



Lambda Philatelic Journal

PUBLICATION OF THE GAY AND LESBIAN HISTORY ON STAMPS CLUB * SEPTEMBER 2010, VOL. 29, NO. 3, WHOLE NO. 111

Novaro, or is it Novarro?

See article beginning on page 4



The *Lambda Philatelic Journal* (ISSN 1541-101X) is published quarterly by the Gay and Lesbian History on Stamps Club (GLHSC). GLHSC is a study unit of the American Topical Association (ATA), Number 458; an affiliate of the American Philatelic Society (APS), Number 205; and a member of the American First Day Cover Society (AFDCS), Number 72.

The objectives of GLHSC are to promote an interest in the collection, study and dissemination of knowledge of worldwide philatelic material that depicts:

- Notable men and women and their contributions to society for whom historical evidence exists of homosexual or bisexual orientation,
- Mythology, historical events and ideas significant in the history of gay culture,
- Flora and fauna scientifically proven to having prominent homosexual behavior, and
- Even though emphasis is placed on the above aspects of stamp collecting, GLHSC strongly encourages other philatelic endeavors.

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WINNER OF THE SILVER-BRONZE AWARD AT
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**GLHSC, PO BOX 190842,
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Yearly dues in the United States, Canada and Mexico are \$10.00. For all other countries, the dues are \$15.00. All checks should be made payable to GLHSC. \$1 add-on for late dues.

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There are two levels of membership:

- 1) Supportive, your name will not be released to APS, ATA or AFDCS, and
- 2) Active, your name will be released to APS, ATA and AFDCS (as required).

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PUBLICATION SCHEDULE:

<u>Publication Months</u>	<u>Articles Needed by</u>
March	February 15
June	May 15
September	August 15
December	November 15

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News from the Editor

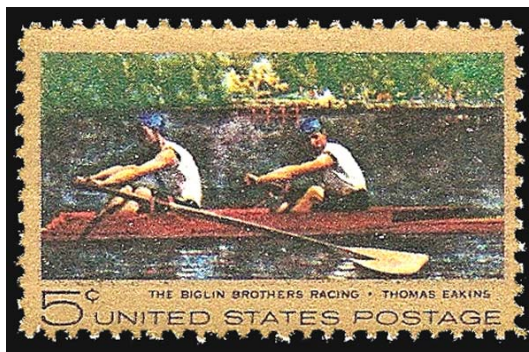
Articles are urgently needed for upcoming issues. I have received a few articles which appear in this and the next journal. Thanks to the members that have sent them in. I can still use articles for the remainder of the year.

* * * * *

This issue contains your copy of the Austrian stamp celebrating the 15th anniversary of the gay pride parade. The officers hope that you enjoy this addition to your collection.

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The April 2007 issue of the Gay & Lesbian Review included a review of *Portrait: The Life of Thomas Eakins* by William S. McFeely. This book is “a very sympathetic and gay-affirming book about Eakins’ life and work.”



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Misspelled Name Hides Gay Latin Heartthrob

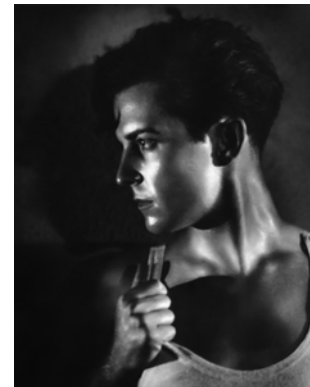
by Gaylord E. Smith

Mexico issued a set of five stamps in 1986 to celebrate the World Cup featuring paintings of soccer players by the Mexican artist Ángel Zárraga (1886-1946). One stamp (Scott #1440), showing a young man naked from the waist up, is labeled "Portrait of Ramón Novaro". I googled Ángel Zárraga and found the same painting but with the spelling "Novarro." I even learned that the artist and his model were cousins. The Mexican Postal Service's misspelling of the name obscures the identity of one of the most famous Hollywood stars of the silent film era. And for our purposes, a gay movie star to boot.

