

COPACART A



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PANAMA

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Philatelists
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Colombia & Panama Philatelists
Everywhere in the world

SEPTEMBER
1996

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Subsarie J. B. Baillière et Fils
19, Rue: Montefeuille,
Paris

1904 Cover showing Panama 5c stamp used in Cauca (ex-Helme)

COPACARTA is published quarterly by COPAPHIL, the Colombia/Panama Philatelic Study Group, P.O. Box 2245, El Cajon CA 92021, a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting the philately of Colombia and Panama.

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COPAPHIL NEWS**NEW MEMBERS (thru 15 AUGUST 1996)**

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193 BILL BARTLETT Postmaster Saanichton BC V8M 100 CANADA
 331 MANUEL ARANGO E. . . . Calle 4 #39-15 Bl 3 No 201 Medellin COLOMBIA

DECEASED

C38 DR. JAMES B. HELME

Carlos Edwards is recognized as a contributing member for 1995-1996. Mr Hughes collects Colombia, codes 1-14, 16, 19-20 and Panama codes 51-57, 59, 61-64, 66 and 68.

SPACE FILLERS

In tribute to Dr. Helme, the final article which he prepared with co-author Federico Brid is being published in this issue in its entirety. Because of the length of the article most of the regular features have been omitted, but will return in the next issue. Dr. Helme has appointed Federico as the administrator of his philatelic estate. COPAPHIL will cooperate with Federico in ensuring that Dr. Helmes extensive library of notes, photocopies, audiotapes of interviews, etc. is preserved for future philatelists.

Jim always had extensive plans for his future activities. His 1996 plans included remounting his

exhibit for CAPEX. I was looking forward to seeing the exhibit as I had traded four of my better second issue Panama covers to him for two of his covers of Panama stamps used in Cauca and I knew he had also acquired other new material. The title of his exhibit, as listed in the CAPEX program, included the 1878 issue, but the collection as exhibited did not include that issue or any of the new material he had acquired. The title page was the one from Korea which mentioned that the exhibit would be remounted and expanded before CAPEX *96. In view of the circumstances this was conveniently ignored by the jury.

THE PANAMA ISSUE OF 1906- 1907
PRINTED BY THE HAMILTON BANK NOTE CO. OF NEW YORK
The Background of the Issue and a Listing of the Die and Plate Proof Varieties.
by Federico A. Brid and James B. Helme M.D.

Historical Perspective

The February 1987 *COPACARTA* published a one page article on the Panama Hamilton Bank Note Co. issue of 1906. The article's intent was to solicit members of COPAPHIL to report any proofs varieties in their collection for a comprehensive listing to be published in a future issue of *COPACARTA*. It has been over nine years since that appeal. It is time to keep our promise and publish the information we have gathered.

Federico Brid's interest in the proofs of the 1906-07 HBNC Co. issue started when he went to a New York philatelic show in 1982. He used to attend New England shows often and always made a point of visiting the booth of the Classic Collector from Canada. Dealer Sergio Sismondo was always friendly, spoke Spanish and usually had interesting stories and Panama items for sale. This time Mr. Sismondo showed him three different color die proofs of the frame of the HBNC Co. issue which he promptly purchased. Back home Mr. Brid pulled out a copy of an article by Philip H. Ward Jr. "*Panama, The Issue of 1906. History of the development of designs, essays, proofs and stamps prepared by the Hamilton Company of New York*" and started comparing his new purchases with the listing of Mr. Ward's article. This article was published in April and July 1948 in the *Collectors Club Philatelist*. In the introduction Mr. Ward states that: "Through some circumstance, all of the material pertaining to this issue has been gathered and maintained in one place, and presents a most interesting story of the progression of this issue and problems which had to be circumvented". Even though there are a number of illustrations and what appears to be a comprehensive listing of the proof varieties found in this "gathering", Mr. Brid's three die proofs were not described in the Ward article. After correspondence between the two authors, and a comparison of 76 die proofs in the collection of Dr. Helme with the Ward listings, the question was raised as to how many varieties existed that were not including in the Ward "gathering". The search was on and as we will demonstrate from this listing, quite productive.

