

# A Revisit to Bellefonte, Pennsylvania

by Bob Davidson

It was three years and four months ago that my family and I made a serendipitous trip to State College and by chance, the little township of Bellefonte, PA – serendipitous because it was a completely unplanned part of our Pennsylvania vacation and, for me, provided an excellent opportunity to see the American Philatelic Society's headquarters for the first time. But even better: the APS Summer Seminar just happened to be in session and we were able to join a tour of the old Match Factory in Bellefonte that was to become the *new* APS headquarters. It was a rainy day and the old brick building was leaking like a sieve. We couldn't imagine that becoming an office building, much less one that would house stamps!

We had seen the cramped and cluttered offices at State College and were told how spacious the new facility would be. It was difficult to picture! It was the Project Manager who showed us around so he described what the various areas would house – again, it took a lot of imagination. When the tour was over our clothes were wet from the leaking ceilings but it was worth it – for me anyway. Not sure about my wife and granddaughter!

In the time since that visit I have followed the progress of the new American Philatelic Society headquarters building with much interest. Earlier this year when we began planning an October trip to Pennsylvania, *this time* a trip to Bellefonte was included in our planned itinerary. We even made arrangements for a tour of the new headquarters facility. Unfortunately I left my trusty digital camera at home and had to make do with a \$4.65 Wal-Mart throw-away (and that's what I did!), but we did get some pictures. We were greeted by a pleasant receptionist in a spacious entry-way. Our tour leader, Brian, met us and showed us each area, introducing us as we passed through. The research library is *absolutely beautiful*. At least twice the area, if my memory is correct, as the old space – maybe more so. (The picture below doesn't do it justice). In fact, all the work spaces are large. The only cluttered space we saw was the incoming donated collections, waiting to be cataloged and sold (?).

We were told the facility now has four tenants. We saw the outside of those nice offices on our way out. Also as we left we saw yet the unrestored part of the old Match Factory building, promising perhaps even more office and tenant space for the future.

All in all, the trip to the little town of Bellefonte was well worth the side trip. Should you be in the area it is highly recommended.



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Entrance October 2005



Research Library