

PHILATELIC SOCIETY OF LANCASTER COUNTY
POST OFFICE BOX 982
LANCASTER, PA 17603

MEETINGS - 2nd Wednesday of each month
STAUFFER MANSION at 7:30 P.M.
1241 Lititz Pike, Lancaster, PA 17601
Next Meeting Wed., October 10, 1990

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OCTOBER 1990

During September, three applications were received by the society. Two were former members: Sanford Goldstoff and Roger Johnson; the third, Michael Shirley, a first-time member. This raises our dues paying membership to forty-nine. We like to think that our new Newsletter was instrumental in their wishing to be part of the society's activities. As the current T.V. commercial that begins "Wouldn't it be great if ..." fantasies, wouldn't it be great to report in the November issue that our membership has reached an even fifty?

The anticipated nominations for officers and Board of Directors were tabled until the next meeting because as the president pointed out, we cannot move until the re-writing of the bylaws has been completed.

As mentioned elsewhere in this issue, the society has the opportunity to purchase exhibit equipment in excellent condition consisting of 48 frames, 12 tripod stands and storage boxes, individually priced at \$336. as one lot, \$292. These would replace the frames currently in use which are deteriorating and possibly in unsafe condition

SEPTEMBER PROGRAM NOTES

The theme of this program was the story of fluorescence. A variety of short and long wave ultraviolet lamps were brought by members, ranging from battery-operated portable models weighing a few ounces, excellent for use at society meetings, stamp stores or shows, to a unit weighing five pounds suitable for home use. We learned that fluorescence has many other applications besides identifying tagged and untagged stamp paper varieties. The collecting of fluorescent rocks, crystals and gemstones; writing with invisible ink; in criminology, medicine, chemistry, advertising and theatrical use; mining and prospecting are some of its uses. Mark King, Jim Lyman and Lesley and Richard Botte supplied

the lamps. Incidentally, if this discussion has piqued your interest, Leslie can supply further information and offer a range of modestly-priced units.

OCTOBER PROGRAM

A short business meeting has been scheduled, to be followed by an auction, so bring that duplicate material to the meeting and convert it into cash, maybe enough to buy an ultraviolet lamp?

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

The other Saturday I had a humbling experience when I went to an auction in Farmersville. I had seen this auction advertised just briefly the week before in the daily Lancaster paper and from the brief description I thought this would be a quick auction with maybe an item or two which would warrant a couple of dollars from my pocket. What could one expect from a single collection coming out of New Holland, PA!

Oh what a surprise was in store! The collection was almost complete either mint or used to at least 1940 (these were all U.S. stamps). This included both commemoratives, regular issues and air mails. Also there was numerous revenues and back-of-the-book material along with many specimen and proof examples. The material was beautiful and some of it I had never seen before. Needless to say, the few bucks in my pocket did not buy very much. I wasn't ready for what I found either in money, knowledge or examination.

I guess the first point is that even though a lot of this material was of high quality, each piece a person is going to buy should be examined first. One of the dealers there spent \$500.00 for a stamp (catalog value \$1,700.00) only to find that the stamp was thinned and worth a lot less than he first imagined. Unfortunately the "catalog" for this auction only listed the stamp and whether it was mint or used. Nothing on the centering or condition. Certainly if I had known what was there I

would have tried to examine some of the material beforehand.

The other problem was knowledge. Some of the material was stuff I had never seen before. I couldn't tell whether some material was authentic and even when it was, I did not have a current price list to determine value. I wasn't prepared and you shouldn't pay good money for something you are not sure of.

One final note about this collection. The person who sold it was not a stamp collector, if I got the story straight. Although the seller got thousands of dollars, on average, they received 1/3 of catalog for the material. I suspect they could have done better at a major auction house. We collectors usually know our collections and their approximate worth. Many times our families don't have the foggiest idea of what we have or how to dispose of it. If you plan to collect stamps until the day you die, and no one in the family is interested in stamps, leave instructions on who to contact for help in disposing of those little pieces of colored paper. I know a lot of us really don't care about the value of our collection; but, nevertheless, whoever sells it should get a fair value for it.

THE CONSUMMATE COLLECTOR

Among other meanings, the American College Dictionary defines consummate as "complete or perfect, supremely qualified, of highest order." All of these definitions aptly describe Paul Westcott. At 85, Paul is the oldest active member of the L.C.P.S. When he and Florence, his wife of sixty years, arrived in Millersville thirteen years ago, his immediate concerns were to locate a stamp club and to find a church. In the ensuing years Paul has lost none of the impish wit, charm and enthusiasm that has made him a mainstay of the club.

Paul was born on January 26, 1904 in Norfolk Downs, MA. At that time the population numbered 500. Today, the town has been absorbed by Quincy--a suburb of Boston. At four, his family had moved to Weymouth where he attended a one-room school with the teacher instructing the first four grades. Paul formed his first stamp collection at this time, but it was lost in the family move to North Adams, when he was

ten. In the summer of his tenth year, he spent his last vacation with his grandparent on their farm in Appomague, R.I. earning the princely sum of \$6.00 for his summer's work. North Adams was notable in his life because he met Florence in grade school and they became life-long sweethearts.-

An athlete, he played Center with his brothers - Howard, the Quarterback and Sam the Fullback - on the North Adams H.S. football team. Graduating in 1924, Florence attended North Adams Normal School on a scholarship studying Elem.Ed. Paul continued his work with youths in the YMCA begun in high school. But soon, he followed Florence's lead and attended Springfield YMCA College studying Phys.Ed. and returning to full time work with the YMCA.

He and Florence married in 1930. The union produced two children, Libona in 1934 at Ansonia, CT and Eleanor in 1938 at New Brunswick, NJ. The Westcotts now have five grandchildren, three girls, two boys and all are college graduates. Paul later worked for Johnson and Johnson, the pharmaceutical company, as naturally, a travelling salesman until he retired at 65. An insight into his yankee business sense occurred at college, when he earned extra money, he bought an old car and rented it out to fellow students for dates. He had several cars in service when he graduated.

In high school Paul collected everything. Married at the onset of the depression, he still managed to set aside \$3.00 each week to buy stamps. By purchasing U.S. stamps in full sheets, he helped finance Eleanor's college education when he later sold them. He was an early collector of odd named post marks, amassing a huge collection which he later donated to the Postmark Museum in Ohio. He and Florence attended many Post Mark Society Conventions in Iowa, Vermont, Ohio and still holds membership in the Society. For the past thirteen years he has collected metered envelopes. He estimates there are nine million different extant in the U.S., but he doesn't have them all, yet. This article began as a write-up of Paul the collector, and resolved into Paul the man. AND WHAT A MAN HE IS!

EDITOR'S NOTE: ROBERT GOODELL, in his 90's is the oldest living CHARTER MEMBER of the Society.