

# **A Philatelic Biography of Major (Rtd.) Richard K. Malott, CD, M.Sc., B.A. 1927 -2020**

**Fellow of the Royal Philatelic Society of Canada (1986)**

**Foreign Associate Philatelic Member, Royal Belgian Academy of Philately (1986)**

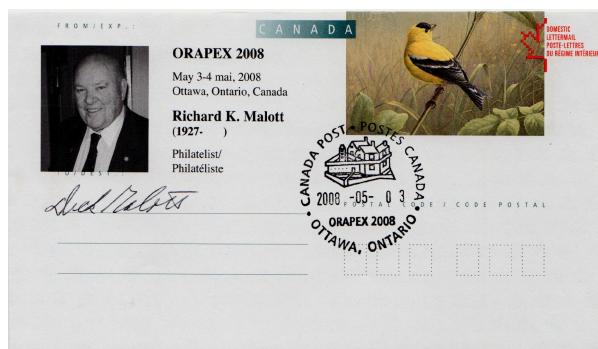
**Elected to American Air Mail Society "Aerophilatelic Hall of Fame" (1996)**

**Fellow of the Royal Philatelic Society of London (2005)**

**British North America Philatelic Society Life Time Achievement Award (2006)**

**Fellow of the Canadian Aerophilatelic Society (2009)**

**Honorary Member, Philatelic Specialists Society of Canada (2013)**



## **Honoured as a Distinguished Philatelist at ORAPEX 2008**

### **Part One**

I was born in Kingsville, Ontario, near Windsor/Detroit on 31<sup>st</sup> October 1927.

My stamp collecting began at age 5 through the kind guidance of a retired United Church Minister, Reverend Creasy, who lived around the corner from my home in Kingsville, Ontario, the home of the Jack Miner Bird Sanctuary. Reverend Creasy had been a minister in Newfoundland for many years and during his years of service accumulated thousands of Newfoundland stamps which he traded with many collectors to create a fabulous British Empire Collection. He collected and traded only fine used stamps for fun, education and relaxation. These aspects of philately he imparted to all the young collectors that he guided. You were expected to mount the stamps by hinges, and if he approved of your work, you received more stamps. I augmented my collection by collecting stamps off all envelopes that came my way, including stamps on envelopes in the local Post Office's waste paper baskets. The local postal clerks were very helpful, and often directed me to local citizens who received parcels and letters from distant lands.

I continued my collecting through Public and High School days, and augmented my collecting by getting Canadian and USA First Day Covers. I made special blue leather binders to put in the FDC's.

I attended the University of Western Ontario in London, Ontario, 1945 - 1950 where I graduated with an Honours History Degree. While at Western I was the President of the Dr. Jeffries Stamp Club, and our group often displayed covers and stamps in a large display window at the end of an underground passageway from the main building to the Library. While at Western I joined the RCAF Reserve Training Program and spent 3 summers as a flight cadet under administrative training at RCAF Station Clinton, at RCAF Headquarters in Ottawa, and at the Training Depot in Toronto, Ontario. Unbeknown to me I was laying the foundation of my dedicated interest to Canadian Aerophilately with my History Degree, my RCAF training, and my interest in stamp collecting.

In 1950 after graduating from Western I joined the RCAF and undertook Navigation Training at RCAF Station Summerside, PEI. My main philatelic interest at the time was plate blocks, especially OHMS and G corner blocks. While there I met a young lady who worked at the federal Government Unemployment Office who handled these stamps. She supplied me, by exchanging them for regular stamps, with hundreds of Government Official OHMS and G plate blocks, including some with missing Gs. Much later I traded these for my first Canadian Flight Covers.

After graduation as a navigator, I was posted to Greenwood, Nova Scotia, where I served as a Navigator with 404 Maritime Reconnaissance Squadron, The Buffalo Squadron, flying Lancaster aircraft.

My active aerophilatelic collecting did not start until 1954 when I converted to the Logistics Branch, and was transferred to RCAF Station Aylmer, in Aylmer (West), Ontario - a lovely town near London, Ontario. At Aylmer I attended the 12 month supply officer's course, then served as the Base Junior Supply Officer for 2 years; then the Officer Commanding the Airmen's Supply School for two years; and finally another two years as the Officer Commanding the Officers' Supply School.

