (**AP 17 42**) and London arrival stamp on 19 April 1842 (**19 AP 19 1842**). Letter has mixed typeface **SKIBBEREEN Ship Letter** and was landed at Schull, the Nº1 receiving house of the Skibbereen Penny Post and forwarded to London at quadruple rate of 2/8 (8d x 4 = 2/8). The letter rate was 8d per ½oz. and two extra rates for every oz. or part oz. over 1 oz. Letter is endorsed **per Cuba to Cork**. This ship letter handstamp was used 1840 to 1844 (a version in blue print was used in 1847).

Youghal

Youghal is on the east of Cork County, situated at the mouth of the river Blackwater, which enters Youghal Bay 25 miles east of Cork Harbour.

The town boasts a royal charter from King John in 1209 and was the homeland of Sir Walter Raleigh, who had large estates in the townland, was mayor of Youghal from 1588 to 1589 and who brought the potato from Virginia to Ireland. The harbour at Youghal was deep but was obstructed by a sand bar at the entrance which prevented admission of larger ships. The relative proximity to the much more versatile Cork Harbour, makes the ship letter handstamps from Youghal very scarce.

Figure 19: Quebec to Greenock via Youghal 1801.

Entire letter from Quebec, Canada to Greenock, sent on 10 November 1801 and carried on the ship *Charlotte*. Letter has an in-transit back stamp at Dublin on 11 January 1802. Letter face has a black unframed two line **YOUGHAL/**

SHIP LETTER. The letter is rated 1/10 (ship letter rate 1d, Cork to Dublin 6d (greater than 80 miles), Dublin to Donaghadee 6d (greater than 80 Irish miles), 2d packet to Portpatrick, 7d Portpatrick to Greenock (less than 120 English miles), total 22d or 1/10. This is the only recorded Youghal ship letter stamp and it was used from 1802 to 1834.

**Conclusion**

Many overseas letters to the United Kingdom were initially landed at Irish ports such as those along the County Cork coastline. The evolution of ship hand stamps is demonstrated for the major Cork ports. Bantry Bay is not included but it does have an excellent harbour and did see a significant amount of transatlantic shipping in the mid 19th century but with little maritime commerce. The only Bantry Bay port known to have a ship letter was Castletown (Bearhaven) and both Feldman and Robertson report a single unframed black two lined **CASTLETOWN/ SHIP LETTER** in use from 1834 to 1840. However, surviving examples are very scarce and have not been seen by the author. The remaining ports did not have ship letter handstamps until the 20th century when Paquebot handstamps are known for Bantry town (1960 to 1980) and Glengarriff (1952 to 1968).

Bibliography

Dixon, F.E., and Joachim S., *Irish Postal Rates Before 1840* 2ed., Forschungs und Arbeitsgemeinschaft Irland c.V (FAI), 1995.

Hinneburg-Murphy, C.T., *Maritime handstamps of County Cork*, Irish Philately Vol 3, pp 57-66, September 1988.

Feldman, D. and Kane, W., *Handbook of Irish Postal History to 1840*, Dublin, David Feldman 1975.

Quail, D., *Ireland Postal History 1591 –1865*, Geneva, David Feldman, 2019.

Robertson, A., *Ship Letters - The Maritime History of the British Isles*, Bournemouth, the Author, 1955.

Ray-Smith, M., *An Introduction to Irish Ship Letters -Part 1*, Irish Philately, Vol. 1, pp 6-11, March 2011.

Reprinted from Irish Philately with permission

**The Éire Philatelic 75th Anniversary Celebration at the St. Louis Stamp EXPO**

March 20 to 23 2025

Robert Benninghoff

We had a very successful meeting in St. Louis last March with over 20 members attending the show plus we signed up 10 new members. We would like to give special **Thanks** to Frederic Boatwright, Nathan Esbeck and the Saint Louis Stamp EXPO committee for their generous **Hospitality**.

We are very grateful to Michael Canavan for setting up and Coordinating the Zoom meeting for the Board of Directors on Friday and our AGM on Saturday. Thank you to Jean, Michael O'Reilly and John Sharkey and others for travelling to show.

