



January 2004

Vol. 14 #1

LANCASTER COUNTY PHILATELIC SOCIETY 2004 PROGRAM

<u>DATE</u>	<u>PROGRAM*</u>	<u>HOST/HOSTESS</u>
14 January	Auction	Jim Boyles
11 February	Pre-cancels	Lou DiFelice
10 March	Stump the Experts/ Lick & Stick	Eleanor Wheeler
14 April	APS Speaker/ Penny Stamps	Dick Shaefer

24-25 April—LANCOPEX

12 May	Watermarks & Tagging	Bill Snyder
16 June	Penny Stamps	Lori Hostetler

JUNE—BUS TRIP

14 July	Auction	Bell Greiner
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11 AUGUST—CLUB PICNIC

8 September	Stamps & Computers	Paul Petersen
13 October	APS Slide Presentation	Mary Husson Marilyn Shirley
10 November	Christmas Stamps	Bob Stevenson

8 DECEMBER—CHRISTMAS BUFFET

* Programs subject to change. Retain/put on you personal calendar.

TREASURER'S REPORT
December 2003

It's that time when we share some "end-of-the-year" thoughts. And from my lookout as Treasurer, there are a few things that I think are noteworthy.

The club continues to be solvent—able to pay our bills on time, able to dream some dreams for 2004! We have sixty-six (66) dues-paying members, and that large number is explained, I feel, by the resurgence of activity among our club members and the sharing of ideas and interests. It is great to attend the monthly meeting and see all the bustle and sharing and talk!

Our annual LANCOPEX continues to be our primary income producing activity. Springtime gets us all working together to keep stamp collecting evident in our community. From our oldest member to our young collectors (seven, at last count!), everyone puts in many hours to make LANCOPEX the success it is.

Financially, we have three Certificates of Deposit, totaling \$6,931. We look forward, hopefully, to spending some of that money this year on additional Display Frames for the exhibition area at LANCOPEX. What a pleasure to handle the new aluminum frames rather than the old, heavy wooden ones!

Dues for 2004 are due in January—with the amount a topic for discussion at the January meeting. Whatever the amount, the LCPS remains one of the best bargains around!

Don Weber

STAMP CLUB MINUTES
December 10, 2003

The December meeting was a cold buffet meal to which spouses were invited. Forty two members and guests attended, paying \$5 each for the feast. There were platters of cold cuts, veggies and dip, salads, and fruit—all from Millersville University-- and club members supplied beverages and cookies. Junior members displayed some of their philatelic activities from the past year, and Elizabeth Welch accompanied on her saxophone our singing of some Christmas carols. It was an evening of easy social fellowship.

Outgoing president, Paul Petersen, turned over the badge of office (a baseball bat) to the new president, Marilyn Shirley. A token gift was presented to Paul for his year of faithful service to the club.

Jim Boyles asked the club to consider a monetary donation to the APS building fund to be decided at the January meeting. All officers were asked to meet at Marilyn's home on Monday evening December 29 at 7PM to plan next year's meetings.

The meeting ended at 9:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Lucy Eyster, Secretary

THE PENNY BLACK: THE WORLD'S FIRST POSTAGE STAMP

The Penny Black, introduced by the U.K. in 1840, is the world's first adhesive postage stamp, and is perhaps the most famous stamp ever issued. This stamp depicts a likeness of a young Queen Victoria and, because of the stamp's black color and a denomination of one penny, it has come to be known as the "Penny Black".

Prior to 1840, postage rates for delivery of letters in the U.K. depended on the distance traveled and the number of sheets of paper used. Further, the postage was required to be paid by the receiver rather than the sender of the message. There was no system for the prepayment of postage prior to mailing. Since postal rates at that time were quite expensive, many people refused to accept delivery of letters.

In 1837, the British Postmaster General, Sir Rowland Hill, proposed several reforms to the domestic postal system including: 1) mail could be sent to any destination in the U.K. at a uniform rate of a penny per half-ounce of weight, no matter how long the distance involved; 2) postage would be prepaid by the sender prior to mailing, and not by the addressee; and 3) proof of prepayment of the postage was to be evidenced by affixing a small piece of gummed, colored paper (stamp) on the outside of the letter prior to mailing.

These reforms were passed by Parliament in 1839 in the form of the Penny Postage Act and thus began the printing of the first Penny Black stamps. The first stamps were engraved on steel plates and then printed on gummed paper in rectangular sheets of 240 stamps each. For security reasons, each stamp had corner letters on the front corresponding to its position on the plate and a small crown watermark on the reverse. These stamps were imperforate, meaning that the post office had to cut the sheets of stamps with scissors to obtain individual copies for sale. Perforated stamps were not issued in the U.K. until 1854.

The cancellations on the Penny Black stamps were initially done in black ink, but this was shortly changed to red ink to make the cancellation marks easier to distinguish. The Penny Black was made available for sale on May 1, 1840. A two penny blue stamp, of identical design to that of the Penny Black except for its color, went on sale on May 8, 1840 for letters exceeding one-half ounce.

Sending mail using stamps proved to be extremely popular in the U.K. and many other countries soon began issuing stamps. In 1847, the United States Post Office issued its first stamps, a 5-cent stamp depicting Benjamin Franklin and a 10-cent stamp depicting George Washington. Although highly regarded by philatelists, Penny Black stamps are not all that rare. About 68 million of these stamps were issued during 1840-41, and it is estimated that about 1.5 million of these survive today. The price of the stamp today varies significantly according to its grade and condition. A fine used copy can be bought for about \$125 or less. Fine unused examples are quite rare and can sell for \$3,500 or more.



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Editor's Notes:

The January 2004 meeting will be held at the Maple Grove Community Center at 7:00 p.m., Wednesday, January 14.

The Newsletters published during 2003 were designed and printed by Tuyen Tran and T & D Design, Inc. Because of the press of business, Tuyen is unable to continue publishing the Newsletter. The members of LCPS join in thanking Tuyen and T & D Design for their contribution during the past year and extend our best wishes for 2004.

An important item for discussion at the January 2004 meeting: Dues! Dues have been at \$5.00 for a number of years, and the Club's leadership believes an increase is in order. In that regard, simply preparing and mailing the monthly meeting announcements costs well over the current annual dues. So think \$10.00 with \$5.00 for junior members!

One of the Club's long term initiatives is to make greater use of email in the distribution of monthly meeting announcements (and Newsletters). Thus, we need to know your email addresses—and promise not to pass it to anyone else. If you don't have email, printed notices will still be available. Signup at the January meeting.

Marilyn and her team are revising the club's Constitution and By-Laws. Recommended revisions will be considered at the February