

## EXHIBITS

### *Creating the Philatelic Exhibit Synopsis*

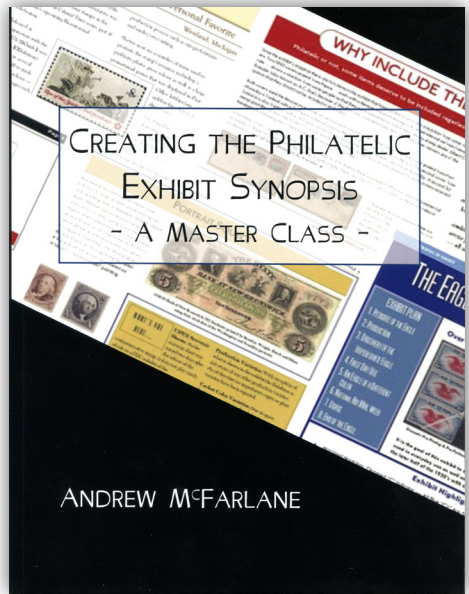
– *A Master Class* by Andrew McFarlane. 120 pages, 8½ by 11 inches, card covers, perfect binding, Exhibitors Press, Silver Spring, Maryland, 2021. ISBN 9798731447959, \$35 from Amazon.

Author Andrew McFarlane is an accomplished exhibitor, especially of first day covers. His exhibits have won not only gold medals but several show grand awards as well. He quickly learned that one of the most important keys to successful exhibiting is preparation of the synopsis.

The exhibit synopsis does not appear in the frames and is not judged. However, it is required by exhibitors and is usually submitted along with the application to exhibit. The overall purpose of the synopsis is to inform the jury of what the exhibit is all about and to educate them on aspects of the difficulty in obtaining and assembling the display.

McFarlane describes the major components of the synopsis. A brief description and goal of the exhibit are essential. Mention some of the important or key items to reinforce the difficulty of acquisition, and state how these are set off with special borders or descriptive text. An exhibit plan or list of chapters reveals how it is organized. A select bibliography will help the judges prepare to evaluate your exhibit. The reference list should be short and not encumbered with foreign language or scarcity of availability. Make the job of the jury as easy as possible to prepare to evaluate your exhibit.

Original research helps achieve more points. Highlight any discoveries. A good outline of what to include in the synopsis is to use the Exhibitor Evaluation Form



as subject headings in the synopsis. The form is found in the judging discussion on the American Philatelic Society web-site.

Much of McFarlane's book is devoted to actual synopsis pages of his exhibits. He describes the evolution of the synopsis for one of his exhibits and how it was improved and expanded as he added material over the years. His exhibit pages are not the common 8½-by-11 inches but are typically double pages measuring 11-by-17. His synopses include not only text but graphic material as well. He recommends software and fonts that he prefers.

In an appendix he shows the title pages of some of the exhibits, which demonstrates that they are two different documents. Both are important and are seen by the judges before the show so they can prepare to evaluate the exhibit fairly. The importance of the synopsis is stressed in this "how to" book and demonstrates one way for exhibitors to improve their chances of success.

*Reviewed by Alan Warren.*