Ramón Novarro (1899-1968) was born José Ramón Gil Samaniego in Durango, México. As a teenager, he and a younger brother fled the Mexican Revolution and moved to Los Angeles. Soon he was getting parts in the movie industry as an extra, while supporting himself as a singing waiter. He was an extra in director Rex Ingram's film, *The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse* (1921). This is the film that catapulted Rudolph Valentino into stardom. Later there were rumors about a sexual relationship between Novarro and Valentino. The female star of that movie, Alice Terry, would later marry Ingram. However, she would remain a constant friend to the young Mexican, often serving as his "beard" when he went out clubbing.

Valentino soon quarreled with Ingram and left for another studio, causing Ingram to claim that he could make a star out of any extra. He chose young Ramón Samaniego. It was Ingram who suggested that Ramón adopt the surname Novarro. He gave Novarro his first major part, as the villain in *The Prisoner of Zenda* (1922). His first role as a leading man was in the big budget swashbuckler *Scaramouche* (1923) opposite Alice Terry. With this film's success, Ingram publicized Novarro as a new Latin Lover, in competition with Valentino.

On the ocean voyage to Tunisia to film his last picture for Ingram, *The Arab* (1924), Novarro began an affair with Herbert Howe, a journalist. This was probably his only long-term relationship. He had to be very discreet. There were rumors, of course, but for his homosexuality to become known to the public would mean certain box-office death. A visit to a gay bar or a casual pickup was out of the question. As his publicist, Howe made sure that Novarro's image in the press was quite masculine by showing him involved in sports or dating actresses.



Novarro's most famous role was as the lead in *Ben-Hur*, perhaps the biggest blockbuster of the silent film era. It was released in 1925, the same year that Zárraga painted his portrait as a soccer player. *Ben-Hur* was the first of string of major films Novarro made for MGM in the late 20s and early 30s. Valentino's untimely death in 1926 also helped establish Novarro's career as the preeminent Latin heartthrob of the era. He was the leading man to some of the most famous actresses of the era: Norma Shearer (*The Student Prince of Old Heidelberg*, 1927), Joan Crawford (*Across to Singapore*, 1928), Greta Garbo (*Mata Hari*, 1930) and Myrna Loy (*The Barbarian*, 1933).

Despite the success of his films, MGM cancelled his contract in 1933. This was the era when the puritanical Motion Picture Production Code was beginning to be enforced. Louis B. Mayer, in particular, was homophobic. Novarro had once refused his request that he take a "lavender wife." His career declined, but did not end. He got roles as a character actor, starred in B movies, and in the 60s, was a guest on television series such as *Bonanza* or *The Wild, Wild West*.

As an actor, Novarro was not the super-muscular, hunky type. Only five feet, eight inches tall, he was a sweet man who appealed to the ladies by dint of his tenderness as well as his good looks. Perhaps just a little too pretty and somewhat of a dandy, he was one of the best-dressed actors in Hollywood, nicknamed "Ravishing Ramón" by the press. However, he was conflicted by his homosexuality because of his Catholicism as well as his career. It also contributed to a lifelong problem with alcohol. Most of his sexual liaisons were with paid hustlers.

In 1968, Novarro hired two brothers, Paul and Tom Ferguson, aged 22 and 17, to come to his Laurel Canyon home for sex. The evening ended with the murder of the movie star, who was found tied naked to his bed, his body tortured and mutilated and his house ransacked. He died having choked on his own blood. Some claim that he choked to death on a black Art Deco dildo given him by Rudolph Valentino that the brothers rammed down his throat. The prosecution alleged that the killers were after five thousand dollars they believed were hidden in the house. In an interview thirty years after the crime, Paul Ferguson disputes this fact while admitting that it was he who killed Novarro. He claims that he reacted in a moment of homosexual panic when the actor kissed him on the lips, especially since it was in front of his younger brother. Whichever version is correct, the murder took not only Ramón Novarro's life, but revealed the closeted actor to the world.

Art historian Rudi C. Bleys discusses at some length homoeroticism in the works of Ángel Zárraga. Regarding *Three Soccer Players with Berets* in the Mexican set (Scott #1439), Bleys writes,

"The position of each of the three soccer players is such that a certain intimacy between all three of them becomes inevitable. One holds a wooden pole, with his left arm downwards, while he rests his right hand on the shoulder of the man in the middle. The youngest one, to the left, holds a football together with the middle one, right in front of the latter's genitalia. The middle one holds his hand quite low, on the left one's hip. The one on the right looks at the one in the middle, who, in his turn, gazes away." Bleys goes on to suggest that the composition conveys a "hidden homosexuality." Whether Zárraga is gay or not is speculative, writes Bleys, but he never married, there are no heterosexual relationships in his biography, and there is also the evidence of homoeroticism in a number of his paintings.



