

A journal that reports about and studies the myriad markings
added to a letter that explain how it reached its final destination.

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ANTHONY S. WAWRUKIEWICZ

September 29, 1943–July 11, 2023

TONY WAWRUKIEWICZ, of Portland, Oregon, died July 11, 2023. He was 79. Tony was founding editor of *Auxiliary Markings*, journal of the Auxiliary Markings Club, a position he held for twenty years, and was an honorary life member of the Club. He contributed much of the journal's content. His articles also appeared in *The United States Specialist*, *Meter Stamp Society Quarterly Bulletin*, *Australasian Informer*, and *Linn's Stamp News*, where he authored a long-running column on modern U.S. postal history.

His major contributions to postal history include two landmark books with Henry W. Beecher: *U.S. Domestic Postal Rates 1872–2011*, and *U.S. International Postal Rates 1872–1996* in several editions. He also authored books on the domestic and international postal rates of Canada and Great Britain.

Other titles which he wrote include *The Forwarding of Mail by the U.S. Post Office Department 1792–2001*, *Insights into U.S. Postal History 1855–2016*, *Further Insights into U.S. Postal History 1794–2019*, *New York Auxiliary Markings 1798–2022*, *Redirected Mail*, *The Liberty Series*, co-authored with C. David Eeles and Ken Lawrence, and *The Uses of U.S. Postage Due Stamps and Their Substitutes 1879–2023*, co-authored with Arnold Selengut.

Working with others in the hobby, Tony contributed essential online references that are major resources for United States collectors: the *U.S. Postal Bulletin* and *Postal Laws and Regulations* (PL&R). He was an accredited philatelic judge and occasional exhibitor, served on the PIPEX show committee, and taught at the APS Summer Seminars.

Tony received many honors that recognize his contributions to the hobby. He received the APS Luff Award for distinguished philatelic research (2002), the APS Charles J. Peterson philatelic literature life achievement award (2020) and was elected to the Writers Unit Hall of Fame in 2013. The U.S. Philatelic Classics Society awarded him the Elliott Perry Cup (1999), the Stanley Ashbrook Cup (2001), and named him a Distinguished Philatelist (2008). The American Philatelic Congress honored him with the Diane D. Boehret award (1998).

Tony was born in 1943 in Santa Ana, California, to Margaret and Waldemar Wawrukiewicz. As part of an Air Force family, he grew up in Libya, Germany, West Virginia,



Photo by Mary Wawrukiewicz;
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and California. He finished high school in San Francisco, attended college at Santa Clara University, and completed a PhD in astronomy at the University of Rochester.

While in Rochester, he met Mary Huntsinger; they married in 1968 and had two daughters, Carol and Ann. Tony was a professor of astronomy at Western Kentucky University for five years before returning to school, this time to study medicine. He graduated from the University of Louisville medical school in 1979 and moved to Oregon for his residency at Oregon Health & Science University (OHSU). He worked as a radiologist at Kaiser in Portland until his retirement in 2003.

In addition to his philatelic pursuits, Tony was an avid gardener, talented photographer, enthusiastic musician, and dedicated San Francisco Giants fan. He coached his daughters' softball teams for many years and was a longtime volunteer for local organizations including Neighborhood House and the St. Vincent de Paul food program.

Tony is survived by his wife of 55 years, Mary; his two children, Carol (Lloyd) and Ann; and two grandchildren. He was predeceased by his sisters, Margaret and Mary.

[Thanks to Alan Warren for preparing a wonderful philatelic obituary for Tony. I supplemented Alan's work with information from Tony's obituary on OregonLive.com. -Ed]

Tony W—An Appreciation

by John M. Hotchner

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TONY W. was a force of nature, and his contributions to U.S. philately are monumental. Both those statements need to be given a bit of context. Before Tony came on the scene in the early 1990s, there had been a developing movement toward cover collecting by a large number of serious U.S. philatelists. But there was a problem in that information about rates and services represented by stamps on the covers was dispersed in a wide range of publications; some long out of print, and others quite obscure.

