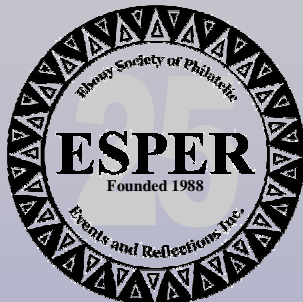


Reflections

Ebony Society of Philatelic Events and

December 2013

Volume 19, Issue 5



Anniversary

Edition



ESPER

**Ebony Society of Philatelic Events
and Reflections, Inc.**

Founded 1988

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Note from the Editor



On October 18 and 19, 2013, in Charlotte, North Carolina, ESPER celebrated its 25th anniversary as a philatelic society. In those two short days, much was shared and learned and many were delighted by it all. The culmination of the celebration was getting the group together for a photograph. And it is the featured centerfold in this bonus issue. Directing such a task was not easy, but it was accomplished with much success. My only concern is that we were not able to identify all of the people in the photograph (and some of the snapshots on page 18), and for that I sincerely apologize. I once was “unknown” in a photo in this newsletter long before I became the editor. Ever since then, I have done my best not to have someone else have that experience. It may not seem like a big deal, but to me it is. And when I learn who the unidentified people are, I will share their names in a later issue.



The rest of the bonus issue was a labor of love, and I hope I captured the essence of the anniversary celebration for those of you who were unable to attend. For those of you who did attend, I hope your memories will be enhanced by these pages.

Thank you to any— and everyone who submitted thoughts and/or photos for this issue, and special thanks to Tony Thaxton, Jr. for his photography. I wouldn't have had much with which to work without your submissions.

—Don Neal, Editor



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The talent and expertise of ESPER members was showcased in workshops for beginners and advanced collectors alike.

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The hard work and dedication of several of ESPER's members is acknowledged.

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The auction, the food, the fellowship were splendid.

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Members share their impressions, memories, and thoughts about the ESPER 25th anniversary in Charlotte, North Carolina.

AND MUCH MORE!

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www.esperstamps.org



APS Affiliate #239



ATA Study Group



AFDCS Chapter #91

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MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

ESPER (Ebony Society of Philatelic Events and Reflections) is an international organization of people who have a common interest in the promoting and collecting of philatelic material related to the African diaspora.

ESPER membership dues: Adult—\$25 per year (\$20 with emailed newsletter), Youth (17 and under)—\$20 per year, Family—\$40 per year, and Foreign—\$35 per year. Annual membership dues include membership card, African-American Stamp Guide, and four issues of the award-winning newsletter *Reflections*. Send name, address, phone #, and email address to ESPER Membership Committee, PO Box 605100, Bayside, NY 11360-5100.

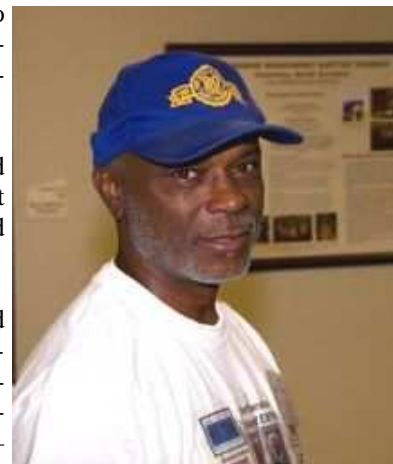
ESPER 25th Anniversary



By Ricky Johnson

I tried to think of one word to describe ESPER's 25th anniversary celebration: fantastic...exciting...extraordinary...splendid...enjoyable...memorable. Then I realized that a thousand words cannot describe what I saw, felt, and experienced.

There were old friends and new ones in attendance, people from near and far – California, Washington state, Missouri, Ohio, and Michigan – were represented. The presence of old friends from New York, Texas, New Jersey, Virginia, Nebraska, Georgia, Illinois, Alabama, and the DC/Maryland area made everything even more special.



The South Carolina and Tennessee members really turned out – way to go. I am impressed with them, and we are grateful for their support. South Carolina and Tennessee are well on track to become our next state chapters.