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- Kenneth Anger, *Hollywood Babylon*, Dell Books, New York, 1981.
- Rudi C. Bleys, *Images of Ambiente: Homosexuality and Latin American Art, 1810-Today*, Continuum, London and New York, 2000.
- Allan R. Ellenberger, *Ramon Novarro: a biography of the silent film idol, 1899-1968 with a filmography*, McFarland & Co., Jefferson, North Carolina, 1999.
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- María Luisa Sabau García, *México en el mundo de las colecciones de arte: México contemporáneo, Vol. I.*, Mexico City, 1994.
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- <http://artinconnu.blogspot.com/2009/11/angel-zarraga-1886-1946.html>
- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ramón_Novarro

Mary Wollstonecraft (1759-1797) Feminist Philosopher

by Bobby Cloud

Wollstonecraft was an English philosopher and feminist. [She made several contributions to the beginnings of feminism.] She suggested that both men and women should be treated as rational beings and imagined a social order founded on reason. Wollstonecraft is best known for *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792).

One biography of Mary Wollstonecraft typifies the prudent attitude with which biographers approached the subject of lesbianism. The biographer remarked that it was a "relief" to discover that Wollstonecraft had "a certain secret disloyalty" to Fanny Blood, to whom she wrote many professions of love. Apparently the biographer invoked such disloyalty as evidence that Wollstonecraft was not lesbian or had no lesbian tendencies. As an adolescent Mary Wollstonecraft had befriended Fanny Blood with whom she formed an enduring bond.



After the death of her own mother in 1780, Mary abandoned her own home and went to live with the Blood family - a female enclave that subsisted on the small earnings to be made by needlework and painting. Mary's sister Eliza escaped the home by marriage, but when after the birth of a child she appeared to her husband to have suffered a nervous collapse, he summoned

Mary to help in her recovery. The sister instead became convinced that the problem lay in her marriage. Mary essentially kidnapped Eliza from her predicament, afterward arranging for a legal separation of Eliza from her husband.

Caroline Franklin's *Mary Wollstonecraft: A Literary Life* hints at Wollstonecraft's lesbian tendencies or sympathies that were suggested by Mary's own husband, William Godwin. It's hard to pin down her sexuality with exact labels since lesbianism wasn't much of a word being spread around in the 1700s. They were more attuned to "romantic friendships". And besides, they really didn't need labels. However, Mary was known to have had several romantic attachments with women besides Fanny Blood.

Mary's marriage to Godwin was more for survival than love. The one legacy she left behind that most remember was her daughter, Mary Godwin Wollstonecraft who wrote *Frankenstein* and married Percy Bysshe Shelley. Mary, the mother, died of septicemia after giving birth to Mary, the daughter. On the 8th Oct 2009 The Royal Post issued a stamp honoring Mary Wollstonecraft in a series called "Eminent Britons".

Bibliography:

Surpassing the Love of Men: Romantic Friendship and Love Between Women from the Renaissance to the Present. New York: William and Morrow, 1981.

Smith-Rosenberg, Carroll. *The Female World of Love and Ritual: Relations Between Women in Nineteenth-Century America.* Signs 1 (1975): 1-29.

Evans, Richard J. *The Feminists: Women's Emancipation Movements in Europe, America, and Australasia, 1840-1920.* New York: Barnes and Noble, 1977.

House of Stuart



House of Stewart – issued by Royal Post 23 March 2010; James VI of Scotland

House of Stuart, issued by Royal Post 15 Jun 2010; James I of England

House of Stuart, issued by Royal Post 15 Jun 2010 ; William III / Queen Anne

(The spelling of the family name was changed during the 1500's.)

James VI/I (1566 - 1625)

When James inherited the English throne from Queen Elizabeth I in 1603, it was openly joked of the new English monarch in London that “Elizabeth was King: now James is Queen!” If there is still any doubt, it should be noted that George Villiers also held an intimate relationship with King James, about which King James himself was quite open. King James called Villiers his “wife” and called himself Villiers' “husband”! King James died in 1625 of gout and senility. He is buried in the Henry VII chapel in Westminster Abbey, with one of his favorite male suitors on his right, and another on his left.

