

Phila-telling Around

MEETINGS, 2ND WEDNESDAY OF EACH MONTH
TIME: 7:30 P.M.

LANCASTER TOWNSHIP COMMUNITY CENTER
Lincoln Highway West, Maple Grove
Lancaster, PA 17603

Next Meeting - Wed., March 12, 1997

FOR INFORMATION ABOUT OUR CLUB
CALL MARILYN SHIRLEY (717)872-2479

VOL.8, #3

NEWSLETTER FOUNDED SEPTEMBER 1990

MARCH 1997

IMPORTANT!



FELLOW CLUB MEMBERS:

February (winter) is past and March (spring) is here. Saturday, April 5, will be arriving before we know it and if you have not made your reservation for the bus trip to Washington, DC by sending your check to MARILYN SHIRLEY, do not delay. I don't want you to miss out on this fun excursion. Details in this newsletter.

The March 12 meeting which is a "washline exhibit" (Show 'n Tell) is my favorite meeting. It is exciting to hear about the strange, funny, unusual, or vaguely philatelic things people have added to their stamp collections. If your contribution is not the sort of thing to hang on a wall, that's OK! Bring three or four items and your explanation of them is all that's needed. I can hardly wait.

A request was made for membership application forms. If not included with this newsletter, you can get some at the next meeting. New members are essential for the health of our club.

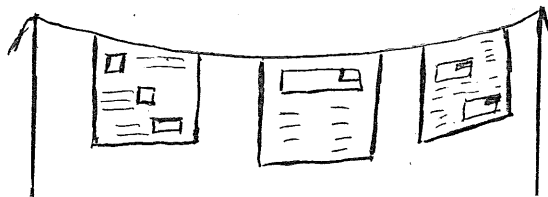
And on the idea of health, get well wishes go to BOB ALLISON, DICK DUDLEY, EDNA LYMAN and ADRIAN MECK.

Lucy Eyster, President



March Host

From all indications our March Host, DICK SHAEFER, plans to come "roaring in" with some delicious snacks for the gang and we will end up "leaving the meeting like little lambs, with tummies full of goodies."



WASH LINE EXHIBIT

A Washline Exhibit is the program for the March meeting. All members are requested to exhibit something from their collection. "Pins and Props" will be provided by the club for hanging up exhibits.

Junk mail is the rage at museum exhibit

By Bill McAllister
Washington Correspondent

The newest permanent exhibit at the National Postal Museum does not contain a single stamp, but it's worth viewing for two reasons.

It is devoted to what some call "junk mail" and the display technology is truly remarkable.

Titled "What's in the Mail for You!" this exhibit opened earlier this winter with little public attention.

As museum director James H. Bruns notes, the exhibit does not use the "j-word."

Junk mail is the pejorative term for advertising mail and, although widely used, it has driven commercial mailers up the wall since a newspaper writer coined the phrase in the 1950s.

This new exhibit, instead, speaks glowingly of "direct mail."

Thanks to an array of spectacular holograms, floating laser images and 3-D motion pictures that are projected on thin air, the exhibit makes a glittery, high-tech pitch that should have visitors begging the Postal Service for still more of that marvelous direct mail.

Commercial mailers had a big hand in the exhibit. A grant from Pitney Bowes, the giant postage meter manufacturer, made the \$2.4 million exhibit possible.

And a pair of PB's most sophisticated mailing machines play a big role in the exhibit, producing personalized sealed letters for every visitor to the exhibit.

The letters, which mimic a direct-mail piece, contain a 10 percent discount coupon

for use at the nearby museum store and a Xerox-quality digital photo of the visitor.

As anyone knows who has watched the recent growth of the U.S. Postal Service, commercial mailers have a major say in the way that huge federal agency is run.

According to the museum, direct mail is big business, accounting for sales of \$47 billion a year and "85 percent of what arrives in America's mailboxes."

It is not surprising, therefore, that the Postal Museum, a joint venture of the Postal Service and the Smithsonian Institution, has sought financial support from the commercial-mail industry and has portrayed the industry in a sympathetic exhibit.

You get no suggestion of any problems with what the Postal Service now calls "standard" mail but remains known as "third-class mail."

In this exhibit, direct-mail wizards L.L. Bean, Charles Tiffany and W. Atlee Burpee are heroes.

They are the three 19th-century merchants who discovered that boots, baubles and seeds can just as easily be sold by mail as in stores.

Actor Tom Beckett serves as the exhibit's electronic host.

He portrays a number of characters on the exhibit's television and movie screens, but none more spectacularly than merchandiser Aaron Montgomery Ward.

As the exhibit opens, Ward's three-dimensional "ghost" is projected on thin air via a technological marvel.

"We need something called direct mail," he says and quickly adds that his catalog business "just took off."

Later in the exhibit an electronic quiz gives visitors one reason why Montgomery Ward catalogs were treasured in rural America.

Known as "the Farmer's Bible," the early catalogs performed the same function as bathroom tissues.

Since the exhibit opened, Bruns said it has become the facility's most popular attraction.

Actor Beckett's most popular role is as a Scarlett O'Hara-like Southern woman who loves to buy her jewels by mail from Tiffany's. (To wear an off-the-shoulder gown, Beckett had to shave his chest for that role, Bruns said.)

There are lots of interactive machinery for visitors.

They begin by photographing themselves with a digital camera and using a coded plastic card to activate various exhibits.

After answering a few questions about their interests, visitors are asked to devise their own mailing list of individuals with varied interests.

