

Philatelic Gems at the WSS-NY 2016 Exhibition

The World Stamp Show-NY 2016 Court of Honor will feature a number of world philatelic rarities. Among them will be a special exhibit presented by members of the Club de Monte Carlo.

The organization was established as a result of the perseverance of its first president, Mr. Alexander Kroo, as well as the generous support of Prince Rainier III of Monaco, and officially founded after the second exhibition of "100 of the World's Rarest Stamps and Philatelic Documents." The club brings together the top of international philately and is firmly committed to limiting its membership to around one hundred experienced collectors and a number of institutions.

Since its founding, the Club has hosted a number of "MonacoPhil" exhibitions, culminating in its 10th edition, taking place in Monte Carlo in December, 2015. This exhibit will consist of 100 rarities, with each club member contributing only one item from his or her collection. These same rarities will all be shown at World Stamp Show-NY 2016.

One of the important documents on display has particularly close links with the history of New York. In order to learn more, we will have to travel back in time to the 17th century.

After the Wars of Religion ravaged the Netherlands in the 17th century, many people left in search of more hospitable countries. Some of them crossed the Atlantic to seek their fortunes in the New World, where they founded new colonies in "New Netherlands," which refers to the present-day states of Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Delaware.

A Dutch Army officer, Peter Stuyvesant, was appointed director-general of the New Amsterdam colony in July, 1646. He set sail for there several months later, arriving at Manhattan in May, 1647. In fact, he was the last person to hold that position before the territory was captured by the British in 1664 and renamed New York.

Only three documents are known to be privately owned bearing the signature of the famous governor. One of them is here, an edict dating to 1652 and handwritten by his secretary, Carel van Brugge, who as his surname indicates came from the city of that name. Stuyvesant's signature can be found just below the paper's horizontal fold.

This document is currently owned by Patrick Maselis of Belgium and exhibited with his permission.