We started up a Stamp Club Chapter of the RPSC at RCAF Station Aylmer, and I joined the RPSC. Each year on Air Force Day we would hold a big stamp show with the help of a dear departed friend, Warrant Officer 1st Class, Daws Perry. It was at one of these shows that a local collector, the late Maurice Hewitt, displayed his fabulous collection of Canadian airmail First Flight Covers, most of which were signed in black India ink by the pilots who flew the flights. Needless to say I was hooked. At RCAF Station Aylmer I commenced my research in earnest on Canadian air mail, the pilots and the aircraft. Little did I realize the fascinating future that lay ahead for me with Canadian Aerophilately.

**Dick Malott was about write his philatelic memoirs for many years, but he never got beyond 1960.**

**Following Dick's diagnosis with liver cancer in September 2019, I wrote a second part to his memoirs, in order that they could appear as a tribute to Dick, not an obituary. - The information in "Part 2" is based on notes Dick made for the presentation "My Wonderful Aerophilatelic Flight: 80 Years a Stamp Collector", that he gave to the Philatelic Specialists Society during ORAPEX 2013, and on other information I had gathered over the years.**

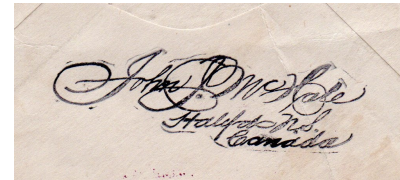
**The complete biography was sent to Dick to be reviewed and commented on, and then published in the December 2019 issue of *The Canadian Aerophilatelist*.**

**Chris Hargreaves**

## **Part Two**

In February 1953 Dick had married Dorothy Payne of Halifax, Nova Scotia. On trips to the Maritimes he sought out early collectors like John McHale, a retired Post Office clerk who had prepared special flight covers during the 1920's and 30's; Reverend Morris who had a lot of material he'd produced in the late 1920's and 1930's for sale; and Major Ian Morgan who had produced early catalogues about Canadian Air Mail, and was living in Chester, Nova Scotia.

In developing his collection, Dick was particularly guided by the advice of Jim Sissons, "who advised me not to buy the stamps but the air mail envelopes that told the story". Jim also commented that he had "hoards of mint semi-officials from heirs of printers".



**Handwritten note on front:**  
***Carried on German Plane D-1422 to New York***

**John McHale handstamp on back**

In September 2004, when there was a number of questions in *The Canadian Aerophilatelist* about the different cancellations on covers related to Von Gronau's Trans-Atlantic flight in August 1930, Dick was able to explain the situation based on his earlier conversations with Jack McHale, and to provide an anecdote about what happened afterwards:

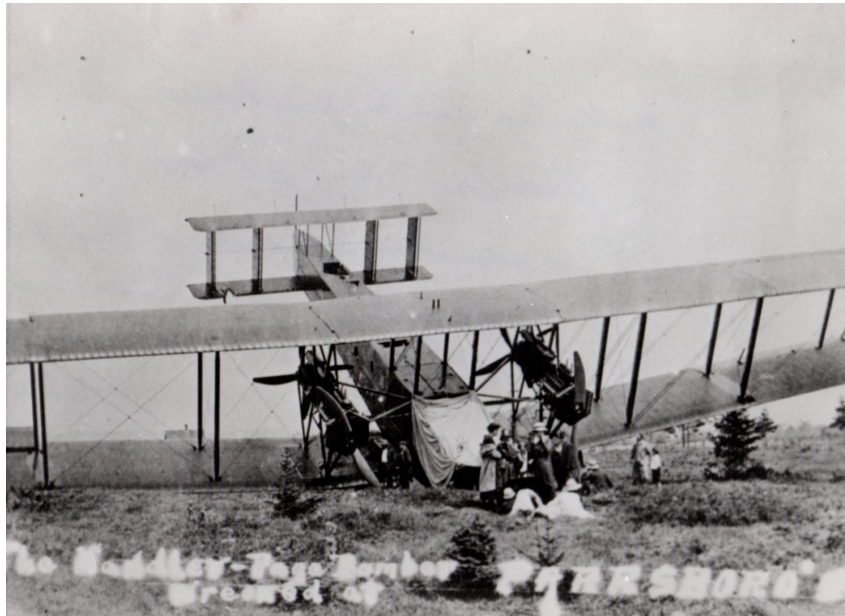
- after Von Gronau landed in Halifax, Postmaster John King - who worked with Roessler - arranged for some covers to be "officially" carried from Halifax to New York by Von Gronau on August 25<sup>th</sup>
- when Von Gronau's departure was delayed, Jack McHale - who worked with the American Aero Philatelic Society - arranged for additional covers to be carried "unofficially" from Halifax to New York on August 26<sup>th</sup>
- when it turned out that collectors preferred the "unofficial" covers cancelled on the actual date of the flight, to the "official" covers cancelled the day earlier, Postmaster King was furious and suspended Jack McHale for two weeks without pay!

