

Mayflower Minutes

West Suburban Stamp Club

<https://westsuburbanstampclub.org/>

P.O. Box 700049
Plymouth, MI 48170
E-mail:
newsletter@thewssc.com
Meetings on the 1st and 3rd
Fridays of each month at 6:45.
(Doors open at 6:00)
Held at:
Plymouth Historical Museum
155 South Main Street
Plymouth, Michigan



UPCOMING PROGRAMS

- February 6—Mike Pappas/Charlie Wood—The 50 Cent Quimby Stamp First Day in Plymouth
- February 20—Ed Dubin—WWI British Ship as German Prize
- March 6— Giant Winter Auction
- March 20— TBD

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CLUB MEETING INFORMATION (New Start Time)

The February 6th and 20th Meetings (6:45 PM) will be LIVE at the Plymouth Historical Museum and via ZOOM. Open at 6:00 PM.

WSSC MEMBERSHIP—DUES PAYMENT

Annual dues are \$15.

A list of members who have paid their 2026 dues has been emailed to current membership. If your name was not on the list please submit a payment to Nick. If you have any questions, feel free to contact Nick Fava at westsuburbanstampclub@gmail.com.

Dues can be paid at a meeting or by check to:

West Suburban Stamp Club
P.O. Box 700049
Plymouth, MI 48170

PROGRAMS NEEDED FOR 2026 MEETINGS

Looking for someone to present a topic for discussion at a 2026 meeting. If you would like to talk about something in your collection, see Charlie Wood. It can be as simple or complex as you want. Do whatever you feel comfortable with.

DOOR PRIZES NEEDED

Looking for donations of door prizes for our meeting raffles. If you have items that would be appropriate for our raffles, talk to Jim. Current stock of items is getting low.



WSSC Club Officers:

President: Sarah Beckman, Vice President: Ron Beier, Secretary: Nick Fava, Treasurer: Bill Chace.

Trustees through 2026: John Beeskow, Ray Gunther. Trustees through 2027: Doug Becker, John Beckmann.

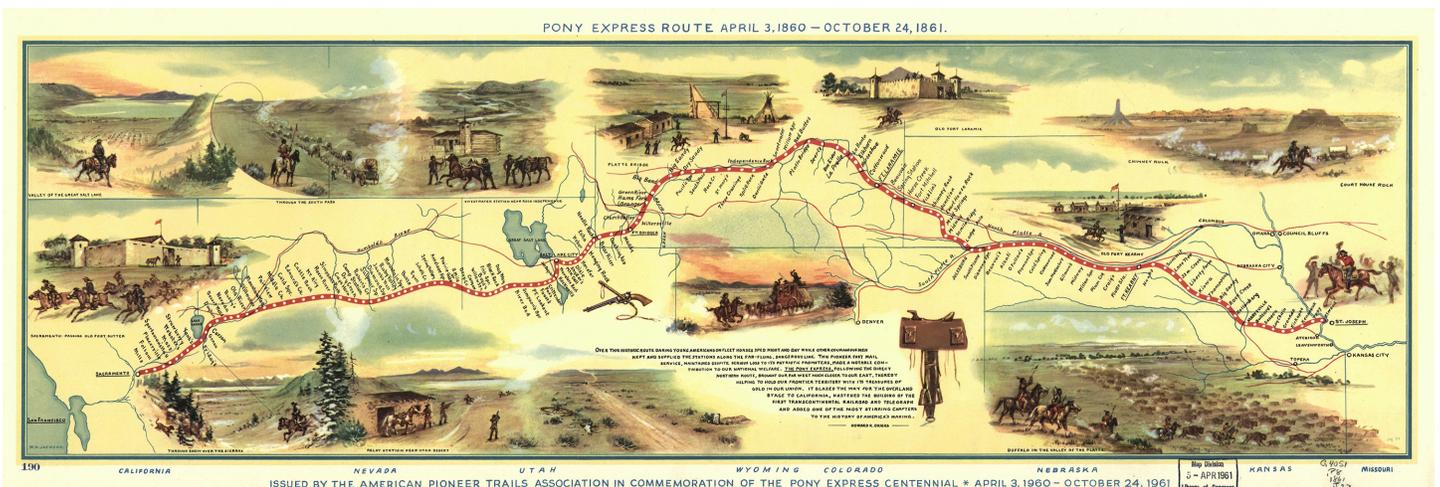
Newsletter Editor: Doug Becker, E-mail: newsletter@thewssc.com

ARTICLES WANTED FOR NEWSLETTER

Would welcome any writeups or articles on stamp collecting related subjects. Keep your eyes open and submit any article you write or find.

