



# San Jose Postcard Club Newsletter

No. 40

Mar Apr 2019

## President's Message

Welcome all you postcard individuals to the March/April SJ newsletter. I am presently again in the area of our nation's capital with my two new grandsons. It is rather cold here but SJ has also experienced some decreased temperatures. I should be back for our April meeting.

I would like to thank Tom, Lynne, Shav, Mary Ann, Dan, Walt, Jim and others who have kept our SJ Postcard Club in existence. We need new members or we will perish. Suggestions are always appreciated.

I would like to say a special word in honor of Gail Kransky. We all miss her and wish Walt the best under difficult conditions.

I enjoyed attending the SF postcard meeting in January and Dan's presentation. I might try to attend some shows here in the DC area.

Let me be the first to welcome Shav La Vigne as the newly elected president of our postcard club. I know he will do a fine job and we expect to hear from him in our next newsletter.

Happy collecting one and all!  
Bob Kavanaugh  
Recently Acting President

## 2019 Club Officers

**President**  
Shav La Vigne

**Vice-President**  
Bob Kavanaugh

**Treasurer, Secretary**  
Mary Ann Stanfield . . .408 747-1653

**Newsletter Editor**  
Lynne Paulson  
lcpaulson@comcast.net

**Contributing Editors**  
Walt Kransky & Shav La Vigne

**Hospitality**  
Tom Brackett  
*Additional Volunteer needed*

**Program Chairman**  
**Position Open**  
**Volunteer needed**

**Librarian**  
**Position Open**  
**Volunteer Needed**

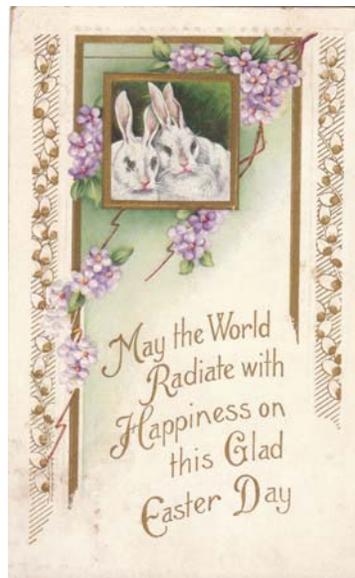
Please direct all correspondence to:  
P O Box 32042  
San Jose CA 95152-2042

Visit our online link @ Walt's website  
[www.thepostcard.com/walt/club.htm](http://www.thepostcard.com/walt/club.htm)

Meeting at 7:00 PM the second Wednesday of the month September through June—See map on last page

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*Easter*  
*April 21, 2019*



*Embossed postcard with April 1917 postmark, Publisher was Whitney Valentine, Worcester, Mass. Their cards say Whitney Made or carry a red W.*



*Embossed postcard with April 1914 postmark,*

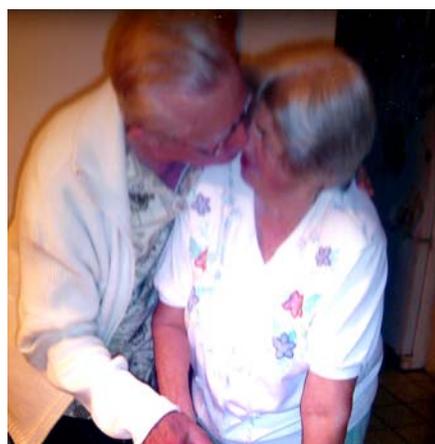
## In Memory of Gail Kransky



*Above, Gail Kransky with a metal Santa sign. Left, Gail with her sweet smile.*

Our long time friend and club member Gail Kransky passed away on October 12, 2018. Gail Lynn Kransky was born on March 18, 1937 in Seattle, Washington. Gail raised three sons together with her husband Walt. We really enjoyed her company at postcard club gatherings and her ambrosia fruit salad at potlucks. She loved to cook and loved Walt.

*The photo on the right is from Walt and Gail's 50th anniversary. By September 13, 2018 they had been married for 61 years.*



*This Easter card is part of a set of four. Gail liked to collect cards with illustrations of children's faces in flowers like this one.*

Recent years had brought health issues that kept Gail away from some of our meetings and events but when she was present we appreciated her kind and enthusiastic involvement in postcard collecting.

Here are a few cards from Gail's postcard collection.

