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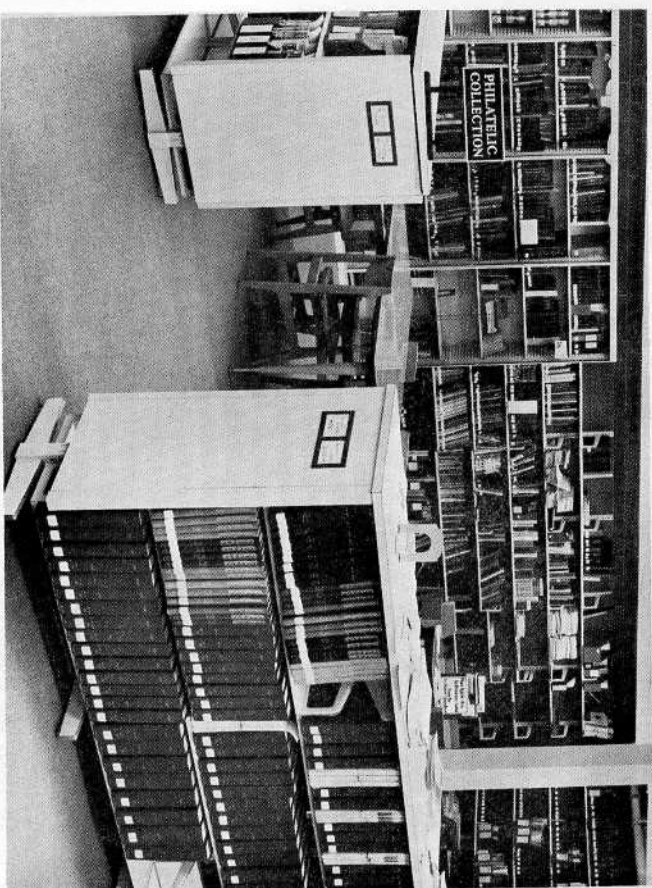
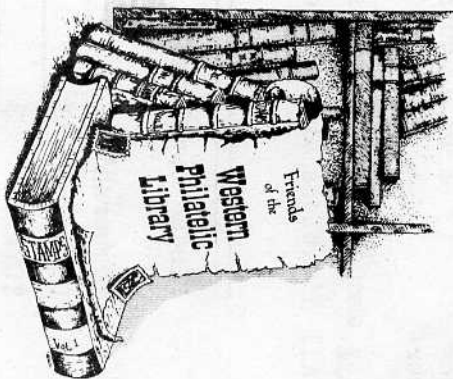
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# Philatelic Literature

# REVIEW

September 30, 1973

*A Guide to Intelligent Stamp Collecting*



The Western Philatelic Library

Reprinted 1974 by The Friends of the Western Philatelic Library, Inc.

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### Preface

Even if the Western Philatelic Library of Sunnyvale, California, were nothing more than a small public depository of comprehensive philatelic literature, this alone would make it a reasonably valuable asset for the people who would use it. The Western Philatelic Library, however, is much more than this.

Located 40 miles south of San Francisco, the Western Philatelic Library is the philatelic section of the City of Sunnyvale's main public library. This section contains over 1,000 linear feet of philatelic books, catalogs, and bound periodicals; it is probably the largest public philatelic library in the United States today. But this great collection of literature would receive only local and, therefore, limited usage without the guidance of its non-profit support group, The Friends of the Western Philatelic Library, Inc. It is felt by The Friends that a library shelf of impressively written books is of limited value if they are seldom put to use. Therefore, it is the specific goal of The Friends to create as complete a philatelic information center as possible not only by accumulating philatelic literature of all kinds, but also by actively encouraging its use by the philatelic student, the collector, and the interested public on the broadest possible scale. It is toward this end that The Friends are directing much of their volunteer time and energies. It should be understood that The Friends of the Western Philatelic Library is not a research society since it does not attempt to perform original research itself. It is basically a source-providing service organization with the philatelic section of the Sunnyvale Public Library serving as its main resource.