William III, Prince of Orange, King of England (1650-1702)

Speculations about William III's sexuality have been countered by his English and American biographers, who have been unwilling to entertain the idea that a man of his nobility of character and special historical significance could have loved other men. Dutch writers on the other hand have been much more willing to accept the evidence that William was indeed bisexual. William had close and affectionate relations with two notable favorites, William Bentinck, whom he brought to England and made Earl of Portland, and a handsome younger Dutchman, Arnold van Keppel, whom he created Earl of Albemarle.

Anne of Great Britain (1665-1714)

Anne became Queen of England, Scotland and Ireland on 8 March 1702. On 1 May 1707, when England and Scotland combined into a single state, Anne became the first sovereign of the Kingdom of Great Britain. She continued to reign until her death. Anne was the last monarch of the House of Stuart. She was succeeded by a second cousin, George I, of the House of Hanover. Though married, Sarah Churchill and Anne were life-long lovers, until Abigail Hill appeared on the scene and stole away the Queen's heart and affection.

ATA Members Elect New Directors and Reelect Officers

Members of the American Topical Association voted earlier this year to elect two new members to the ATA Board of Directors. Members also voted to reelect officers for additional two-year terms. Directors and Officers were installed at National Topical Stamp Show in Denver.

The new ATA Directors are Myron Molnau of Moscow, Idaho, and Evan (Van) Siegling of Kalamazoo, Mich. Molnau has served since 1969 as an officer of ATA's Ships on Stamps study unit. He is currently Secretary and Webmaster for the unit and moderates its discussion group on Yahoo! Siegling's exhibit, "The Magical World of Harry Potter," has won the Most Popular Exhibit award at several stamp shows, including National Topical Stamp Show 2010. He is president of the Kalamazoo Stamp Club.

Molnau and Siegling replace retiring Directors Catherine Fechner of Maywood, N.J., and Alan Hanks of Aurora, Ontario, Canada. Fechner is a charter member of ATA and served as secretary during 1954-55, 1962-63, and 2005-08. She has served as a Director of ATA for several terms through the years. At the June Board Meeting, she was designated by the ATA Board of Directors as Director Emeritus. Hanks served several terms as ATA Director and has been Exhibits Chair for National Topical Stamp Show since 1998. He also served as Director of Judges Accreditation for many years. Hanks has long been active in ATA's Biology study unit.

ATA Officers re-elected for two-year terms include: President, Jack André Denys of Somerville, N.J.; First Vice-President, Dalene Thomas of Lakewood, Colo.; Second Vice-President, Dennis Dengel of Poughkeepsie, N.Y.; Secretary, Laurie J. Ryan of Fairfield, Ohio; and Treasurer, Dorothy C. Smith of Woodbridge, Va.

ATA Directors who will serve additional two-year terms are: Douglas N. Clark of Marstons Mills, Mass.; George B. Griffenhagen of Woodbridge, Va.; David A. Kent of New Britain, Conn.; Robert E. Lamb of State College, Penn.; Robert J. Mather of Wauwatosa, Wis.; and Frederick C. Skvara of Bridgewater, N. J. Jerry D. Husak of Sun City West, Ariz., is the Founder of ATA and also serves as Director Emeritus.

Each officer and director was elected to serve until June 2012. ATA member Robert Ulatt of Waukesha, Wis., chaired the ballot committee for the 2010 ATA elections. Wayne Redlinger of Waukesha, Wis., and Roland Essig of West Bend, Wis., also served on the committee.

ATA is the world's largest organization for topical and thematic collectors. More than 500 of its members live in 60 international countries. Members receive its bi-monthly journal, *Topical Time*. ATA offers a member-to-member service of 550 checklists. Its publication division offers 60 handbooks, 30 DVDs, and an archived article service. For more information, contact ATA at PO Box 8, Carterville, IL 62918-0008, e-mail americantopical@msn.com, phone 618-985-5100, or access www.americantopicalassn.org

Need more info? Contact Vera Felts, 618-985-5100, or e-mail americantopical@msn.com

ATA Releases Five New DVDs

The American Topical Association (ATA) has released five new multimedia presentations representing a variety of topics of interest to stamp collectors. The DVDs are excellent for stamp club programs and for the enrichment of individual philatelists. Thirty DVD titles are now available from ATA. Titles of the latest releases are: *Collecting the Presidents*, *My Eclectic Collection*, *Firemen on Stamps*, *Integrating the U. S. Navy*, and *When Presidents Die*.