The celebration of the 25th anniversary will always be one of the greatest moments in my life. The members of the Ebony Society of Philatelic Events & Reflections honored me on my 78th birthday. No movie star could have been honored in a more fashionable and loving way. I have my memories of hugs, kisses, words of thanks, and a plaque which was illustrated by Barbara Higgins Bond, one of our greatest illustrators in the artist world. This will hang on my living room wall for the rest of my life. I owe this to ESPER'S members.

Thank You! Thank You! Thank you!

This Event was orchestrated by a great team of philatelic musicians. Conducted by President Walter Faison, Lead by #1 chair Beatrice Cox, #2 Rosina Major, Clarence McKnight, Don Neal, Earnest Shinault, Ricky Johnson, Greg Slaughter, Robert Fields, Richard Barnes, Ekundayo Azibo, Donald Conway, Desdemona Faison, Manuel Gilyard, Calvin Mitchell, Edgar Hicks, and Dr. John Allen. This is why the music was outstanding — members from across America held a great philatelic performance in my honor of 78 years and 25 years of ESPER.

Many of the members I have never met, and some I had not seen in many years. I was privileged to witness such a great performance of philatelic moments in time. I have been motivated to try and live a longer life, to be present at the next event. My love and gratitude to you all.

*Loungie,
Esper*

The North Carolina chapter of ESPER may have been the host chapter, but this truly was an ESPER event. The North Carolina chapter received a tremendous amount of support and input from members who served on various committees, led seminars, created displays, donated to the auction, or helped to make the journal a success. Those who supported this event made it possible to create such an extraordinary and enjoyable time. Each and every one of the supporters deserves a standing ovation.

There was a sizable crowd on Friday night in the hospitality room. We had a smorgasbord of food and drink. I don't mean just cheese and crackers or hors d'oeuvres. The South is known for food and drink, and our Charlotte members did not disappoint. There was an assortment of salads, entrées, beverages, sandwiches, and desserts. The food and drink were ample and there to be enjoyed. We even sang the Stevie Wonder version of "Happy Birthday" to Ms. Hayes. We had a fantastic time.

On Saturday, Friendship Missionary Baptist Church welcomed us for our day of activities. This church is by no means your 100-200 member neighborhood corner church. It is very spacious and well-equipped; everything we needed was readily available. Our bourse was held in a gymnasium-size room that easily accommodated the dozen plus vendors and displays. Enough rooms were provided for us to hold two seminars simultaneously. That allowed for more seminars to be scheduled throughout the day. Lunch was prepared in the church kitchen and was served in the dining room. My hat's off to the entire staff of Friendship Missionary Baptist Church for their assistance. This proved to be a great venue and a wise choice to utilize the facilities.

ESPER 25th Anniversary

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Our president, Walter Faison, unbeknownst to me, has graduated with high honors from the Mani Gilyard School of Arm Twisting and Task Delegating. During our general membership meeting, without warning, Walter drafted Tony Thaxton, Jr. to be the official event photographer. Tony did not know that he was going to be appointed this task, but he stepped forward and did an excellent job. Many of the photos in this issue, including the group photo, were taken by Tony. With members like him, I see some great things ahead for the Georgia chapter. Thanks, Tony! Our keynote speaker, Mrs. Higgins Bond, was gracious, humble, and more than accommodating. Not only did she create our 25th anniversary artwork (as featured on the cover of the July 2013 issue of Reflections), but also she readily signed items for all who asked. She signed books, FDCs, show cards, envelopes, sheets of stamps, and even a T-shirt for me. Never did I see her hesitate to talk with anyone or autograph any item that was presented to her. She was available Friday night in the hospitality room, all day Saturday during our activities, and during the evening ceremony. She went far and beyond the expected – nothing more could have been asked of her. Thank you, Mrs. Higgins Bond. I believe Clarence McKnight was instrumental in arranging her appearance...way to go, Clarence!