# In Memory of Gail Kransky

*continued*



*A careful look at this card indicates it depicts Christmas packages with faces and arms and legs. This card is part of a set published by Whitney Valentine Co, 1858-1942, Worcester, MA.*



*This cherub celebrating baseball, holds not just a bat but also hearts, indicating it is a Valentine card, another favorite topic in Gail's collection. This card is part of a set.*

Gail was an avid antique collector with diverse interests. Some of her other collections included:

- Owl figurines and decorative items
- Snowbabies —collectible small white figurines of babies and children representing stories of "love, friendship & inspiration"
- Postcards of storks, including baby announcements
- Postcards of women
- Calendars from the late 1800's and early 1900's
- Maud Humphrey statuettes—figurines of children based on the artist's early 20th century work. (She was Humphry Bogart's mother)
- Postcards from many different holidays

We will miss Gail and are glad to have known her.

Walt continues to sell extra postcards from his and Gail's collections at his website:  
<http://www.thepostcard.com/walt/>

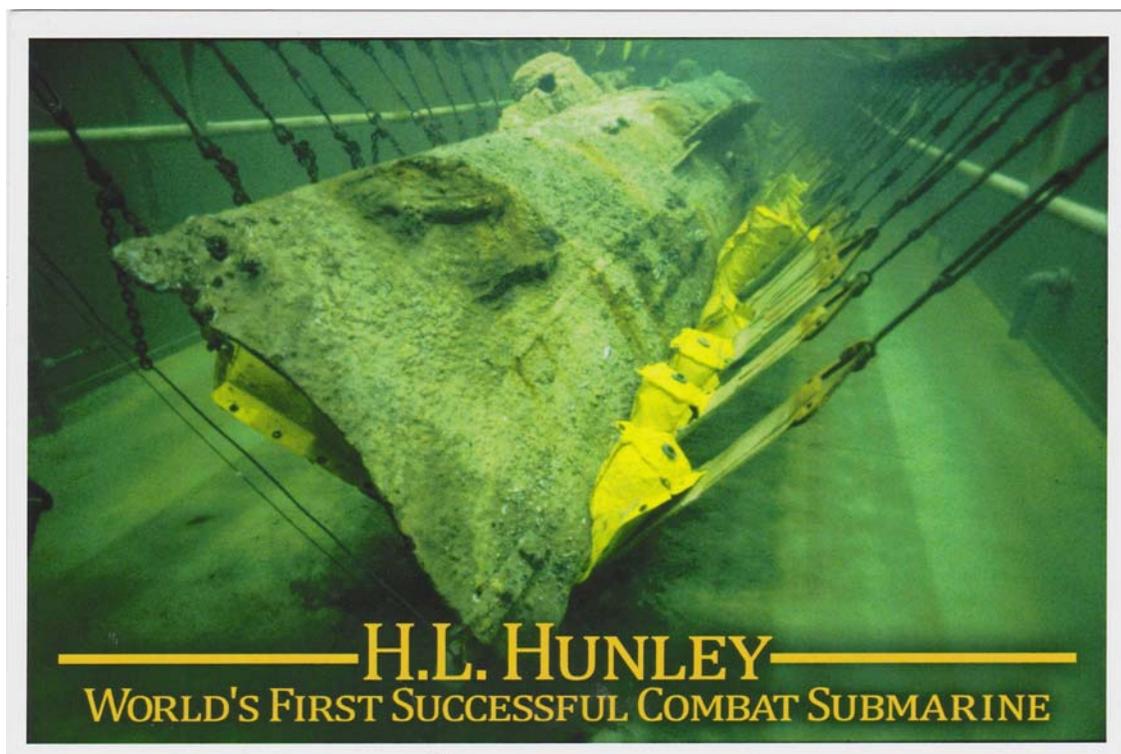
# *H.L. Hunley* America's First Successful Submarine by Shav La Vigne

There has been a lot of fussing and fighting over historical monuments, statues, and symbols of the American Civil War. Though there are many arguments, good and bad, the fact is that American history has to include Confederate history to be complete.

During a vacation to Charleston, South Carolina, I had the long anticipated opportunity to actually see a bit of history that many people know little or nothing about. I find it very interesting and hope that others will feel the same.

I have had a lifelong curiosity involving ships, most especially submarines. This trip offered me the opportunity to see the first submarine to destroy an enemy ship. The boat was the *H.L. Hunley* and she was supporting the Confederacy. There have been many books and papers written on the *Hunley* but here is a synopsis aimed to stir an interest to read further on this amazing boat.

