



L A M B D A
P H I L A T E L I C
J O U R N A L

THE QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF THE GAY & LESBIAN
HISTORY ON STAMP CLUB, ATA STUDY UNIT NO. 458
AND AMERICAN PHILATELIC SOCIETY AFFILIATE NO. 205

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Official Cover
NIUAFO'OU



Scientific Expedition



See page 10 for
related story.

The Lambda Philatelic Journal is published quarterly by the Gay and Lesbian History on Stamps Club (GLHSC). GLHSC is a study unit of the American Topical Association, Study Unit Number 458, and an affiliate of the American Philatelic Society, Affiliate Number 205.

The objectives of the club are:

To promote and foster an interest in the collection, study and dissemination of knowledge of worldwide philatelic material that depicts:



- notable men and women and their contributions to society for whom historical evidence exists of homosexual or bisexual orientation.
- mythology, historical events and ideas significant in the history of gay culture.
- flora and fauna scientifically proven having prominent homosexual behavior.
- even though emphasis is placed on this aspect of stamp collecting, the Club strongly encourages other philatelic endeavors.

MEMBERSHIP: Yearly dues are \$6 per calendar year for US and Canadian residents; \$8 or 10 IRC per year for foreign residents (to cover higher postage cost).

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The Lambda Philatelic Journal thrives on philatelic articles (original or reprinted) and alternative viewpoints for publication. Members are also encouraged to place free advertisements of philatelic interest. The Editor reserves the right to edit all materials submitted for publication.

The views expressed in the journal are those of the writers and do not necessarily represent those of the Club or its members. Any comments or letters should be addressed to the Editor at the address listed.

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NEWS FROM THE EDITOR

This is the start of my second year as editor of the Journal. I truly appreciate the trust that the Club officers have placed in me. I would love to hear from all members on their thoughts, ideas and suggestions for the Journal.

Finally, the questionnaires have been reviewed. Over 200 of them were sent to members and prospective members. Through mid-December 42 completed forms have been received by me. One discovery that I made is that future "send backs" will be on a separate sheet. My thanks to those of you who xeroxed the last page or were kind enough to re-write the form.

Fifty-two percent would like to see new issues and AIDS issues listed quarterly. The AIDS Update currently covers the latter. A similar section for gay/lesbian issues can be started. However, the task of discovering new (and old) issues is very time consuming.

Cash and membership reports will hopefully appear in each January issue. Most respondents favored an annual report. Another overwhelming response was on a separate AIDS newsletter. The answer from all but a handful was no. Until such time that opinion changes, I plan to keep the AIDS Update section.

Many members would like to see a larger (more pages) journal, and increase dues to cover this expansion. (About 36% said yes to increasing dues to \$10, regardless of increasing the size of the journal.) I, too, would like to add more pages. The main drawback to this is the lack of articles. Currently, there are only a few members who are consistent in sending articles. Several others will write if asked. There are many gays/lesbians on stamps waiting to appear in the Journal. I need your help in obtaining the articles and/or research.

It appears that most, if not all, GLHSC members also belong to other philatelic groups. The leading "other" group is the American Philatelic Society (APS). Not only have they just accepted GLHSC (see Vol. 10, No. 4) as an affiliate (#205), they offer many benefits to their members. Their award winning journal, The American Philatelist is published monthly. The APS Sales Division circulates nearly 70,000 books of philatelic materials. The circuits are an ideal way to obtain stamps, generally at a below retail cost. APS provides low-cost stamp insurance, discounts on expertising and access to the American Philatelic Research Library (APRL). Dues are \$21 annually, \$18 if paid before the end of the preceding calendar year.

The American Topical Association (ATA) is the second most popular group. ATA publishes Topical Time bimonthly. ATA, as the name suggests, is mainly concerned, though not limited, with the topical aspect of philately. GLHSC is a study unit of ATA (#458). ATA also has a sales service. Dues for ATA are based upon a pro-rated schedule, depending in which month that you join. For those of you not members of either group, please drop me or Ed a line and we can get some information to you.

The category of local groups is the third favorite group for GLHSC members. The major benefit to a local group is the chance to meet with other collectors on a regular basis. Meeting collectors makes this hobby that much more exciting. Various national, thematic groups were mentioned by one or two members each.

Now that you know what GLHSC members would like in a journal and to what other groups they belong. However, what do they collect? The world, basically!

