



The Overprint

Newsletter of the Reading Stamp Collectors' Club

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Issue: September 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, September 6, 2011, at 7:00 p.m.

“Aerial Postal History” First Air Mail–Great Britain

Presented by Mike Bach

Come back with us to the early days of flight and a faster
way of transporting the mail!

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We will miss them–

Two more members of the Reading Stamp Collectors' Club have passed away. They are Walter Creitz and Leo Knoblauch.

Walter often spoke about re-organizing the club–after it had been dormant for years–to provide a venue for the Boy Scout Stamp Collecting Merit Badge Program.

Leo had been very active in the club in the past and was 102 years old at the time of his death. He still attended club meetings past 90 years old.

Bus Trip Reservations

By now, everyone should have paid for their reservation on the October 12 bus trip to New York.

If by chance you have not, contact Roy Baardsen immediately at 610-927-3435 as seating is very limited. The cost is \$45.00.

There is an outside chance of a seat or two still available–call Roy if interested.

Could the stamps of Italy and the Roman Empire be for you?

By Stan Raugh

I could not help but write the headlines and this story in the *Times New Roman* font, or use italics in the headline—but this is such a fun story.

It began with a thought about the Roman Empire and led to a search for stamps on that topic. Unfortunately, I could not pull up the topical listings on the website of the American Topical Society.

So I searched the specialty society list on the American Philatelic Society's website and found no listing for organizations specializing in Italian stamps. Am I looking at this correctly?

If so, and there is no specialty group just for Italian national stamps, this is a travesty. Not only has Italy produced so many worthy stamps, there has to be a plethora of interesting flyspeck varieties.

Certainly, there are older societies than the Roman Empire and Italy, such as the first, Egypt, and that of Greece.

But no one dominated the expanse of territory in the ancient world more completely than did the Romans.

Mythically, the city of Rome is named for its founder, Romulus. There are a zillion variations in the ancient sources, but usually Romulus and his twin brother are outcasts from another land that end up being adopted by a she-wolf. Some versions omit Remus totally, others list him as disappearing or being killed by Romulus as a young man.

In any case, alone or with his brother,

Romulus establishes his namesake city about 758 to 728 B. C. Most historians think the ancient storytellers back figured the name Romulus to match the name of the city and enhance the story, but at least one archaeologist, Count Carandini, thinks the founder of Rome may have been an historic man named Romulus.

Eventually, Rome came to be ruled by a senate of about 500-1,000 men during the several hundred years known as the Roman Republic. About 20 families provided almost all the candidates for senate.

A revolutionary period in the century before Christ centered on land reforms as Roman citizens often spent more than half their adult years away from home in military campaigns and lost their farms.

The wealthy, often senators, bought farms dirt cheap and amassed land in excess of legal limits, and assassinated reformers.

Civility was restored by the hand of Julius Caesar, who tended to be popular among the general population but detested by most senators.

Although assassinated himself, Caesar's brief domination set up the transition to Empire, a change that Augustus eventually cemented in place.

Throughout the empire, there was a postal service, however it was a sort of Old World pony express established to communicate political and military correspondence.

Imperial Rome would last short of 500 years, followed by nearly 1,000 years of Byzantium rule in the East.