Many thanks to Brian Callan who traveled from Cork, Ireland and carried 25 of the 55 frames of ÉPA member exhibits shown at the EXPO. The ÉPA members received one Grand Award, five Large Gold Medals, one Gold Medal, three Large Vermeil and two Vermeil Medals plus numerous special prizes. Our Granddaughter Tabitha Fox, received her first Youth Large Gold Medal for her single frame exhibit: *The History of Blarney Castle and the Blarney Stone* (Figure 1). Trevor Brock and Tim Carey both received the *Novice Award* for their first time exhibiting in North America (Figure 2).



Figure 1: Jean Benninghoff receives the Large Gold Medal for our Granddaughter, Tabitha. Jean is the Association Treasurer

Figure 2: Tim Carey (left) receives his Large Vermeil medal and Novice Award from Nathen Esbeck, for his two-frame exhibit.

The Instructible Irish

Tim is a new member of the ÉPA Board and he will be assisting Jean and John Sharkey on both their Treasurer and Secretary Duties



The ÉPA hosted a dinner on Friday Night with 15 people attending at nearby Lombardo's Restaurant. The food and service were excellent and we had our own room for the evening (Figure 3).



Figure 3: 15 members and Friends at the Eire Philatelic Association Friday evening dinner. This was the first Annual General Meeting held at a Stamp Show since 2019. We are Planning the 2026 Annual General Meeting to be at BALPEX in early August.

The Annual General Meeting was held on Saturday March 22 at 11 am. We had 21 people attending including 5 members who joined us via ZOOM. Details of the business portion of the meeting will be given in a separate article. One important part of the meeting, Brian Callan was presented with *The Richard J. Kelly President's Award* for serving as Commissioner of Irish Exhibits to the USA and Europe. Brian will be the Irish Commissioner to Boston 2026, the USA International stamp show. After the meeting, Brian Callan gave a presentation on *Graf Zeppelin LZ-127 South American Airmail 1930 to 1937*.

Several Dealers had a wide selection of Irish material and most ÉPA members were pleased with their acquisitions. 10 members with their spouses attended the awards banquet on Saturday night (Figures 4 and 5).



Figure 4: Saturday Awards Dinner R to L. Robert Benninghoff, Brian Callan and Pat Walker, one of the exhibit Judges, who came with her husband, Dan



Figure 5: Saturday Award Dinner. L. to R. Michael O'Reilly, John Sharkey Tim Carey with his wife, Elayne.

Many members left St. Louis on Sunday morning but Brian, Michael Jean and I were able to have some free time during the afternoon to be tourist. in downtown St Louis (Figure 6)



Figure 6: The Arch in St. Louis Located by the Mississippi River
Robert, Brian and Michael can be seen in the lower right corner
We look forward to seeing everyone at
BALPEX 2026

THE IRISH BRIGADE OF PHILATELIC EXHIBITORS

Robert Benninghoff

The Irish Brigade is a group of about 15 British, Irish and American exhibitors that have come together in the past 10 years to promote Irish Philately (Figure 1). The group mostly shows Irish related material, but we also include a broad range of other topics such as Polar Philately; Airmails, including Zeppelin Mail; and Thematic topics about bridges, family members, voyages of discovery, etc.

The Irish Brigade has been very successful recently, winning Gold, Large Gold, Reserve Grand and Grand awards at several shows in the USA, Europe and FIP Internationals. The Brigade has taken home various APS research medals and numerous special prizes including the Most Popular Exhibit.



Figure1: Three of the five founding members of the Irish Brigade
The Three Brians at London 2022:

Left to Right: Messieurs Harmon, Warren and Callan

*We are told that to be a **Pillar of Irish Philately**, you must be named Brian and wear glasses.*

Other Founding members include Anthony Hughes, Karl Winkelmann and Robert Benninghoff

The rest of this article gives brief biographies for each of the 6 Founding Members.

Brian Harmon:

Brian has a very strong interest in all Irish stamps and Irish definitive postal history and is a specialist in Vox Hiberniae Airmails. Brian also exhibits the original artwork of Great Britain's Andrew Restall (stamp designer) and the Vatican. Brian loves the excitement and social aspects of exhibiting and has

won many medals at local, national and international levels. When not following his philatelic endeavours, Brian is a busy family man, university lecturer, consulting structural engineer and is member of the Catholic Church community and is currently studying *Theology*.

