

Philatelic Society of Lancaster County



An Affiliate of the American Philatelic Society: James Buchanan Chapter, # 173
Chapter 118 of the American Topical Assn.

Club Meeting: Wednesday, 8 June 2011

Bourse opens at 6:30 PM and Meeting starts at 7:00 PM

Bluebird Commons / Woodcrest Villa. **Tonight's host:** Lou Leidig

Stamp Trading to Begin Following the Evening's Program

Message from the President

It's June already! Wow, the year has flown by so quickly. As I am writing this column, it's a rare day outside; one with sunshine! So I'll be heading out to take advantage of the opportunity to finally get some yard work done, as I'll bet you're also doing.

We had a great auction at our last meeting and also a productive session afterwards in which we discussed/analyzed the recent LANCOPEX.

Basically, the expo went off as planned and has to be considered a success, albeit a marginal one. I say

marginal due to the fact that our profit was minimal in contrast to the energies expended to produce it. We did have additional expenses that were new to us this year. We have to consider whether or not they are necessary for the future. What else might be eliminated, added, or increased?

I believe we should meet again in a few months to further define what will be done and when it needs to occur. We all knew that Jim Boyles usually handled all of this, but until this year we did not realize the extensive amount of time

and effort he put into it until we were thrust into it ourselves. Kudos to Jim for all his previous efforts; now teach us how to do it.

This month's program brings us **Pre-Cancels**. July offers an interesting program on **Errors, Freaks, & Oddities**, by guest speaker David Hunt. August will bring our **annual picnic**. Summer is, of course, the time where a lot of us take off in various directions to unwind and recharge. Keep in mind what we are offering this summer, and plan on being there. See ya soon. **jmb**

May Program: Precancels for Fun, Part-III

Robert D. Noble and Woody Hann

We welcome back RD and Woody for a third and updated presentation on Precancels. They are precancel experts and members of APS, PSLC, and the precancel collector's group. Their motto has always been "**Precancels are fun,**" and their presentations have always made it seem that way. In Part-III tonight, they will give us a brief review of precancels with an emphasis on the early stamps along with

those stamps of the 1950s-1960s. How were these stamps used and what were the governmental regulations regarding their issue? Finally, they will discuss the valuations of precancels and an introduction to foreign precancels.



Coat of Arms: Belgium #201



10c Crest: Belgium #407



25c French Sower: #169

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PSLC Meets the 2nd Wednesday of the month (except August) at The Bluebird Commons / Woodcrest Villa, 2000 Harrisburg Ave, Lancaster, PA 17601 at 7:00 PM. For club info, call Lucy Eyster: 717.735-2586

President:

John M. Bray

Vice President:

Vacant

Secretary:

Joy Bouchard

Treasurer:

Lou DiFelice

Newsletter Editor:

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June Biography

Ron Hess

When he was in his mid 30s, Ron's colleague, Bob Kopp at Hamilton Watch on Columbia Ave. introduced him to stamp collecting, and he started with a *Scott's National Album*. However, it was only the year before that he began to collect coins, so stamps seemed to be a natural hobby complement.

Ron has been collecting ever since. Retiring in 1993 from the Lancaster Fire Department, he added fire fighting memorabilia to his collecting repertoire. Though he would love to have a working vintage fire engine in his back yard, he has accumulated some interesting but smaller items such as the fire alarm from Hamilton Watch after the factory closed its doors.

In the interim, stamp dealers Pat Rineer and James G. Boyles have been mentors helping Ron build his U.S. collection of mint, never hinged singles. It was just recently that Jim encouraged him to join the stamp club, and after a few months with us, his initial impression is most favorable.

When asked about any major "finds" during his collecting years, he noted that one of the more exciting experiences was when a colleague brought in a sheet of U.S. Zeppelins to show him as a collector. This individual was settling an estate and came across the stamps. Ron brought in his *Scott's Catalogue* and valued it for him.

