



A Review

by Larry Crain

First Day Cover Philatelic Exhibiting: A Master Class is a book for many exhibitors, not just for a first day cover collector. It is a history of first day collecting, a manual of first day collecting types, a guidebook on how to relate an exhibit to the EEF categories and a how-to manual about tools and techniques to start, to build and to complete an exhibit. It is 454 pages of information.

The author Andrew McFarlane has written the book as if it were a conversation. He interjects humor and sometimes trivia or asides. These asides often come as if they are answers to questions that you the reader ask about the pages he has scanned and included. His style is light, readable and informative. The organization is clear, tight and logically presented. It is as close to inter-active as I think a book can get. Again I point out, the book, because of its specific information and comments, is useful for any exhibitor, not just one of first days.

The book is much like a tutorial for a computer program. It tells the reader what needs to be known and allows the exhibitor to skip over what is not relevant at the time. But what is skipped is there when the reader needs it later if working on a different part of the exhibit or even on a different exhibit. The book has a clear advantage over an online tutorial. That is an eleven-page index of specific topics that doesn't require the user to scroll across the time bar to find the right place to restart. Furthermore, the user of this book will consult it as a guide for a first exhibit, as a reminder for a second exhibit, as a refresher for a third exhibit and as a check list for the fourth exhibit.

I read *First Day Cover Philatelic Exhibiting* as a resource book -- the first part sequentially, the middle part randomly as I thought of exhibits I have done or am now collecting material for and the last part to gauge the author's scope and sequence. In other words, I know I will refer to it in the future. The book has three indices -- for subjects, for names and for stamps by Scott number. There are six pages of bibliography. All this will make it easy to refer to.

Production and ordering data: Exhibitors Press, Silver Springs, MD. 514 pages, 400+ full color illustrations, hardcover \$99 and softcover \$89. Available from Andrew McFarlane, P.O. Box 669, Bartonsville, PA 18321, sales@ExhibitSynopsis.com. Website: www.ExhibitSynopsis.com

First Day Cover Philatelic Exhibiting: A Master Class gets a gold and felicitations of this reader. In fact, it got the Grand Award at GASS 2025.