

When my eye falls on children staring into iPhones and iPads, I try to share with them sweet memories from my past to attract their attention to hobbies that are nearly extinct. One of those is stamp collecting. Since I couldn't seem to interest my children or grandchildren in the hobby, I thought I'd engage the reader in it and perhaps hear an answer from a distance. Moreover, this hobby has a story and debt to pay off.

This story of this hobby started when I was in fourth grade at Al Farabi School and I still keep my stamp collection to this day. I would like to note here that the quality of teachers and the curriculum at that time was just as good if not better than it is today under the Ministry of Education. I am talking here about the year 1967, we were young and it was mandatory for students to participate in extra-curricular activities. I learned stamp collecting from Mr. Essa, one of my Palestinian teachers whom I will always remember. I recall in second grade, I enrolled in the music club hoping to play the accordion or *oud*. The teacher didn't think I'd be good, however, so he gave me the triangle. Of course, I hated it and always skipped the class. The next year the same thing happened, but this time he gave me the tambourine which was really just as boring, so I gave up on a music career all together. Then I joined an acting class, playing the role of a father giving advice to his son, I had an opportunity to perform in front of all the parents. Honestly, I overplayed the role, but I think the audience loved the performance. On the other hand, the acting teacher didn't appreciate it as much, got angry, and kicked me off the acting team. Finally, I joined the library team and found a place I could fit in. Stamp collecting was one of their activities. To start a stamp collection, you need people to send you