

Oh my! Weird Covers



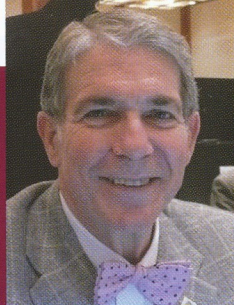
The Duck Cover

A greeting card, yes. And yes to the correct postage: the old greeting card rate of 2 cents. But it's not just a card, but also the mailing envelope, too—complete with the address, the proper postage and a 1942 World War II postmark from Portland, Oregon. It even has a tiny letter tucked into a compartment on the reverse!

Yes, the Duck Cover truly is a real "cover." Note that the sender fashioned and installed an actual "cut to shape" envelope on the reverse in which the original contents are still there—a love letter to the recipient.



This is the story of my journey to understand how the mails affect the everyday lives of Americans and how they have—and continue to—function as missives of mercy, of love and caring, of commerce, of politics and sadly, of war. What the viewer will see here are, quite frankly, *Showstoppers!* In discovering the unusual vagaries of the mails, you just might be amazed. Here's postal history that's fun!



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ViewPoint

The first incarnation of what may be a long line of title pages for an experimental exhibit being developed by the writer. He's pretty sure showgoers will enjoy the results, but (ahem...) will the judges?

The title page shown above, I am sure, has produced the desired reaction I hoped for when I placed it here on page 5 of this issue of **TPE**. It stopped you in your tracks so you could find out what it's all about.

That's exactly the reaction I am hoping for when this title page heads up a 16-page exhibit I am about to introduce at a forthcoming national-level stamp show. But I am hoping for that reaction not so much from the accredited judges, but the average showgoer—especially the individual who may just be getting started in stamp collecting.

So many times over the years I've heard folks in the non-exhibiting community in this hobby bemoan the exhibit aisles of a stamp show as quite often being dull and even boring—and not particularly enticing to the fledgling collector who is only thinking about becoming truly involved in the hobby.

We all know that stamp collecting is what you make of it. If one is looking for a fun pursuit, something exciting, colorful and intriguing to fill the hours, this hobby can provide it in bundles! But we don't see too much of it at all along the exhibit aisles (although I thank heavens for Liz Hisey's exhibits...especially the one about apple pie!). And it's in those exhibit aisles

where we can do the most good for our pastime. It's my humble opinion that, were those aisles to contain at least one category of exhibits that requires the exhibitor to show how stamp collecting can be almost as fun as a trip to Disneyland (*hey wait...it is for me!*), we might not only attract more people to the hobby, we'd expand the ranks of exhibitors!

(Check my article on page 31 of the Second Quarter 2014 issue of **TPE** to get a more detailed analysis of this idea.)

I now have a single frame exhibit that manifests this concept perfectly, I think. Following the title page you see here are 15 pages of highly unusual covers which, to the judges, might seem like only a "collection of covers," but in reality, they're the story of a 15-year odyssey to find unique, unusual covers that extoll the virtues of commercially-used mail in telling the stories of the joys, tragedies, triumphs, humor, passion and struggles of humankind.

Along the way, these covers are so striking, they quickly point out the possibilities one can turn into specialties in this great hobby. The exhibit, in essence, says, "There's no hobby in the world more fun than this one!"

Methinks this is a judgable new category of exhibiting. Want to join me? Email me! 