A picture board with hundreds of faces that is projected in front of them begins to dissolve into a smaller number of faces, until the visitor's own image emerges as the key photograph.

This part of the exhibit is supposed to illustrate that direct mailing is, as Bruns put it, "not just scatter shot" — that direct mail merchants like to target individuals by their tastes.

The new exhibit also fea-

tures an interactive computer station that allows visitors to design a piece of direct mail — a feature that dramatically illustrates why mailers add blaring designs to envelopes, underlined paragraphs to letters and personalized greetings to most mailings.

To make room for the exhibit, the museum had to put aside several displays, including letter carrier Cliff Claven's uniform from the TV show *Cheers* and a bottle containing the ashen remains of an Alaskan post office.

Collectors who want to view some true philatelic items should step over to the museum's "rarities" exhibit

There through April 15 they will find a number of prized covers from the colonial period to the country's earliest days.

Among them are a Benjamin Franklin frank signed "B. Free Franklin" from 1766 when he was deputy postmaster general, a free frank signed by George Washington on a personal letter and an example of what is believed to be the first hand-stamp used in North America, from 1756.

But for collectors who want to know why their mailboxes are being jammed with pieces of mail they didn't request, this exhibit is educational and fun.

The "What's in the Mail for You!" exhibit is part of the Customers and Consumers Gallery at National Postal Museum, 2 Massachusetts Ave., N.E.

The museum, located in the old Washington Post Office building next to Union Station, is open daily from 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., except Dec. 25. Admission is free. ■



BUS TRIP

SAT., APRIL 5TH.

Our club has scheduled a bus trip to Washington, D.C. on Saturday, April 5, 1997. The bus will arrive at the Manor Shopping Center, Millersville Pike, at 7:00 A.M. Do not be late. We will then pick up some of our friends from the York Club at the Queens Gate Shopping Mall at about 7:30 and we will arrive at Union Station around 9:30 A.M. (This is next to the National Stamp Museum). Union Station has an eating court you may want to check out for your noon meal.

Plan to eat lunch in D.C. and bring a bag lunch for supper, as we will not be stopping on the way home to eat. We will leave Union Station at 6:00 P.M. PROMPTLY and arrive home around 8:30 P.M.

The cost for this all-day trip will be \$19.00. Your seat will not be reserved until we receive your check or money. We have 47 seats available. Ask a friend to come along with you. If we do not fill the bus we may have to "tap" the club treasury for help.

If you wish to tour Washington, you can arrange tours leaving from Union Station. Listed below are some of the selections available.

D.C. TOURMOBILE -- tours mostly around inner city -- tour makes 18 stops such as: Smithsonian Mall,

Holocost Museum, Vietnam Veterans and Korean War Veterans Memorials, Kennedy Center, and many more. You can get on or off bus at your leisure. Cost: \$12.00, Child 11 or younger \$6.00.

OLD TOWN TROLLEY -- tours city plus some extended areas such as National Cathedral, Georgetown, Arboretum, Chinatown, Washington Harbor, Smithsonian Mall, etc. You can get off the trolley and re-board at your leisure, also. Cost: \$18.00, Children \$9.00.

D.C. DUCKS -- An amphibious excursion which is partly on land and partly on the Potomac River. (If the Cherry Blossoms are blooming, this could be quite exciting). The cost is \$20.00 for adults and I'm not sure, but I think it was \$10.00 for children.

YOUR \$19.00 CHECK GIVEN TO MARILYN SHIRLEY, 19 CIRCLE ROAD, MILLERSVILLE, PA 17551 -- RESERVES YOU A SEAT ON THE BUS. MAIL YOUR RESERVATION TODAY!



D I D Y O U K N O W ?

Bhutan raises nearly \$500,000. from stamp sales abroad! Their stamps are designed and produced by the Intergovernmental Philatelic Corp. of New York. Through the years they have created oddities such as stamps on steel, rose scented stamps, playable record stamps, plastic bas-relief portraits and 3-D issues. Last year they released their first hologram stamp honoring the 25th moon landing anniversary. The average citizen of Bhutan received 2.5 letters per year and mails even less, a reflection of the country's adult literacy rate of less than 15%.

-- ISWSC

UPCOMING STAMP SHOWS

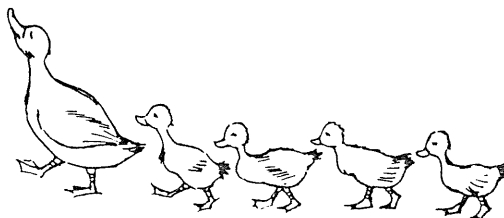
APRIL 6, 1997 -- 10 AM TO 4 PM
GREATER YORK STAMP FAIR
Days Inn Conference Center
Route I-83 and Route 30

APRIL 19-20, 1997
SATURDAY 10-6, SUNDAY 10-4PM
CENTRAL ATLANTIC STAMP EXPO
Ft. Washington Expo Center
1100 Virginia Dr.
PA Turnpike Exit 26 (I-276)

MAY 3-4, 1997
SATURDAY 10-6, SUNDAY 10-5PM
LANCOPEX '97
Farm and Home Center
1383 Aracadia Road
Lancaster, PA 17601

LCPS OFFICERS

LUCY EYSTER, President
MARILYN SHIRLEY, Vice-President
TRUYDE GREINER, Secretary
BEN HELLER, Treasurer



BRING A FRIEND!