What can I say about Ms. Hayes? She looked well...more importantly...she looked happy. She was in all her splendor, a true ethereal queen. You could see the pride in her eyes – the society she founded was celebrating its 25th anniversary. You could sense that she was not only proud of her creation but also all of us. At times, you could tell that she was a little tired, but it was a weekend she had no intentions of missing. She was a trooper

throughout. A special thanks to those who assisted Ms. Hayes during this event. It was great to see the smiles we brought to her face.

The celebration was well planned and well attended. Everything was well organized. The auction/dinner was a fantastic way to close out the celebration. Thanks to our Master of Ceremonies, Don Neal, everything flowed smoothly. The speakers and presenters gave us no long and rambling dissertations – not even Mani. Mrs. Cox, the committees, and our Charlotte members showed us how it is supposed to be done.

The buffet dinner provided an excellent assortment of entrées, sides, and desserts. We even had another cake and ice cream for Ms. Hayes' birthday. I'm sure an enjoyable time was had by all. The fellowship and camaraderie will never be forgotten.

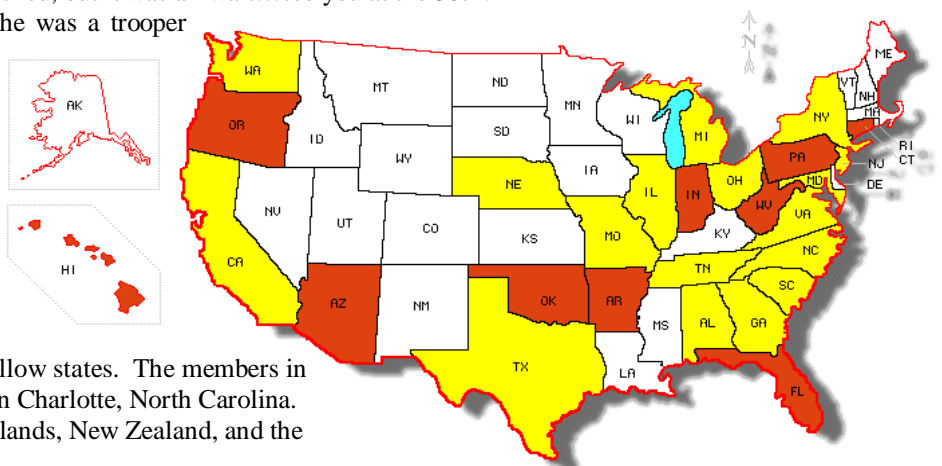
Desdemona Faison deserves applause for the commendable job on the auction. There were sheets of stamps, covers, books, artwork, and other items up for bid. The almost 100 lots were displayed on tables along two walls of the room, each item with its own bid sheet. Desdemona did an excellent job, especially when you consider she had to deal with Walter. She obviously did it her way...way to go, Desdemona.

Gregory Slaughter designed the two cancellations for the event; Sherrod Gresham created a PowerPoint presentation that showed the history of ESPER; it was shown during dinner. Clarence McKnight used Mrs. Higgins Bond's artwork to create the event covers and cards; Leon Lee created a beautiful stamp collage of Mrs. Higgins Bonds' stamps that was presented to her at the dinner. So many did so much. The list is too long to individually thank all of those who made this event so memorable. Each of you has my gratitude for your help in creating this experience. Good friends, good food, and stamps... what more can you ask for in life!

The Washington, D.C. area has been selected to host ESPER's 30th anniversary. I am now like a child on Christmas Eve. I now have visions of stamps and seminars, good food, and...more importantly...old and new friends from near and far. I can't wait...see you at the 30th!

Where in the World Is ESPER?

ESPER has members in the red states and the yellow states. The members in the yellow states attended the 25th anniversary in Charlotte, North Carolina. ESPER also has members in Canada, the Netherlands, New Zealand, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.



