

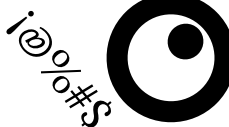
# Elsewhere Philatelic Society. Universal Transcript.

1 The means of travel "East-West" are closed to you here, so enter through the "North-South" passage. One of the most interesting things you'll note as you walk through this place is that you are actually passing through time in both directions here. Face one way and you will pass forward through the City's history; face the other and you will be traveling backward. When you enter you'll see "Pioneers Receiving Mail" on your right. In fact one of the Philatelic Society's oldest stamps from Elsewhere was from this period; it depicted a diamond carried in the beak of a pigeon. Unfortunately when the Philatelic Chamber in the Underground library was vandalized, the stamp was completely destroyed. Around the corner, as you go further forward (and backward) in time, you'll see the Great Earthquake and Fire of 1906 on your left, the early Mission settlers on your right, the Great Depression on your left, the native tribes on your right, even the creation of United Nations in front of you. We don't think you should travel that far ahead in time quite yet. Find the stamps window here near Sir Francis Drake. The years between 1941 (when the art was commissioned by the US Works Progress Administration) and 1953 (when the McCarthy-ites in congress tried to destroy them) ... ah ... those were the heydays of the philatelic society's infiltration of the US Postal Service ... all the way up until the Rincon Annex postal offices closed in 1978, one could secretly buy Stamps From Elsewhere at this window by counting the pieces of art and mentioning Sir Francis Drake to a nonchalant postal worker in the know.

2 Originally from a World War Two tanker, this propeller is made of solid brass, and weighs thirty six thousand pounds. They say it was found here when the area was converted from a shipyard to the modern-day business center. Philatelists will tell you it's actually a remnant from an experimental project by Mullen and Farius, two engineers who hoped to create a large-scale perforation device for extremely large poster stamps. I can hear you thinking to yourself, "Those are some huge stamps!" Indeed ... most people believe there was some kind of scale error on the plans when they were sent to the metalworkers for fabrication. On the other hand, some people think the engineers had actually intended to make a stamp that large, though for what purpose and remains unknown. Building management today says they hope to renovate the lobby and move the enormous thing to a new location. Thirty six thousand pounds? That's going to require extra postage.

3 You are now standing on the former site of the Elsewhere Underground Library. The above-ground building, oddly-shaped and somewhat nondescript, also housed the offices of Issoscles Books, which specialized in titles from Elsewhere, along with more mundane small-market offerings. In 1972 Oswin Books' Stamps and Books opened to the public on the ground floor, but it was forced to close in 1989 after the collapse of the Embarcadero freeway blocked the entrance. Shortly afterward, Doctor Gene Donale took over as Library Director and significant changes began to happen within the building. Security was tightened around the reference stacks. Many public meeting facilities were converted into research offices. The bowling lanes near the library's card catalog were closed due to noise complaints. By the late 90s, even Issoscles Books was forced to close its storefront; the building lay empty for years until its eventual destruction. As former patrons and comrades-in-arms began to gather in the vacant lot to mourn the loss of the structure, green microwaves harassment boxes were installed to disrupt these impromptu meetings. Now, the Shoes of the Fallen are placed into the tree during a secret, yearly ceremony to mark the passing of the beloved library, and associated bookstores. Unfortunately the Elsewhere Philatelic Society does not currently know the location of the New Underground Library. Due to ongoing conflicts and a rather inflammatory letter that was sent one evening after a very large glass of brandy, library officials will no longer return our calls. Forced to find a new meeting spot, we took this opportunity to find other Philatelists who might wish to join us.

4 I can barely withhold my disgust looking at this monument to the coin. Placed here by the Elsewhere Numismatic Society, this model of a round metal disk with a hole in the center was created by artist Roger Berry in 1984. Hauntingly it balances on one edge as if tossed here by an alien creature. Irony, as those coin-freaks have an irrational and paralyzing fear of aliens. It's true. Did you know that the video game Space Invaders was so popular in Japan that it caused a nationwide coin shortage? The government couldn't get the ten-yen coin back in circulation fast enough. A world without coins ... the sheer idea is enough to make the numismatists flee in panic. It is no surprise then that the building tenants have ties to Japan. Famed coin collector Keibun Tanaka was long an idol among San Francisco's "Sempukan" Collection in Tokyo. Numismatists for his famed "Sempukan" Collection in Tokyo. And while economists will cite real estate and stock price inflation as the cause of the Japanese economic bubble in the late 80s, in large part it was the popularity and subsequent scarcity of lower denomination yen coinage that raised prices on all goods. Take note of the address here. Surely the numismatists have infiltrated this facility. But for what purpose?