In the 1950's there were several senior officers in the RCAF who had flown many of the pioneer air mail flights. They were very pleased to learn that Dick was interested in their past air mail activities, and were happy to talk to him about them.

Through historical research procedures, Dick also located dozens of early air mail pilots, who often sold or gave him air mail material.

At one time he made contact with Mrs. L.E.D. Stevens, the widow of one of the founders of Devere Aviation Co., which made the first flights between Truro, Nova Scotia, and Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, in 1919. She had a cover from the flights which he bought from her through her lawyer.

Dick also visited historic sites, such as Parrsboro, N.S. where Admiral Sir Mark Kerr had landed *The Atlantic* - a modified Handley Page V1500 long range bomber - in 1919. The aircraft had been damaged on landing, and new wings were ordered from England. Then, in order to take off, the aircraft had to be lightened. There were still parts of the aircraft in the park when Dick visited. Dick told the local mayor about them, and the parts were then put in a museum. Dick also spoke to an elderly man who had been a guard on the aircraft in 1919. The guard gave Dick a cover he'd sent to his sister in Greenport, Long Island, New York, on 9th Oct 1919. - When Dick told him it was valuable, the guard said it wasn't as valuable as finding a guy who cared about it!



***The Atlantic* at Parrsboro, July 1919. - It had been modified to attempt a Trans-Atlantic crossing, but after Alcock and Brown's success, it was trying to fly from St. John's to New York. See the March 2019 *Canadian Aerophilatelist* for more information.**

In 1960 Dick was transferred overseas and served with NATO. He spent two years at 312 Air Material Base, Langar, England, where he became President of the base stamp club. While in England he acquired through a major air mail auction at Harmer's of London, 20 of 24 lots of an original Canadian air mail collection, composed of almost all the early first flight covers. (He missed out on Patricia Airways and Yukon Airways to a French collector.) The items were badly lotted, and Dick was particularly interested in the last lot which consisted of 4 large albums containing hundreds of early scarce flights of pioneer and semi-officials. The lots cost £1,200 pounds, but Dick's wife concurred and a local bank loaned him the money. By selling the duplicates Dick was able to repay the loan in six months.

In 1962 Dick was posted to the RCAF Air Weapons Unit, Deccimonammu, Sardinia. In Sardinia he commenced collecting Canadian military post marks, as all sorts of new cancellations were being developed due to bilingualism and the fact that the AWU was on the crossroads for all the Canadian UN flights to Cyprus, Lebanon, Egypt, Pakistan, etc. These scarce cancellations were later traded or sold for more Canadian pioneer and semi-official first flight covers. Dick also obtained scarce UN postal markings. Dick knew the pilots: he got them fresh fruit for return flights, and they mailed covers for him.

After he returned to Canada in 1964, Dick spent a year in Ottawa. He was given permission to go through the waste envelopes from incoming mail in the Central Registry of the Department of National Defence, where he found a lot of unusual markings.

In 1965 he obtained a Master of Science Degree in Logistics and Computers at the United States Air Force Institute of Technology (AFIT) at Wright Patterson Air Force Base, Dayton, Ohio, USA.

Back to Ottawa Dick continued compiling data on air mail flights, the aircraft and the airline companies. He started writing articles for the philatelic press to publicize the early flights that were being forgotten, and sent letters to editors seeking information about the early flights.

He was contacted by the widow of a WWI VC winner, Major Thain MacDowell, who had a connection to the Laurentide Air Services, and had a collection of Laurentide semi-official stamps, covers, and schedules. She wanted help in locating her husband's VC, and Dick located it for her.