Friday Night Hospitality Room

The celebration started on Friday night, October 18, 2013, in the Hospitality Room of the Embassy Suites Charlotte-Concord in Concord, North Carolina. Members checked in with Richard Barnes and Rosina Major and received a “goodie bag” which included an event journal, some stamp pins and covers, and several other items.

The tables were decorated with centerpieces of figurines depicting historical persons also honored on stamps: the Buffalo Soldier, Martin Luther King, Jr., Rosa Parks, and Booker T. Washington.

The “spread” was bountiful with hot and cold fare, snacks, beverages, and desserts. Mrs. Hayes greeted the enthusiastic crowd which included artist and illustrator Higgins Bond, our keynote speaker and guest of honor.



Friday Night Hospitality Room



(L-R) Dr. Mary Love (NC), Ricky Johnson (NC), Julie Leak (NY)

(L-R) Joy & Don Conway (MD), Howard & Rhonda Ingram (VA), xxxx & Phil Williams (MI), and Brenda & Gregory Slaughter (CA).



(men L-R) Ricky Johnson (NC), Calvin Mitchell (MD), Dr. John Allen (NC), Edgar Hicks (NE), Bea Cox (NC) in the foreground.



(L-R) Walter Faison (NC), Carnella Parker (NC), Desdemona Faison (NC)



(L-R) Leon Lee (MD), Gregory Slaughter (CA), Dr. John Batchman (MO)



(L-R) Ida Hawkins (WA), Marchane Hawkins (OH), Dr. Betty Howell-Gray (NC)



(L-R) Howard and Rhonda Ingram (VA) and Corliss and Phillip Williams (MI)



(clockwise from 12) Bob Fields (VA), Zola Crowell (NC), Vernetta Nelson (NY), Mani Gilyard (NY), Sherrod Gresham (NC)

Saturday Bourse

A SPECIAL BREED

Thank you to the vendors at our 25th Anniversary bourse. There are some people in the philatelic world who use stamps in a very creative way and there are some people who create covers from a unique perspective. These folks are the philatelic world's own "special breed." Vendors bring to collectors, the works of these special ones. They introduce us to a variety of philatelic materials, and expose us to the creative works of many cachet makers. At our 25th Anniversary bourse, we were privileged to have vendors, cachet makers, and designers of creative philatelic art. One way we can thank them for their support of ESPER is to seek them out and patronize them when we go to stamp shows around the country. Here is the list of vendors that supported our anniversary. Some of them were present at our bourse, some made donations to our auction, for door prizes, or for the goodie bags, and some placed an advertisement in our souvenir journal. Seek them out on the Internet or in the neighborhood, and as you attend regional stamp shows, visit those who have philatelic tables/booths and let them know that you are a member of ESPER.

3D LAZ FDCs—Denise Lazaroff

6° Cachets—Don Neal

Aardvark Stamps

American First Day Cover Society, Graebner Chapter—
Foster E. Miller III

American Philatelic Society

American Stamp Dealers Association

Bea Cox/Mayme Grier

Black Women's Leadership Caucus, Inc.—

Elizabeth Rankin-Fulcher & Omoye Cooper, Co-Chairs

CL Cachets—Chris Lazaroff

Collins First Day Covers—Fred Collins

D. A. Lux

Donald P. Conway—Collector and Displayer

Douglas S. Weisz, U.S. Covers

Dragon Cards—Lloyd de Vries

Education Ministry of the Church of the Holy Redeemer

Friends of National Council of Negro Women—

Sandra Cook-McKnight, President

Gresham's Coins, Stamps & Medals—Sherrod Gresham

Hilltop Stamp Service—Richard A. Peterson

Jacksonville Stamp and Coin—Peter L. Dearling

JVC Cachets—John V. Colasanti

Kendal Bevil

Larry Lester—NoirTech Research, Inc.