5 We'll stop here for a minute -- this isn't necessarily part of Elsewhere Philatelic Society history but it's one of my favorite stories. In 1982 the Aquatic Thought Foundation purchased the Aquatic Mammal Art Collective outright and closed the facility to the public. The dolphins from the art collective were kept here in a large round chamber on this floor. However, one problem the scientists had was effectively warming the chilly water brought in from the bay to keep the dolphins happy and creative. Electric and gas heaters interfered with some of the foundation's technologies and were frankly too expensive to run. So instead they planned to move the dolphin tanks to the roof overhead in an experiment using solar heating techniques. The Elsewhere Numismatic Society, our rival organization at the Underground Library, sought to drive us further out of the neighborhood; One of their officers used his connections at the Library to try to get in well with the Foundation. To help pay for the new tanks, the Numismatists held a fundraising event, the Grand Aquatic Ball with thousands of guests. It was a lavishly decorated event, and in keeping with their area of expertise, had a coin-tossing contest in the new glass-bottomed tank itself before the dolphins were moved. They planned to toss thousands of dollars worth of coins into it to show how many donations they'd received. Well, the sheer weight of all the coins flipped into the new glass tank cracked it, flooding the atrium beneath, bankrupting the event itself and eventually forcing the Foundation to move its facilities out of the building altogether. The 85 foot high fountain "Rain Column," created by artist Doug Hollis, commemorates the utter failure of the Numismatists on that night. Perhaps for safety's sake you should note the capacity of the room ... how many people can be safely accommodated here?

7 So, you begin to know our passions, our enemies, our mission, as best as we know them ... now you wish to know our whereabouts? (Well, as best as we know that, either.) Perhaps our offices are here in this towering skyscraper north of you, inside where a diamond rests in a bed of nails at the heart of an enormous hexagonal cage. Or perhaps we checked into leasing an office here and realized that stamp collecting doesn't pay enough to afford a sign in the lobby, let alone an actual office. No, the Elsewhere Philatelic Society got kicked out the door by building security and stood here under the miniature model of their tower ... this sort-of ... pineapple-shaped white structure. We sat with the pigeons in this hexagon pineapple, and looked up to watch the sky above us, framed by the triangle at the very top, for a sign. That was when we heard the faint echoes of squeaks and clicks. The answer was so simple. We can send anything through to Elsewhere as long as we have enough postage. We could send this whole skyscraper there -- if only building security would stop scraping our stamps off of the facade. So why couldn't we send our own office through? All we needed was a return address. Which is why I now address you: return to our return address! While standing at the spot of our revelation, while looking at the sky, call the number listed in your booklet and enter that code, in order. We await your

3 One of the Library's neighbors and a friend of the Philatelic Society was The Aquatic Mammal Art Collective, a precursor to the Dolphin Discovery tour program based in Cancun, Mexico. In 1976 Marine Biologist Maya de Cozumel wanted to start a program here in the Bay Area to foster inter-species communication between humans and dolphins; however Maya's method was based on means other than verbal language. With courses such as "Underwater Painting" and "Sculpture with Mackarel and Herring," the program was a moderate success; though operating costs meant only a few could afford the program -- mostly celebrities and other artists seeking inspiration. In fact, Douglas Adams wrote his 1984 book "So Long and Thanks For All The Fish," as a thinly disguised memoir of his own experiences in California meeting with Maya and her dolphins. You may be thinking to yourselves, "What do dolphins and stamps have to do with each other? Wouldn't the stamps get wet?" In fact, dolphins were very common subjects of stamps from Elsewhere around this period. Much like in Adams' book, dolphins are even more intelligent than we humans give them credit for; In the wild it is believed they also possess the ability to come and go from Elsewhere as they please. Because of this they are a frequent symbol for fast and easy communication between the two places. In 1988, when the Rincon Center area was redeveloped, Maya's small troupe of dolphins and their artistic achievements were immortalized here by local Bay Area artist Joan Brown. Did you see all of them?