The United States, in various forms, is the most popular. The US is the only thematic to out-poll gays and lesbians, which is second in popularity. Canada finished a strong third, closely followed by worldwide, United Nations and AIDS. Male nudes, England (Great Britain) and the Netherlands each had four or more votes. After the most popular topics, thirteen had two members each showing interest. 59 others each had one vote. These topics included nations (Poland), people (Czeslaw Slania), animals (dogs), plants (roses), machines (tanks) and a host of others (royalty, stamps on stamps).



With all of these topics, I hope to include a varied offering in this journal. You can help me provide such a journal. If each member were to send an article on their favorite topic, there would be enough articles for many journals and/or to expand the current journal format. You may have an aspect of collecting that others would like to hear about. After all, these figures were based on a 20% response rate to the survey.

The major benefit of all these articles is that the journal can provide something for everyone. GLHSC members aren't just collectors of gay/lesbian materials (though this is the main purpose of GLHSC), they can be collectors who happen to be gay/lesbian. We live in a varied world, and I would like to meet this demand with your help!

Charles Laughton (1899-1962): Public Triumphs, Private Turmoils

by Gaylord Lovett

"I am a little rug of misery under your feet," a movie fan wrote Charles Laughton, whose villains, like Captain Bligh, made one wince. Because he tried to humanize each role in some way, Laughton's performance looked natural, easy. Yet he forged a complex character with agony, some-times wasting take after take.

His insecurity came from causes ranging from a childhood dislike of his jowly face and fat body to an adult feeling of shame about his sexual preference for men. As an adolescent in northern England, he was the taunted chubby boy at school who disliked sports and made few friends. At home, he acted out private fantasies in improvised costumes. His mother derided him as "the artist."

At a Jesuit college he was attending, he confessed masturbation to a priest, who predicted that this wickedness would wear away his fingers and send his soul to hell. After Charles broke with his Catholic upbringing, it's teachings dogged him. He did penance by devoutly reciting the Bible in private conversations, in public readings and in movies.

He enlisted in the British Army near the end of the first World War. He was gassed in combat, which caused repeated skin eruptions. After the war, he worked in his family-run hotel, but gave that up. When the Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts in London accepted Charles, he plunged into acting with vigor. Playwright George Bernard Shaw saw him in a student performance and predicted a great future.

His first professional roles on the London stages got favorable reviews in 1926. That year he met Elsa Lanchester, a spritely song-and-dance actress who was two years younger, unconventional, agnostic and a lover of woodland walks, as was he. In spite of his active interest in men, which he kept secret from her, Charles lived with Elsa for three years. They married in 1929, Elsa wrote in her cautious memoir, Charles Laughton and I, for "protection against society."

In her franker Elsa Lanchester, Herself, she described her shock at discovering this needed protection. In the spring of 1930, Charles encountered the police outside his building, detaining a hustler. His heart stopped--he knew the bloke. The guy blurted out to the police that Laughton had paid him for previous sexual favors and he was there to get a promised second fee. At that time in England, they could have been jailed for having sex. Naturally, Charles denied the homosexual part, but admitted he had given the young man money. A hearing in court was scheduled.

In their flat, Charles tearfully admitted the truth to Elsa. She forgave him, but the trauma made her go deaf for a week. If he had told her this "problem" in the beginning, she might have gone along with it. The hustler incident put a lifelong wall between them. To her credit, she never retaliated. She did, however, make one small demand. Where, she asked, had he entertained the man? On their sofa? Then, she ordered, he'd have to sell that sofa!

At the hearing, the judge dismissed the case. As if with a knowing wink, he warned Charles not to be so generous in the future. Ironically, years later in his affluent stardom, Laughton lavished the best of everything on his lucky boyfriends.

Elsa stayed married, but didn't want children. Charles agreed with her at the time. Decades later he changed his mind and blamed her for not bearing their children. After the hustler incident event, physical relations between the couple dwindled to nothing. Charles kept having liaisons with men. Elsa had occasional affairs, also with men. She was not, as some gossips hinted, a lesbian.

Laughton's stage work continued steadily. Elsa got occasional jobs in his plays, or vaudeville-like acts in entertainments of her own. A play in which both appeared was transferred to New York. They crossed the Atlantic with it. Laughton received great praise from the American critics. Hollywood soon beckoned with typical seven year contracts. When Paramount offered a less binding arrangement of six films in three years, he signed.