Lindenwood Diner, Brooklyn, NY

Love's Creative Resources—Mary Love

Lyle Boardman

Mack Morant

Mani Gilyard/Clarence McKnight

Marilyn J. Nowak

McGraw-Hill Publishing Company

M. Rosina Major

Mystic Stamp Company

National Alliance of Black School Educators—

Dr. Betty Howell-Gray, Consultant

Pan-African City Alive—Keisha and Peter Evans, Proprietors

Pugh Cachets —Shawna D. Pugh

Rainbow Philatelics—Dave & Deborah Collins

Richard Barnes/James Daniel

Ricky Johnson/Leon Lee

Stamps Unlimited of GA, Inc.—Tony Roozen

Subway Stamp Shop, Inc.

Wayne and Leah Gehret

William Wright Stamps



3D LAZ FDCs — Denise Lazaroff



6° Cachets — Don Neal



AFDCS — Foster E. Miller III

Saturday Bourse



The USPS Associates



Mark Thompson (left) admiring Chris Lazaroff's CL Cachets



Emma Little for Love's Creative Resources



Mani Gilyard (seated) selling his stamp lapel pins



M. Rosina Major (right) covering the busy ESPER table



Ricky Johnson and Leon Lee



William Wright Stamps

Ebony Society of Philatelic Events and R



First row (seated on floor): Jean Lewis; Marilyn Barnes; Edward Sanders, Jr.; Don Neal; Ricky Johnson
 Second row (seated): Marchane Hawkins; M. Rosina Major; Clarence McKnight; Walter Faison, ESPE
 Hayes, founder; Higgins Bond; Li May Hicks; Gregory Slaughter, ESPE vice president; Richa
 Third row (standing): Calvin Mitchell; Don Conway; Brenda Slaughter; Carnella Parker; Desdemona L
 Rhonda Ingram; Howard Ingram; Zola Crowell; Dr. Mary Love; Hershel Johnson; female; Ekun
 Fourth row: David Mayfield; Lola Mayfield; female; Yvonne Sanders; Edward Sanders, Sr.; Rose May
 Lawrence; Ida Hawkins; Dolores Jenkins; Joy Conway
 Back row: Phillip Williams; Howard Gaines; Crystal Gaines; Mark Thompson; male; Robert Fields; R

Reflections 25th Anniversary Group Photo



on; Juliette Leak
ER president; Mani Gilyard, immediate past president; Earnest Shinault, first president; Esper G.
rd Barnes; Gloria Perez; Beatrice Cox
Faison; Farnese Hicks; Dr. Betty Howell Gray; Sherrod Gresham; Dr. John Batchman; Leon Lee;
ndayo Azibo; Joan Williams
yfield; Cynthia Dumizo; Gail Riley; Robert Gilmore; female; Charlene Blair; Yvette Major; Rosemary
Robert Cox; Sandra Long Weaver; Dr. John Allen; Foster Miller III; Edgar Hicks

Workshops and Presenters



Joyce Reece-Thomas, President of the African American Heritage Ministry at Friendship Missionary Baptist Church in Charlotte, North Carolina, welcomed us at our general meeting on Saturday morning. This group co-sponsored the events that ESPER conducted at the church on Saturday. We share very similar objectives — educating the community and the public about Black heritage.

On Saturday afternoon, several workshops for all skills levels — beginner, intermediate, advanced — were conducted by ESPER members. The presenters included **Clarence McKnight** (right) whose student workshop, “Education Through Philately (The Art of Stamp Collecting),” was aimed at introducing young people to stamp collecting and encouraging them to learn history through stamps.



“Creating and Preparing a Competitive Philatelic Exhibit” was conducted by **Dr. John W. Allen** (left), an APS certified judge and advanced national and international exhibitor, who demonstrated basic techniques and shared advice and his experiences. Dr. Allen also conducted “The Philately of Liberia and Its Impact on Black History Studies in the United States.”

Sherrod Gresham (right) presented “The African-American Experience Through U.S. Postage Stamps,” which focused on struggles and achievements depicted on U.S. stamps (i.e., amendments to the U.S. Constitution, civil rights leaders and milestones, and African Americans in the military as well as writers, athletes, and musicians).



