



GAY AND LESBIAN HISTORY ON STAMPS JOURNAL



GLHSONLINE.ORG



Issue 033

July 2026

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Cross Dressing for the Cause: Feminine Figures of the American Revolution

By Barry Christensen

One of the most fascinating panel discussions sponsored by the USPS and others at Boston 2026 World Expo was the special dedication ceremony on Friday, May 29, for the Figures of the American Revolution stamps, previously released on April 10 in Washington DC.

The panel discussion with Q&A was moderated by the energetic and personable USPS Director of Stamp Services Lisa Bobb-Semple and included the most prolific modern designer of US stamps, Ethel Kessler, and two of the artists who contributed to the issue.

Ethel oversaw this mammoth four-year project, which she characterized as complex and difficult (see her comments at the Stamps Forever website). The issue includes 25 individual new paintings, a very large number for modern US stamp panes, resulting in unusually small text, according to Kessler.

This issue is notable because of its diversity, including five women, five persons of color (including Native American leaders), and five foreign leaders who significantly aided the cause. One of those feminine figures is noted for her bravery in cross dressing for the cause.

Say what? That’s right! Ken Burn’s new documentary mini-series, The American Revolution, uses stamp art and tells the story of most of the persons in this issue, as well as this year’s Black Heritage stamp honoree, Phillis Wheatley. He specifically mentions that several women cross dressed as male soldiers during the American Revolution, allowing them to contribute to the fight.

One of those women, Deborah Sampson, is included in this new stamp issue. Kessler specifically discussed her new stamp portrait as being the greatest example of several where the artist had only one very marginal historical image to work from. The artists carefully preserved basic facial features and have now created the definitive portrait of these relatively unknown heroes.

Sampson disguised herself several times as a man to serve in the Continental Army and was among the first women in US history to earn a military pension. I find this especially wonderful, as an adopted son of my (now) Old Kentucky Home, after our state legislature unsuccessfully tried to outlaw cross dressing in the Commonwealth (to thwart gay drag shows), conveniently ignoring the illustrious accomplishments of cross dressers though out our nation’s history. Be sure to see Derwin Mak’s wonderful presentation on the GLHS

(Continued on page 5).





The *Gay and Lesbian History on Stamps Journal* is published quarterly by Gay and Lesbian History on Stamps (GLHS). GLHS is an affiliate of the American Philatelic Society (APS), Number 205, and a study unit of the American Topical Association (ATA), Number 458.

The **objective** of GLHS is to promote 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 as having prominent homosexual behavior, and

Even though emphasis is placed on the above aspects of stamp collecting, GLHS strongly encourages other philatelic endeavors.

GLHS Board of Directors 2026-2028

President: Lisa Foster (WA)

Vice President: John P. Stefanek (MI)

Secretary: Barry Christensen (KY)

Treasurer: Laurie Anderson (WA)

PUBLICATION SCHEDULE:

| <u>Publication date</u> | <u>Submissions due</u> |
|-------------------------|------------------------|
| October 2026 | September 15 |
| January 2027 | December 15 |
| April 2027 | March 15 |
| July 2026 | June 15 |

Members may submit advertisements for free.

Additional volunteers are needed

- Social Media Committee to explore options for group open and/or closed online communications/meetings such as Google, Instagram, twitter, blogs, go-to meeting, HipChat, etc.
- GLHS Journal Columnists
- Give presentations in person or virtually
- Coordinate GLHS Socials
- Maintain membership roster
- Advertising Committee
- Submit articles, journeys, cover/postal history write ups, travels and philatelic events

Membership Report

Our current membership consists of **75** members. 51 are also members of the American Philatelic Society (APS) & 36 members of the American Topical Association (ATA).

*10 did not renew membership
3 New Members from BOSTON2026*

! New Members !

Sylvette B., MA
Larry F., NY
Kyrasis, R., MA



Mailing with Kyrasis' Membership

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GLHS @ BOSTON2026

By Barry Christensen

The annual meeting of Gay and Lesbian History on Stamps was held at 1 pm on Friday, May 29th at Boston 2026 World Expo, the twelfth international philatelic exhibition of the United States. The Expo was held at the Thomas M. Menino Convention and Exhibition Center in Boston's Seaport District. There were twenty or so attendees, including many new folks and new or returning members. Group president Lisa Foster and treasurer Laurie Anderson led the meeting with new secretary Barry Christensen assisting.