His first feature film was The Devil and the Deep in 1932. His co-star was Talullah Bankhead, who had a dedicated Lesbian following. Although the stars had words off camera, they did their best at acting this now-dated melodrama. His next part was Nero in Cecil B. DeMille's spectacle, The Sign of the Cross.

DeMille wanted Nero to played as a heavy menace. After careful research, Laughton argued for a self-indulgent hedonist. Amazingly, DeMille went along and provided a muscular slave to feed Nero grapes. The public laughed with nervous amusement at the effeminate Nero as interpreted by Laughton. Twenty years later, Peter Ustinov emulated Laughton when he played Nero in Quo Vadis. (Twenty-eight years later, Ustinov and Laughton did a superb scene together in Spartacus, for which they rewrote their dialogue.)

Laughton often rewrote his lines, striving for accuracy in every

detail, especially for a historical role. The Private Life of Henry VIII was produced in England in 1933. Henry VIII was the first English film to do big business in the United States and internationally. Its success was due mainly to Laughton. He won his only Academy Award for it. (He was later nominated for an Oscar for Captain Bligh in Mutiny on the Bounty and for the sickly barrister in Witness for the Prosecution.)



607a



607b

Charles lost weight for his next three Hollywood films. In The Barretts of Wimple Street (sometimes shown as The Forbidden Alliance) he exuded an incestuous lust for his daughter Elizabeth and ruled his family like a tyrant.

In 1934 came Ruggles of Red Gap. Laughton, for a change, was happy at work by day and at home with Elsa by night. One evening when shooting ran hours overtime, Director Leo McCarey complained to Charles, "Do you have to be so nancy?" Laughton usually would have exploded, but he merely quipped, "After 8 o'clock, a bit of it is bound to show." It was a momentary lifting of the lid that he then put on his gay life. It took decades for him to cultivate ordinary friendships with known gay men like Christopher Isherwood or speak of gay people to Elsa as "my kind."

He acted another evil part in 1935, that of the police officer who compulsively pursued the hero in Les Miserables. It's sadistic overtones readied him for his next

part. Mutiny on the Bounty was about historical people, so Charles studied all the documentation. He even tracked down Captain Bligh's tailoring firm, still in business in London. They had notations on Bligh's 1787 uniforms and made handsome duplicates which Laughton paid for and wore in the movie.

We remember Laughton's Bligh for many of the actor's touches, like the curled lower lip or the jutting jaw. It was a larger-than-life portrayal that worked. Clark Gable and Franchot Tone did commendable performances in this film, which was the biggest money maker in 1935.



607d



607e

Korda brought the Laughtons back to England for Rembrandt. Elsa acted as his shy second wife. The film's lack of a strong story line and its abrupt continuity didn't help to make it a success in 1936.

In 1938 he formed his own company, based in England. He acted in the three films this company produced. However, these three pictures lost money.

Back in Hollywood, Charles undertook the nearly impossible title part of The Hunchback of Notre Dame. His sonorous voice was turned to a rasping gasp for his few lines. His expressive face was covered in an elephant-man mask, which to his credit, he insisted on wearing. In spite of handicaps, his masterful pantomime made the cripple a symbol of persecuted outcasts.

As his fame and finances increased, he bought impressive homes. Now a US citizen, he lived more like a star. He donated most of his large earnings from one film to send a young male protege to drama school. He told Elsa that he had made a pittance on the same film. He could be devious.

Among Elsa's film roles, the most famous was her screaming swan-hissing bride in The Bride of Frankenstein. In this, she also played author Mary Shelley in an oft-cut introduction. In between films, she did her musical skits for tours of colleges, night clubs and theaters.

Twice, Laughton's soul searching to capture a character failed. To see his confusion trying to play the stuttering cripple of I, Claudius is agonizing. Later, he tried to portray Macawber in David Copperfield, but was unable to produce the brashness managed so well by his replacement, W. C. Fields. However, Charles could do occasional silly parts and seemed to be having sly fun mocking himself, as in Captain Kid (1945) and Abbott and Costello Meet Captain Kid (1952).