“The Joys of Pictorial Postal Cancells” was presented by ESPER’s vice president, **Gregory Slaughter** (left). The workshop covered postal service regulations, examples of pictorial cancels, the *Postal Bulletin*, and how to commemorate a special event such as a family reunion, class reunion, or wedding anniversary. Gregory designed the two ESPER anniversary cancels.

Mary Rosina Major (right) conducted “Why, What, and WOW! The 3 Ws of Stamp Collecting.” Participants had fun playing games, doing puzzles, and quizzing themselves about U.S. stamps.



The workshop presenters were recognized at the Saturday evening dinner. From left to right are Sherrod Gresham, Clarence McKnight, ESPER president, Walter Faison, Dr. John W. Allen, ESPER vice president, Gregory Slaughter, and ESPER treasurer, Mary Rosina Major

Workshops and Presenters



Edgar Hicks represented the Liberia Philatelic Society and talked about that country's stamp history and the importance of ESPER aligning and collaborating with the societies that focus on the philately of Liberia, Haiti, and Ethiopia. Edgar Hicks is a former member and was the first African-American member of the board of directors of the American Philatelic Society.

Attentive members in the audience of one of the workshops included (L-R) Robert Gilmore, Higgins Bond, and Joan Williams



Clarence McKnight (standing, left) conducts his student workshop whose audience included members of Friendship Missionary Baptist Church Cub Scouts Pack 63.



ESPER members Hershel Johnson (seated, left) and Earnest Shinault (seated, right) share information with two interested young ladies.

Don Conway creates exceptional philatelic displays that he presents at stamp shows and cultural events as well as shares with seniors and school children in his area. Commented Edgar Hicks, "I was overwhelmed with the attention that Don Conway paid to the 'little' participants at ESPER's 25th. It didn't go unnoticed by my granddaughter (Li May Hicks) either. On the plane home, she mentioned 'having class' on history and stamps. My desire is to make sure she follows-up on her plan of doing an exhibit on 'her day' with ESPER and Mr. Conway for the Omaha Stamp Show!!"

Awards and Recognitions

At the Saturday evening program, ESPER president, Walter Faison, presented several members with special awards. These included the ESPER Membership Growth Award presented to **Bob Fields** “for his dedication to the goals of this society, and for helping to spread the love of the hobby of philately.” Bob attended numerous philatelic shows and events and was the top recruiter of new full-year memberships. He is the state director for Virginia.



Bea Cox, who wears several hats in our Society including state director for North Carolina, received the Director’s Award “for encouraging others to be an active part in furthering the hobby and for being a positive influence in the philatelic society within your community.”

A new award, the Reflections Award, was presented to **Don Neal** “for helping spread the love of the hobby throughout the philatelic community by using the media of communications.” Don is the editor of ESPER’s award-winning quarterly newsletter and the first recipient of this award. In the future, he will help determine subsequent recipients.



The Sanford L. Byrd Award was presented to **Gloria Perez** (left in photo) “for exemplary dedication, service, and commitment to the promotion of the hobby and the education of others.” Gloria is the chair of our membership committee and the hospitality committee. She also makes educational book-marks and other creative items that we use in recruiting new members, especially young people.

The ESPER Award “for outstanding service to this society in helping keep the philately of the African diaspora relevant to today’s world” was presented ESPER’s immediate past president, **Mani Gilyard**, for his efforts on the national level, and to **Ricky Johnson**, ESPER’s unofficial public relations person, for his efforts on the local level.



The Silver Anniversary Committee was recognized for its tremendous effort and success with the anniversary celebration. From left to right are M. Rosina Major (NY), Richard Barnes (TX), Beatrice Cox, Chair (NC), Walter Faison (NC), Clarence McKnight (NJ), Donald Conway (MD), and Ekundayo Azibo (SC). They each received framed artwork by Higgins Bond.



ESPER president, Walter Faison, made a special presentation of framed artwork to the three ladies that helped him the most with the anniversary celebration: (L-R) his wife, Desdemona Faison, M. Rosina Major, and Bea Cox.