He located at CFB Rockcliffe the daughter of one of the Eve Brothers, founder of BC Airways: she had 50 full sheets of BC stamps, schedules, maps, etc. Dick bought them all.

He also heard many stories from Georgette Vachon - wife of Romeo Vachon who developed the winter air mail service along the St. Lawrence - who was the secretary of Wing Commander Ralph Manning, Deputy Director of the Canadian War Museum.



**1968 - Part of Dick's first series of Anniversary Covers.**

In 1968 Dick began producing covers to commemorate the anniversaries of significant air mail flights in Canada. These were another way of publicizing Canada's air mail history, and were popular collectibles - he produced 100 of each cover. He also produced First Flight Covers when new services were advertised, in order to continue the philatelic record of aviation in Canada, at a time when the Canadian Post Office and the airlines were showing less and less interest in such covers.

Around this time Dick joined the RA Stamp Club in Ottawa. He also became a President of the Canadian Airmail Collectors Club, and an Assistant Editor of their newsletter, which was published as part of the *Jack Knight Air Log*, produced by the Aerophilatelic Federation of the Americas.

In 1969 Dick joined the Philatelic Specialists Society of Canada, and is now the longest serving member of the PSSC.

In 1973 Dick was volunteered to go to Vietnam, where he was part of the Canadian Delegation of the International Commission of Control and Supervision (CANDEL ICCS) at the end of the Vietnam War. While there he obtained hundreds of special military Vietnam cancels and Canadian postal markings. He was able to buy cigarettes at \$1 a carton, and gave them to postal clerks who were happy to co-operate in the production of his covers..

In 1974 he retired from the Canadian Forces, and assumed the position of the Chief Curator of Collections at the Canadian War Museum, Ottawa, Ontario. - In this new role he was responsible for a staff of 19 curators, researchers and conservators, as well as 25 volunteers assisting in curatorial work. He was also responsible for the largest military collection in Canada, composed of some 700,000 artifacts that included 10,000 works of art and sculptor, 6,000 uniforms, tens of thousands of military accouterments, thousands of cap badges, military insignia, military medals, and buttons, 7,000 posters, 3,000 weapons, over 100,000 photographs, hundreds of maps, and over 150 military vehicles and tanks including a Russian T-34.



**1975 - First Flight Cover produced for a new Air Canada service from Toronto to Charlottetown, in order to continue the philatelic record of aviation history.**

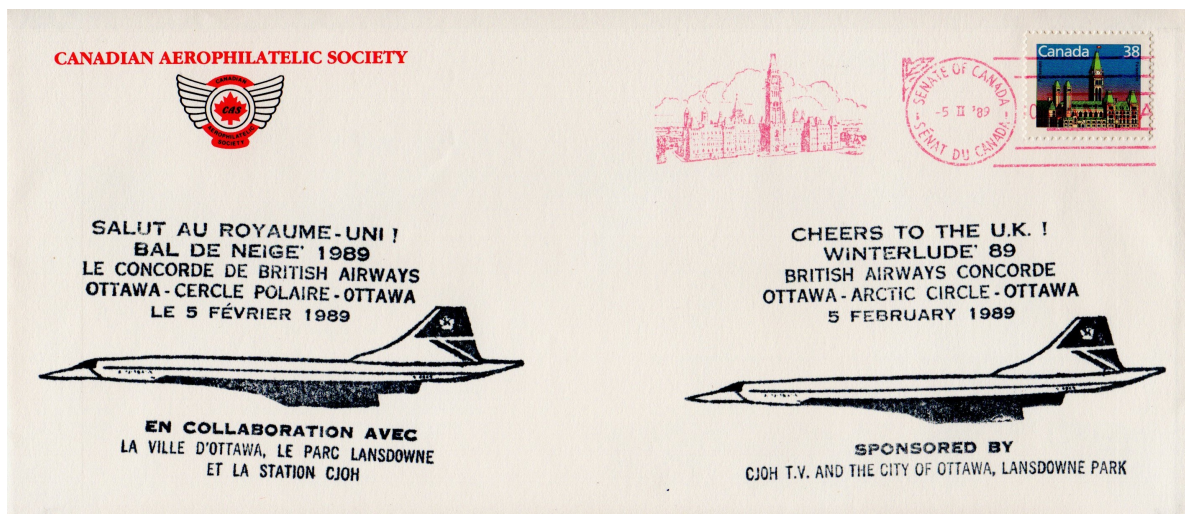
After he retired from the military, Dick became very involved in philatelic exhibiting - as an organizer, as an exhibitor, and a judge.

