

**Goal.** The overall goal of this article is to encourage thematic exhibitors to elevate their storytelling by 1) incorporating diverse material from all branches of philately and 2) using analogy as a literary device to enhance both the story and the philatelic material in the exhibit.

**Treatment.** The article is illustrated throughout with examples from the author’s thematic exhibit about blood, however the focus is not to tell the story of blood, but rather to present an approach to storytelling in thematic exhibits.

The article is divided into two main sections dealing with diversity of philatelic material and use of analogy. Subheadings based on the stated goals help the reader navigate.

To make the article more relatable, background is provided on the author’s own exhibiting journey, which also serves to demonstrate that the evolution from “beginner” to “advanced” is a journey of discovery and something to be embraced.

To ensure that everyone is on the same footing, “topical versus thematic” is defined and the “rules” of thematic exhibiting are summarized in the introduction. These provide a common basis of understanding for the concepts discussed in the article.

**Significance.** The article is written to appeal to the broad readership of *The American Philatelist*, including topical/thematic collectors who are considering exhibiting, thematic exhibitors who are looking to improve their exhibits, and “traditional” collectors/exhibitors who may not have considered or appreciated thematics as a serious-minded discipline.

The article provides a widely-applicable approach to thematic exhibiting that will hopefully inspire both thematic and non-thematic exhibitors to take new approaches with their own exhibits, and maybe even inspire would-be exhibitors to take their first step.

**Originality.** Some of the ideas discussed in the submitted article have been presented by the author in various online forums and in a 2023 article in *The Philatelic Exhibitor*<sup>1</sup>. However, the 2023

article was organized based on different types of philatelic material (traditional philately, postal stationery, postal history, modern material) rather than with a focus on storytelling, and there is minimal overlap in the examples selected to illustrate the two articles.

In the current article, the author has consolidated these ideas and more fully developed the use of analogy as a literary device for storytelling in thematic exhibiting – this is a concept that has crystallized over the last several years as the author has worked on her own exhibit. In contrast to the 2023 article, which emphasized “creativity” in selection of material, the current article presents a more objective and scholarly approach to storytelling, facilitating broader acceptance and uptake in the philatelic community.

**Research / Knowledge.** Detailed philatelic descriptions of illustrated items are presented in both the figure captions and the main text, within the space constraints of the journal. Items have been selected to provide a sampling of material from all branches of philately, including uncommon and significant items. These serve to demonstrate that philatelic analysis and research are an integral part of thematic exhibiting. The appropriateness of the selected items for illustrating the thematic story is clearly described.

**Technical.** Figures appear throughout either on the same page as the callout or at most one page away. Through an editorial error, a panel was accidentally omitted from Figure 16; at the request of the author, an erratum was published in the following issue (attached).

A list of resources is provided, including links to online presentations by the author, print articles, a topical handbook, and an Open Philately exhibit referenced in the article.

In future the article will be available online at no charge through the Robert A. Mason Digital Library of the American Philatelic Research Library (issues of *The American Philatelist* are currently available up to 2022).

1. J. Wang, Thematic Exhibiting: Connecting Through Creativity, *The Philatelic Exhibitor* First Quarter 2023:21-33

the famous 1938 Presidential set, the “Prexie” series. I own seven bags full of these stamps, all in used condition. Obviously, they are not worth very much, but I value them personally well beyond any book value.

My reasons for this are twofold. First, every time I explore an old stamp collection, I find a faint echo of the personalities of the people who started the collection back in the day. These hints of identity are precious beyond any book value. Each of those old-time collectors put a little bit themselves into their collection. Many of us enjoy these old collections because we can hear within them the faint echoes of life in days gone by.

Second, the 3-cent violet Jefferson happens to be an amazing historic stamp. It was issued from 1938 to 1951 and saw wide use up to the late 1960s. It provided first class postage from its issue in 1938 up to the rate increase of 1958, about 20 years. After 1958, all it needed was a 1-cent stamp to be added for domestic mail use. From 1963 to 1967, it required an additional 2-cent stamp. Based on finding these stamps commonly on covers up to 1970, I believe this stamp moved more mail than any other U.S. issue.

The result is that I choose to value these stamps. I honor the memory of the people who saved them, and I hope to continue their tradition of saving used stamps. So let’s keep

on accumulating those accumulations!

**Stephen Herring**

*Tarboro, North Carolina*

## A welcome arrival

Congrats to everyone involved with the August issue of *The American Philatelist*! Trains and railway philately surely is of interest to many of your readers, and your presentation, from the imaginative cover to the historical pictures, was impressive. The article mix of the Old West to the Orient Express was most interesting. Your writers outdid themselves with excellent reporting in great detail. It never ceases to amaze how a dedicated philatelist can discern so much from a stamped cover or other philatelic item. Bravo, and looking forward to upcoming issues, as always.

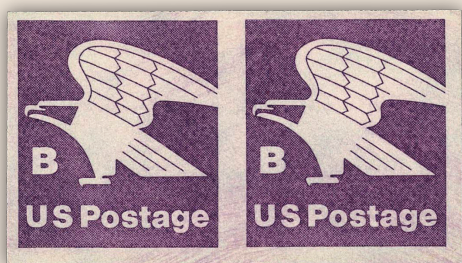
**Brian Scott**

*Hendersonville, North Carolina*

## Errata

### SEPTEMBER

**Page 39. Figure 16 in Dr. Jean Wang’s article about thematic exhibiting and storytelling was missing an image of an imperforate pair of purple B Eagle stamps (shown), with the letters representing blood group genes. We regret the error.**



Many Graded Stamps from 80–100

## QUALITY U.S. STAMPS

*HB Philatelics*

Proofs & Essays • Federal & State Hunting Permits

**Guy Gasser**

P.O. Box 2320 • Florissant, MO 63032

Phone 314-330-8684

E-mail: [guy@hbphilatelics.com](mailto:guy@hbphilatelics.com)

[www.hbphilatelics.com](http://www.hbphilatelics.com)



Official APS Web Sponsor



1847–1945

## Quality U.S. Stamps

Singles (mint and used), Plate Blocks, Booklet Panes plus Complete Booklets, Price lists \$2 each category or free online. We also buy quality U.S. & foreign stamps.

### Mountainside Stamps, Coins and Currency

P.O. Box 1116 • Mountainside, NJ 07092

Tel: 908-419-9751 or 908-232-0539

E-mail: [tjacks@verizon.net](mailto:tjacks@verizon.net) • [www.mountainsidestamps.com](http://www.mountainsidestamps.com)

Tom Jacks, owner; member APS, ASDA

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

We encourage readers to send their comments, questions and feedback to *The American Philatelist*.

Submission of a letter implies consent to publish, unless specifically prohibited by the sender. The decision of whether to publish is made by the editorial staff of *The American Philatelist*.

Generally, letters will be published unless determined to be offensive, disrespectful, libelous, or not chiefly related to the stamp hobby.

The opinions expressed in a Letter to the Editor are those of the author and not *The American Philatelist*. We do not publish or accept requests for the publication of anonymous letters.

To allow more Letters to the Editor, you are respectfully requested to limit submissions to 500 words or less. If your submission is longer, the editorial team will ask you to resubmit a shorter version, or provide you a copy of an edited version to review prior to publication.

Submit your letters to [letterstotheeditor@stamps.org](mailto:letterstotheeditor@stamps.org) or mail a typewritten copy to:

Letter to the Editor

The American Philatelist,

100 Match Factory Place, Bellefonte, PA 16823.