Brian is an active member of the ***Irish Philatelic Circle***, the ***Dublin Stamp Society*** and ***STAMPA***, the Irish National Philatelic Exhibition, which is held in Dublin Ireland, in October each year. Brian lives with his wife and three sons in County Louth (Ireland)

Brian Warren

Brian's interest in stamps goes back to the 1970's when he joined the Dublin Stamp Society and attended the first Irish National Stamp Exhibition in Dublin, December 1972. This proved to be a wonderful learning experience and to this day he encourages collectors to visit as many shows as possible and learn from other exhibits. Brian first entered an exhibit in ***STAMPA*** in 1979 winning the David Feldman Trophy (the show Grand Award) for his first attempt at exhibiting. One of his recent exhibits is the ***Northern Ireland Regional Issues***, which received a Vermeil at the May 2025 FEPA / International show in Birmingham, England.

Brian has written extensively about Irish new issues and publishes an annual series ***That Was the Year That Was***. This series is printed in several journals, summarises the previous year's Irish Stamp issues and special postmarks. He has written or co-authored a number of books and articles on modern Irish philately and modern Irish postal history. His booklet, ***Irish Postal Rates 1839 to 2014*** is a "***must have publication***" for

anyone exhibiting 19th and 20th century Irish Postal History. This Booklet was written with Joachim Schaaf and is available from the APS Library.

Brian was the Irish Commissioner at Europhilex 2025 in Birmingham and he is the Chairman of **STAMPA**. Brian is the Secretary of **The Irish Philatelic Circle** and European Vice President of the **Éire Philatelic Association**. Brian lives with his wife in Dublin.

Brian Callan

Brian has collected stamps since the age of eight and he has covered a wide range of interests such as Graf Zeppelin LZ127 mail, Cork Postal history, Irish Postal Stationery, Polar Philately, British and Irish telegraph stamps and various postcard themes. He has exhibited in twenty countries, winning over one hundred gold or large gold medals at national exhibitions and fourteen gold medals at international exhibitions, **in six different exhibition classes**. He recently won a large gold at the FEPA Show at Birmingham for his **Cork Postal History** exhibit. He has written numerous articles on the topics that he exhibits. And Brian has published one book on **Graf Zeppelin Mail to South America**. (winning Gold Medal at GASS 2024).

He is the current President of **The Irish Philatelic Circle**, Honorary Secretary of **The Federation of Philatelic Societies of Ireland**, Chairman of the **Cork Philatelic Society**, a member of the Irish **STAMPA** Council. Brian is also a director of the **Éire Philatelic Association**. Brian has been the Irish Commissioner for several International shows and he will be the Irish Commissioner for **Boston 2026**.

Brian is a local preacher with the Irish Methodist Church and preaches most Sundays across the County of Cork. Brian lives with his wife in Cork City, and has he also published over 10 books of Poetry.

Anthony Hughes

Anthony's areas of interest include twenty century Postal History and the Postal History of the Irish County of Westmeath. He turned his philatelic passion into a research project that resulted in his PhD for **The Post Office in Ireland 1638 to 1840**, granted in 2015. Anthony has received several Gold and Large Gold medals at USA shows beginning 2016. He has published many articles on Irish Postal History in the **Irish Philatelist** and **The Revealer**.

Anthony is an active member in various Irish Philatelic Societies, including STAMPA, and he was co-commissioner with Brian Warren at the recent Birmingham show. He is a retired pub owner and he lives with his wife and family in Mullingar (Ireland). (Figures 2 and 3)



Figure 2: Anthony prepares for the Liffey Swim. An annual competitive race in Dublin. Anthony received a PhD in Irish Postal History from Maynooth University in 2015

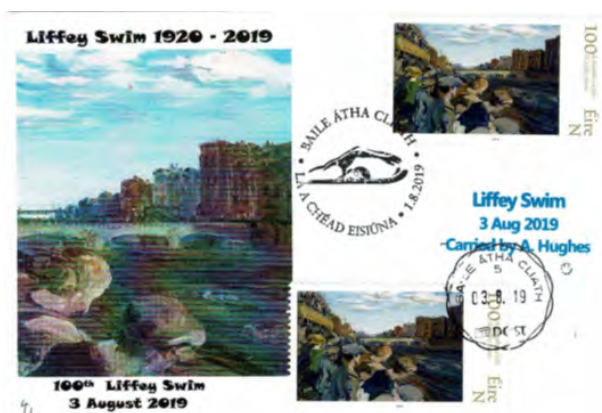


Figure 3: Number 4 of 14 covers that Anthony carried somewhere on his person during the 2019 Liffey Swim. The cover shows the stamp and Cachet issued by the Irish Post Office to mark 100 years of **The Liffey Swim**