Ron has a sister in Kennett Square near Philadelphia, while he occupies the family home here in town (Lancaster). In fact he sleeps in the same bedroom in which he was born.

May Minutes and Treasury

Joy Bouchard & Lou DiFelice

Opening: President John Bray opened the meeting.

Minutes: The April Secretary's and Treasurer's reports were approved as written by voice vote.

Membership: Lucy Eyster announced that Tim Kosko of Lititz and Lynn Floyd of the Club. Visitor Tom Brown was introduced.

Treasury: Treasurer Lou DiFelice discussed the income and expenses with respect to Lancopex with a net profit of \$520.15.

Drawing: Paul Petersen won a 1937 1-peseta block of what looks like local Republican post of the

Spanish Civil War.

PSLC Vice Presidency: Paul reported that Bob Epler has expressed interest in the vacant VP position. It will depend on his health following surgery that is coming up soon.

Club Bus Trip: Roy Baardsen told us to save the date, Thursday, 13 October 2011 for the ASDA Show in NYC. Cost will be \$45/pp, and this will be due by Wednesday, 10 August.

Programs: Paul added that PSLC club members may now sign up for presentations for 2012. Help is available with PowerPoint if desired. He further said

that presenters, if they like, may submit a short article for the newsletter regarding their topic, but this is purely optional.

Lancopex: A Lancopex debriefing will be held following the auction. All show volunteers and other interested members are invited to attend.

Program: Tonight's program was a club auction.

Treasury Report

Opening: \$2,940.76 (1 Apr)

Income: \$1,326.14

Expenses: \$1,874.65

Closing: \$2,392.25 (30 Apr)

3-CDs roughly \$6164.85 due in 2012-13.

Canadian Stamps, Resources, and the BNAPS

Like most countries, older issues were used to promote the country's history. This is apparent on U.S. stamps, and the same is true with our northern neighbor, Canada.

BNAPS is the British North American Philatelic Society, and Canada is the specialty. Check out www.bnaps.org. Of similar interest is the archive of their journals from 1944 (when the organization was founded) through 2005. These are open to all. However, membership is needed for the later issues. Go to www.bnaptopics.org for these archives.

A short article in Vol. 1, No. 1 in *British North American Topics* of March, 1944 is by the group's president WR Hoffman who discussed the

oversized Jacques Cartier Quadricentenary stamp (Scott #208) of 1935.

In this most attractive blue 3¢ stamp, Cartier is planting a cross at Gaspé in the Gulf of St Lawrence to claim the country for the King of France, Francis I.

Cartier set out from Saint Malo in early 1634 and landed in Newfoundland. From there he coursed the straits of Belle Island and then into the St. Lawrence where he made his claim.

On a second voyage a year later the explorer sailed further down the river, visiting Indian villages. The first, Stadacona, is the site of the present Quebec City. Another village lay at the base



of a beautiful mountain which he named Mont Royal, the present city of Montreal.

Cartier was then tasked with colonizing Canada in the 1640s but was unsuccessful. He returned to France for further planning. However domestic and foreign affairs took precedence, so no further expeditions were sent for another 50 years.



Miscellaneous Club Notes: Programs/Hosts, Shows, and News

2011-12 Programs and Hosts

8 June: *Precancels for Fun: Part III*, RD Noble and Woody Hann. **Host:** Lou Leidig

13 July: Errors, Freaks & Oddities, David Hunt. **Host:** Paul Petersen

10 August: Club Picnic. No Host this month.

14 September: Club Auction. **Host:** Lou DiFelice

12 October: Show 'n Tell: Your Best Stuff. **Host:** Lucy Eyster

9 November: The First Aerial Post in England (9/1911), Mike Bach. **Host:** J. R. Ahlfeld

14 December: Dinner.

11 January 2012: Club Auction. **Host:** TBA

8 February 2012: Swiss Philately, a DVD by the Helvetia Society. **Host:** TBA

Upcoming Show Reminders: *Some Sunday Stamp Shows*, Farm & Home Center: • 26 June, • 21 August, • 2 October, • 4 December (Please verify ahead with Jim-394-5118.)