In the midst of the American Civil War the Confederacy in general and the city of Charleston, SC in particular, was in desperate condition. By August of 1863 the United States Navy had Charleston completely blockaded, not allowing ships to enter or exit the harbor. Their successful blockade was starving out the city of Charleston and was depriving the Confederacy the use of their largest and most important port city.



*Postcard from the Lash Conservation Center in Charleston, SC. This shows the sub in her cradle in a chemical tank. Eventually she will be preserved and out in the open in an as yet to be determined new location in Charleston.*

## *H.L. Hunley* *continued*

Horace Lawson Hunley, a very wealthy plantation owner, partnered with James McClintock, an engineer and part owner of a large machine shop in New Orleans, LA. With Hunley's money and McClintock's knowledge, the two were able to design and build several submarines intended to help stem the flow of aggression against the south.

Hunley and McClintock built a total of three submarines, improving on each as they were built. The first was named *Pioneer*. She was extremely slow and showed little promise as a first attempt to develop a boat that could actually do damage to an enemy ship.

When Union forces overtook New Orleans in 1862 Hunley and McClintock feared that the *Pioneer* would be captured by the fast Union warships. As a result, their first effort was deliberately scuttled.

With New Orleans now being under the control of the Union forces, Hunley and McClintock moved their operations to Mobile, AL. It was there that they built their second submarine, the *American Diver*. Unfortunately this boat was lost when a rogue wave swamped and sunk her in Mobile Bay.

Work began on their third and most famous submarine, the *H.L. Hunley*, in February 1863. By the summer of 1863, *Hunley* was ready for her first test. Hunley and McClintock invited General Dabney Maury, commander of Confederate forces in Mobile, to witness what she was capable of doing.

Her first mission involved towing a floating torpedo under a ship and exploding the charge. The test worked like magic and General Maury was amazed at what he saw. Keep in mind that this technology had never been seen before *Hunley* was invented and proven. Money and material to build her was not provided by the Confederate States. She was built and tested by her makers who wanted to help in the war effort. For this reason the *Hunley* was never commissioned by the Confederate Navy and therefore correctly was never called the "Confederate States Ship (CSS) Hunley".

