

## *The 2014 Thomas F. Allen Award Winner:* **Christopher D. Cook**

**Christopher D. Cook** (Columbus, Ohio) received the 2014 Thomas F. Allen Award, which recognizes the writer of the best article published in the previous calendar year in the *Philatelic Literature Review*.

Cook was honored for his article, *Using Omeka to Publish a Stamp Collection Online*. It was published in the first quarter of 2014.

“The article on open source software to publish a stamp collection brings a librarian’s knowledge and expertise to philately and provides readers with detailed and practical information,” wrote the recommending committee. “The information Cook provides is thorough, well-documented and illustrated, and easy to understand and put to use. Cook encourages an innovative approach to publishing in philately.”

Cook wrote that he chose Omeka because it is a “free, flexible, and open-source web-publishing platform for the display of library, museum, archives, and scholarly collections and exhibitions.”

The article explains how to install and use the program, which was developed at George Mason University. Typical of the article was Cook’s explanation and analysis that tech-savvy users can follow the do-it-yourself method of installation, though “most readers likely would be more comfortable using” the Omeka.net service, which offers five plans from “free” to a cost of \$999. More helpful advice follows: “Using the free account on Omeka.net would be an excellent way to experiment with Omeka before fully committing.”

Chapters in the 6½-page article explore the Omeka dashboard, adding items, themes and plug-ins, metadata and tags, and support. Using screen shots, the article also reviews three online presentations using Omeka.

Cook has collected stamps off and on since childhood and began to focus on topical collecting in 2003 as an outgrowth of collecting books by and about the medieval Italian poet, Dante Alighieri. His current collection started with a few easy-to-find Dante stamps—the 1921 issues from Italy and 1965 issues from Vatican City — and first-day covers. In 2009, Cook began to look into the subject of Dante on stamps more seriously. To share his philatelic accumulations with the world he started a website, *Dante on Stamps* (danteonstamps.com), which has grown over the last several years.

Cook holds a master’s degree in library and information science and is the special collections cataloging coordinator at the Ohio State University libraries.

Cook was selected after a review of the quarterly journal by a subcommittee of Tara Murray, Don Heller, and Larry Nix. A list of previous honorees and award details are available on the APS website at [www.stamps.org/Awards](http://www.stamps.org/Awards).