Like many great stage directors, Laughton was a perfectionist who got along best with those who held him in esteem. Henry Fonda, fretting about cuts Charles made in his role in a staged Cain Mutiny Court-martial, was not one of those. Annoyed by director Laughton's careful explanation of a military point, about which you can be sure he had done thorough research; Fonda, in front of the whole cast exclaimed, "What do you know about real men, you fat, ugly faggot?" From that moment, Charles never spoke to Henry. Later, they both appeared in Advise and Consent. Laughton's questions and Fonda's replies were shot separately for their solitary joint scene, except one brief shot.

Laughton was brilliant as a corrupt senator with a soft Southern accent. It was his last role. (A subplot in this movie, unusual for 1962, dealt with Don Murray's affair with a handsome soldier before he married and entered politics.)

Laughton directed only one film, Night of the Hunter (although he probably co-directed the exceptional The Beachcomber.) Hunter, starring Robert Mitchum and Lillian Gish who both respected him greatly, failed at the box office in 1955. He was not asked to direct a movie again.

In his final year, Laughton's health deteriorated. He spent a lot of time in hospitals. When at home, he had round-the-clock nurses. They repeatedly drugged him against the pain of bone cancer. His brother Frank, also gay, arrived with a priest when Elsa was not around. Charles, in a semi-coma, was inducted into the Catholic faith and given extreme unction. Several priests visited on succeeding days. He died in December 1962. Elsa remained a widow until her death in 1986.

Of the biographies of Laughton, only Simon Callow's Charles Laughton, a Difficult Actor remains in print. It covers his life, films, plays and disks. Check libraries for other books by Elsa Lanchester, Charles Higham and William Brown. Skip the inaccurate biography by Kurt Singer.

Callow gives a compelling picture of Charles's last lover, Terry Jenkins (called "Peter Jones" in Elsa Lanchester, Herself.) This friendly man met Charles in an art museum, propositioned him there and in his hotel room immediately stripped. This gave the old actor renewed confidence. They shared a loving relationship over a brief time before Charles died, including a holiday tour of Japan.

GAY AND LESBIAN UPDATE

Ed. Note: This section will be similar to the AIDS Update. Items to be included are:

- 1) New discoveries of previously issued philatelic items relevant to our topic.
- 2) New issues for our topic.
- 3) Tidbits of information that may lead members to discovering new items to include in their collections. I would like to emphasize that an item listed in this section does not imply a person's sexual orientation. The main purpose of including this information is to help those who would like to do further research. (Once this research is completed, and other sources found, it is hoped that the information would be shared with the group.)

The Ivory Coast issued two miniature sheets of 9 stamps each to commemorate the French Open Tennis Championship's Centenary. Scott no. 900h depicts Martina Navratilova.



La Poste (the French postal service) used two cancellations and one flammé to honor the 100th anniversary of the death of Arthur Rimbaud. Be on the lookout for these. (Thanks to our Canadian member for this information.) (See Vol. 8, No. 1, Pages 3-4 for a related article)

An article on the Mutiny on the Bounty in the August 31, 1991 issue

of the Stamp Collector brought up the subject of the reason(s) behind the mutiny. The author of the article mentions that a Madge Darby, in her book, blames it on an affair between Capt. Bligh and Fletcher Christian. The article's author says that he thinks it was actually for another reason and states that it was actually because Christian disliked anything or anyone English. (He was from the Isle of Man.) However, he offers no proof that Ms. Darby is incorrect in her assumption.

A letter to the editor of the Stamp Collector (December 28, 1991 issue) responds to a previous article. He states in his letter that Eugene O'Neill was gay. Can anyone substantiate this?



1305c

AIDS UPDATE

Republique Centrafricaine issued a set of three stamps for it's 1990 Fight Against AIDS campaign. Scott nos. 982-84.

Harare used the slogan "CONDOMS CAN PROTECT YOU FROM AIDS AND OTHER STD'S". The slogan was short lived due to being considered controversial in some countries that may receive mail with the slogan. It is difficult to find.

South Africa used the slogan "Prevent AIDS/Voorkom VIGS" the week of November 28, 1988. It incorporated a map of Africa with black dots indicating the area of infection.

The Soviet Union (now CIS) issued a piece of postal stationery in early 1991 (?). It reads, in Cyrillic letters except the first two words:

"SIDA AIDS SPID - Together with the whole world we conquer it. W.H.O. World AIDS Day 1 December."

Copies of the cancellation used during the 1991 AIDS Conference in Florence, Italy are available. Contact the editor for more information.