PONY EXPRESS: ROMANCE VERSUS REALITY (Part Two)

The story continues on the following pages



MAP OF PONY EXPRESS ROUTE (Map courtesy of the Library of Congress)

Romance

From the dime novels of the late 19th century to movies and television today, the Pony Express has supplied drama, excitement, and a good deal of make-believe.

Reality

The riders' constant struggles along the route did not need to be exaggerated. They rode through ghastly weather and over rough territory in a constant race against time.

The Founders

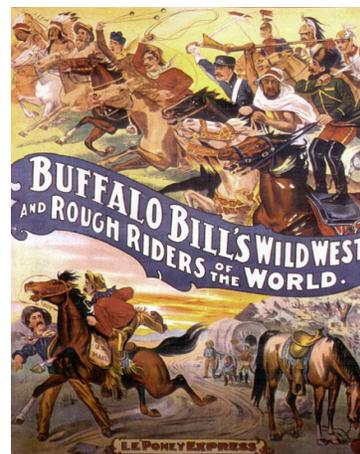
The Pony Express was founded by William Russell, Alexander Majors, and William Waddell, partners in a freight-shipping business. To start the Pony Express, Majors had to buy more than 400 ponies, build or purchase more than 150 stations, hire stationmasters and Riders all in less than three months. It was a bold business venture, but one that rapidly ate up the partners' investment.

(Continued on next page)

The Riders

The name of the first rider galloping out of St. Joseph, Missouri, on April 3, 1860, has been lost to history. Fewer than 100 men rode for the Pony Express in its 18 months of existence. Later, many men claimed to have been Pony Express riders, with tall tales of reckless adventure growing taller with each telling. Among those mentioned as famous riders was Buffalo Bill (William Cody), whose Wild West shows toured the U.S. and Europe for 30 years. Cody was such an accomplished showman and genius at self-promotion that even today it is difficult to separate the reality of his life from the romance he created in his shows. His claims of life as a Pony Express rider made for great theater, but little accuracy.

Scott 1154



The Pledge

Alexander Majors gave a Bible to each Pony Express employee, including riders, and made each man pledge not to swear, drink, or fight. Because every extra ounce slowed their progress, riders did not carry their Bibles with them. Some did not even carry guns. They relied on the speed of their horses to whisk them out of trouble.

The oath:

Alexander Majors required each man in his employ to take the following oath: "I,, do hereby swear, before the Great and Living God, that during my engagement, and while I am an employee of Russell, Majors, and Waddell, I will, under no circumstances, use profane language, that I will drink no intoxicating liquors, that I will not quarrel or fight with any other employee of the firm, and that in every respect I will conduct myself honestly, be faithful to my duties, and so direct all my acts as to win the confidence of my employers, so help me God."

An observation on the oath:

"Mr. Alexander Majors . . . forbade his drivers and employees to drink, gamble, curse, and travel on Sundays; he desired them to peruse Bibles . . . Results: I scarcely ever saw a sober rider; as for the profanity . . . they are not to be deterred from evil talking even by the dread presence of a 'lady.'"

- Sir Richard Burton, City of the Saints, 1862

(Continued on next page)

Fastest with the News

William Russell used the 1860 presidential election as a showcase for what the Pony Express could do. Before the election, he hired extra men and ensured that fresh relay horses were available along the entire route. On November 7, 1860, a rider dashed out of Fort Kearny, Nebraska Territory (the eastern end of the telegraph line) with the election results. Riders sped along the route, over snow-covered trails and into Fort Churchill, Nevada Territory (the western end of the telegraph line). California's newspapers received word of Lincoln's election only seven days and 17 hours after the East Coast papers, an unrivaled feat at the time.

