

The Collectors Club

Annual Awards Dinner

Under the capable direction of Dr. Mark Banchik, chairman of the Awards Committee, this year's Annual Awards Dinner was held at the elegant Cornell Club. Seventy-five members and guests enjoyed a delicious dinner with a choice of duckling, salmon, or filet mignon. President Thomas Mazza was the master of ceremonies. He turned the podium over to Vice President Stephen Reinhard who, after a few words about Tom, introduced former Governor Edward J. Siskin who introduced the Lichtenstein Award Recipient. His remarks follow:

Introduction of the 2001 Lichtenstein Award Winner



The President & Vice President

One is supposed to begin an introduction with the obligatory jest—however, after a year in Washington my sense of humor has been replaced by a sense of the absurd.

We are here tonight to present the Alfred F. Lichtenstein Memorial Award, given in recognition of distinguished philatelic service. It is named for the premier philatelist of the first half of the 20th century. In my opinion, it is the premier honor philately has to bestow. Since it was first given in 1952, its recipients have encompassed the giants of philately. Some of these recipients are here tonight, and we honor them as well.



Ed Siskin congratulating Tom Mazza.

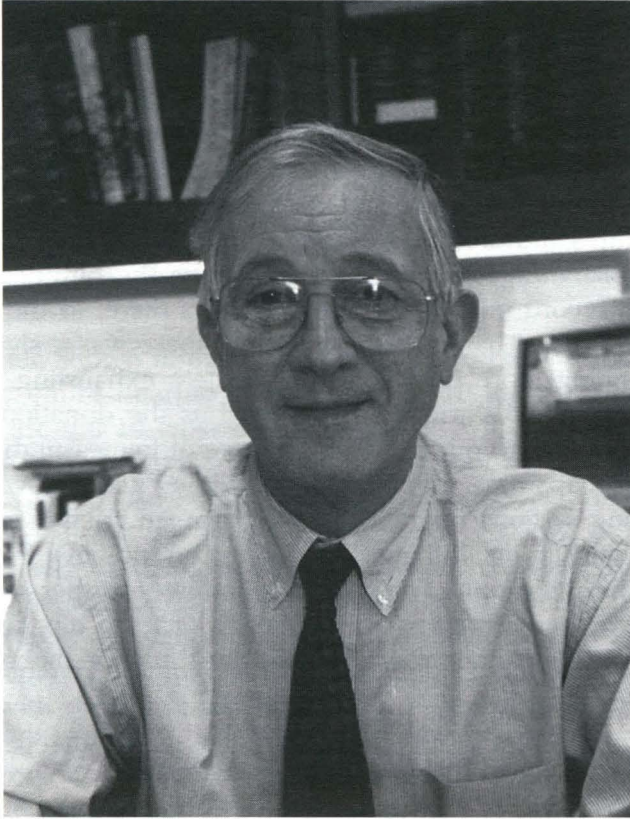
This year's honoree has a long and significant philatelic career. He has been an officer or director of the Collectors Club, the Philatelic Foundation, Postal History Society, Pennsylvania Postal History Society, Carriers and Locals Society, PhilITex '92, Anphilex '97, and Washington 2006. He has written many important articles. He has exhibited nationally and internationally. He is a nationally accredited judge. However, in my view, what makes him such an outstanding selection is *what he has done for the Collectors Club*.

Every organization, whether a political entity, corporation, or club, faces a number of significant crises in its life. Whether that organization survives and prospers, or whether it fades into oblivion depends almost entirely on the quality of its leadership at crucial times. The Collectors Club has certainly faced its share of problems in the last decade. Probably the biggest crisis we faced was the deterioration of our clubhouse. This was not just a question of comfort and esthetics. The outer wall was bulging, and we were within a few years of having a single story structure. The successful resolution of that crisis is plain to see for all visitors to the clubhouse.

We have been fortunate to have this year's honoree as President for the last eight years. His leadership, vision, good sense, and good humor have resulted in a club that is organizationally and structurally well prepared to serve philately during this new century.

Ladies and Gentlemen, it is my honor and pleasure to present this year's honoree of the Alfred F. Lichtenstein Memorial Award, Thomas C. Mazza.

Remarks by President Mazza



The Lichtenstein Award recipient

Thank you Ed. I am delighted, and extremely honored to be the Lichtenstein Award recipient for this, the first year of the new millennium. At the outset, without meaning to sound like a night at the Oscars, I do want to recognize and thank my family for being here on this important night for me; my mother, my wife Lois, Lois' mother Irma Bigbie, and my children, Elizabeth and Tom, plus the one who wanted to, but could not be here, my dad. Their support and encouragement was and is very special to me.

You all know that it is not my style to give long speeches, and I don't intend to change that tonight. You also know, from previous years, that I consider this to be among, if not the highest honor that is given to a living person "for service to philately." Previous recipients have performed their service in many different ways, and in many different venues. It is truly a humbling moment to be included in this group which comprises, to name a few, such collectors as John Boker, Louise Boyd Dale, and Lou Grunin, such students as Carroll Chase and Mort Neinkin, such editors and publishers as Bob Stone, Barbara Mueller, and Susan McDonald or such experts as Robbie Lowe, Herbie Bloch, or Enzo Diena. I don't pretend to have collected, edited, published or known to these heroic proportions. However, I have been privileged to serve as President of The Collectors Club during a period which was unique and also critical in its history.

This was a time which required the advice the Red Queen gave to Alice, in *Through the Looking Glass*—that it takes all the running you can do to stay in the same place. If you want to get anywhere you must run at least twice as fast as that. The early running was in paths of austerity, of exploration of potential cost sharing or space sharing with other entities, such as The Philatelic Foundation. Costs were cut, alternative spaces were identified, but nothing was found that truly fit the bill. Nor did the attempts to design a reconfiguration of the Clubhouse that would accommodate both organizations arrive at a satisfactory solution. The middle years brought the planning for, and carrying out of, Anphilex 96, for the celebration of the Club's hundredth. Norman Hubbard led that magnificent effort, which was an exhilarating experience indeed. From the birthday party at Capex, the recruiting of a record number of new members there, to the wonderful spectacle at the Waldorf over Thanksgiving weekend, there was a style and an energy that made the running more enjoyable, but no less exhausting. The energy and vitality which were gained through this, as well as the donation of more than a hundred thousand dollars to our capital fund were of immeasurable help.

The most recent laps have involved the rebuilding and renovation of the Clubhouse. The building systems upgrade plus the climate control frees our program from any artificial constraints and gives us possession, possibly for the first time, of the whole year. The relocation of the library eliminates further strain on the structure. Soon the boxes will be gone, the art work back on the walls, and we'll all forget we ever lived any other way. I thank the Club for the privilege, and the award.

As is customary, awards for the best article in the *Collectors Club Philatelist* and the best program were announced. The winners for best article published during 2000 in the *CCP* are: George B. Arfken, Clearwater, Fla., Horace W. Harrison, Baltimore, Md., and Harry W. Lussey, Atlantis, Fla., who co-authored "Canada's Five Cent Registered Letter Stamp, the Anomalous Plate 2," that appeared in the July-August and September-October issues. The winner of best program of 2000 is V. Denis Vandervelde, London, for "Quarantine and Disinfection in the Age of Cholera," presented on September 20, 2000.

All agreed that the fellowship, food, and selection of our own President as honoree made this one of the more memorable Liechtenstein Award Dinners in recent years.

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