



The Overprint

Newsletter of the Reading Stamp Collectors' Club

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Issue: May 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, May 3, 2011, at 7:00 p.m.

“Harry Ioor Cachets”

presented by Al Schwartz

This will be a very interesting program centering on a specialized collection of artwork by a single, popular cachet maker.

A presentation like this illustrates what can be learned by focusing in on what initially looks like a narrow area of collecting but becomes an expanse of opportunity through philatelic study.

Bus Trip Revived!

Initially, response to a proposed bus trip to the New York Mega Show at the New Yorker Hotel on October 13 was light and the idea was shelved.

However, renewed interest has revived the idea and Trip Meister Roy Baardsen is making a second attempt. *You do not have to attend the show to take the bus!* So if you know of anyone who wants to attend the show or have a nice day in the Big Apple, let Roy know. We want to fill the bus!

Sad News

Club member and former officer Carl Waller passed away April 9.

Carl suggested and obtained for our club the current meeting site at Berkshire Commons.

In addition, he helped establish a public school stamp program run by our stamp club.

Carl also was a member of the Berks Mineralogical Society and built innovative display cases and sold them to mineral collectors.

Mint Stamps Sold for Postage Could Be Big Mistake

How many times do we pass a dealer's table at a show and see a big box of modern mint stamps for sale at face value or less—often to be used as postage?

Dealers are willing to admit there is very little market for many issues—particularly from the 1960's and beyond.

Today, I was researching this article and ran into a fun little site, 1847usa.com. It listed all major United States stamps from 1847 to about 1970.

Modern stamps often included the number printed. For example, the 1863 Battle of Gettysburg stamp numbered almost 80 million. At first, I thought this was sheets of 200 or panes of 50, but that would be an incredible number. It appears that only 80 million stamps were printed.

I surveyed stamps several years before and after and this figure was roughly one-third to one-half all the other commemoratives I saw. In the world of coins, 80 million is usually considered a low mintage, especially when you consider many of these stamps were applied to philatelic covers or used as postage and discarded.

This stamp has a small premium and is rarely sold for postage, but it is odd to me that it does not have more value. In the world of coins, scarcity means there are not enough for every American to own one. Counting used stamps that still exist, probably less than one in five Americans could own this stamp, not counting foreign collectors. Other 60's commemoratives would average less than one in three Americans to own a copy.

First Day Covers present many collecting choices

One of the healthiest affiliates of the American Philatelic Society is the American First Day Cover Society.

Due to their attractiveness and reasonable cost, it was easy for collectors in the past to order or prepare multiples of every new stamp issue for first day of issue cancellations.

As a kid, I remember sending off ordinary blank envelopes and payment to the designated city of first issue for a number of new stamps. I didn't bother about cachets, I just thought it was fun to get five or six first day covers (FDCs) returned in the mail. It felt like "insider" stuff to me that most people didn't know how to do.

Then I began buying professionally prepared envelopes from a local stamp dealer and sending them off for the cancels.

Problem was, thousand of collectors were sending off more thousands of FDCs resulting in a future reservoir greater than demand has yet required.

Smaller cachet makers, like Harry Ioor who will be discussed at next month's meeting, were collected in much smaller numbers. Often, their artwork was different or outstanding and these items have held their value. The work of some cachet makers now runs from \$2 to \$1,000.

But even FDCs produced by larger cachet makers who did tens or even hundreds of thousands or each issue have an historic charm that should be better appreciated. In time that will be so—for now, let's enjoy picking up a common FDC that we like at a bourse for a quarter!