The End of the Pony Express

The Pony Express was created to bridge the gap between the eastern and western ends of the transcontinental telegraph lines. While the line between Missouri and California was under construction, riders carried letters across the entire route. They also carried telegraphed messages across the gap between telegraph lines. When the telegraph line was completed, there was no further need for the Pony Express. The first telegraph message from San Francisco to Washington, D.C., was transmitted October 24, 1861. Two days later, the Pony Express came to an end.

Wells Fargo and the Pony Express

The Pony Express was a rousing success in speeding mail across the country, cutting delivery time in half, but it was unbearably expensive to operate. Unable to win a government mail contract, Russell, Majors, and Waddell lost \$30 on every letter carried and were forced to sell the Pony Express. In 1861 the Wells Fargo freighting company took over the route through its Overland Mail Company and, in what must have seemed a final blow to Russell and his partners, won a government mail contract on the condition they continue the operation of a semiweekly pony express service.

Source—Pony Express: Romance Versus Reality, National Postal Museum

Note: When we lived in Salt lake City we were able to drive for about 20 miles along the original Pony Express Route. The road is dirt and a rough ride in itself. The various stops were identified.





Mini Auction February 6, 2026

1. Specialized Catalogue 2011 US covers and stamps. Like new condition.
2. US Mint Gold replicas on FDC, 3 Albums with 89 Covers Issued 1981-1983. More to come at 2-20 26 Auction.
3. US Mint Assorted Commemoratives mounted on Album Pages from 1997 – 1999, 102 Singles plus Daffy Duck sheets Scott # 3306 and 3307. Cat. \$48.00+
4. US Mint Celebrating the Century. Full sheets with Mounts 1940s thru 1990s. Cat. \$73.00+
5. US Used Washington /Franklin issue of 1917-1919 Scott #498-518 exclude #500. Cat. \$14.00+
6. US Mint & Used. 10 Stamps Scott #523-547 8 appear mint and 2 used. Cat. \$747.00 +
7. US Mint mini Album FDC, 1984 US Olympic Games with Gold replicas in Binder.
8. US Mint, 116 single stamps from 1960-1965. Cat. Est. \$40.00+
9. US Mint Stationary, Includes 2 Binders and 1 Folder of loose Stationary.
10. US Mint random Commemoratives from 1992-1993, Quantity 114 stamps.
11. US Mint, 116 singles and 1 Souvenir Sheet Issued 1943 to 1955 random check no hinge marks.
12. US Used, 17 Stamps assorted issued from 1895 to 1913. Cat. \$24.00+
13. US Mint Random singles issued from 1966-1985. Qty 200+
14. US Mint, 97 Singles + 4 Souvenir sheets Issued from 1934-1941.
15. US Used Assorted Postage Due, 15 stamps from J31-J56. Cat. \$151+
16. Christmas Seals from Cuba and the USA – (12) mint from Cuba inc. #RA1-RA4, RA7, & RA8 (Total Cat. \$15.00) and (6) mint unlisted from 1939 & 1947-1951. Also (6) mint from the USA from 1927-1932. All mounted on Tatham Stamp and Coin Co. sales sheets with notations.
17. Denmark - #15 used, 15 skilling. Cat. \$175.00.
18. Great Britain – (83) used mostly different Machins from 1982 to 1988. Includes many varieties covering the many technical differences. You should have fun with these.
19. (152) mint & used older stamps mounted on both sides of a stock card from: Finland, Austria, Azores, Angola, Portuguese Guinea, Macau, & Denmark.
20. “B & C” Countries – (310) older stamps from: Cameroun, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Cayman Islands, British Guiana, Ceylon, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, & Comoro Islands.
21. Portugal - #31 used, 100 reis, lilac, Perf. 12 ½. Cat. \$175.00.
22. San Marino - #1, 3, 6, 9, 32, & 34, all mint. Total Cat. \$80.75.
23. Switzerland - #C3, C4, C5, C8, C9, C10, C11, & C12. All used airmail stamps. Total Cat. \$134.25.
24. Great Britain - #222, 223, & 224 used. Complete 1934 “Britannia Rule the Waves” set printed by Waterlow & Sons. Total Cat. \$150.00.
25. Bulgaria – (217) older stamps mounted neatly on album pages.
26. New Zealand – (5) used Postal-Fiscal stamps including #AR52, AR79, AR84, AR86, & AR105. Total Cat. \$47.25.
27. (1,000) Foreign used stamps sorted roughly into glassines of 50 & 100.