It was also often contradictory. For this part of the hobby to grow, someone had to step forward and bring order out of chaos. Tony had been working with rates researcher Henry W. Beecher, who had amassed a great deal of rate information, but passed away in 1992, before he could make sense of it all. Tony set himself the task of doing just that in book form. The first iteration of *U.S. Domestic Postal Rates, 1872–1996* was released in 1997, and rapidly became a “must have” for every serious collector of U.S. postal history.

He subsequently revised and updated it; the last time being 2011. “Tony W’s rate book” became and remains an instantly recognizable bit of shorthand among postal history collectors.

But rates information—first for the U.S., then followed up by *U.S. International Postal Rates, 1872–1996*—was only the start for Tony. The gigantic topic of mail handling next drew Tony’s attention, and it is fair to say that if you gave Tony a cover that needed to be diagnosed (one that no one else could figure out), Tony would come up with the explanation more often than not. And if he couldn’t explain it he would add the question to his unresolved list, and run it down later. He was absolutely relentless in gaining an understanding of every aspect of mail handling.

This led to the publishing of several additional books containing in-depth research on classes of mail handling and

the auxiliary markings typically used to document delays in the mails. When I say in depth, it was not enough to lay out what was known. Tony endeavored to establish when use of auxiliary markings began, their basis in law and regulation, and how they were used, and often, misused. Add to this his contributions to books and magazines others have published and since 2004, his monthly articles published in *Linn’s Stamp News*, which have gone a long way toward legitimizing modern postal history.

These are by no means all of his contributions. He worked diligently to make available on the Internet the official publications of the Post Office Department and U.S. Postal Service so that other students and even casual collectors could diagnose their covers.

Indeed, he was all about developing the next generation of scholars by providing research resources, but also by example. It is especially noteworthy that he was the founding editor of our club’s quarterly journal from 2003–2022. In that role he served as a guide, mentor, friendly critic, collaborator and model for many of the authors we have come to see regularly in the pages of *Auxiliary Markings*.

I first met Tony as he was working on his first rate book and was immediately impressed by his vision, his level of effort, and his devotion to scholarship. Over the years, I was privileged to work with him on several projects and to mentor him as a philatelic judge and exhibitor (where he certainly broke new ground in modern postal history). So, part of his passing is a personal loss of a friend and colleague. But also I feel the loss to the hobby of a truly great philatelist whose work will shine as a beacon.

It is said that each generation stands on the shoulders of the generation before. Tony is now one of those who will be a model for many generations to come of a researcher, writer, exhibitor, talent scout, and editor.

Anthony S. Wawrukiewicz, PhD, MD, Philatelist

by Douglas B. Quine, PhD

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ANTHONY (TONY) WAWRUKIEWICZ was the quintessential philatelist. His expertise in postal history, markings, rates, and literature was unmatched. His writing and editorial skills enabled him to communicate this information in lively articles to the philatelic community. As founding editor of *Auxiliary Markings*, he wrote countless articles, edited, and laid out 76 consecutive quarterly issues over 19 years to the delight of the membership. Tony’s ability to clean up incomplete overprinted auxiliary markings and present them in the original dimensions was almost magical. In the background, he patiently compiled and published online the critical U.S. Postal Bulletins providing essential reference material for postal historians.

Through 20 years of collaboration, I learned that Tony and his wife, Mary, shared my love of the number 13. They were engaged on a 13th and were married on July 13 as were my wife Maryclaire and I. When I completed my chapter on the 30-year history of POSTNET barcodes for Tony’s 13-chapter book *Insights into U.S. Postal History, 1855–2016*, I asked if mine could be chapter 13. Tony hesitated, but I pointed out that chronologically my story was the most recent and he relented.