Awards and Recognitions



During a special tribute to Ms. Hayes, ESPER's immediate past president, Mani Gilyard (left) and ESPER's first president, Earnest Shinault, presented the founder with a beautiful floral arrangement.



Since it was founded in 1988, ESPER has had three presidents. The first president was Earnest Shinault (left) who served until 1998. In 1999, Manuel Gilyard (center) began his term as president which ended in December 2011. In January 2012, the current ESPER president, Walter Faison (right) began his term.



Ms. Hayes (seated) was presented with the original artwork by Higgins Bond commemorating ESPER's 25th anniversary.



Higgins Bond was presented a special collage depicting the artwork she did for the ESPER anniversary as well as her stamps for the USPS and the United Nations Postal Administration.

Saturday Evening

The anniversary's evening program was the highlight of the weekend with delicious food, an amazing auction, and a visual presentation that took us down memory lane.

We had the three-entree Calabash Buffet:
 southern fried chicken with red chili honey;
 beef rib roast rubbed with sea salt, peppercorns, garlic & herbs with Alouette cream and sweet onion marmalade;
 and lightly blackened and pan-seared flounder prepared North Carolina style over hoppin john with horseradish cream and cajun remoulade.

also:
 roasted garlic rice & vermicelli pilaf
 red bliss lyonnaise potatoes
 green bean casserole
 sweet corn
 cole slaw, macaroni salad, potato salad
 mixed greens with chef's dressing
 sliced seasonal melon
 peach bread pudding with bourbon and cinnamon anglaise
 seasonal fruit cobbler with vanilla bean ice cream
 cinnamon shaker
 pecan pie
 sweet cornbread and fresh baked yeast rolls
 fresh brewed coffee, iced tea, and lemonade

and Esper's 78th birthday cake with her beautiful picture on it !!



The ESPER 25th Anniversary commemorative cover



(Top photo) At the sign-in table, people paid for their auction wins. (Center photo) Master of Ceremonies, Don Neal shares an anecdote about keynote speaker, Higgins Bond. (Above photo) Sherrod Gresham during his presentation of the history of ESPER.

Saturday Evening



People browsing the myriad of items up for auction.



Bob Fields led the group in the singing of "Lift Ev'ry Voice and Sing." At left, views of the ballroom.



(L-R) Rose Mayfield, Dr. Betty Howell Gray, Edward Sanders, Sr., Yvonne Sanders, and Edward Sanders, Jr.



Phillip Williams and Corliss Williams from Michigan and Rhonda and Howard Ingram from Virginia

Snapshots



Charlene Blair



Marchane Hawkins



Lynda Thompson



Esper Hayes



Richard Barnes



Edgar, Li May, Anna Hicks



Zola Crowell



Dr. Mary Love



Foster Miller III



Ida Hawkins



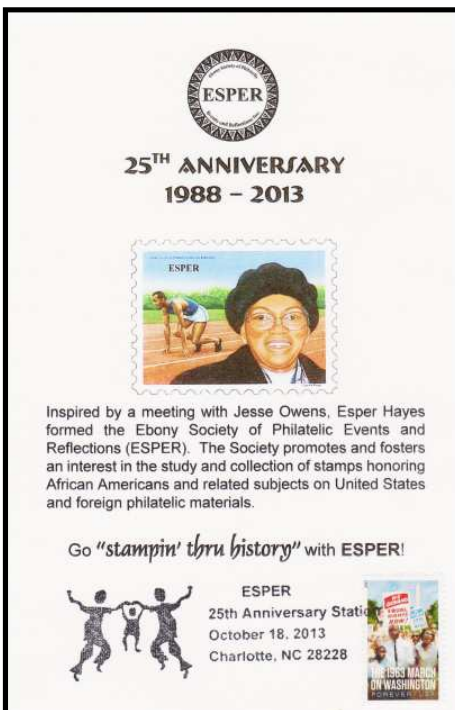
Calvin Mitchell



Young People at the Celebration



The Friendship Missionary Baptist Church Cub Scouts, Pack 63. The six adults from left to right are Keith Jett, Bruce Edwards, Walter Faison, Thelancy Price, Tommy Lee Hayes-Brown, and Darryl Ince.