Karl Winkelmann

A Serendipitous encounter during 1980 with Shelia Hitchcock (a senior Irish Philatelist) introduced Karl to organised Irish stamp collecting and membership in the Irish Philatelic Society. His initial focus was on Irish Censorship Mail during World War II, known as the *Emergency* in Ireland. Karl began exhibiting this topic in 1992 and has expanded and improved his material, subsequently winning Gold and Large Gold medals for his one frame and five frame exhibits (Karl won the APS research Medal at GASS 2024 as well as medals of excellence). He has twice won the **STAMPA** David Feldman Trophy (Grand Award).

Recently Karl has made a start into **Social Philately**, using family related material, to form an exhibit on his Grandfather who was a participant in the 1916 Dublin Easter Rising. He has authored numerous philatelic articles on Irish Topics and he is an active member in the **Irish Philatelic Circle**, **Éire Philatelic Association** and **FAI** in Germany. Karl is the Founder of our Friday evening **Irish Philately TEAM's** meeting (formerly Skype). People from around the world join in to discuss and illustrate all things *Philatelic Ireland*. He began the meetings in March 2020 at the start of Covid. The meetings are still going strong and start at 3:00 pm (Eastern USA Time). Karl currently lives with his wife in France.



Figures 4 and 5: Karl Receives the David Feldman Trophy – the STAMPA 2023 Grand Award for his multi-frame exhibit **The Dublin Censor Office**. The award is presented by Brian Warren and Brian Harmon.



Robert Benninghoff

Robert has been interested in Irish stamps since the mid -1960s when his family moved to Ireland on his 12th Birthday. He found that the Irish Government was issuing stamps related to Irish history and social events as well as various aspects of Pan European social and economic cooperation. This helped inspire a lifetime interest in History and Geography, particularly related to Ireland's importance in the world.

Robert's first venture into exhibiting was with his five frame **The Development and Use of Irish Coil Stamps** which received two International Gold Medals in 2016 and 2018. He has moved into exhibiting various topics related to 20th century Irish Social, Economic, and Political Philatelic History. He has won several Gold and Large Gold medals and Grand awards in North America and Internationally. He started the *Benninghoff Style* of Single frame exhibiting which has been both **cursed** and **applauded** by judges.

Robert has sponsored an increased interest in the importance of Irish Philately by taking the Irish Brigade exhibits to shows around the USA, with 20 to 30 frames of member's exhibits on display per show. Robert is President of the **Éire Philatelic Association**, Vice President of **The Irish Philatelic Circle** and Editor of the Circle's journal, **Irish Philately**. He lives with his wife in Maple Shade, New Jersey but they frequently travel to Ireland collecting new exhibits from the Irish Brigade for display at shows in the USA.



Figure 6: Robert Benninghoff, EPA President

Contact Robert Benninghoff for information on joining the Irish Brigade, the Irish Philately Friday Team Meeting or the three Irish Philatelic organizations shown below email: rmercer01@aol.com:

The **Éire Philatelic Association** (mostly in North America). The association's Journal *The Revealer* is published 4 times a year
The **Irish Philatelic Circle** (Europe and the USA)

The **FAI** (mostly in Europe), The society's journal, **Die Harfe**, is published in German and English.



David Feldman
INTERNATIONAL AUCTIONEERS

Outstanding material leads to remarkable results

Spring Auction Series – May 26-June 1, 2025

IMPORTANT UNRECORDED CHARITY LETTER



Lot 65294 – 1820 (10.1) Miniature envelope sent within Dublin to Drumcondra and showing a red small scroll unrecorded type “CHARITY LETTER” (similar to DF No.231), with red scroll “TOO LATE” and “P.P.OFFICE” ds on reverse, fine strike of this extremely rare unrecorded small type, important exhibition showpiece.

Sold for £2'214



David Feldman
International Auctioneers

Switzerland: +41 (0) 22 727 0777
info@davidfeldman.com



www.davidfeldman.com

Our latest auction achieved remarkable results thanks to the freshness and rarity of the material offered. Each philatelic item tells a unique story, connecting collectors to moments in history and deepening their passion for the art of stamp collecting.

Let us share those stories! Consign with us for our Autumn Auction Series, November 2025.