The album is closed but Tony’s philatelic legacy in books, newsletters, articles, and mentored students lives on. He will be missed.

An Appreciation

by **Ralph Nafziger**

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FROM THE time I first met Tony about 25 years ago, he was my philatelic mentor. We engaged in many discussions regarding exhibit subjects and ways to improve our exhibits. Tony enthusiastically encouraged me to continue my exhibiting activities. His ideas bore fruit over the years for me. He was a superb accredited national judge, who judged many of my exhibits and always had constructive and useful comments leading to many improvements.

When I became president of the Auxiliary Markings Club in 2008, Tony, as editor, encouraged me to write for the club's publication *Auxiliary Markings*. He was supportive of my writing, and published my articles and reports promptly.

Tony was editor of the award-winning *Auxiliary Markings* journal from its inception in January 2004 through the end of 2022. This represented a remarkable period of nearly 20 years. He also authored many informative articles for the publication. His other writing activities included a monthly column in *Linn's Stamp News*, among many other philatelic publications.

Tony always supported and enhanced my efforts to improve the club and make it more relevant to its members. He was a major contributor and asset to the popular "show and tell" sessions held each year at the WSP show that hosted the club as a convening society, and at the annual APS winter and summer shows. He always brought and discussed interesting covers that he had found in digging through dealers'

boxes at various shows. I remember the enthusiastic delight on Tony's face whenever he found a cover with an unusual auxiliary marking that he had not previously seen. He was anxious to show and describe the cover to everyone.

Tony was an accomplished national exhibitor, whose exhibits won many large gold and gold medals, as well as special society awards. He chaired the PIPEX show from 2014 to 2018. Prior to that, he was the show's exhibits chair. He continued as the PIPEX committee secretary, jury organizer, and convening societies chair.

Tony's contributions to the hobby were of great importance. His numerous books on postal history, auxiliary markings, and postage rates are the standard references. I use his rates books frequently. He was responsible for making the Postal Bulletins and Postal Laws and Regulations available online for everyone at no cost.

It was my pleasure to write Tony's citation for the PIPEX Service Award that he deservedly won in 2022, the first year that this award was offered. As awards chair for PIPEX, I relied on Tony to provide the certificates for all of the show's exhibits, a task for which he volunteered every year. He accomplished this job cheerfully and on time, including for PIPEX 2023. The certificates always were well done.

We will all miss him and his many contributions to the hobby.

What I Learned From Tony W.

by **Gregg Redner, PhD**

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THE YEAR was 1990 and I was deeply into the world of Canadian philately. I had just purchased what I then thought was "a spectacular" 1861 Canadian business cover, which had been mailed from Montreal to Essex, Connecticut. The cover was paid to the border by Canadian postage, but also had U.S. postage on it as well. All of this was complicated by a postage due mark.

I could not for the life of me figure out what was going on with this cover. Luckily for me, I showed it to a friend of mine named Alan McDougall, who passed it around our local stamp club. They were all stumped, but upon returning the cover Alan handed me a piece of paper with an address for a mysterious gent who everyone referred to as Tony W. He suggested that I write to this Tony W. and send him a photo of my cover. He said that they all agreed that if anyone could solve the puzzle, it was Tony W. I was fascinated by the mysterious way that this Tony W. was spoken about. Of course, I learned later on that this was because his family name was not an easy one for anyone except his family to pronounce and spell.

Off went the letter to Tony W. Little did I know that three weeks later I would receive a reply that would change my philatelic life. The response from Tony was four typed pages in length and included volumes of fascinating and thought-provoking information. Tony's response didn't just answer my question about the cover, it opened an entire world of philately to me. He explained every marking on that cover. He explained the routing and the delays. He explained how and where the postage due was collected and what would have happened to my cover had it not been picked up by the addressee. In essence he showed me that a nice little cover contained a world—a world I had no idea existed.