At one time a large portion of what was a

production file for the nine value issue and two postal cards was gathered in one place. Trying to reconstruct and provide better detail of what might have been the contents of the production file has been quite a challenge. What we know is that this "gathering" or a large portion of it was offered to Dr. Helme in 1956 for \$5,500. The material was not purchased, but a table-like recording was created of its contents that has served as a guide to the authors. Since the original purchase of the three die proofs from Mr. Sismondo, the holdings of the two authors have been consolidated into one collection. A great deal of proof and die material has continue to be added to this collection through purchases from collectors, dealers and auction houses. Information of small proof holdings from two COPAPHIL members has also being received and recorded. In March 1992 a prominent Canal Zone specialist and COPAPHIL member sent one of the authors a one volume collection containing substantial HBNC Co. proof material for examination and recording. This collection has recently become part of this consolidated holding.

Even though we had recorded or had in our collection a considerable number of die and plate proofs, there were still a number of items listed in the Ward article that had not come to light since the offering of 1956, especially the wash drawings and hand painted pieces. In late 1992, fellow COPAPHIL member David Leeds sent Mr. Brid a copy of a one page article that appeared in *Stamps Magazine* in 1989. The article described Latin American collections at the Museum of American History in Washington. One of the collections listed was a three volume set of a "highly specialized collection from Panama covering the years 1906-07". After verifying that this collection was of HBNC Co. material, Mr. Brid visited the National Postal Museum in December 1994 and recorded its contents in detail. The museum also provided color slides of the hand painted items. With the recent purchase of the one volume collection and a closer examination of its contents, we are now able to complete the recording of what must have been an enormous amount of experimentation by the

JAMES B. HELME, M.D. 1924-1996: A PERSONAL RECOLLECTION

by Federico Brid

Dr. James B. Helme, "Jim," the dean of Panama philately died of a massive heart attack at the University Hospital in Philadelphia on June 7. He was 72.

Born in Port Chester, New York, Jim graduated from Princeton University in 1947, and obtained his M.D. degree from the University of Washington in 1952. He did his residency in pediatrics at the Vanderbilt University Hospital and practiced medicine in Nashville, Tennessee until his retirement in 1982. He is survived by his son Franklin, three daughters, Martha, Susie and Cary and seven grandchildren.

As he wrote me many years ago, Jim began collecting stamps in his pre-teen years. On a trip through the Panama Canal, his ship stopped at the Port of Cristobal on the Atlantic side. While touring Colon, he asked his father to take him to the Colon post office to buy some stamps. This purchase introduced Jim to the stamps of Panama and from that point on, it became a life-long passion to obtain, study, research, write and exhibit the stamps of Panama and the Canal Zone.

I first met Jim Helme while attending AMERIPEX in Chicago in 1985. His award winning gold medal collection of the 1st Panama map issue was on display. Jim took me to his exhibit, and with a lot of patience and understanding started showing me frame after frame of wonderful items I had never seen before. I still remember his enthusiasm when we came to a Honduras mixed franking cover. The master was at work, and the student was eager to learn. Back home, I wrote him a letter which was the beginning of a long correspondence stream that continued until a few days before his death when he went to New Jersey to visit his daughter Cary and attend a class reunion at Princeton. With him was a draft of this article on the Panama Hamilton proofs I had sent him a few days earlier. That draft has been finalized and is now the key article in this issue of COPACARTA.

With the publication of the Hamilton proof article, Jim's death brings to a close a long series of works that appeared in the most prestigious philatelic

journals in the country. The New York-based *Collectors Club Philatelist* not only published some of his most prominent articles, like the definitive series on the Panama 1886-87 1st Map issue, but twice gave him their "Best Article of the Year" award. I was fortunate to share with him one of these awards for the *Panama 1885 Stampless Period* series.



Jim's need to exhaust the topic before the work was ready for publication produced definitive studies. At the same time, this drive for completeness left a series of topics unfinished, such as the history of the Panama state postal system up to 1886, the Panama 4th provisional issue, the Panama arms issue, the early Panama registration covers and others. Having his notes and research materials available, we hope to bring to press some of these unfinished products.

