What’s New in the Philatelic Union Catalog

I last wrote about the Philatelic Union Catalog at the beginning of 2012 ("A Philatelic Library at Your Finger-tips," February 2012 AP, page 168). Since then additional philatelic libraries have contributed their holdings to the catalog, the APRL collection has continued to grow, and we’ve added more digital content. Here are a few of the highlights:

In early 2012, the Philatelic Union Catalog (http://catalog.stamplibrary.org) contained the holdings of six libraries:

• American Philatelic Research Library
• Collectors Club (New York)
• Harry Sutherland Philatelic Library at the Greene Foundation
• Slusser Memorial Library at the Postal History Foundation
• Rocky Mountain Philatelic Library
• Western Philatelic Library

In the past year, we have added records from four more libraries:

• Collectors Club of Chicago
• Northwest Philatelic Library
• Royal Philatelic Society London
• Scandinavian Collectors Club

The Scandinavian Collectors Club library holdings are not yet complete. We are adding one country collection at a time. So far, we have added Denmark, Danish West Indies, and Greenland. We are working with Paul Albright at the SCC library to include non-English characters (such as Ø) in these records. The method we are using also creates a “shadow” field replacing these special characters with standard English characters (e.g., O for Ø), so that you don’t need to know how to type these characters to search our catalog. For example, if you wanted to find 30-Øres Provisorierne in the catalog, you could search for either “30-Øres Provisorierne” or “30-Ores Provisorierne.”

The Smithsonian National Postal Museum Library and the Spellman Museum of Stamps and Postal History also have joined the Philatelic Union Catalog and we are working with them to import their records.

The Collection Continues To Grow

Nearly every day, we add new items to the APRL collection. As soon as we add an item, whether it is a book, journal, or CD-ROM, it appears in the online catalog and you can request loans, photocopies, or scans.

Lists of new items are published quarterly by subject in the Philatelic Literature Review, available by subscription, and monthly on our blog, which is available to anyone at http://blog.stamplibrary.org.

Digital Content

Increasingly, additions to our collection are digital or have digital versions available. In my last column, I wrote about the APRL’s efforts to digitize content and to make existing digital content available. Some digital materials are on CD- or DVD-ROM and may be borrowed like books. Others available online — anytime, anywhere. Whenever possible, we make digital content available via our website, as is the case with our growing collection of online exhibits at http://stamps.org/Online-Exhibits.

To browse content available online, go to the catalog search page (http://catalog.stamplibrary.org) and click on “Find records with digital content” on the right side. As this collection grows, we’ll add the ability to search online content.

Microfilm Scanner

The APS recently received a $50,000 grant from the David T. Beals III Trust, Bank of America trustee, for digitization projects. The first purchase using this grant was a microfilm scanner.

Our existing microfilm viewer/printer did not produce legible prints, limiting
access to those researchers who are able to visit the library in Bellefonte — and even then the quality of images on the screen was poor. The new scanner allows for scanning with OCR to make searchable text, image editing, and printing. It can read a variety of formats, including 16mm and 35mm microfilm, microfiche, and even microprint. We also can automate digitizing rolls of microfilm, such as archived APS membership records.

Our microfilm holdings, including difficult-to-find government documents, *Linn’s*, and *Western Stamp Collector*, will once again be available for use by library visitors as well as by staff filling member requests. The year ranges of newspapers we hold on microfilm (roughly from the 1930s to the early 1980s) are among the most fragile and brittle in our print collection, and still are used quite frequently. Microfilm and microfiche holdings in the APRL are identified with [microform] at the end of the title. To search for these holdings, include “microform” in the title field when you search.

Other digital projects will include purchasing a second book scanner (which will allow more volunteers at the APC to take on scanning projects), acquiring server space for storage and backup of digital library materials, have items from our collection professionally scanned, and cover costs to ship materials to and from volunteers for indexing and/or scanning.

**USPS Tracking**

Previously, when you borrowed books by mail from the APRL, you received a green Delivery Confirmation label. Now, you will receive a black-and-white USPS Tracking label to use.

Unless otherwise requested, please return books to us by Media Mail with USPS Tracking ($0.90 at a post office or $0.20 online). You may use the label we provide, or your post office may prefer to use its own label. Either way, please save the customer receipt attached to the bottom of the label, as you may need this to track the shipment.

We will continue to send books to you at the Library Rate with Signature Confirmation, unless you request and pay additional postage for Priority or First Class shipping.

Whenever you have research questions, contact the library staff for assistance. You usually will work with me or our reference assistant, Scott Tiffney.

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**The APRL Delivers**

**To Your Mailbox & Your Inbox**

The American Philatelic Research Library has resources on just about every aspect of stamp collecting — a subject, a place, a time, or even a person. With more than 20,000 books and 5,000 periodicals from around the world, the APRL staff can assist you with your research needs.

[www.stamplibrary.org](http://www.stamplibrary.org)

*the ultimate philatelic research site*

Learn how to use the Library to increase your enjoyment of the hobby. Search our online catalogue for books, journals, article references, & name sales. For a more personal touch, call our friendly staff 814-933-3803, selection 3.