

▶ GETTING STARTED..... 1

▶ PROBLEM PAGES..... 4

WE *think*

ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF WOMEN EXHIBITORS

Starting an exhibit can be overwhelming. Where do you begin? How do you begin? Where do you get your ideas? Ruth Caswell suggests a group of like-minded beginner exhibitors can help with the planning process.

Getting started!

By Ruth Caswell

In the *Keeper's Korner* of the WE newsletter *WE Expressions*, I frequently implore WE members to start their exhibits. It sounds so easy, but may not be so for beginning exhibitors. Many articles tell us how to get started, but these directions are presented in a linear form. Step one is to formulate an idea, step two is to develop a story line, and so forth. We, the friendly group of beginning exhibitors, do indeed need to find an idea, develop a story line with beginning and ending, find material to support our story, identify the type of exhibit we are crafting, and more. From the WE workshops and my work with be-

ginning exhibitors, I believe getting started with an exhibit is not a step by step process but instead involves interactive thinking processes. I'll use scenarios to help us understand how this interactive thinking might work. To help us visualize how these processes might interact, I asked Janet to conjure up another of her famous graphic illustrations.

Scenario 1. We do start by grappling with an idea for our exhibit. One might think of hats, an area in which we live, or a memorable meal we enjoyed in Paris. As we

think about this idea, we also begin to think about a story we might tell, and about where the story will begin and end. Sometimes, we find that our chosen idea will not work well. If the idea is not workable, then it is discarded. Yes, we are crushed because our favorite idea is unusable! Other times, the idea needs to be revised. From the above idea examples, one might think specifically of blue hats worn for a specific occasion, a stamp is-



sued to commemorate an event in the area in which we live, or the scrumptious desserts from the meal in Paris. We are beginning to shape the idea for our exhibit into a workable one and to identify a possible story line that tells about our exhibit idea. At the same

“As you select material for your story, you will also find out if your idea is workable or if it needs more revision.”

time, we are thinking about where our story will start and where it might end. At this point, we’ve engaged our brains in several interactions to identify what we want to present in our exhibit.

In workshop and mentoring experiences, the above scenario involves discussions with support groups, or a group of beginning exhibitors, who are not familiar with our particular idea. These support groups should *discuss* rather than tell. The exhibitor has ownership of the exhibit idea, but the interaction from those in the support group brings a different perspective. Group discussions can identify areas that need revision or areas that are not workable. Each member of the group is aware that she/he will have the opportunity to *discuss*, not tell with others. These peer-to-peer discussions, usually monitored by an experienced exhibitor, are informative, lively, and helpful to all.

Scenario 2. I suspect that as you are involved in the idea and story interactions, you’ve also been thinking about philatelic items that you have in your collection or that you saw at a bourse or online. We’re now adding another dimension, philatelic material, to this idea/story about which we’ve been thinking. The story line, or the text that you want to use to tell about your idea, now needs to be developed into a full story for your exhibit. Someone once suggested to me that I write the story separate from the exhibit to see if it holds together and if it is coherent. I’ve found this to be a good idea and often ask new exhibitors to do the same. As you develop your story, you may follow an outline; some, however, react negatively to the “O” word. If you are one of those, you may prefer to think of mapping out or telling a story.

If you have a collection, you’re ready to fit material with your developed story line. Or, alternatively, you are ready to acquire material that supports your story line. As you select material for your story, you will also find out if your idea is workable or if it needs more revision. You’re also making a list of philatelic items that you need to fill the “holes,” the parts of the story for which you have no supporting philatelic or non-philatelic material. Let’s say for purposes of this article, that your selected idea is workable. You now have an idea for your exhibit, a developed story line with beginning and ending, and some material, or a list of needed material, to support your story. You’ve had numerous interactions in your mind as you worked through your exhibit idea, story, and material.

WE Board of Directors

Ruth Caswell, Chair
ruthandlyman@earthlink.net

Vesma Grinfelds, Secretary
dzvesma@sprintmail.com

Liz Hisey, Treasurer
lizhisey@comcast.net

Patricia Stilwell-Walker, At Large
psw123@comcast.net

Denise Stotts, At Large
stottsjd@swbell.net

Barb Harrison, Newsletter
barbandwill@comcast.net

Janet Klug, Publications
tongajan@aol.com



APS Affiliate #260



Supported by
AAPE

No material in this publication may be reprinted in any form unless permission is acquired in advance.

**Contact the Editor, Janet Klug
Tongajan@aol.com**

This is a publication of WE
— Women Exhibitors —

Whose mission is to be the vehicle through which women exhibitors can encourage each other through sharing information, ideas, experience, advice, problems, and solutions.