A feature of Dick's organizing was his extensive networking: locally, nationally, and internationally. - Doug Lingard has commented that Dick was a member of the ORAPEX committee when he joined it around 1976: "In the old days, Dick was in charge of publicity and sent press releases out to all of the radio and TV stations in the area plus the newspapers, including most of the local/community ones. He would normally have the CBC and sometimes CTV at the show and they would give the show a plug on the Saturday evening 6 PM and 11:30 PM news. He had a massive distribution list he used, which also included the stamp clubs in eastern Ontario, like the Peterborough club."

Dick became involved in international exhibiting in 1980 with the assistance of the late Phyllis Geldert, who first induced him to exhibit internationally; and Harry Sutherland who appointed Dick to serve as a Canadian Commissioner or Judge at over 20 FIP international stamp shows. Dick reckoned that by the time he stopped exhibiting, "I had been awarded 12 large and 5 small gold FIP medals, as well as dozens from RPSC and American Air Mail Society (AAMS) exhibitions."

Dick's main exhibition collections were:

1. Canadian Pioneer and Semi-official Air Mail Flown Covers - first shown internationally at LONDON 1980, it ultimately received 8 Large Gold Medals in the FIP's Championship class at HAFNIA' 87, FINLANDIA' 88, PRAGA' 88, INDIA' 89, BULGARIA' 89, PHILEX FRANCE' 89, NEW ZEALAND' 90, and PHILANIPPON' 91. It also received a Large Gold and special prize, the "Matejka Sterling Silver Sword Excalibur in Crystal Glass", for the best Aerophilatelic Exhibit at AMERIPEX '86.
2. Canadian Official Government Air Mail Flown Covers, 1925-1960.
3. Canadian Interrupted Covers - first shown internationally at ITALIA '85, received a Gold medal and the Grand Award at ORAPEX in 2006, and progressed to a Large Vermeil at the FIP exhibition in China 2009. This exhibit was then published by BNAPS as No. 56 in their Exhibit Series.
4. The Civilian Aerograms of Canada, 1945 - 1997
5. The Air Letter Forms of the Canadian Forces, 1942 - 1974



### **1989 - Concorde souvenir cover, which helped establish the CAS.**

In 1984 Dick was one of the founding members of the Canadian Chapter of the American Air Mail Society, which became the Canadian Aerophilatelic Society in 1986. - He was the first Vice-President, and first editor of *The Canadian Aerophilatelist*.

In February 1989, when a British Airways Concorde visited Ottawa during Winterlude, a special flight to the Arctic Circle was arranged for 100 people. Tickets for the three hour flight were \$1,200, but they were all sold within a day and a half of going on sale. Dick arranged for a variety of souvenir covers to be carried on the flight. Winterlude agreed to this provided that the CAS paid all the expenses and did all the work, and that some of these covers were given to passengers, to the organizers of the event, and to the City of Ottawa. The remaining covers were sold, and the profit made put the CAS on a sound financial footing for several years to come.

Dick retired again in December 1992, and set up Malott Aerophilatelic and Militaria - a consultant service which specialized in evaluating militaria for insurance and tax evaluations. He also had a small business selling the current Britain's Toy Soldiers, and became the Executive Director of the Organization of Military Museums of Canada, Inc. (1974 - 2000).

As part of his retirement planning, Dick donated his research files and data to the Canadian Postal Archives and Library. Cimon Marin later produced a 110 page Finding Guide to "The Richard Kenneth Malott Collection". - The introduction to the guide comments that 54 boxes of files were received from Dick's home and office, and that they included correspondence "with nearly 200 early pilots".

At this time Dick was also serving as Editor-in-Chief for *The Air Mails of Canada and Newfoundland*. This project began in response to concerns that many Canadian covers had been left out of the revised, Fifth Edition of *The American Air Mail Catalogue*, due to a rigorous interpretation of the criteria for listing First Flight Covers, that didn't reflect Canadian circumstances. The AAMS offered to support a separate Canadian catalogue, which was worked on by 45 collectors over a 7 year period. The result was a 550 page catalogue and handbook, listing "anything and everything", published in 1997. The AAMS provided \$50,000.00 to pay for the printing of 2,200 copies.