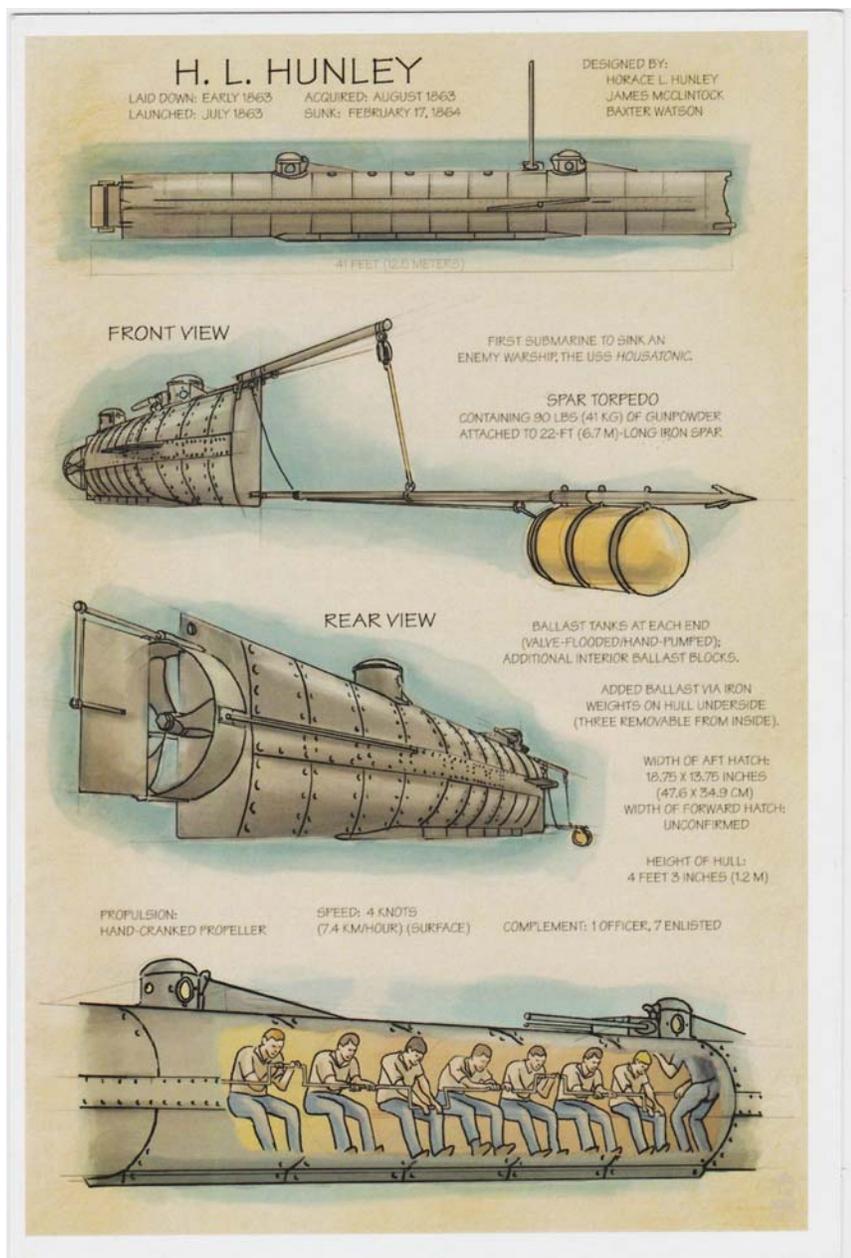


*Postcard showing a full scale reproduction of the Hunley which is located at the Lash Conservation Center in Charleston, SC. This is an old, full size model made from memories and from what small amount of information was available at the time. It was made years before the boat was discovered and brought to the surface—so it is similar to the actual boat but not an exact model.*

## H.L. Hunley continued

The *H.L. Hunley* was a marvel that premiered many features still used in submarines to this day. She was nearly 40 feet long and carefully shaped to channel water around the boat, reducing friction. Her bow was sharp with a slightly curved edge that was designed to allow her to quietly push through water. Her stern contained a three-bladed propeller that was surrounded by a metal band allowing it to generate maximum force. Her rudder was a flat square of metal fastened just behind the propeller.

The boat's upper deck consisted of two 14 inch high by 16 inch wide hatches with small viewing ports provided for looking forward and to the sides. Both hatches were equipped with "cut waters" on their forward edges allowing smoother passage through water while underway. These hatches were the only entrance and escape routes to the submarine.



Interior light was provided by a row of ten circular glass ports (dead lights) evenly spaced in pairs between the conning towers. When submerged, a lit candle was the crew's only source of light.

Eight crewmen would enter the sub's cramped 4 foot high by 3.5 foot wide compartment through the hatches. Seven men would arrange themselves along the side of the submarine, partly sitting and squatting on small wooden seats. In front of each man was a crank shaft which ran the length of the crew area, back through the aft bulkhead to the propeller.

The eighth man, the captain, partially stood at the forward hatch where he could see forward and have access to controls for steering and diving.

## *H.L. Hunley* *continued*

*Hunley's* only means of movement was by manpower! Her seven crew members cranked power to her propeller which moved her through the water. Diving was controlled by using two ballast tanks, fore and aft, and dive planes mounted on the starboard and port bow of the boat. The captain could control the water levels in the forward and aft ballast tanks using valves called seacocks and made use of the diving planes to control the depth and angle of decent. **Much easier said than done!**

After her successful tests in Mobile, AL, *Hunley* was shipped to Charleston, SC, by railroad, where she was to be further tested and hopefully used to relieve the Union blockade of that city.

She was tested twice more with disastrous results on both tests. In both cases the cause of her sinking was not the fault of the submarine's design but happened due to errors made by its crew and commanding officers. Among the persons killed on these test runs was the *Hunley's* namesake and financier turned captain, H.L. Hunley.

Regardless of these failures, General Pierre G. T. Beauregard, commander of Confederate troops in Charleston, believed that the submarine could help his situation but insisted that there be a strictly volunteer crew to run the boat.

After being refloated two times, the *Hunley* was placed in the charge of Lieutenant George E. Dixon, originally from the Twenty First Alabama Infantry Regiment. On April 6, 1862 Lieutenant Dixon fought at the Battle of Shiloh. During that battle, he was struck by a bullet in his left thigh. Miraculously, the force of the bullet which would have surely at least caused an amputation to his leg, was stopped by a \$20 United States Gold Coin that he was carrying with him. From that time forward, Dixon carried this coin as his good luck charm wherever he went!

Finally on February 17, 1864, Dixon and a crew of volunteers climbed into the *Hunley* to attempt to break the blockade of Charleston.