Copies of a meter slogan "SUPPORT AIDS SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS" can be obtained, for a small donation, from: Health Issues Task Force, 2250 Euclid Avenue, Cleveland, OH 44115 USA.

LAST LICK LAST LICK LAST LICK

Mr. Wayne Mineard of West Virginia wrote to Stamps Magazine shortly after reading of our acceptance as an APS Affiliate. He claims that he will quit APS because of this decision!

STARTING OVER. It's been 3 years since I disposed of my collection of many years. Seeking mint issues, engraved series (classic

British colonies, France, CSSR, many others), landscapes and cityscapes, AIDS topicals, covers, MC's. Can offer recent mint USA to start. Les Wright, 67 Coleridge Street, San Francisco, CA 94110 USA.

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Jerry Tartaglia operates an approval service. He'd be happy to send a free gift to any club member who'd like to try it out. He's also interested in swaps of his gay postal history collection. Write him in care of Mercury Stamps, 532 LaGuardia Place #264, New York, NY 10012 USA.

Stamp collector has limited quantity of new and used US postal stationery, souvenir cards and FDC's for sale or trade. Some FDC's are of special interest to sports fans and Ohioans. Write Ms. M. A. Hibben, 12 Carlene Drive, Nashua, NH 03062 USA.

Chicagopex '92
November 6-8



Aerophilately '92

Chicagopex '92
November 6-8



Aerophilately '92

Chicagopex '92
November 6-8



Aerophilately '92

Chicagopex '92
November 6-8



Aerophilately '92

Chicagopex '92
November 6-8



Aerophilately '92

The earliest use of the US Americas series has been discovered! The postmark reads "Newark, NJ, Jan 30, 1661" What a find!! (Thanks to the USPS for this!)



2512

Stamps Magazine (October 19, 1991 issue) re-printed Herman Herst, Jr.'s article "Reporting On An 'Alternate Lifestyle". The original article appeared after Mr. Herst had seen Paul Hennefeld's exhibit on alternate lifestyles.

Reminder - ATA Annual Convention, Chicago, IL, May 29-31, 1992. The Convention will be held at the Radisson Suite O'Hare Hotel in conjunction with World Columbian Stamp Expo '92. The 1992 ATA Convention, in lieu of the usual TOPEX, will be held on the final 3 days of WCSE'92. Any members interested in attending, please contact the President or Editor. An official GLHSC meeting can be held during the show if there is enough interest.

Reminder - Dues for 1992 are now due. If your mailing label reads 1/01/91, please send \$6 to the Connecticut address on page 2. Foreign members send \$8 or 8 IRC's. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

1991 Ornithological & Scientific Expedition

(Niuafu'ou Megapode Expedition
1991)

Two GLHSC members were part of a four-man scientific expedition, led by Dr. D. Rinke of Germany. The expedition was to Niuafu'ou (better

known as Tin Can Island) to obtain photographs and information on the endangered Niuafu'ou Megapode. This information would, in turn, be used to prepare upcoming stamps for the World Wildlife Fund (WWF). Another purpose of this expedition was to collect live specimens, if possible, for study at the Brehm Fund Bird Park on Tongatapu.

The Megapode is one of the rarest birds in the tropical Pacific. The most distinguishing characteristic of the Megapode is that they lay their eggs in a 3-6 foot hole, dug in the volcanic soil by the female, then covered and left to incubate. In about 50 days, the chick hatches and digs it's way out. Chicks are on their own from the day they hatch.

The T\$1 Whaling Miniature Sheet was overprinted by the Government of Tonga to mark this venture. Two other philatelic items were produced for this expedition, an official souvenir cover and a special cachet. The cachet was only applied to mail from the camp. Some covers exist with an additional "POSTED AT TIN CAN ISLAND, NIUAFO'OU, KINGDOM OF TONGA" applied.

The expedition consisted of two co-leaders: Dr. Dieter Rinke, who is studying the possibility of introducing the Megapode to other uninhabited volcanic islands, and George Bennett, an American artist who has designed several of Tonga's stamps and who will be the Megapode stamp artist. He also designed the souvenir sheet that was overprinted for the expedition. The final two members were Nildo Harper and James Mejeur, two world renowned explorers and adventurers, as well as GLHSC members!

We wish them well on their further adventures! And, thanks for sharing this venture with us!