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## **NEW ATA DIRECTOR OF STUDY UNITS**

The American Topical Association (ATA) has announced that Dr. Bruce L. Johnson has assumed the position of Director of Study Units. The ATA is the world's largest organization for philatelists collecting by theme or topic. It has 47 different study units, ranging from Americana to Wine on stamps. Dr. Johnson will coordinate the units' relationship with ATA and write a regular column with unit news for ATA's bi-monthly journal, *Topical Time*.

The ATA study units cover a plethora of philatelic themes, such as Biology, Cats, Maps, Penguins, Religion, and Ships. Study units carry out a variety of philatelic activities including chronicling new issue information, maintaining checklists, and researching historical aspects of the topic. Units also publish printed or digital newsletters and maintain websites. Some units produce printed and digital handbooks relating to their topics.

Dr. Bruce L. Johnson is a retired librarian now living in Zionsville, Indiana. His interest in stamp collecting and wine began as a student at the University of Minnesota, where he earned a B.A. and an M.A. in history, and continued at the University of California at Berkeley, from which he holds a Master's degree and a Ph.D. in Library and Information Studies. He has served as Curator of the Kemble Collections on Western Printing and Publishing, Director of Libraries for the California Historical Society, and Director of the Library at the Indiana Historical Society, from which he retired in 2003.

The philatelic interests of ATA's new Director of Study Units include a wide range of countries, plus topical collections on grapes, wine, and the history of the book as an artifact. In retirement he edits *Enophilatelia*, a quarterly publication of the Wine on Stamps Study Unit about the history of grapes and wine as represented on postage stamps. With a fervent belief in an inherent liaison between wine and books, he also edits *Philateli-Graphics: The History of Books and Printing* for the Graphics Philately Association, a study unit of the ATA.

Dr. Johnson succeeds Dalene Thomas, who has retired as ATA's study unit director after 7 years in the position. She retains her seat on the ATA Board of Directors and her position as First Vice President of the organization.

For a complete contact list for all ATA Study Units, go to the organization's website at [www.americantopicalassn.org/units.htm](http://www.americantopicalassn.org/units.htm). Or email [americantopical@msn.com](mailto:americantopical@msn.com), call 618-985-5100, or write to PO Box 8, Carterville, IL 62918-0008. If your collecting group would like to become an ATA Study Unit, please contact Dr. Bruce L. Johnson, 115 Raintree Dr., Zionsville, IN 46077-2010, [indybruce1@yahoo.com](mailto:indybruce1@yahoo.com)