How, What and Why of Exhibiting, by Allan M. Cunningham

You first have first have to make the big decision:

What will you exhibit?
What Subject or category do you want to exhibit?
Do you have the material to put together an exhibit?
Do you have the philatelic knowledge and also why would
your exhibit is interesting to others?

How will you exhibit?
Decided on pages Style: plain, boarded, other?
How will you display the material?
Will it be stamps, stamps and covers, covers and other?
How big do you want your exhibit?
16 pages or do you have enough to do 160 Pages?

Do you want to do hand writing, type written or computer generated?
Will you have a cover (Head page tells about exhibit)?
Will your exhibit be in a special order?
Will your material fit the page?
Is your material sound and good condition?
Do you know how you will mount your exhibit?
Will you use hinges, picture mounts, and stamp mounts (what kind and Color)?
Do you use sheet protectors (archival what kind to preserve you exhibit.)
Can you write information in an abrevated format and make
Each page in your exhibit easy to read and checked grammar
And spelling?

Do you know who your judges will be at a judged exhibit and why?
Do you know your category and how it will be judged on points?
Do you know what awards are available?

Now after all that why did you want to exhibit? For yourself?
Sharing your knowledge with others? Sharing a view of your
collecting interest to interest others in what you collect or exhibit?
To win an award?
It does take some time and planing. I have put together and award
Winning exhibit in as little as 72 hours* or years.
*I have done the put together in 72 hours but took ten years to get all the
information and material together. Thanks to the computer
and it has pretty much replaced the typewriter as much as cd's and
DVD's replaced vinyl records and tapes.

YOUR TITLE PAGE IS VERY IMPORTANT

Don't waste this page showing off a pretty picture that describes your topic. . . or spend the space telling the story of how your subject came to be. Use it to tell the judge what you are attempting to do. . . what you are about to show him. Don't be afraid to softly point out the key items in your exhibit (it demonstrates significance). A good hint: Under your "exhibit title," show off a key cover. . . then below it, describe your exhibit ending with a list of main items in it.

TEN THINGS YOU ALWAYS MUST DO

1. Be neat. Keep your pages clean, symmetrical in layout.
2. Keep your write-ups as brief as possible. When they're not needed, don't use them just to fill space.
3. Always keep your exhibit "outline" in mind.
4. Be courteous and receptive to all judges' criticisms.
5. Watch what other exhibitors are doing. Pick up ideas.
6. Keep your typewriter keys clean.
7. Exhibit stamps, covers in the best condition obtainable.
8. Do your title page last. . . after collecting all your thoughts.
9. Read the APS "Manual of Philatelic Judging" (Your "bible").
10. Keep coming back for more. . . no matter what award is achieved. Try always to improve your exhibit between shows.

15 THINGS YOU MUST NEVER DO

1. Use less than superior page stock.
2. Allow spelling errors or "typeovers" in your write-ups.
3. Overwhelm your stamps, covers with big maps, "unphilatelic" items like photographs, locks of hair.
4. Mount too many stamps on a page. (Avoid overcrowding.)
5. Praise your own material ("this is a lovely cover").
6. List catalog numbers.
7. Use the word, "rare," in your descriptions.
8. Mix mint and used stamps on the same page.
9. Use your own name anywhere in the exhibit.
10. Mount more than three covers on a page.
11. Use colored page stock (like black, yellow, etc.).
12. Be discourteous and pushy at a judges' critique.
13. Fail to view your exhibit as constantly evolving.
14. Exhibit a fake or forgery without describing same.
15. Exhibit material that you do not own, yourself.

WHEN YOU'RE READY . . .

Or even before. Write to several stamp shows and get their entry blanks. Get your feet wet. Enter four or five frames in a smaller stamp show. Await the results. . . then go back to work. As you do, the pride of accomplishment will slowly put a new gleam in your eye!

AND BY ALL MEANS, JOIN WITH US!

Like hundreds of other novice exhibitors, become a member of the AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF PHILATELIC EXHIBITORS. Use our services, read "The Philatelic Exhibitor," our exciting journal. You'll belong to one of philately's friendliest clubs where help is always handy. If you don't have an application, SEND A SASE TO: AAPE, P.O. Box 12, Boys Town, NE 68010. (Or you can join right away. Just send your name, membership number in a philatelic organization, and dues. [$10.00 Jan-Mar; $7.50 Apr-Jun; $5.00 July-Sept; $12.50 Oct-Dec.] Mail to the preceding address.)

GETTING STARTED IN PHILATELIC EXHIBITING

By Randy L. Neil

INTRODUCTION

It was a cold October day back in 1955 when I took my very first exhibit to the Olathe, Kansas Stamp Club's annual show. And I was shivering more because of my fears than the weather. Was my stuff good enough to win an award?

Since that special day I have never given a thought about NOT being a philatelic exhibitor. The benefits are too exciting and too numerous to keep me away! Consider, for instance:

My collections (exhibits) are always organized. Putting together exhibits makes them that way. I meet new friends all the time. . . many of whom tell me things I never knew, know where to get things I couldn't find before. My exhibits inform people about my specialty. . . it's fun to teach. Word gets out about what I collect thus helping me find new sources. And the awards. . . well, they are tangible proof of philatelic achievement.

This could be YOU, too. For once you have entered your first exhibit. . . the fun, the extra effort, the excitement and, yes, even the frustrations will give your hobby a bold new dimension. So come on in. . . the water is wonderful!