Save the date: Club Picnic Wednesday, 10 August 2011 at **6:00 PM**. Millersville Boro Park. More information will be provided at future meetings and forthcoming newsletters.

50th Anniversary of Manned Space Flight

Growing up in the 1950s and 60s was an exciting time as the many years of the space race between the U.S. and the USSR was finally coming to fruition. The 1969 moon landing was the capstone.

In the April issue of *Stamp Magazine*, author Jeff Dugdale describes the first successful manned flight by the Soviet Union (pgs. 64-68).

On 12 April 1961, the 27 year old Soviet fighter pilot, Yuri Gagarin, became the first to enter space. Due to the limited confidence in the safety of the mission, Gagarin was chosen to ride over the more senior cosmonauts.



The activities of the Soviet Union and their space program in particular were always shrouded in secrecy. Even the openness of *glasnost* in the late 1980s did not provide answers to a host of lingering space questions.

Following Gagarin's 108 minute journey, many commemorative stamps were issued, mostly in Communist countries of eastern Europe and Asia. But due to deep Soviet secrecy, a photo of the Vostok-I space capsule was not released until 1964 where it was subsequently depicted on a stamp from Yemen.

Without a visual reference, the many Vostok-I stamp images looked like Jules Verne's space ship. Other commemorative images featured a design commonality that may have come from deliberate Soviet misinformation.

The life of the Vostok-I chief designer, Sergei Korolev (see below), was also held in abeyance. With the obsession on security, his role was not revealed for another five years.



Korolev was always under government scrutiny for his

pyrotechnic exploits. He survived one of Josef Stalin's slave-labor camps only to be imprisoned again late in WWII. It was in the Khrushchev regime that he was rehabilitated and given some responsibility in the burgeoning space program.

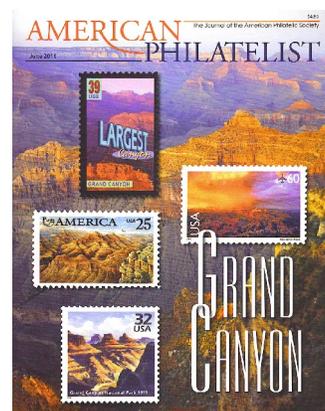
Because of flawed designs and other technical difficulties, Gagarin never returned to space travel. He was scheduled for a 10/68 launch but died earlier in the year. His death, too, is cloaked in mystery. He was with another experienced pilot, and they were flying a familiar plane when it went down. They were given incorrect information from the tower regarding other air traffic and weather conditions. This precipitated a maneuver that caused them to lose control of the plane and crash.

Even in death, conspiracies are legion about Gagarin and other cosmonauts who just disappeared. Eventually, this Hero of the Soviet Union had a scientific research vessel and the cosmonaut school named in his honor.

Prognosticators Wanted

Composite articles have been popular in this newsletter as seen by the solid number of contributors. The latest was the 1/11 "My favorite stamp." As such I have several more in mind, and the planned topic for the fall regards your predictions for the hobby and USPS in 15 years. This should generate great interest.

That being said, it looks like there's been a head start in Wade Saadi's June Presidential Column in the *American Philatelist* (pg. 508, 510). He critiqued a similar prediction published in a 1986 issue of the same philatelic journal. The question put to the membership over 25 years ago asked them where the hobby/USPS will be in 100 years.



One member was spot on in his vision. In fact, it took less than 25 years for his predictions to be realized. Let's look at what Steven A. Gilmore prognosticated in 1986.

“▪ Postage stamps will be phased out. ▪ Home computers will combine postal and telephone services into one function. ▪ The USPS will be phased out because of high unit costs, mounting deficits, and outdated, non-functioning equipment. ▪ Telephone companies will pick up the pieces. UPS-type contractors will handle the parcel portion.” Ed□



Musings:

Will stamp collecting keep us young?