For more information contact
Ruth Caswell (Chair) :
ruthandlyman@earthlink.net

“The beginning is the most important part of the work.”

Scenario 3. At this point, we've not talked about the type of exhibit you want to show. If you're preparing an exhibit, you do want to show it. To enter your exhibit into a show, you need to identify the particular type of exhibit. It is better to identify the type of exhibit now, rather than when it is finished and you are trying to select a type on an entry form. Our interactions now have another dimension--the type of exhibit.

There is a type of exhibit for almost anything you want to do. Each type has its own rules and regulations, so you want to give careful consideration to the type you choose. For example, Display exhibits permit both philatelic and non-philatelic material. If you are working with the blue hats idea from scenario 1, philatelic material might include, but is not limited to, stamps, illustrated mail, meters, cancels, poster stamps, and post cards. If you added non-philatelic material, such as a flyer from the *Blue Hat Company* or a photograph from the specific occasion for blue hats, then you have a Display exhibit.

If you choose to do a Thematic exhibit, your exhibit will feature a wide variety of philatelic elements, such as stamps, meters,

cancels, covers, and so forth. If you are working with the scrumptious desserts from scenario 1, your story will tell about these desserts and be supported with a wide variety of philatelic material.

Look, I'm just about tolerating this blue hat you put on me, but I refuse to get into that frame with those stamps.



If your exhibit is about the area in which you live, you might choose a Traditional, a Postal History, or a First Day Cover exhibit. Traditional exhibits focus on the design, production, and uses of a particular stamp, such as the example above for a stamp that commemorates an event in the area you live. If you want to tell the story of the first-day uses of the stamp, then you might consider a First Day Cover exhibit. If you are interested in Postal History, you might tell the story of a particular post office or you might choose to study post offices in the area where you live.

As you can see, there are many choices for type of exhibit, and

aerophilately, revenue, cinderella and illustrated mail were not mentioned. Several sources are available to assist you. Visit the APS web site (www.stamps.org), purchase the *Manual of Philatelic Judging* (a new edition will be available at or after Ameri-Stamp Expo in February 2009), request materials from the *American Philatelic Research Library* (APRL), visit the AAPE web site (www.aape.org), or find philatelic friends or mentors to help you.

Thinking about the type of exhibit has involved our interactive process again as we consider exhibit idea, story, material and how these fit with a particular type of exhibit. If you have worked this far in getting your exhibit started, you've made excellent progress. I know that you are excited about your exhibit and, I, along with you, look forward to seeing your exhibit in the frames at the next stamp show in your area.

References:

Manual of Philatelic Judging, Fifth Edition. 2002. American Philatelic Society, State College PA.

"A hard beginning maketh a good ending."

Do you have a problem page that needs fixing? Or have you fixed a page that had always been problematic? Tell us! We want to learn. Janet Klug shares a problem page from one of her exhibits.

Problem pages

Having big stuff means big problems when mounting an exhibit. Most of the big stuff one encounters in an exhibit are large covers. You know — the business-sized envelopes that some people mount on a diagonal and others mount horizontal on double pages.

Yes, those are big things. Well, bigger than a postage stamp any-

The first thing to ask yourself is “do I really NEED to put this monster in my exhibit?” Maybe the honest answer to that is “no.” Sometimes we fall in love with something and think it has to go into the exhibit. Step back from it and observe the 10,000 foot view. If the monster doesn’t go into the exhibit, will the story suffer? Can you make the point some other way? Or is

into the frame, but you have to figure out how to get the text that explains the monster into the frame and you have to figure out how to get the monster to the show in one piece. Having a big hunk of “something” that needs to be shipped and mounted by someone other than yourself is too risky. You really need to do that yourself, and that is also going to require you traveling with the monster.

For those of you who have been on an airplane recently, you know that checked bags can’t be locked and can be rifled by TSA agents who don’t know and don’t



A double page and a single page mounted triptych-style helped solve the problem of how to mount a large full sheet of overprinted stamps.

way. But I’m talking about a really, really BIG monster of a thing. Like, for example, an entire sheet of stamps. Not a block, not a pane...a full sheet. Now what the heck are you going to do with that, pray tell?

this a “hit ‘em over the head and knock their socks off” kind of item? If it is, then you have to be creative about figuring out how to get it into the frames.

Not only do you have to figure out how to get the monster

care about philatelic materials. Your monster is in danger. And if you try to shove your monster in your carry-on bag, it may not fit without damage. Driving with the monster is just about the only available option.