Melvin Morris, a member of the Americana Unit of the ATA, provided the philatelic material used for *Collecting the Presidents* and *When Presidents Die*. Mel's contributions to philatelic literature are well known. He edited the *Americana Philatelic News* from 1992 until early this year, and also wrote six ATA handbooks related to the American presidents. A seventh handbook will be released soon.

Linda Geerlings, an artist and ATA member from Oregon, has contributed a lovely program called *My Eclectic Collection*. In this creative DVD, Linda describes beautiful and interesting scented stamps and stamps made of unusual materials.

The Fire Service in Philately Study Unit of the ATA and its member Edward Flory have contributed *Firemen on Stamps* to the ATA's new releases. It is a welcome addition to the philatelic literature on a popular collecting topic.

Harvey Edwards, ATA member from Nevada, has written and illustrated a comprehensive DVD on *Integrating the U.S. Navy*. Using both U.S. and international stamps along with covers and other philatelic material, Harvey brings history alive in the presentation.

ATA DVDs are available to members and nonmembers alike for \$10 each plus postage of \$1.50 (U.S.), \$1.75 (Canada/Mexico), or \$2.25 (overseas). Stamp clubs can lease the programs for \$5 plus postage. If more than one DVD is ordered, cost is \$9 each. Up to five DVDs can be shipped for the listed postage prices. For a complete list of available DVDs, contact the ATA Central Office.

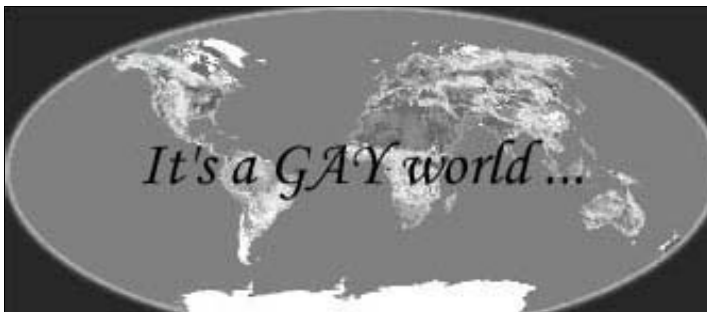
The ATA Audio-Visual Program is conducted by Dennis Dengel of Poughkeepsie, N.Y., ATA Second Vice President. Dennis is ably assisted by Harvey and Terri Edwards, who provide technical and narrative support. Collectors who would like to share their collections through audio-visual means are asked to contact the ATA Central Office.

To contact ATA about the Audio-Visual program or to order DVDs, e-mail americantopical@msn.com, call 618-985-5100, or write to PO Box 8, Carterville, IL 62918-0008. For more information, visit the website at www.americantopicalassn.org

Gay & Lesbian Update

For the first time in many years, there was a Pride cancel used in Milwaukee, June 11 - 13. Copies of the cancel are available until July 13. Be sure to include a self-addressed stamped envelope for the covers' return. Mail your covers to:

Pridefest Station
Box 5016
Milwaukee WI 53201-5016



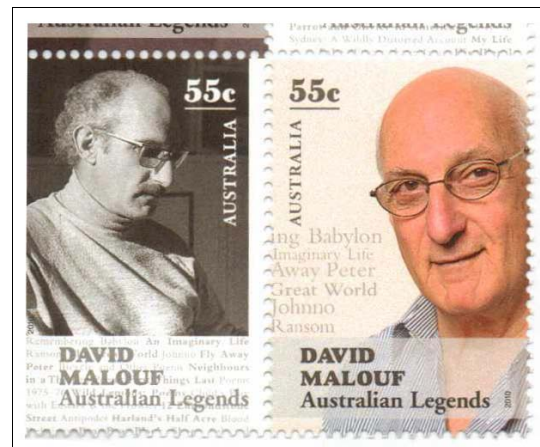
Ascension issued a set of our stamps and a souvenir sheet of three stamps for the Girl Guides centennial on April 10, 2010. Lord Robert Baden-Powell can be found on the third stamp on the souvenir sheet. Scott no. 1002c.

