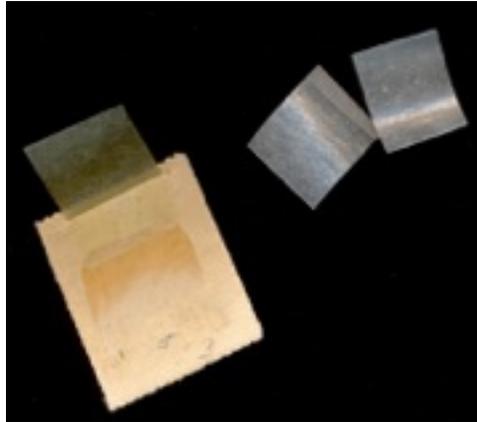


It's all in the Mounting

When we first start collecting and have little knowledge of how we put our stamps and covers in albums, there is a lot of room for error. I remember a small collection that a friend bought at a garage sale for me. Even though I knew it was worthless I accepted his generosity. Each mint stamp was lovingly added to the small album by licking the gum of each stamp, until it was solidly placed one stamp next to the other. Of course, I thanked my friend and in my spare time I soaked the stamps off the pages, just for fun. I figured they would make good



stamps to be given away at a show to young collectors.

The traditional way to display stamps has always been done with hinges. Early collectors made their own hinges and often used things like flour and water to make their own wheat paste. Some collectors used selva from the edges of full sheets to make their hinges. Later on, commercial hinges came on the market, and finally they made hinges that once dry would peel easily.



Mounts were the next thing on the market for the collectors wanting ways to display their stamps without tampering the backs and disturbing the gum. Various mounts were made for the stamp trade. Some were designed like little clear envelopes that surrounded the stamp. Unfortunately, these mounts were almost air tight, and the stamps could not be seen on the back or easily removed and secondly the stamps would dry out. In some cases these stamps would become

It's all in the Mounting

so brittle that once removed from these mounts, they would crumble. Other mounts called Crystal mounts came in strips that could be folded around the top and bottom of the stamp. On this type, damage often happened when the mount was too constricting.



Mounting is not an easy task, nor is it inexpensive, if done with modern mounts. Modern mounts such as Showgard types and other brands that come in strips, but allowed the collector easy removal from a flap have made big advances in safe mounting. These types of mounts do well, if care is taken. Even individual pre-cut sizes designed for a number of standard size stamps has made mounting stamps easy. These can be found with black or clear backgrounds and they are acid free, keeping the stamps from discoloring as some of the older type mounts have done.

It's all in the Mounting

Albums that come with mounts added are beautiful and can be purchased from a



number of commercial album makers. There are also pages designed to help the collectors if they want to expand. Albums with pre-mounted holders often are done with either plastic inserts that hold the proper configuration of stamps or with individual mounts. Many of these type mounts are open at the top, generally clear and do a wonderful job of containing the stamps the album was designed for. The down side is expense for such custom work.

The older exhibitors really had a difficult time when the mounts were much less than perfect and each page had to be hand made to show their stamps. Today's collectors that make their own pages, especially for exhibits or specialty collections, using modern computer programs can use the same type mounts that other collectors are using in their commercially made albums. The down side is time and effort that such albums require. Obviously, the end product is often very appealing to show off their collections at exhibits and well worth the efforts put forth.

Whatever you use, make sure that it is not damaging your stamps, there is breathing room for your stamps and that you do not lay albums down flat or stacked on top of each other. Make sure you keep albums upright and not so cramped together that unfortunate things can happen. Nothing is worse than finding out that such as gum glazing, mould from overly humid air and other effects have ruined your stamps. Lastly, any plastic mounts on individual stamps such as those used by stamp grading services can damage your stamps if they are not allowed to breathe. Stamps are made of organic material such as wood and cloth and the health of them depends on air that is not too dry, hot or humid.

It's all in the Mounting

Good luck with mounting your collections.

Enjoy.