Mini Auction February 20, 2026

1. US Mint Mini Album FDC Flags of the 50 States with cancellation from Washington DC Binder with sleeve. Cat. Est. \$18.00
2. US Mint Mini binder of FDC Flags of the 50 states with cancellation from the appropriate state capital Binder with sleeve also includes soft cover book with each state flag history. Cat. Est. \$18.00
3. US Book Covering the Liberty Series
4. US Mint Gold replicas of FDC 2 Albums containing 82 covers issued 1983-1985
5. US Mint Full sheets, World of Dinosaurs and Star Wars
6. US Mint Washington/Franklin Imperforate and Coils, Issue of 1916-1922. Cat. \$110.00+
7. US Mint, 128 single stamps from 1950-1961. Cat. Est. \$45.00+
8. US Used Revenue assorted qty. issued 1862-1871. Cat. \$82.00+
9. US Used Washington/Franklin issue of 1916-1917 Scott #462-480, Excludes #476. Cat. \$200.00+
10. US Used, Take a chance, 17 singles not mounted on correct spot. You do your own analysis
11. US Mint 128 singles plus 2 mini souvenir sheets. Cat. Est \$45.00+
12. US Used Assorted Postage Due J1-J26 Qty 10 Stamps. Cat \$113.00+
13. US Used Scott #443 & 444 mounted on Album page. Cat. \$52.00
14. US Mint Assorted small sheets & Souvenir sheets Issued 2001 & 2002
15. US Mint Assorted Souvenir Sheets and Mini Sheets issued 1947 - 2001
16. Uganda – (8) MNH Souvenir Sheets including #218a, 296a, 309, 385, 679, 856, 994, & 995. One is the 1980 Christmas S.S. Total Cat. \$35.65.
17. Great Britain – (86) used mostly different small Machins from 1989 to 1996 and large Machins from 1971 to 1987. Includes many varieties covering the many technical differences. You should have fun with these.
18. Portugal - #22 used, 80 reis, orange, Imperf. Cat. \$120.00.
19. (150) mint & used older stamps mounted on both sides of a stock card from: Denmark, Norway, Vatican City, Spain, & Libia.
20. Czechoslovakia – (303) older stamps mounted neatly on album pages.
21. San Marino - #4 used and #78a Type I mint. Total Cat. \$66.00.
22. New Zealand – (14) mint and used Back of the Book stamps including mint #E2, J22, MR1, O102, O104, O106, & (4) Machine Printed Vended stamps. Also used #AR47, AR48, AR49 & AR50. Total Cat. \$56.25.
23. Switzerland – (25) mint & used early Airmail stamps – Total Cat. \$67.10. Plus (36) mint & used Commemoratives & Semi-postals that probably Cat. around \$20.00.
24. San Marino – (4) mint Souvenir Sheets & a (6) stamp Set including #465a Set of 3 MNH Olympic Games S.S. and #539a MNH “Europa” S.S. and #97-102 mint Set of Antonio Onofri stamps. Total Cat. \$35.25.
25. Great Britain, #249, 249A, 250, 251, 251A, & 275 used. Complete 1939-1942 & 1948 King George VI Set. Cat. \$59.50
26. “A & B” Countries – (325) different mint & used stamps from Austria, Argentina, Afghanistan, Albania, Angola, Antigua, Australia, Barbados, & Belgium.
27. British Commonwealth – About (30) MNH Sets from Jersey, Guernsey, & Isle of Man sorted in glassines. Consists of Singles, Blocks of 4, and Gutter Blocks including up to 6 duplicates of some issues. Total Cat. \$170.00.