Australia issued 18 stamps featuring famous Australian authors on January 21, 2010. They were issued in blocks of four.

David Malouf, Scott nos. 3202, 3203, 3213.

Colleen McCullough, Scott nos. 3204, 3205, 3214.

Palau issued a miniature sheet of four stamps featuring Abraham Lincoln on October 13, 2009. Scott no. 973 a-d.



Poland issued a souvenir sheet on February 22, 2010. It was issued for the 200th anniversary of the birth of Frederic Chopin. Scott no. 3973.

Portugal issued a set of two stamps and two souvenir sheets featuring famous composers on March 1, 2010. Frederic Chopin can be found on one stamp and one souvenir sheet. Each bears a different design. Scott nos. 3180 and 3182.

St. Vincent issued a sheet of six stamps and a souvenir sheet on April 23, 2009. The stamps were issued for the 200th anniversary of the birth of Abraham Lincoln. Scott nos. 3656 a-f and 3657.

San Marino issued a souvenir sheet of two stamps for Christmas on October 21, 2009. The sheet features *Rest on the Flight Into Egypt*, by Caravaggio. Scott nos. 1808 a-b.

Serbia issued a stamp for the 200th anniversary of the birth of Frederic Chopin on March 1, 2010. Scott no. 502.

Vatican City issued a set of three stamps for the 500th anniversary of the death of Sandro Botticelli on March 5, 2010. The stamps feature details of Sistine Chapel paintings. Scott nos. 1435 - 1437.

Zambia issued a set of two stamps and a souvenir sheet on July 29, 2005. Dag Hammarskjold is featured on the stamps. Scott nos. 1067 - 1068, 1068a.

AIDS Update

A new website is on the Internet. Be sure to visit www.aidsonstamps.com. The site is the result of hard work of one of GLHSC's newest members.

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The international bureau of the Universal Postal Union has asked postal administrations to issue stamps in 2011 to mark 30 years of the fight against AIDS.

The request is part of a campaign of the UPU, UNAIDS (the joint United Nations program on HIV/AIDS) and the International Labor Organization to raise awareness of how AIDS is spread.

The UPU's international bureau also has recommended that the stamps include the UNAIDS logo and other logos that may be designed for the occasion.

We're on the web!
www.GLHSC.com

Helpful Addresses

American Philatelic Society (APS & APRL)
 100 Match Factory Place
 Bellefonte PA 16823
 814-933-3803
www.stamps.org
www.stamplibrary.org



American Topical Association (ATA)
 PO Box 8
 Carterville IL 62918-0008



www.americantopicalassn.org

American First Day Cover Society (AFDCS)
 PO Box 16277
 Tucson AZ 85732-6277
 520-321-0880
www.afdcs.org



Wineburgh Philatelic Research Library
 PO Box 830643
 Richardson TX 75083-0643
www.utdallas.edu/library/uniquecoll/speccoll/wprl/wprl.htm

ONE National Gay & Lesbian Archives
 One Institute
 909 West Adams Blvd.
 West Hollywood CA 90007-2406
 213-741-0094
www.onearchives.org



Homodok (Gay Archives)
 Oosterdoksstraat 110
 NL—1011 DK Amsterdam
 The Netherlands
www.ihlia.nl



National Postal Museum
 MRC 570
 Smithsonian Institution
 Washington DC 20560-0001
www.postalmuseum.si.edu



The British Library
 Philatelic Collections
 96 Euston Road
 NW1 2DB London
 United Kingdom
www.bl.uk/collections/philatelic



WANTED: ARTICLES

Send in articles on your favorite gay, lesbian, bisexual, topical or country for publication in a future issue of the *Lambda Philatelic Journal*.

- Text file via email or diskette preferred.
- Graphics - 300 dpi or better quality.
- Will scan originals and return if needed.

Would any members like to trade the Canadian (English and French on back) version of Starbucks cards? Can trade stamps (US, France) or US bucks cards.

Cards shown are examples only.

Contact:

Joe Petronie
PO Box 190842
Dallas TX 75219-0842



Charles Jaco was a CNN newscaster during the Iranian hostage crises and the President Carter years. Does anyone have any information on whatever became of him? Contact information?

Contact the editor. Thanks.