HERE'S A LITTLE TIP TO KEEP IN MIND

America is a competitive country. . . it's our lifeblood. Americans compete when they bowl, fish, play golf. . . and even when they try to be top bidder at a stamp auction. Philatelic exhibiting, 90% of the time, is competitive. My advice: be ready to not receive the award you think you deserve. And then. . . don't worry about it! Hard knocks can only make your exhibits get better. Never fail to accept criticism gracefully (it paves the road to success). And by the way, if you're an AAPE member, you've got a head start. The experts are always here to serve you after the show closes.

Published In Benefit To The

LET'S EXPLODE ONE OF PHILATELY'S BIG MYTHS

"Exhibiting is tough. I could never do it. My collection isn't good enough and I don't know the first thing about 'page layout' and write-ups. I could never win an award."

"Balderdash!" as my mother used to say. Anyone (ANYone) can be an exhibitor. Why? How? Because there's plenty of help out there. . . AND it isn't all that hard to begin with. Many people win national gold medals. Well, you're kidding yourself if you think you can't do it, too. Assemble a few good (cheap) tools. . . start out with a plan. . . get some advice. . . then go to it.

SET A GOAL FOR YOURSELF

Be realistic when you start out. Eventually, you might wish to receive a national gold medal. . . but for now, set your sights on a gold medal on the local/regional show level. Perhaps, also, a national silver medal. These are "reachable" heights. Thereafter, follow the judges' criticisms and watch the results. In all cases, though. . . be pragmatic. Few people achieve major awards up front.

SUBJECT MATTER SELECTION: A KEY TO SUCCESS

Philatelic exhibiting is demonstrating to a panel of judges that you have: 1. some philatelic knowledge; 2. have gone to extra lengths searching out unusual items for your exhibit; and 3. worked on your specialty enough to offer a good representative showing of it.

Success doesn't come easily when you throw a display of easy-to-buy-anywhere 1950's vintage first day covers into the exhibit frames. Or all the butterflies printed on stamps since 1972. That material doesn't require much knowledge. . . nor much waiting to fill want lists. An exhibitor must show he has devoted serious time to building his collection.

BUT. . . assembling a good, exhibit-quality collection doesn't mean spending big dollars, either. The essential exhibit of our US Transportation coils has yet to be shown. . . and it is a potential high achiever if done properly. Never be turned off by the "big money" exhibits, also.

THE TOOLS OF THE EXHIBITOR'S TRADE

Good exhibit-quality pages. See a local printer. Have him cut you some 100 lb. white (Bristol) page stock size 8½" x 11." And don't have him print the title of your specialty on each page. Not needed. Want to exhibit 80 pages in the frames? Then buy 250 pages. You'll make some mistakes.

A clean, well-adjusted typewriter. Hopefully, with a carbon ribbon which gives a clear, precise impression. (Some people will want to hand-letter their pages. Fine, if you're good at it and want to take the time.) The best typewriter for exhibitors: the IBM Selectric with interchangeable typeface "balls."

Clear, plastic rulers. In several lengths. You can see through them so you'll always see your work as you do it.

A SAFE (brand) paper-cutting guillotine. About $8. Sold to cut SAFE mounts to size. . . but very handy for trimming anything paper.

Soft lead pencils. Nice for making little marks to help remind you where you plan to mount stamps, covers. . . type write-ups, etc.

Art gum eraser. Erases those pencil marks and smudgy fingerprints.

Lots of plain typing paper. Handy for laying out your pages in pencil before actually doing them on your good page stock.

Tracing templates. In clear plastic (at art stores), they're great for tracing good circles (for postmarks), ovals, squares, anything.

Patience, peace, quiet, some crackers to nibble on. Don't get the crumbs on your pages.

ORGANIZING YOUR EXHIBIT

An exhibit should have a beginning, middle, end. Tell a story. Jot down the key exhibitable items in your collection. Outline them into a viable beginning, middle, end just as you did with your high school term paper.

Next, assemble your items in your stockbook (or present album) in the order you wish to mount them. Suddenly, your collection is getting organized! You also discover where the gaps are. Well, even with those gaps. . . go ahead and start your exhibit. Fill the gaps when you can.

While doing all this. . . view exhibits at nearby shows. Start a little notebook and gather some ideas. The exhibit begins to take shape in your mind.

PAGE LAYOUT

Anyone can do it. Just remember one word: symmetry. Headlines that sit smack in the middle between a page's two sides. Write-ups the same. Stamps, covers, postmark tracings. . . the same. (Well, some people do it asymmetrically. . . but that can wait.) Balance something at the top of your page (a cover, a write-up) with something at the bottom (another cover. . . a write-up, postmark tracing, etc.).

Now prepare several test pages. Heading at the top ("Shades Of The Three Cent 1938 Issue"). Brief write-up below the heading (tell why there are so many shades). Under the write-up. . . mount seven stamps showing shades—3 on top row, 4 on row below it. Under stamps, mount nice cover showing the weirdest shade actually being used. Give brief write-up describing same right under cover.

How do they look? Ask around. Your wife. Fellow collectors. Read the AAPE journal. Get criticism. Go back to work. You're off and running.

WRITE-UPS

Here's another word: Brief. In fact, VERY brief. Judges want most to see your stamps, covers—not get bogged down with wordy write-ups. Do them as if you're having to pay $10 a word! Proper length? NEVER anything more than five lines long. You can have more than one write-up paragraph on a page. . . never more than three, four. Say only what needs to be said.

Wrong way: "This stamp was in use over 16 years. During that period many ink pigments were used, thus, producing many different shades."

Right way: "Variations in ink pigments over 16 years produced numerous shades."

Simple? Of course.