

STORY BEHIND THE COVER

I like a good cover when it has a super juicy story behind it. Recently, as many of you know, I obtained a lot of old naval covers, and while going through them, I discovered two covers from the U.S.S. SIRIUS – a cargo ship from the 1920–1930 period. My first cover is dated 24 September 1927 when the ship is in San Diego, and has two cancels, one from the ship and one from the city post office. The second, and the interesting cover, is dated 25 Apr 1932 aboard the vessel, and addressed to a "Mary Townsend, Keysville, Virginia." Keysville, VA, is a small village about 60 miles south of Richmond on the Richmond–Danville Railroad line in Lunenburg County. The letter inside the cover was written by "S. Ward" and reads in part:

"Mary, my sweet one, ****Miss you like a fish out of water.****You are the only reason I get up in the morning.****I will get to Norfolk, hitch a train to Rmond and to K ville and spend 30 days with you. Get ready!!! Are you ready toots?****Your seagoing man." I contacted a mate in Lunenburg about S. Ward and Mary Townsend and he wrote back. "Prior to television, three events were talked about in Keysville – 1. The arrival of the railroad, 2. The arrival of the Yankee Army, and 3. Mary Townsend." Miss Townsend was what they called a "modern girl" in 1932. Still a teenager, she turned quite a few heads and a lot of eyebrows. She smoked in public, wore silk stockings, danced all night, drove like crazy, flirted with all the tobacco farmers, and she loved jazz music. Special prayers were said in the churches on Sunday to save the sole of Ms Townsend. To make a long story short, she left S. Ward standing on the church steps as she drove off to the big cities of Richmond and Baltimore. Papa Ward was irate, especially since he was setting in the church at the time – thinking about the money he had spent on the wedding. Papa Ward organized a search party to go rescue Ms. Townsend. Alas, they could not find her, and S. Ward went bananas. The navy took a dim view of the fact he did not return after his leave was up and came looking for him. When the shore patrol (?) arrived, he went into the tobacco barn to shoot himself – however he botch the job. He was sent to the funny farm where he stayed for several years, and upon his release, he started searching for Mary. He never did find her; it was rumored that she studied art in Baltimore, caught the eye of a proper but wealthy Scotsman and went to live in Scotland. S. Ward never did get over the fact that Mary dumped him, and moved to Farmville where he finally married one of the nurses he met at the funny farm. (Continued on the next page.)

Is the story true? I have no reason to think otherwise, my mate in Lunenburg knows the local history of the county and is a member of the church that prayed for Mary Townsend, so he should be knowledgeable and truthful about the events. Nevertheless, he has been known to spin a yarn or two, but its a great cover with an interesting love letter inside. Who did the drawing on the cover? S. Ward when he posted it to Mary? Did Mary take the cover with her and while studying art, do the drawing? Or was the drawing done later by Mary or by the collector in Bristol that ended up with the cover? Who knows? Who really cares? Its a great cover for a cargo ship. What happened to the ship? There is another story. Isn't collecting covers really great? Three cheers to Mary Townsend -who by today's standards would be quite a proper lady.



The Ward-Townsend cover from the U.S.S. SIRIUS. Watercolours with ink. Two cent Washington red stamp from the booklet issue, rotary press printing, Scotts' 583a, perf. 10, franked with three bar ship canceling device, 25 August 1932. (From the collection of ACE 242) Story by ACE 242.

ACE 17, Ken Jenkins had the idea for the Great ACE Day in 1987. There has been seven GADs as of today. ACE 80 - 1994; ACE 242 - 1993, plus five others - and what happened to ACE 17?



ACE 179, Jim Eckert, Bastrop, Texas.

In his garage in Upland, Jim Eckert makes canes in a variety of shapes and sizes and with different kinds of wood.

Upland man raising canes to perfection

by Linda S. Renken
Chronicle-Tribune

In the corner of Jim Eckert's front porch is a basket filled with canes.

"I've got oranges. I've got apples. And everything is a different wood," Eckert says of his canes. He holds up one cane with a hollow metal ball on the end. "This one is made of a metal stick. And that money in there is mad money."

