



The Overprint

Newsletter of the Reading Stamp Collectors' Club

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**Most Meetings Held the first Tuesday of Every Month at 7:00 p.m.
Meeting Site: Berkshire Commons, 5485 Perkiomen Avenue (Route 422)
Turn North on Lincoln opposite of the Dairy Queen.
Proceed 300 feet, turn left on Washington and look right of center at the stop sign.**

Tuesday, May 6, 2014 at 7:00 p.m.

**Bring a stamp with...
Something that Grows!**

Winter is gone, Spring is here
'Can be said, Summer is near...
"Something that Grows" is our theme,
We'll look at the stamps and of good weather we will dream!

Bring along a stamp or cover that shows a plant, tree, shrub,
flower, vegetable, vine...anything that grows...
and share it with the rest of us!

Our April Meeting was well
attended and the auction was active.

Dr. Denby won the 50/50 drawing of
\$21.00.

There was no winner of the
attendance drawing, which will be \$25.00.

Your editor is struggling
along with the new computer. It seems to
have an odd office suite and the bugs need
to be worked out. However, the program
appears to be more sophisticated and
carries opportunities for a bit more creative
work. Until then, the old computer is
cranky. **Pray** for your editor.

Collecting Naval Ship Cancellations Made Easy

So many fun areas to collect stamps and related materials are linked to the military.

Patriotic covers, censored letters and naval covers are just a few examples.

I once sat down at a dealer's table next to a fellow who was looking for Civil War "rocket mail". I had never heard of it until then, but let me share it with you.

This mail was not launched by a rocket, but was sent from members of Union squads charged with shooting rockets against Confederates. The covers bore return addresses with identification of the units involved in this specialty. In years of collecting, the philatelist had found only a small number of these rare covers.

Naval covers are far more common. In fact, because it is so easy to create Naval covers and this activity has been highly popular since the early 1930's, there is a glut of common covers on the market.

This makes it fun to assemble a nice collection without spending a fortune. There are some rarities, but virtually nothing to compete price wise with top end Confederate covers, rare multiples on cover, or early Presidential free franks.

In the glory days, thousands of collectors sent literally tons of stamped envelopes to the postal clerks on board U. S. Navy ships to be cancelled.

Mostly, but not always, either before or after the stamp was cancelled, a cachet was added to the envelope.

Again, most of the time an envelope was struck with a cancellation with the name of the ship much as a letter mailed in Temple, PA would have been struck with a cancel including the name of our little town here north of Reading.

There were times when Naval rules disallowed the use of the name of the ship in the cancel, such as in World War II.

My favorite covers are those that were created just prior to the war and known as "Hobby Shop" cachet covers. Produced by a Rochester, NY stamp dealer, a good portion of his 1941 output bore fake cancels, which, by the way fetch at least double what a comparable authentic piece brings.

The dealer felt forced to do this as due to war preparation the Navy ordered an end to philatelic cancellations on board about 250 war ships.

What was a poor stamp dealer to do! Why run to the nearest rubber stamp store and order a cancellation device mimicking a typical Naval cancel—with changeable type, of course.

Today, in lessor numbers people continue to send covers to Naval ship postal clerks for all sorts of events from the anniversary of the launching of the ship to holidays like St. Patrick's Day.