I sometimes walked into the retirement facility to see my great aunt watching television. Often I commented “Aunt Jean, too much TV will turn your brain to jelly.” I always did this in good nature, as she did much to stimulate her mind.

Jane Van Wagner’s younger brother and sister (my grandmother) developed senility and died with such. Jean did not wish this to happen to her. She read *Prevention Magazine* and added up columns of figures by hand and then checked them with the calculator. “Don’t let me go mental,” she always begged me.

On the other hand, my grandmother did two daily newspapers worth of crossword puzzles and the word “Jumble,” and she still “lost it.” Perhaps it’s just our gene code.

Today I see adults from middle age and up doing activity books that have been written and published to stimulate brain cells. “Experts” imply that doing this may retard senility, dementia, and Alzheimer’s disease. Unfortunately, the books are a little too late for Aunt Jean, though she did make it to 103 years and three months with a clear mind until the day she died.

But can stamps help? I can’t give you data-based research to prove that they do, but I can show you how to use your stamps in activities that promote the same brain stimulation as found in the published books. You have all you need at your fingertips. As you engage your favorite

hobby, try some of the activities that follow—just for the fun of it.

In the past I have mentioned how stamps can be used for some great learning experiences for children. Ramp up some of these, and they are suitable for the rest of us. It is fun for all.

Sorting: For children, sorting activities are great with stamps. Depending on which stamps you offer them, they can sort them by shape, size, color, topic, and more. Common sense and trial and error will guide you how to make it easier or harder.



For the adult, try this for sorting: Take a large “tongful” of foreign stamps and sort by country as fast as possible. Time yourself and aim to decrease your time with the same lot of stamps. Then try it with another tongful.

Color discrimination: Select a dozen or so stamps of one color, and place them in rank order of redness, for example, from light red to dark red. With a bunch of the same stamp issue, see how many color varieties you can find

and rank them. The 1¢ Franklins and 2¢ Washingtons are a great starting place for sorting of green and red. I mentioned in an earlier issue that with the 1938 Presidential issue there are at least six varieties of the 8¢ olive green, eight of the 10¢ orange brown, nine of the 12¢ violet, and ten varieties of the 18¢ carmine brown. Now delve into your glassines of multiple multiples and start sorting.

Perfing: Practice with your perf gauge, and make a mental note of what some of the perf values look like. Stick with whole perf numbers such as 9, 10, 11, 12 to begin then proceed to halves.

Pick some stamps at random and estimate their perf values and follow up with the perf gauge until you are good at it. Estimate then measure.

With practice using the “eyeball method” followed by the validation of the perf gauge, you’ll get good at it. See if you can pick out some stamps with compound perfs, those with more than one perf value on a stamp. I would not recommend the eyeball method to mount stamps in your album. Eyeballing is a separate exercise for visual and brain enhancement.

What’s missing? Spread out a sample of stamps on a table, perhaps 10-15. Orient them toward you. Look them over for

20 seconds and make a mental note of which stamps are there. Close your eyes, rearrange the stamps on the table. Remove one (or two), and don’t look. When you open your eyes, try to figure out what’s missing.

Start with some foreign stamps, and then try to remember that it is the red French stamp that is missing, for example. To make it harder, use stamps of a similar nature such as those of the Liberty Series. Further, the more familiar you are with a given set of stamps or other array, the easier it will be to determine what is missing.

For the big challenge, try an array of stamps from an Indian Feudatory State, the ones that all look the same. The more similar the stamps are in appearance, the more difficult the activity becomes. Level of difficulty can also be adjusted up or down by the number of stamps used on the table top.

In doing this activity you are not only helping specific parts of the brain, but you will become much more familiar with your stamp holdings.

Many believe that stamps can cause you to “go mental.” Just ask any stamp dealer, exhibitor, or show planner the night before the expo! And a perusal of Pat Hurst’s writings will substantiate this phenomenon. Ed□



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