Unlike the typical cane with a hook-shaped end, each handle of Eckert's canes is unique. He has a cane topped with an Eastbrook black panther, another topped with a wooden elephant with ivory tusks, and another made from a wooden bannister and doorknob from the Austin, Texas, courthouse.

During a visit to Austin, construction work was being done on the courthouse. As Eckert picked up the bannister a construction worker told him he couldn't take it. So Eckert put the bannister down, waited until the construction worker wasn't looking, and tucked it under his arm.

Eckert started making canes three years ago when he began having problems with his right knee.

Eckert wasn't satisfied with the hooked cane a salesman showed him at a local drug store.

"You aren't going to make an old man out of me," he said he told a sales clerk. Eckert then decided to make his own canes.

In his garage at 509 S. Main St., Upland, Eckert crafts the canes, often from branches

he gets from the woods behind his home.

"There's nothing behind us, between here and Hartford City. So you know how many trees I have," he said pointing to the woods.

From a 3- or 4-foot-long stick, Eckert cuts a 32- to 34-inch cane that he smooths, paints or lacquers, then tops with a handle.

One of the first canes Eckert made he topped with a pin cushion.

"I didn't know how to make them then," he said holding the top of the cane as the pin cushion wobbled.

Since then, Eckert has pieced together between 100 and 150 canes.

"My latest invention is to make a cane with a seat," he said.

With a hooked cane, Eckert has fastened a small, round plastic disc, and two fold-up alu-

minum posts, that unfolds and can be used as a chair.

"I have to come up with legs heavier than aluminum. But I'll come up with it. You name it, I'll make it," he said.

Eckert won't take money for his canes.

"I don't sell them," he said "I give them away. Somebody says 'Hey, I have a back knee.' Come over."

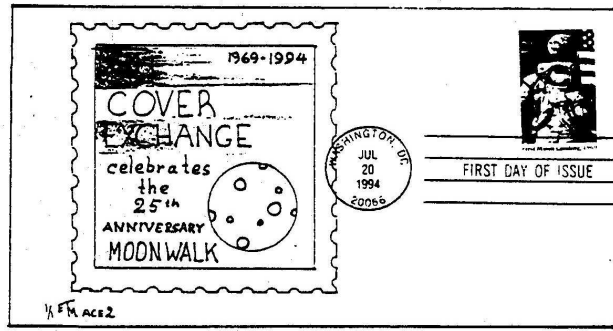
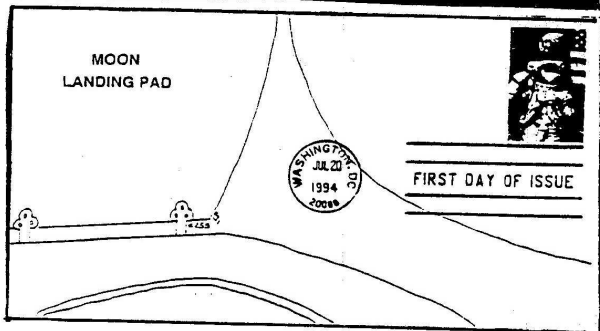
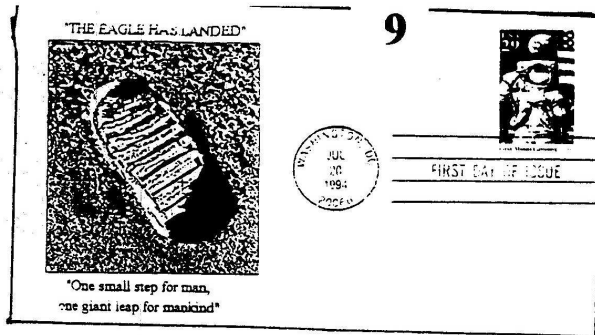
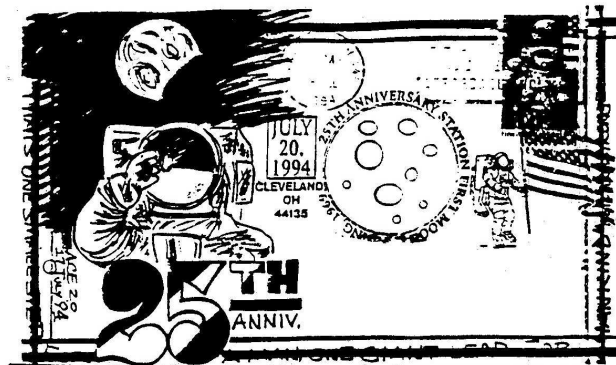
Often, Eckert crafts canes from what appears to be useless pieces of wood.

