



# Phila-telling Around

MEETINGS, 2ND WEDNESDAY OF EACH MONTH  
TIME: 7:30 P.M.  
LANCASTER TOWNSHIP COMMUNITY CENTER  
Columbia Ave., Lancaster, PA

Mailing address:  
L.C.P.S.  
19 Circle Rd.  
Millersville, PA 17551

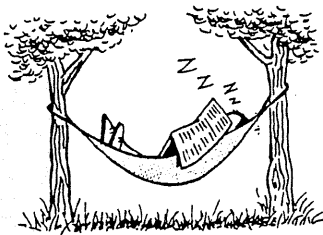
Next Meeting - Wed., SEPTEMBER 8, 1999  
FOR MORE INFORMATION, CALL MARILYN SHIRLEY (717) 872-2479

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Our President, BILL GREINER, is presently on sabbatical due to an over-indulgence in hot dogs and hamburgers at the August picnic. HARRY RAPP warned him not to eat that 5th hamburger....Oh well!!



September  
Host



The Hostess with the Mostess, is our one and only MIRIAM ARMERDING. MIRIAM has such a pleasant personality, we know her refreshments will be pleasant as well. So, do your thing, MIRIAM! We'll enjoy anything you select for us.

Twenty-seven people attended our yearly summer picnic. The hot dogs and hamburgers were quite tasty as DICK SHAEFER AND JIM BOYLES outdid themselves as our chefs.

For those of you who could not attend, we must let you know you missed some excellent vitals. We have good cooks in our club.

The program consisted of "Stamp Bingo" brought in by HERB TINDALL. It was lots of fun and TRUYDE AND BILL GREINER donated the "grab bags" with all kinds of little prizes inside. This eliminated a lot of time deciding which prize to pick -- all the bags were alike. Good idea!

The special program this month will be headed by TRUYDE GREINER AND LUCY EYSTER.

They will bring us up to date on "Post Cards and Postal Stationery". We look forward to hearing about this subject.

How often does the Post Office trumpet the issuance of a new stamp, booklet or souvenir sheet only to have your local P.O. Clerk say, "Sorry, we ordered it but never got a supply". Or else you drive quite a distance to a Post Office that has a Philatelic Station and stand half an hour on a common line behind customers mailing registered, insured, special handling, etc. before you reach the counter. This article by Larry Powell in the GLOBAL STAMP NEWS tells of how another country services its new issue customers.....

(Editor)

### FARMHOUSES AND POST OFFICES: LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE DUTCH

Our postal service, intent on selling more stamps to collectors, might want to look to the PTT (Post, Telephone, and Telegraph) of the Netherlands for some ideas on marketing. On my recent trip to Amsterdam, I saw a marketing program for collectors that seemed far more efficient than that of the USPS.

Rather than using mass advertising to promote philately, the Dutch PTT simply makes it easy for collectors to purchase stamps. Take the recent example of the Netherlands semi-postal issues on Dutch Farmhouses.

This three-stamp set featured farm scenes from the Netherlands. The semi-postal surcharge raised money for social and cultural welfare organizations.

The stamps were issued April 16. However, when I arrived in Amsterdam on April 13, announcements of the issue were already visible in the post office and more importantly, on every outside drop box in the city. The signs pictured all three of the stamps, noting they would be available, after April 16, at local post offices. "Big deal", you say. U.S. post offices do the same thing, placing announcements of new issues on post office bulletin boards.

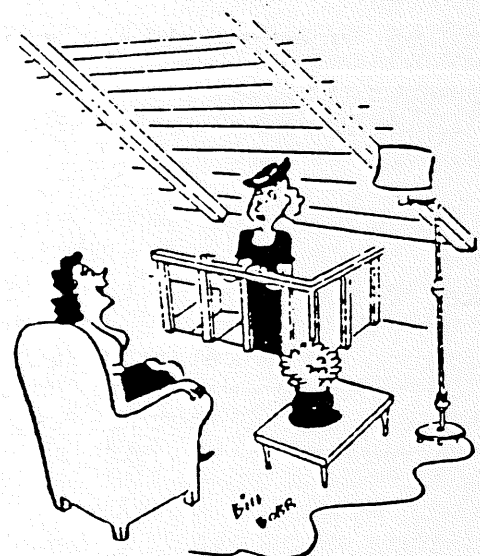
True, but there are two differences. First, placing signs on every drop box gives more exposure than bulletin board announcements. And second, the stamps really were easily available at the local post offices.

On Wednesday April 17, I went to the downtown Amsterdam post office. Upon entering, I immediately saw a small temporary booth near the entrance with two women workers. They were doing nothing but selling the Farmhouse stamps to collectors.

They had FDC's, mint sets, presentation packs, booklets and individual mint singles. Collectors could purchase any and all combinations of these, discuss alternatives, and never interfere with the regular postal customers.

On Thursday, April 18, I visited Markem, a small town about 15 kilometers north of Amsterdam. Despite its closeness to metropolitan Amsterdam, Markem is a village of only about 2,000 people.

Still, when I visited the village post office, there were again two women with a temporary booth near the door. Like their counterparts in Amsterdam, they were selling mint stamps and FDC's of the farmhouse issue.



"We've been living up here since Hap's stamp collection has gotten so big!"

On Friday, April 19, I visited another Dutch city, Utrecht. Again, I stopped at the Post Office, and again the story was repeated. The only difference was that a man was providing the service at this collector's booth.

How does this compare with the U.S. In the U.S., philatelic windows are available only at some larger post offices. For collectors in other regions, purchasing new issues can be difficult. And, to do so usually requires waiting in line and delaying the purchase of other postal customers.

The temporary booths in the Dutch Post Offices made it easy to buy stamps. The line was short, and the clerks did not have to thumb through their entire stock to find the new issue.

The personnel handling the stamps catered directly to collector's needs and questions. And, in all three instances, these temporary collectors' booths were near the entrance.

Granted, the charitable purpose of the Netherlands semi-postals may have made clerks more zealous than normal in providing service. And, having USPS clerks selling FDC's might be unacceptable, since it could put the government in competition with private cachet makers. But mint stamps and plate blocks could still be provided, along with some of the collateral material the USPS is selling.

The key factor is the "easy to buy" concept. If you make it easy for collectors to make purchases, then more purchases will be made. It worked for me. I bought copies of the farmhouse issue at all three stops.



The Club has acquired some of the collection of the late Charles Griffiths, an active collector. We will have an October Auction selling some of his material -- both foreign and U.S. DON'T MISS OUT ON THIS SALE. There will be more detailed information in the October newsletter.

#### TOP TEN DEATH PENALTY CHOICES FOR WAYWARD STAMP COLLECTORS

10. Electrocution by UV Lamp.
9. Hand-cancelled to death by Philatelic window personnel.
8. Hung from Post Office flag pole.
7. Guillotined by Shogard Mount cutter.
6. Humiliated to death by New York stamp dealers.
5. Lethal watermark fluid injection.
4. Philatelically cancelled mail bomb.
3. Drowned in a pool of soaking kiloware.
2. Mangled in BEP coil presses.
1. Choked by Elvis stamps.



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**SEPTEMBER**