

Why Collectors Exhibit

by Bob Davidson

On every occasion I have had to view a collection of another hobbyist, diversity is always there. No two collections are alike. Not in content, nor organization, nor means of display. Each of us has a favorite way of enjoying the hobby of stamp collecting. We choose different specialties, different albums, and even different mounts for our precious stamps. There is, however, always one thing in common. The owner delights in showing her or his collection, explaining why certain specialties were chosen, where favorites were acquired, and why they are mounted in a particular way. This tells you many things but one for certain. The collector is proud of her collection and the way it is organized!

What better way can there be to show off portions of *your* collection to others with similar interests than by exhibiting? When I visit a stamp show the exhibit area is the first place I look – even before the bourse tables. You might say exhibiting fills that secret need collectors have to let others know what makes one tick, so to speak: It helps explain why you are inclined to collect stamps in the first place, and not lighthouses; why you have focused, for example, on the not so attractive, but very historical stamps of the American Civil War; and maybe why you have chosen both stamps and covers to broaden your collecting horizon. There is something else, too. Have you ever wondered how your very special items stack up against those of other collectors? Not necessarily are they more valuable, but hard to acquire is nice! I have looked for years for a certain item and finally found it in a \$1 box at a dealer bourse table. Now it is proudly displayed in my exhibit.

Never exhibited and all the rules and jargon sound a little scary? Don't be intimidated. Start off easy.* A one-frame exhibit is a good starting point. That's sixteen standard 8 ½ x 11 pages. You can almost take the pages right out of your album. Just append little write-ups here and there. You can get fancier as exhibiting grows on you. If you already prepare your own album pages by computer you actually have a little head start. A computer isn't necessary though. A typewriter or even neat hand lettering will do fine. One last thing is important to remember: Your pages *must* be sleeved in transparent protectors, available at any stationery supply store. This is a necessary safeguard for your valuable material.

* Our Club exhibiting scheduled for April is the perfect time to 'start off easy'. Even if you *have* exhibited before, but not lately, this will be the time to renew. The rules will be fewer and the categories will allow fair competition. Though it will be a one-frame exhibiting, starting now will give you time to put together a nice exhibit. Our Club exhibit frames will be twelve 8 ½ x 11 pages, so plan with that in mind.

*I have never quite understood this sex symbol business,
but if I'm going to be a symbol of something,
I'd rather have it be sex than some of the
other things they've got symbols for.*

Marilyn Monroe