Jim's death is a great loss to the students of Panama and Canal Zone stamps. To postal historians, his collections, exhibits, APS expertizing opinions, notes and writings remain a testimony to a great passion for all that is encompassed by the philately of the Isthmus of Panama. Even though I have lost a co-researcher, a guide and most important of all, a friend, I am grateful for the wisdom I have acquired during these ten years of intensive collaboration.

I attended the seminar on judging of Postal History. I raised the question of whether specialized societies such as COPAPHIL could aid the judging process by preparing summaries indicating the scarcity of postal history items from various periods for our countries. I remain convinced that lack of familiarity with the material is wide-spread among jury members and that this in turn leads to overemphasis in judging on presentation and nit-picking over minor details. Unfortunately, previous commitments made it impossible to remain for the entire session, but I understand there was some spirited discussion of this question after I left.

The COPAPHIL meeting on Friday 14 June was very poorly attended. President Ray Ireson had planned for an attendance of thirty, but only five members and one non-member attended. The show organizing committee had scheduled a trip to Niagara Falls for that day for the commissioners and jury members which was joined by the members present from Colombia. Officers and board members present were able to discuss and resolve a number of issues concerning future organization plans.

Bill Welch reported that the APS is attempting to reenergize FIAF, the Interamerican Filatelic Federation and that it is tentatively planning to

devote its 1998 spring meeting in New Orleans to exhibits of the Americas.

I reported to the other board members on the new printer that we are using and also on plans to include color pages in some issues when suitable material is available.

We discussed the special mail bid sale which will be held in conjunction with PACIFICA and it was decided that security considerations dictate that the material not be brought to the show. However, the lots will be photocopied and the photocopies will be available at the COPAPHIL booth. Members that I saw at the show included:

John Arn	United States
Alvaro Barriga	Colombia
Bill Bartlett	Canada
Gianmarco Caruso	Colombia
Andrew Cronin	Canada
James Cross	United States
Debbie Friedman	United States
Hugo Goggel	Colombia
Ray Ireson	Canada
Jairo Londoño	Colombia
Jorge Maier	Germany
Brian Moorhouse	England
Giana Wayman	Costa Rica
Bill Welch	United States



Shoppers at CAPEX. L to R. Jim Cross, Gianmarco Caruso, Ray Ireson, Santiago Sanchez.

combined stocks the second best source Latin American material. In one of the stocks I found a cover with a pair of the 20c stamp of the second Panama issue. Multiples of this stamp on cover are scarce. Dr. Helme's exhibit shows a cover with a strip of three, but none with a pair.

As would be anticipated there were a large number of Canadian dealers, most of whom seem to have had mainly Canadian material.

Space was provided in the Court of Honor for Brigitte Kaplan's exhibit "Colombia Aereo, Nuevo y en Sobres," but the exhibit, which won the grand award at ESPAMER 96 in Madrid, failed to arrive.

Nine Colombia and Panama exhibits were entered in the open competition (all exhibitors are COPAPHIL members except Santiago Sanchez). The exhibits with awards earned are shown in the box below.

Hugo Goggel	Classic Colombia	Traditional Philately	Large Gold
Dr. James B. Helme	Panama, the 1878 & 1887-88 Issues	Traditional Philately	Gold
Santiago Sanchez	Colombia Clasica, 1859-1868	Traditional Philately	Large Vermeil
Bernd Sander	SCADTA, El Primer Correo Aero de Colombia	Airmail	Large Vermeil
Jairo Londoño	Estado Soberano y/o Departamento de Antioquia	Traditional Philately	Vermeil
Raymond Ireson	The Panama Canal Story	Thematic	Vermeil
James Cross	Colombia, The Unknown War	Postal History	Large Silver
Deborah Friedman	The Postal Cards & Envelopes of Colombia	Postal Stationery	Large Silver
Carlos Valenzuela	Vuelos Precursores en Colombia	Airmail	Large Silver

Four additional COPAPHIL members exhibited material from other areas. Robert D'Elia received a large vermeil for Prephilatelic and Classic Ecuador, Jorg Maier received a large vermeil for Chile, 1853 to 1900, Finn Stjernholck received a large vermeil for Postal Stationery of El Salvador and Robert Markovits showed U.S. Officials 1873-1884. In addition the show committee solicited two additional categories of exhibits. One frame exhibits were used to fill out rows of twenty-five frames which had three eight frame exhibits and non-competitive five and eight frame exhibits were mounted to replace exhibits which did not arrive. Three members had exhibits of these types which were not listed in the show program. The show stealer (in my opinion) was Ray Ireson's one frame exhibit of the Quest for El Dorado, featuring material from his recent find which, in addition to material previously published in this journal, includes the original deed for the purchase of the property on which the tunnel to attempt to drain Lake Guatavita was dug. Ken Rowe, who was the general chairman of CAPEX, exhibited Colombia, the 1908 numeral issue. Unfortunately, not all of our members present saw these exhibits, because they were not in the show program.