### Historical Background

For many years prior to the existence of The Friends of the Western Philatelic Library, the need and desire for space to house an accessible source of philatelic research material had been expressed by several Bay Area philatelists. The development of this need, in fact, originated around the turn of the century. As the various local philatelic societies grew and prospered during those early years, they quite naturally established their own libraries. Among the societies which soon developed the most extensive libraries were the Pacific Philatelic Society of San Francisco and the Berkeley Philatelic Society. Both libraries ultimately gained nationwide recognition. During the 1950's they were transferred through donation to the library of the newly organized Philatelic Research Society of Oakland, California.

The Philatelic Research Society, founded in 1953, was initially based on the acquisition of the fine private library of the late Juan G. Cano. The acquisitions of the Pacific and Berkeley philatelic libraries came soon thereafter, as well as several other donations of literature from many sources. The library of the Philatelic Research Society was located in the home of Mr. Frederick B. Thomas, first curator of the library and president of the American Philatelic Society from 1961 to 1965. The library remained there until 1965 when difficulties in maintenance caused it to be boxed and placed in storage.

In 1969, the Sunnyvale Public Library was in the process of constructing a large addition to their building and let it be known that space could be provided for a philatelic section. In response, a small group of philatelists formed an organization and called it The Friends of the South Bay Philatelic Library, Inc. Based in Sunnyvale, they were dedicated to the goal of creat-

ing as fine a philatelic library as possible—in the public library. A board of directors, consisting of six officers and six directors, was formed. An agreement was then made between The Friends and library personnel. It was to be one of reciprocity: In order to receive the space and public library advantages, The Friends would take the responsibility for the maintenance of the philatelic section. Construction of the mezzanine addition of the library was completed in 1970. A section of the mezzanine was then provided for the philatelic library, with provision for future expansion, and The Friends were in business.

Early in 1971, philatelic material which had been donated by several individuals was placed on the shelves. The section was officially opened for the public April 4, 1971, and the long-awaited breakthrough in the evolutionary development of a Bay Area philatelic information center had finally been achieved. Appropriate space was now available to receive any and all philatelic literature contributed by supporting collectors and other sources.

The Friends organization had developed into an effective library support group by the summer of 1971, with its membership growing steadily. Even though its library was in its infancy, ideas and plans for improving it and its use were never lacking.

During the years between 1969 and 1972, the efforts of The Friends progressed steadily and were gradually acknowledged by members of the Philatelic Research Society. A mutual interest developed between the two organizations with regard to reactivating the Society's library which had been in storage since 1965. Negotiations between The Friends and trustees of the Philatelic Research Society's library got under way in 1972. These negotiations resulted in an agreement, on August 6, 1972, to place the comprehensive collection under the direction and guidance of The Friends of the South Bay Philatelic Library, Inc., and into the Sunnyvale Public Library.

Packed in 189 storage boxes, the collection was taken out of storage and delivered to the Sunnyvale Public Library on August 11, 1972. A total of 15,000 pounds of literature was gradually unboxed over the ensuing months. It was processed, cataloged and merged with the existing literature already on the shelves. The addition of the library of the Philatelic Research Society represented an increase of 600 linear feet of shelved material as well as several hundred linear feet of fine duplicated literature.

As a result of this rapid growth, the scope of The Friends organization had quickly shifted from one of local to one of national and even international nature. The accession was publicized in September, and interest in the library was manifest across the nation. The need for changing the name of the library and its support group was evident. So in recognition of its expanded scope, "The Friends of the South Bay Philatelic Library, Inc." became "The Friends of the Western Philatelic Library, Inc." in December, 1972.

The dream of establishing an accessible and extensive philatelic library within the Bay Area had finally been achieved. As a result of the generosity of the involved philatelic societies and individuals of past and present, through their willingness to share their literature with others, the public has become the ultimate beneficiary. The fact that this comprehensive literature is now in a public library makes it available to virtually everyone for the first time. This fact, along with the continuing influx of donated literature, is expected to make the process of building a complete information center a challenging one for many years ahead.

The Friends of the Western Philatelic Library, Inc., has its own immediate maintenance responsibilities, but it has, at the same time, a broader and longrange objective—that of cooperating with other organized groups of philatelists who wish to create or expand philatelic sections within their own

