



The Overprint

Newsletter of the Reading Stamp Collectors' Club

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Issue: June 2013

**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, June 4, at 7:00 p.m.

“The Whizz Kids Quiz”

Join us for a team-quiz-challenge based on U.S. stamps and the history they present. Your team may win without knowing about stamps. It may lose if it doesn't! Be there to find out!

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IMPORTANT NOTE !!!

Our **July** meeting will be a different place and time. Instead of having our picnic meeting in August, it will be held in July.

The meeting will be **Monday, July 1** at St. John's Lutheran Church in Boyertown. The picnic will begin at **6 p.m.**

The change is to accommodate our speaker, Ken Lawrence from the American Philatelic Society. The auction will follow.

Food, but no ants!

The traditional picnic has both food and ants, but this time, the ants are not invited.

But you and your food are!

A sign-up sheet for food will circulate at our June meeting. If you can't make the June club meeting, you can call Barbara Brown at 610-469-2758 to arrange to bring your specialty to the July 1 picnic with the Pottstown stamp club.

Where is it now? The Little-Known Secret of Reading

Of all the articles in this series, this is the first with a Reading connection.

It is a mystery involving a beautiful model, a famous husband and a bronze sculpture of great historical importance.

Our obscure model, raised in Reading, was born before 1900. She dropped out of high school and worked as a pianist in the sheet music department of a local department store.

Blonde and blue-eyed, Elsie Kachel was the daughter of a huckster with low social status. But she caught the eye of a Harvard-trained lawyer who had grown up in Reading but was practicing law in New York City.

When the lawyer told his uppity parents he was marrying Elsie, they told him she was not good enough for him and that they would not attend the wedding. They kept their promise.

After the ceremony, the lawyer and Elsie immediately moved to New York. They lived in an apartment owned by a German immigrant and sculptor, Adolph Weinman.

A great admirer of Elsie's natural beauty, Weinman asked Elsie to sit for a portrait and the artist created a bronze sculpture. She was 27 years old at the time.

So what? A bronze sculpture of a rather ordinary girl from Pennsylvania.

Well, that bronze became the model for the so-called "Mercury" dime. The portrait on the coin actually depicts Liberty (a female) with wings on the side of her head to symbolize freedom of thought. The ancient god named Mercury had winged feet, not a winged head.

Today, hardly anyone knows of Elsie's role in history. Her husband, however, was a man whose name would be recognized by any English major. He was

Wallace Stevens, the Pulitzer-prize winning poet.

As a reward for her work, the sculptor Weinman gave the bronze bust to Elsie as a keepsake.

Elsie's daughter, Holly, was the heir to ownership of the art piece, but after her dad died her mother lost the historical sculpture.

Quite possibly it was stolen by a guest or house keeper.

Memorize the image on the "Winged Liberty" Dime. You don't know when it will show up at some dusty flea market stand.

Odds and Ends

-It's final, a bus trip to the Postal Museum in Washington, D.C., has been set for Thursday, September 26. There will be an early cut off date for those who want to visit the back offices of the museum. See Mike Bach at the next meeting or call him at 610-670-0620. The cost will probably be about \$45 or so.

-There was no winner for the attendance drawing in May, so next month the pot will be \$15.

-The 50/50 was won by Dr. Denby, a nice \$24 bonus for his generosity in supporting the club through the drawing.

-The club recently has purchased a hot dog roller for the stamp show. Members can loan the machine, non-members can rent it. See Roy Baardsen.

-The club also purchased a projector and a color analyzer. The projector will enhance meetings and the analyzer can be loaned.