A jury of COPAPHIL members appointed by Ray Ireson reviewed the Colombia/Panama exhibits and I was privileged to receive the special COPAPHIL award for the exhibit showing the best original research. The award is a beautiful replica of the gold owl artifact which was pictured on two Colombians stamp, Scott C674-C675. A similar

award will be given at PACIFICA.

Throughout the show there was widespread dissatisfaction by exhibitors with the judging and the levels of medals awarded. Numerous exhibits which had been previously shown internationally received medals one or even two levels below those that they had previously obtained. It is curious that the previous CAPEX produced similar results ten years ago, even though this was a different jury with few members from the former jury. Because of my interest in the inflation covers of Colombia, I took special note of two postal history exhibits, one showing the 1923 German Inflation and the other showing the hyper-inflation in Hungary in 1945-1946. Both of these exhibits were outstanding in my opinion, completely documenting each step of the inflation with many scarce and unusual covers. Both exhibits had previously received international gold medals, but neither received one at this show. There seemed to be definite prejudice against exhibits of more modern material.

I took notes of the contents of each of the exhibits in our area and will describe them in more detail in the next issue. I also took additional photos which will be included in that issue.

Most of the exhibits that I had the opportunity to study seemed to be of very high quality, although there were some exceptions in the thematic area. That group contained a number of poorly organized and sloppily mounted exhibits of very ordinary material and it is difficult to understand how they qualified to be shown by receiving a vermeil in a national competition.

SALES MANAGER'S REPORT

by Jim Cross

Mail Bid Sale 14 was closed on 15 July 1996. 142 lots were sold for a total of \$5259.50 earning \$525.95 in commissions for COPAPHIL. Checks to the consignors were mailed during the following week. There were 11 consignors and 23 successful bidders. Lists of prices realized in Sale 13 and Sale 14 are enclosed with this issue of COPACARTA.

FUTURE SALES

Sale number 15 will be another Colombia sale. Lots for this sale should be submitted between 1 October and 31 October. The sale catalog will be mailed with the December 1996 COPACARTA.

Sale number 16 will be a special PACIFIC 97

sale of better grade material with a minimum bid of \$50 per lot. It will include both Colombia and Panama. The catalog will be mailed with the June 1997 COPACARTA prior to PACIFIC 97 and copies will also be available at the COPAPHIL booth at that show. Lots for this sale should be submitted between 1 April and 30 April 1997.

Please do not submit sales lots early and remember to contact the sales manager before sending more than 25 lots for a single sale. Failure to follow these instructions places an unnecessary burden upon the sales manager who must safeguard the lots while they are in his custody.

REPORT FROM CAPEX

by Jim Cross

I drove to Toronto from my daughter's house in Rochester NY on Thursday, the second day before the show was scheduled to open and arrived just after lunch to find a scene of organized chaos. Crews of workmen were everywhere, constructing dealer's booths, installing electric wiring, moving in displays and doing the hundreds of small tasks that are necessary to prepare for a large international stamp exhibition. Crossing the border with my exhibit was no problem. Customs officials merely asked where I was going and why. When I answered, Toronto to do some research in the archives and attend the stamp show they waved me thru without inspection.

Stopping at the front desk to obtain a badge, I was delayed a bit. The staff was still learning what was required and I was apparently the first exhibitor who had come by. A supervisor explained what was needed and I went upstairs to the bin room. There a representative of the customs agent took my customs form and the staff took my exhibit to be checked in. The exhibit frames had been erected and mounting of exhibits had already begun. I volunteered to help and spent the next four hours in this task.

