



The Overprint

Newsletter of the Reading Stamp Collectors' Club

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Issue: March 2011

**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, March 1, at 7:00 p.m.

THE STAMPS OF LAOS

PRESENTED BY DR. CARLSON CHAMBLISS

This country produces some of the most beautiful stamps in the world.
This is a re-scheduled meeting due to snow and ice in February

Don't Forget Dues!

Many members have already paid their dues, but if you have not, see Mike Matus at one of our meetings. We make it simple, family memberships are \$10.00. If you cannot pay at the January meeting, mail a check to Mike at 157 Lucinda Lane, Wyomissing, PA 19610.

Also...at our January meeting...the club agreed to join the Philadelphia National Stamp Exhibition at a cost of \$20.00. This will result in publicity for our local club.

Snowy, Snowy Nite

Remember the song! Well, just in case the weather is frightful, the meeting is automatically cancelled if the Reading or Exeter schools close early or for the day.

If the schools are open all day but it looks iffy, it is best for you to call an officer as it is possible we will cancel anyway. We want everyone to be safe. However, we also hope it is sunny and 60 degrees for the days of our winter meetings!

Johnny Appleseed lives forever in stamps and trees!

By Stan Raugh

Many people think Johnny Appleseed is a fictional character, but that is untrue. He is honored on U. S. Scott #1317, a five-cent stamp issued in 1966.

Born John Chapman on September 26, 1774, in Massachusetts, he grew up to become what should be impossible, an itinerant nurseryman.

Working in the upper Ohio river basin after apprenticing in Massachusetts and possibly the Wilkes-Barre region of Pennsylvania, he was responsible for the planting of many thousands of apple trees during his life.

In some cases, he would plant apple seeds in a plot tended by a local man who would split the profits on each tree sold to a local farmer or homestead. In good times, the price was six-and-one-half cents, in bad times, only two or three cents. The top rate was roughly one third of the cost of mailing a letter.

In other cases, Johnny Appleseed would buy the land. Although he wore only throw-away clothes and traded stories for a place to sleep, he died March 18, 1845 a propertied man. Some of his wealth was lost because he sometimes failed to file deeds.

Chapman got his seeds free from local cider producers, because this would increase apple production and make it easier for the cider men to produce their product.

Thus, the thousands of apple trees he planted were largely suited only to make hard cider, a cheap and heavily used drink

in colonial America.

Tracking down live trees planted by the traveling nurseryman that may still stand in fields today is a hunt worthy of Indiana Jones, but there has been little success.

One tree in Ohio may still be alive and scion wood (the part you graft) has been collected for many years.

Your editor recently was able to order a small stock plant grafted from this tree, which is believed to have been originally planted by Johnny Appleseed himself.

The apples are poor for eating, but remember, the original was planted for cider production. Collectors buy a grafted clone of this tree for it's history

Chapman supposedly had religious convictions against grafting, but the practice was around long before him and an estimated 8,000 apple varieties have been propagated by that method over recent centuries.

The most famous is Hawkeye. This variety first appeared around 1870 as an errant seedling in a farmer's field—and twice it was cut down by the orchardist, but grew back.

When it fruited, the farmer sent in a crate to a national contest where it won first prize. The label on the crate, however was damaged in the shipping and the farmer could not be identified.

The following year, the farmer again sent in sample apples. A major apple nursery rushed out and paid him \$100,00 for the tree, and renamed it "Red Delicious," as they believe that was a more salable name.