The ESPER 25th Anniversary show card



Candids of the cub scouts at the ESPER 25th anniversary bourse

Reflections

There is a definite buzz in the air about the wonderful celebration held by ESPER in celebration of its 25 years as a philatelic society. Even if you were not able to attend the event, you have heard the buzz; across the country, members of the committee, long-time ESPER members, new ESPER members, and visitors are talking about it. Here are some of the comments that people in the ESPER community have sent to us.

My wife and I had a great time at the Anniversary Event. It was well organized and the Host Committee from North Carolina did a great job, especially their chair, Bea Cox. The vendors, the U.S. Postal Service, and the ESPER Store all had some great stamp products available for purchase. The event was made special by the presence of Esper Hayes, the founder, and Higgins Bond, the stamp designer. Both of these ladies were available all weekend for photos and autograph signing. The workshops we attended were very informative. Especially nice was the silent auction, and we did win two of the three items we bid upon. Another plus was the meeting of some great people from across the country, who love Black Heritage stamp collecting. – Howard Ingram, Joined this year (member # 727).

I'm still high on the anniversary celebration. It was altogether too short; I didn't get to do all that I wanted to do. But I had much fun, learned a lot, and met some wonderful people. I truly wish we could do this more often. – Bob Fields, Virginia Chapter Director (member # 132)

All I can say is that I had a good time and I did learn a lot. I was very impressed with the different items that the vendors took the time to make. The fact that there are so many African Americans on stamps was very impressive to me; there was way more than I even knew. – Yvette Major, Daughter of Treasurer, M. Rosina Major (member # 303)

I definitely enjoyed being at the ESPER 25th Anniversary. I learned about ESPER from the announcements in the bulletin at Friendship Missionary Baptist Church. I was ecstatic with the

merchandise being offered, especially the four pair of cuff links that I purchased from Mr. Gresham. – David Cannady, who joined ESPER at the Bourse (member # 574)

I really enjoyed the 25th Anniversary celebration for ESPER. Meeting people who share a passion for stamp collecting gave me motivation to do more. It was truly a learning experience in so many ways. The opportunity to meet a stamp artist was truly amazing and added another dimension to the hobby of stamp collecting. Having Esper Hayes share with us was a blessing. I thank her for the vision and the work to make it a reality. I must also commend our North Carolina Chapter President, Bea Cox for all of her hard work in preparing to host the event. Thanks to our president and all who worked to make the event memorable. This was my first time serving as a vendor and that was a rewarding experience. I got some new ideas for creative ways to use stamps and develop items to share our hobby. – Mary Love, North Carolina Chapter (member # 323)

Great show – extremely friendly bunch of people, which is always true for ESPER – nice location. – Foster Miller, Vendor (member # 741)

I thought this event was most enjoyable and informative. I'm not saying this because I grew up at Friendship, but it was great that we collaborated with them. It was good to have the Boy Scouts there also. – Juliette Leak (member # 461)

I think the meticulous planning and excellent leadership within the Planning Committee paid off in spades!! It was an excellent event and the next planning committee has a big job ahead to beat this one. – Ekundayo Azibo, Anniversary Committee (member # 307)

It was a great event!!! I hope that the 30th anniversary will be in D.C. We can go by the White House and stop at the Dr. King Memorial. – Earnest Shinault, Sr., Past President (member # 3)

**Please renew your ESPER membership
for 2014.**

**We need and appreciate your support.
Happy Holidays!!**

**A BIG thank you to Tony Thaxton, Jr. for taking and
sharing many of the photos in this issue. You can
see all of the photos that Tony took at the celebra-
tion by visiting www.travelenjoylife.com**



ESPER members from Tennessee: Earnest Shinault, Sandra Long Weaver, and Mark Thompson.