I am sure that Tony W. never thought about that letter again, but to this intermediate collector it was a revelation. His letter taught me to love auxiliary markings. His letter taught me to research my collection. His letter taught me that sharing one's knowledge with the other philatelists is not only a nice thing to do, but also the right thing to do. The gift of that letter led me down a path from which I have never looked back. That is what Tony W. taught me.

An Appreciation

by **Tim Bartshe**

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TONY WAWRUKIEWICZ was a friend, a fellow judge and Luff Award winner. His award was earned through hard work, steady thought and study for his Research Award.

Tony decided to focus on an area that was not as popular of an area of collecting as most of us seek out in our philatelic-focused endeavors. No, I coined the phrase for Tony as Mr. Dumpster Diver. He collected what others threw out, modern postal history.

His exhibiting success, through diligence and perseverance was a modern “who cares” issue that later became a challenge for many, the Liberty series of 1954. This stuff was only 40 years old when he set out to put the series on the map. Then came the call for bags from emptied trash cans

to study the rates and markings of less flashy classes of mail and study it he did.

We in the present philatelic world and in the world 40 years from now, owe Tony W. a gratitude that is hard to express for doing the work that may have been lost in the trash heap of “junk mail” and keeping a record for others to follow in their future collections.

Tony was a character, as most of us in organized philately are, and he leaves a void in the ranks of researchers that will not be easily filled. An album closed and stamp tongs retired for a friend, a fellow judge for over 20 years and a philatelist extraordinaire.

Remembering Tony

by **Jerry Johnson**

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IFIRST GOT to know Tony when the Auxiliary Markings Club was created in 2001. I was the Membership Secretary and interacted with him numerous times over the past 22 years. We were always checking with each other regarding the status of the members; this was needed for the mailings of the newsletter.

Tony helped me with my exhibits. He guided me with the layout, formats, wording and content of my exhibit on delays in the delivery of U.S. mail. I was able to visit Tony at his house several times. In addition to the preparation of the exhibit he also sold me some neat covers for the exhibit. After a few attempts I was able to receive a Gold Award and was thankful for all of Tony’s advice.

I was always amazed at the many articles he wrote for the newsletter. Many of the early newsletters were mostly comprised of his articles. As time moved on he was able to

get other members to provide articles. I was able to do a few of them and he always provided me with constructive comments.

Tony and I shared another interest—astronomy. While he earned a PhD in astronomy, I was an amateur observer who did photography of the moon, sun, planets and night sky. Tony had a single frame topical exhibit in astronomy.

Tony’s books were very helpful to me for providing me with the correct postal rates for a cover and for the explanation of various markings. In recent years Tony told me that he got more satisfaction from writing articles and books than in doing exhibits.

In recent years he was a very prolific author, publishing several books on postal history. He will be remembered for these publications and for all his work on *Auxiliary Markings*. We will miss him.

Tony—Legend and Friend

by **Andrew S. Kelley**

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FOR MY entire philatelic life, the answer to any postage rate question has been: “Consult Tony W’s books.” Indeed, when I was a teenage collector, his *U.S. Domestic Postal Rates, 1872–1996*, was one of the first books I purchased. Back then, he seemed legendary—no ordinary person could compile and elucidate a vast field of philatelic knowledge the way he did.

More recently, Tony moved from legend to friend. He was quick to help rate a difficult cover. He welcomed and encouraged my writing for *Auxiliary Markings*. He introduced me to other collectors with similar interests. He shared

research materials. And he was generous: Tony sold me one of my favorite covers, an unusual war tax postage-due rate of which he had the only known examples. I distinctly remember him asking what I thought it was worth, then calling to turn down my offer because he felt it was too high!

As both legend and friend, Tony fueled my lifelong fascination with postal history. I cannot imagine collecting without his scholarship and guidance. Thanks for everything, Tony. You are responsible for much philatelic joy and knowledge. I hope we can do justice to your legacy in *Auxiliary Markings* and elsewhere.