The show was held on the second floor of the Toronto Convention Center, a spacious area with good lighting. There was adequate space with areas for the public to rest and eat. The exhibition layout was orderly and it was easy to find exhibits and dealers booths with the floor plan. This contrasted with the layout at AMERIPEX in 1987

where it took several days to get accustomed to the floor plan and it was commonplace to be unable to find a booth or exhibit that one was interested in.

The number of bourse dealers was less than I had expected and there were only a limited number from the United States. Several dealers have told me that the cumbersome and costly customs regulations which require posting of a bond on merchandise brought in for sale and the high cost of bourse booths made the show unattractive for them. However, the limited number of U.S. dealers probably contributed to lower attendance by Americans, certainly evidenced by the limited number of COPAPHIL members from the east coast that were in attendance.

Member Brian Moorhouse was the only dealer with a specialized stock of Latin America. Among his new acquisitions are three items that merit mention. First, he has found a registered internal mail cover franked with the second issue Panama 5c stamp. This is only the third reported use of this stamp on internal mail and the only registered internal mail cover reported from Panama. The other items were a strip with dye proofs of the four stamps of the first Panama issue in sepia and a similar strip with the four stamps of the second Tolima issue. Examination of the two strips suggests that there was another strip between them on the sheet, (possibly with the four stamps of the second issue of Cundinamarca).

Four U.S. cover dealers shared a booth under the name of Triple S Covers and I found their

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

CAPEX *96 is now history. Frankly, nine days was more than enough: by the final day of the show my dogs were barking furiously....by now, a week later, they're just growling. I must say that this CAPEX Organizing Committee put on a **SUPER SHOW**....a great improvement over the one staged a decade ago. The weather did happen to be a bit "iffy" at first....but then what did that matter when all visitors were indoors! As far as myself and other COPAPHIL members present were concerned, there was one tragic blot on this otherwise memorable occasion...and that was the news of **Jim Helme's** untimely death from a massive heart attack on June 7th in Philadelphia, where he was visiting his daughter and attending his Princeton class reunion. Jim's exhibit of **PANAMA: 1878 ISSUES** in CAPEX *96 received a Gold Medal and a Special Prize. I grieve that he never got to receive them. Jim's close associate on early Panama studies, Federico Brid, has written an obituary which you'll see elsewhere in this Journal, but I would like to add my "two bits" to his words. "Jim: I shall miss you

more than you could ever have imagined! Rest in Peace, my friend!.

On the subject of CAPEX *96 I must record my great disappointment at the paucity of our Society members who attended this International Show. I had arranged for a society meeting of twenty, but only five showed up. Unfortunately, our guest speaker, Hugo Goggel, from Colombia, was a Commissioner and thus was invited on a tour of Niagara Falls by the CAPEX Committee: that happened to be the very day that our meeting was planned. So: sadly, our meeting didn't add up to a hill of beans!

In the absence of any business matters being brought up by the members, I guess we (the Executive Committee) will keep on tramping the same old path for another term!

Our editor, Jim Cross, was present at CAPEX and he took note of all COPAPHIL exhibitors and their awards they received: you'll find the compendium elsewhere in this issue.

RAY IRESON

 THE TREASURER'S REPORT

BALANCE SHEET AS OF 30 JUNE 1996

ASSETS

Cash in Bank	2704.86	
Petty Cash	50.80	
Library Cash Account	275.28	
Investments	9616.73	
TOTAL		12,647.67

LIABILITIES

Advance Dues	751.47	
Due to Consignors	1162.00	
TOTAL		1,913.47

RESERVES

Balance 30 June 1995	9668.97	
Added 1995-1996	1065.23	
TOTAL		10,734.20

INCOME STATEMENT 1 JUL 95 - 30 JUN 96

INCOME

Annual Dues	1607.45	
Contributions	390.04	
Mail Sales Commissions	1132.70	
Publication Sales	17.00	
Investment earnings	698.58	
Library Fees	134.41	
COPACARTA Ads	7.50	
TOTAL		3,987.68

EXPENSE

Printing	912.58	
Postage	880.39	
Supplies	36.64	
Library Expense	72.63	
Computer Expense	400.00	
Mail Sales Expense	620.21	
TOTAL		2,922.45

Addition to Reserves 1,065.23