"Here's one that was just a stick," he said "I seen it on the tree and made a cane out of it," he said, "This is all junk wood here. The cane here is out of a cedar post. The guy in the road said it's over 100 years old.

"(And) here's one to go to church," he said holding up a plain black cane with a cue ball handle. "A less novelty one."

ACE REGIONAL MEETING

All ACE members living in or near the Buckeye State will be able to attend a Regional ACE Meeting to be held during the B.R.S.C. (a stamp club) meeting, 19 to 20 November 1994. The show will be held near Elyria, Ohio, as ACE 20 will be the ACE host. ACE 20 will show several frames of his collection of ACE covers. For more information, as to location and time, please contact ACE 20 - Gonzalo Delgado. I would like to advise our Buckeye members to invite a certain neighbor of theirs from the Wolverine State to teach them the proper protocol of howling - then they can have half as much fun as we did during the annual show in Florida.



THE FACES OF AN ACE FIRST DAY COVER

The covers above, all first day of issue of the Moon Landing Anniversary, were accomplished by five different ACE members. It is great to see that ACE has a wide arrange of styles and ideas. Covers from top right in order are: ACE 20, Charlie Delgado; ACE 244, Don Thompson; (second row) ACE 242, Prof. Thom; and ACE 242, Prof Thom; (bottom row), ACE 255, Sharolyn Chicoine; and ACE 2, Edith Medley. Four of these covers will be offered for sale in the next ACE Auction. ACE 244's The Eagle Has Landed; ACE 242's "Darling Look you can see the man in the Moon", ACE 242's moon, and ACE 2's Cover Exchange.

There is a story behind ACE 255's cover. When my post lady delivered it, she had been looking at the cover since leaving the post office and could not quite understand the design, and only upon ringing our door bell to deliver a another registered letter did she realize what she was looking at, and broke down into laughter. Her comment, "You can tell its a 'man who went to the moon', he left the lid up."

Horrrifying Halloween Face Contest

Last years HHF contest was a great success with bunches of entries, so here we go again.

RULES:

- 1) Place your scariest Halloween Face art on a #6 envelope. Nothing else will be judged, just faces. Human/Humanoid faces only--no animals. The more color you use the better.
- 2) Place your membership number and "HHF" on the back.
- 3) Stamp in upper right corner, cancel on October 30 (Saturday) if at all possible.
- 4) Limit of two entries per member.
- 5) Mail as is, or we recommend placing in another envelope to:

Grand Master of Fright
Charlie Delgado
231 Warren Ave.
Elyria, OH 44035-6237

- 6) Ch. Delgado will arrange to have covers judged. Judges decision is final.

- 7) Three prizes will be awarded through Vice President Warren Lange. Prizes will be for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd.

CALLING ALL TRIVIA LOVERS

For the ACE trivia lovers: What King of England was so short that after he death and when his body was sent to be buried, they misplaced it and could not find it until 200 years later. Hint: He was an adult and he died in 1649.

Charles I (Charles Stuart, 1600-1649), King of England - 1625 - 1649. He was known as the midget king, and then when he was beheaded in 1649, he was even shorted. His body, by mistake was put in the incorrect casket, that of a child's and was lost for 200 years.

OCTOBER'S COVERS

Your October Newsletter will be posted to you in envelopes thanks to several ACE members. I have several covers left over from each former 1994 postings that I am mixing together to use for October's posting. Thanks to all ACE members that sent newsletter covers in 1994. I do need volunteers to help with November and December mailings.