“Without change there is no innovation, creativity, or incentive for improvement.”

WILLIAM POLLARD

Unless, of course, you can creatively cram the monster into standard-sized pages without doing him any harm.

My most recent monster (and I have had many) is a full sheet of overprinted stamps used by Australian soldiers who occupied Japan at the end of World War II. It is a nice piece, and I love it. The 10,000 foot view told me that this was the best way to show the printing varieties that occurred throughout the sheet that consists of a left pane and a right pane — a total of 160 stamps. I had also done some original research and discovered previously unrecorded varieties. So yeah, I needed to show this piece.

The double-page route was an option for this, but the sheet took up nearly the entire double page spread. I still needed descriptive text and maybe enlargements of the varieties so they could be easily appreciated.

I needed more room. The only way I was going to get the room was to add another page, only I didn't need a whole page, I only needed a part of a page. You know, exhibiting is a good way to drive yourself (and those who live with you) nuts.

So to solve this problem, I took out three blank pages of exhibit paper and laid them side by side on my work table. I put my monster sheet into a Mylar sleeve. I put the sleeved sheet on the three pages. Where would the

scans go? The best place was as close to the stamps as possible, so that meant around the edges of the sheet.

Well, there was no room around the edges at the top and bottom of the sheet, so that just left the left and right sides of the sheet. So I moved the sheet over to make room on the left side. That meant the sheet took a good part of the first sheet and all of the second sheet, leaving the third sheet blank.

If I used a few inches of the left side of the third sheet, I could add more scans, but that meant I had a huge bunch of that page with nothing on it.

In reviewing the remaining materials I had for this exhibit, I found some covers bearing this stamp that also had varieties found on the sheet of stamps. Voila! I could fill the rest of that page with a couple of covers that also fit the point I was trying to make which was constant varieties found throughout the sheet.

The next problem to solve was how to draw attention to the varieties within the sheet. I would need a lot more text to explain where the varieties were, when a simple diagram would suffice. Then I had a “eureka!” moment, and the next thing I knew I was cutting apart a perfectly good (and expensive) 11 X 17-inch Mylar sleeve and drawing little arrows on it. When I put the sleeve on top of the sheet of stamps, the arrows were just where they needed to be to illustrate the location of the varieties.

Pages one and two in this triptych fit into an 11 X 17-inch Mylar sleeve. The third page could be in a sleeve of its own, thus taming the monster and making him almost “mailable,” if you are willing to ship your exhibit.

Do you have a problem page you want some help with? Or have you solved an exhibiting problem? Send a scan and your ideas to the editor, Janet Klug, tongajan@aol.com.

Make your reservations NOW!

The Festival for Philatelic Women

\$85 includes meals

Make check payable to

Women Exhibitors

7227 Sparta Road

Sebring, FL 33875

E-mail: WEfestival@comcast.net

“Innovation is not the product of logical thought, although the result is tied to logical structure.”

ALBERT EINSTEIN

Festival for Philatelic Women

May 28—31, 2009

At the American Philatelic Center, Bellefonte, PA

Activities & events for all skill levels.

Preliminary list of seminars & speakers



Open to all, but
philately is ex-
plored from a
woman's point of
view

Women in philately: Where we were, where we are and where we're going	Cheryl Ganz
Family correspondence & research	Charles Verge
Creating a philatelic exhibit workshop	Ruth Caswell
Stamp Saturday (A program for beginners)	Gretchen Moody
Learn, do, teach...mentoring new collectors	Janet Houser
Collecting & exhibiting picture postcards	Barb Harrison
Using Photoshop Elements for exhibit pages	Barb Boal
Experiences & evolution of an exhibitor	Marj Sente
Using the American Philatelic Research Library	Gini Horn
Creating 3-D exhibits	Cheryl Edgcomb
Philatelic elements in thematic exhibits	Denise Stotts
Layout & design for album & exhibit pages	Barb Boal
How to organize your collection or exhibit	Janet Klug
How to get what you want from a dealer	Sue Dempsey
How exhibits are judged	Roundtable discussion
Artful philately	Betsey Carter
Title page & synopsis workshop	Patricia Stilwell Walker
Exhibiting & judging display exhibits	Liz Hisey
Using stamps in scrapbooking	Denise Lazaroff

To register (\$85 includes meals) contact:

Women Exhibitors
7227 Sparta Road
Sebring, FL 33875
E-Mail: WEfestival@comcast.net

"If you're not failing every now and again, it's a sign you're not doing anything very innovative."

WOODY ALLEN