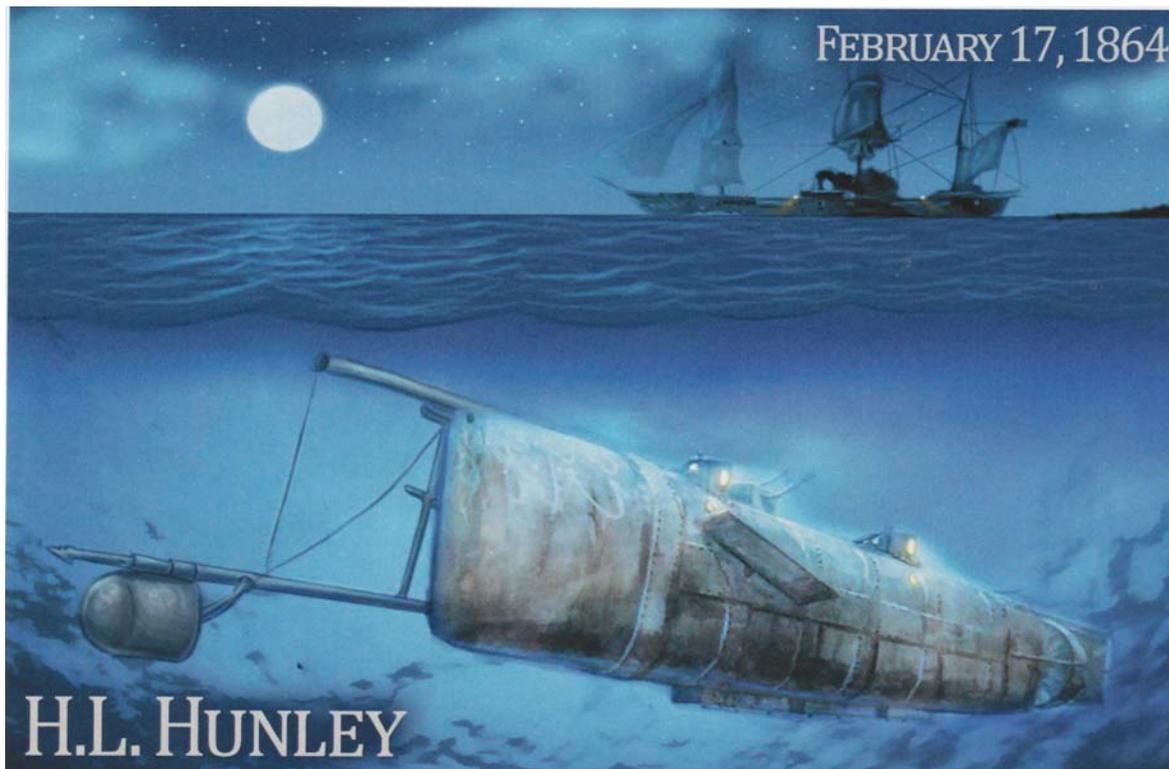
The *USS Housatonic* was among the Union ships blockading the city. She was a dual-powered, sail/steam, ship commanded by Captain Charles Pickering. Pickering was leery of Confederate steam-powered attack boats (Davids) that would draw near to the vessel and set off explosives. As a result, he ordered his ship's boilers ready to make steam at a moment's notice.

## H.L. Hunley continued

At about 8:45 PM, one of *Housatonic's* crew men reported seeing something floating about 400 feet off the starboard side of the vessel. At first the sighting was thought to be a stray log floating in the harbor but after further inspection it was realized that the object was being powered and was heading straight for the ship.

The *Hunley* was fitted with a 17 foot long spar that was attached to her bow. At the end of this spar was an explosive charge capable of blowing a hole in the wooden sides of the *Housatonic*. After driving the charge into the side of the ship, it was detonated causing severe damage that sunk the enemy ship. Only five crew members were killed while other survivors, including Captain Pickering, were rescued by *USS Canandaigua* anchored just two miles away. *Housatonic* sunk in relatively shallow water. Her sail masts protruded above the water allowing most of her crew to escape with their lives.

*Hunley*, the first submarine to sink an enemy ship, backed away from the wreck but failed to return to Sullivan's Island where she started out. No one knew exactly what went wrong but she sunk to the bottom of Charleston Bay with all hands on board.