**Another example of Dick's networking - he first contacted the Snowbirds to get some of their uniforms for the Canadian War Museum, and later arranged for them to carry souvenir covers on their Canada Day flypast over Parliament Hill in Ottawa on many occasions between 1991 and 2013.**

**This photo shows Dick with the leader of the Snowbirds during Canada Post's unveiling of their Snowbird stamp in June 2006.**

Dick became President of the Canadian Aerophilatelic Society in 1993, and continued in that role until 2008. He was also involved in many other philatelic societies.

Dick assisted with the Canadian section of the Fourth edition of the American Air Mail Catalogue, published in 1970, and was Chairman for the Canadian Section in the Fifth Edition, 1981. He also served on the American Air Mail Society Awards Committee for 12 years, most of the time as Chairman of the group. He was presented with the AAMS George W. Angers Award for outstanding contribution to world wide Aerophilately in 1986, and elected to the Aerophilatelic Hall of Fame in 1996. He also received The Gus Lancaster Award of the Metropolitan Airmail Philatelic Society (MAPS) for "the Advancement of Aerophilately in the USA & Canada"

In Canada Dick was very involved with the Royal Philatelic Society of Canada. He has been a Director, the National Office Executive Director, Advertising Manager for The Canadian Philatelist, and Society Historian. Dick was Canada's National Commissioner for CAPEX 96 in Toronto, and the Canadian Commissioner to many international shows. He was elected a Fellow of the RPSC in 1986, and received the RPSC President's Medal, which honours individuals "for their outstanding contribution to the hobby" in 2005.

Dick was presented with a British North America Philatelic Society (BNAPS) Life Time Achievement Award in 2006.

Internationally, Dick was awarded a GOLDEN F.I.S.A. Pin "for his service and devotion to aero- and astrophilately", at the 44th Congress of F.I.S.A. - the Federation Internationale Des Societes Aerophilateliqes - held in Meyrin, Switzerland, on April 25, 2009.

He was also made a Foreign Associate Philatelic Member of L'Academie Belge de Philatélie in 1986, and elected a Fellow of the Royal Philatelic Society of London in 2005.

Dick has presented his philatelic awards to the Vincent Graves Greene Foundation in Toronto, which organized a display of them for the Canadian Aerophilatelic Society's Day of Aerophilately in 2018.



As well as his philatelic activities, Dick has been active in community organizations, particularly the Royal Canadian Legion. Until recently he was the Seniors, Hospital Visitation and Christmas Gift Member for his local Legion Branch 593 Bells Corners. - In 2012 Dick received a Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal for his community service. He was in fact nominated twice - by the Organization of Military Museums of Canada, and by his local MP, the Honourable John Baird. In previous years he had received both the Silver and Golden Jubilee Medals, for Canadian War Museum and community work. In 2018 Dick was awarded Her Majesty's Medal for Volunteers. Dick has also been the Secretary/Treasurer of the CANDEL ICCS Association for 47 years and a Director of the Nepean Museum for 26 years.

Although Dick has sold all his collections, he has remained involved philatelically. - He has been an active Past President of the CAS, and continued to visit shows, sometimes accompanied by his partner Sharleen Marengère.

Dick was a Judge at ORAPEX 2018, and a member of the ORAPEX Committee for 2019, for which he organized the wine and cheese for the Awards Reception, and took photographs to record the event. He also organized the piper that ORAPEX has had to open the show for the past two years: an innovation which according to Mike Powell, the Chair of the Committee, is "a well-received addition". Dick continued to live in his condo in Nepean, together with his son Douglas, until this year.

Dick finished his presentation to the PSSC in 2013 with the comments below, and wished to finish his biography the same way:

My success is due to my late wife's understanding of my passion for Canadian airmails, and the help of dealers, organizations, and philatelic friends at all levels. I have had the privilege of knowing so many wonderful philatelists. To those here and those still living a sincere thank you. To those departed may they rest in peace. I thank them for helping an appreciative aerophilatelist.



Some of Dick's medals on display at the VGGF in 2018.

**MANY, MANY THANKS to Dick for all he did for philately and aerophilately, and especially for the support, assistance and encouragement he gave to other aerophilatelists.**