Lisa welcomed the attendees and introduced the history and objectives of GLHS. Web resources and the quarterly GLHS journal were displayed on the meeting room screen. It was announced that new member, Salem, has volunteered to help publish the journal. Publishing and layout would be done with Affinity. Member Derek has suggested the possibility of also publishing on Substack.

GLHS has a presence in Stamping Ground, the social media platform of the American Topical Association, and a need for volunteer management of GLHS content was discussed. Our GLHS Facebook group, administrated by Joe Petronie, has grown from over 500 to over 2500 people.

Other areas of volunteer effort that are needed include hosting GLHS Zoom meetings and managing the GLHS You Tube channel. Lisa introduced new attendees to membership in the group at \$10.00 per year, renewable each January. She highlighted the group's board members and officers, reporting that next year's GLHS annual meeting will be held during the Great American Stamp Show at the Albuquerque, NM, Convention Center from August 19 to 22.

Two active GLHS members, Joe Petronie and group vice president John P. Stefanek, received the Nicholas G. Carter Volunteer Recognition Award in absentia at the annual meeting of the American Philatelic Society held at Boston 2026 on Tuesday, May 26. In addition to continuing his long-standing New Issues column in the GLHS journal, John hopes to update and publish the GLHS checklist.

Canadian GLHS member Charles Verge, an international leader in the organizing and judging of philatelic exhibits for over 30 years, received one of the highest honors given by the APS, the Luff Award for Exceptional Contributions to Philately, at Boston 2026 on Tuesday, May 26, and signed the Luff Award Scroll.

In addition, two rarities from Tomas' exhibits were

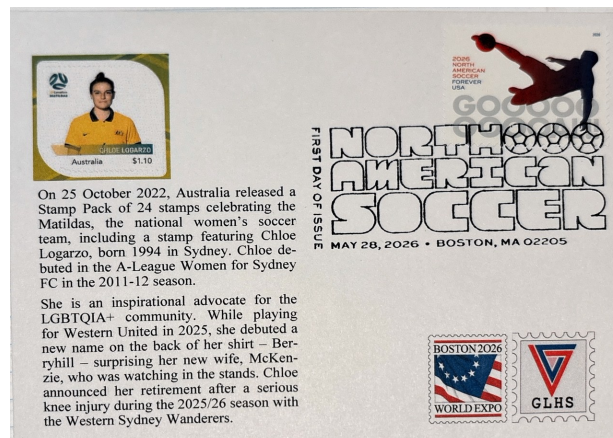
chosen to be included in the beautiful newly published large format book "Gems of Boston 2026." Original artwork for the never issued US stamp for the Mexico Olympics is from Tomas' "Rings of Gold" exhibit. A set of nine vignettes of "The Gay Kingdom of the Coral Sea" Cinderella stamps is from his "The Pink Triangle" exhibit. Both are the only known copies.

Attendees celebrated the news that GLHS member Dr. Tomas L. Griebing, who attended the World Expo with his husband, has won two Large Silvers at Boston 2026 for his exhibits "From Mark of Oppression to Symbol of Gay Pride: The Pink Triangle," and "Rings of Glory: Inspiring Olympic Design." His Pink Triangle exhibit had previously won gold at Chicagopex in November 2025 and at the Sarasota National Stamp Exhibition in January of this year.

Various attendees shared interesting items purchased from the World Expo dealer bourse, international postal administrations, society booths and the giant USPS retail and cancellation area. Laurie raffled numerous show covers to enthusiastic members of the audience that she and Lisa had prepared. The meeting ended with a Q&A session and a group photo.



Several members and friends of GLHS were very active throughout the World Expo, including APS editor-in-chief Susanna Mills, past ATA president Dawn Hamman, and American Philatelic Research Library trustee Casey Jo White. Be sure to check out the articles about the Expo in the APS and ATA journals.



Philatelic Cover by Lisa Foster and Laurie Anderson Thursday, May 28: Sports Day - North American Soccer honoring FIFA World Cup