*H.L. Hunley was an American Civil war submarine that demonstrated the advantage and danger of undersea warfare. Its distinction as the first submarine in history to sink an enemy ship in combat ushered in the age of modern submarine warfare.*

*This postcard shows an artist's depiction of the sinking of the submarine.*

## *H.L. Hunley* *continued*

Over the years many people searched for the wreckage of the *H.L. Hunley*. Finally, in early 1994 novelist Clive Cussler, along with archaeologists Wes Hall and Ralph Wilbanks, teamed up with the South Carolina Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology and found a location at the bottom of Charleston Bay that looked promising.

They had, indeed, found the *Hunley* lying under several feet of sand and silt. Eventually, after many arguments and discussions, the wreck was placed in the care of the State of South Carolina which, in turn, charged Clemson University's Warren Lash Conservation Center in Charleston with her recovery and preservation. On August 8, 2000, *H.L. Hunley* saw the light of day for the first time in 137 years!

Since that date she has been going through a complete stabilization processes that continues to this day. The remains of her eight man crew along with hundreds of artifacts have been collected and cataloged including the \$20 Gold Coin carried by Lieutenant Dixon. All eight men were given a formal military funeral and have been buried at the Magnolia Cemetery, in Charleston, SC.

Plans are underway for the construction of a museum in North Charleston where the *Hunley*, after being preserved, will be placed on permanent display along with her many artifacts.

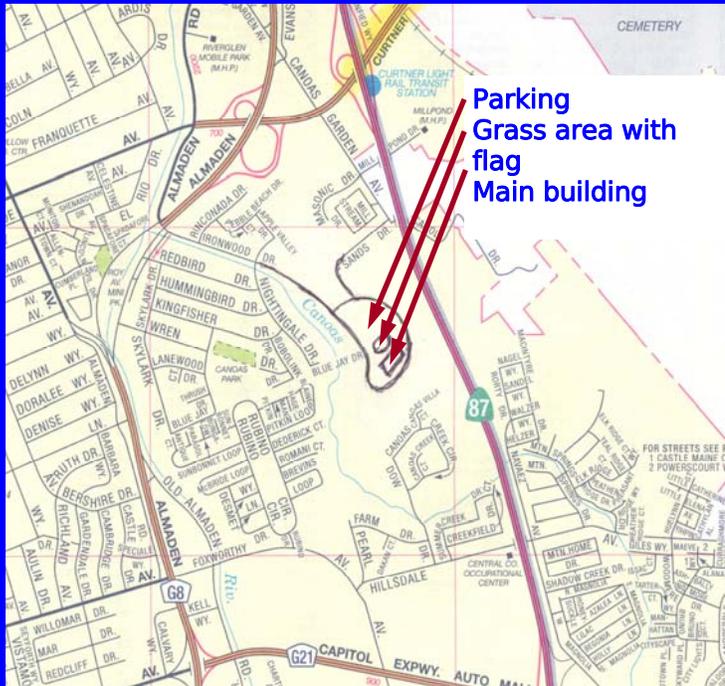


*Photo by Shav La Vigne*

Recommended additional reading: "Sea of Darkness" by Brian Hicks.

*Shav La Vigne is a member of the San Jose Postcard Club. And its newly elected President.*

Next 2019 Meetings include March 13, April 10 , May 8 and June 12.



**Show Calendar**  
 Hal Lutsky's  
 Vintage Paper Fair  
 San Francisco  
 April 27 & 28, 2019  
 Saturday 10am to 6pm  
 Sunday 11am to 5pm  
 Golden Gate Park  
 County Fair Building



San Jose Postcard Club meetings are in the third floor dining room of Hilltop Manor, 790 Ironwood Drive, San Jose, CA at 7pm on the second Wednesday of the month, September through June.

**Walt Kransky's website:** <http://www.thepostcard.com/walt/> has postcards and philatelic material including checklists. Questions for Walt? **Please use the word "POSTCARD QUERY"** in the subject line of your e-mail message to avoid spam.

## San Jose Postcard Club Membership Application

P.O. Box 32042, San Jose, CA 95152

Mr/Mrs/Miss \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_ Collecting interests \_\_\_\_\_

Member of other organizations \_\_\_\_\_

Family members that collect \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby apply for membership in the San Jose Postcard Club and agree to abide by the Constitution and by-laws of the San Jose Postcard Club. Membership dues of \$15.00 for adults/families (\$6.00 Youths) is remitted herewith for the current calendar year. Check to: San Jose Postcard Club.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_