



The

Overprint

Newsletter of the Reading Stamp Collectors' Club

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**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, April 2 at 7:00 p.m.

The Engraving Work of Czeslaw Slania

...presented by Dave Hunt



The stamp to the left (U. S. Scott 2755) is an example of the engraving work of Czeslaw Slania. Mr. Slania engraved more than 1,000 stamps in his career. This total included work for 29 countries. Born in Poland in 1921, he forged documents for the resistance during World War II. Following the war he entered art school and took advantage of opportunities to refine his skills. He died in 2005 in Sweden.

The Price of a Stamp Can Hinge on the Gum

By Stan Raugh

I usually do not byline my articles, but because some of the following is opinion it would qualify for this treatment under “newspaper” rules.

This way, readers can know who is writing and how much credence to give to their statements. Or, in my words, read it with a grain of salt.

The issue is gum. Disturbed gum has become the gingivitis of stamp collecting.

And for years I was a part of the problem—if a stamp was not mint with pristine gum I would not buy it. If an example in that condition cost too much I would do without, hoping my ship would come in someday and I could afford the perfect copy.

I did not have to learn this behavior, it was like I was born with it. I did not see it as snobbery—who would want a less than perfect example? Maybe because I was a coin collector before I was a stamp collector and it was drilled into to me: Buy The Best Coin You Can Afford! Buy Only Mint Coins.

And eventually, Buy Only Slabbed and Certified High Mint State Coins.

So, collecting stamps meant collecting only mint, never hinged stamps. If it wasn't post office fresh it wasn't really all there. A used stamp lacked it's gum.

A mint, slightly hinged stamp lacking 10% of it's gum was only 90% complete.

I even kept auction catalogs with the idea of one day cutting out photos of top-quality stamps and mounting them in my collection rather than buy a less than perfect stamp.

But no more. What changed?

It started back with the coins. I like common Morgan silver dollars. One day, while looking at some nice circulated Morgans it struck me that a low grade S mint Morgan may have floated across a western poker table, passing through the hands of the Earp or Clanton brothers or some other gun-toting celebrity.

Or a Philadelphia Morgan may have been used by one of my great-grandmothers to pay a grocery bill. That's something the mint condition coins could have never done.

That started me thinking that hinged stamps were lovingly handled by collectors of the past.

Although I still can't bring myself to buy a stamp with multiple hinge remnants (although someday it will happen!), I must admit that such stamps are an artifact of the hobby documenting a history of ownership.

Realizing that some or all gum may eventually cause deterioration of the paper and someday be soaked off for conservation purposes, paying top dollars for gum may be unwise.

Herman Herst Jr., the late stamp journalist called stamp gum the most valuable commodity of earth by weight. Imagine soaking it off someday to save your stamps!

MIKE'S PAGE

My Anecdote re Stan's Article:

I got the collecting bug from my dad. My dad from his dad back in Germany in the 1920's and his dad from my great grandfather back in the 1890's. One album in our collection came from 19th century!!. **Back then you had to use hinges.**

I have never seen my dad so mad as when Catalogues started a Mint Never Hinged Value.

"Now" he said "we are putting a value on gum"
From time to time he would compare MNH and MH pricing and see if the value of gum had changed.

I do like Stan's view that a hinged stamp shows the passage of ownership and there was a technique to putting a hinge on a stamp. Depending how it was hinged showed the care of the collector.

That's my 10 cents worth.

**Our March Meeting was cancelled by our facility due to an infectious disease.
So no change to our Banking status.
No 50/50 Drawing and no Attendance Award.**

Future Meetings:

RSCC:

May 7th

From US to Farther India and Back again
Presentation by Dr. Charles DiComo - PSLC

PSLC:

April 10th

The Joys of Philately. Presented by Bill Schultz.

May 8th

The History of Printing
on Stamps. Joseph Sullivan.

MARKET PLACE

The RSCC is assisting a former collector to liquidate over 18,000 USA Stamps

Most of the stamps are 5 cent to 13 cent with some lower and some higher values

We are offering these for sale as follows:

A pack of \$100 dollars worth of stamps
ONLY \$ 35.00

OR

A pack of \$50 dollars worth of stamps
ONLY \$ 18.00

If you want to take advantage of this incredible offer you must reserve your pack by sending an email to

mbach1@comcast.net

Followed by a check mailed to

Michael A Bach
RSCC Treasurer
12 Colorado Avenue
Sinking Spring, PA 19608

FIRST TO RESPOND
FIRST TO GET SERVED

Don't miss this Opportunity