

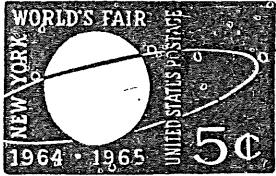
PHILATELIC SOCIETY OF LANCASTER COUNTY
POST OFFICE BOX 982
LANCASTER, PA 17603

MEETINGS - 2nd Wednesday of each month
STAUFFER MANSION at 7:30 P.M.
1241 Lititz Pike, Lancaster, PA 17601
Next Meeting-Wednesday, SEPTEMBER 11, 1991

VOL 2 NO 9

FOUNDED MAY 20, 1938

SEPTEMBER 1991



WHY COLLECT POSTAL STATIONERY?

PART II

(Continued From Last Month)

Those who enjoy exploring new paths, who are interested in Postal History, or who enjoy the challenge of something different from the common philatelic collecting interests, find Postal Stationery a fascinating field. There are ample varieties of stationery to satisfy any collecting interest. Indeed, there are probably as many varieties as there are of adhesives.

For those who wish to extend their philatelic historical knowledge, Postal Stationery offers an excellent opportunity. The collector can learn about the different postal systems and services, such as for example the postal banking system used in Europe. He can expand his knowledge of the types and methods of manufacture of cards as well as paper, of printing methods, and of design. Since stationery items are larger than adhesives, it is easier to study many of these features through them rather than through other branches of Philately.

Postal Stationery is also an important addition to the collection of adhesives. A country collection without its stationery is incomplete. A topical collector who neglects to include the colorful stationery relating to his topic has left significant gaps in his collection.

The messages on the backs of postal cards and on letter sheets are important historical documents. Through them one can trace the changing customs of people, and the increasing use of typewriters; as well as opinions of the writers on an infinite variety of subjects.

When collecting Postal Stationery, missing perforations, centering, and gum sticking are less of a problem than when collecting adhesives. Furthermore, the items collected are sturdier, and less subject to careless damage than are adhesives.

Some collectors have sold their collections of Postal Stationery, or portions of them, at considerable profit. Over the past half century the value of many stationery items has increased sharply. Fortunately, stationery collectors are less subject to the whims of fashion that plague other collectors, and so there have been fewer booms followed by busts, such as occurred in Ghana adhesives. For the most part postal authorities have issued stationery strictly for utilitarian purposes. Very few countries have used it to exploit the unwary collector. Forgeries of stationery exist but they are not common and are usually easily detected.

Although an investment in Postal Stationery can be very profitable, the novice, as in any investment field, can easily be burned. Speculation in stocks, real estate, paintings, adhesives, or stationery is always risky. When an investor has mastered his field, he can increase the odds in his favor, but even then he cannot eliminate the risk of loss entirely. Postal Stationery should be collected for fun; any profit is just a bonus.

An early collector of postal cards summed up the matter by saying: "I just ask the collector, in making up his philatelic train, not to leave off the postal card coach -- the parlor car of the train. Leave off, if you will, the foreign revenue sleeping car, the United States revenue smoking car, the United States proprietary dining and drinking car, but don't leave off the parlor car or palace car on the siding. Your train may be lighter without it, but you will miss a lot of comfort and pleasure"

(TO BE CONTINUED IN PART III)

URGENT

A PUBLICITY REPRESENTATIVE IS NEEDED BADLY TO PUT OUR FACE IN THE NEWS. PLEASE, SOMEONE VOLUNTEER. A WRITTEN JOB DESCRIPTION WILL BE GIVEN TO THE SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATE.

SEPTEMBER PROGRAM

Jim Boyles will discuss aspects of collecting stampless and early stamped covers of Lancaster County. If you have any Lancaster County related letters or covers, bring them to the meeting if you would like Jim to examine and discuss them.



ADVANCE NOTICE OF OCTOBER PROGRAM

We thought a repeat of the "Collector's Bourse" would be a fun evening as members would become "dealers for a night". We are giving you ample time to rummage through your stuff and select items to offer for sale to fellow members and guests. A \$1.00 donation payable to the club treasurer, Ben Heller, will pay for a "table". You may bring in any hobby-related items. Example, stamps, supplies, postcards, coins, old toys, etc.

FORUM (OR AGAINST 'EM)

. . . .Did you ever stop to think that your winning bid at an auction is the highest price anyone in attendance and possibly through mail bids, is willing to pay? Recently, Auction Houses have been adding a 10% buyer's commission to the lot price in addition to a 6% to 8% sales tax (depending on your state of residence). That is 16% more than your bid. Now, if your winning bid is through a mail bid, there is a 10% shipping and handling charge with a stated minimum charge plus an insurance charge. Want to pay by credit card? Many firms add a 3% or 4% service charge to your bill. Conclusion? OUR OWN CLUB AUCTIONS MAY BE THE BEST BUY IN STAMPDOM!

EDITORIALLY SPEAKING

. . . . I have a theory regarding Scott's so-called retailing pricing that I don't recall having read elsewhere. It would seem that Scott, in order to induce new collectors, as well as long time collectors anxious to see how much their collections had grown in value, kept increasing catalogue prices year after year. Eventually, Scott prices bore no relation to actual market prices.

The currency of many countries like Germany in the 1920's, Brazil and Argentina recently, suffered spiraling inflation. A loaf of bread in the morning might cost 100 marks, by evening, 1,000 marks. The solution was to devalue the currency, making, for example 1,000 old pesos equal 1 new peso. So too, Scott took drastic action, using a complex formula, they devalued their catalogue prices, pricing some MNH sets in 1991 at only one quarter the price listed in their 1988 catalogues. Now they are free to once more inch up the prices each year to please new collectors. The old collectors? They probably will forget, eventually, and it will be business as usual.

..... Jim Lyman, Editor



THE ANNUAL PICNIC IN THE PARK

Everyone must have had mixed feelings the afternoon and early evening of the night the picnic was held. We needed the rain badly, but the timing!?! Fortunately, the rain stopped by 6:00 PM and some twenty-four members and guests turned out. The new site, Millersville Community Park, proved to be a great move. The Pavilion was clean, facilities excellent and we were well protected from the weather. That is, all but Dick Schafer who necessarily stood out in the elements cooking the franks and burgers. While most of us were enjoying the variety of hot and cold dishes and munching hot dogs, Dick was heard to mutter, "This is the last year I'll be doing this" and casting baleful looks at Leslie who is next in line to be the president. Apparently being Chief (and only) Cook at the picnic one of the major tasks performed by the president.

Marilyn and Sarah enlivened the evening by getting everyone involved in games, the one which provided the most fun was in setting up two teams with each member being given a card bearing a red or blue letter of the alphabet. When the moderator, Marilyn, called a word, say "Booklet", members of the teams raced to opposite ends of the pavilion to spell out the word. Since there was only one letter each of the alphabet, the person with the "O" had to keep wriggling his/her hips to signify a double letter. The fun came when members on the sideline failed to realize they held key letters and didn't move.

Mr. and Mrs. Money Bags portrayed by Bob Allison and Mrs. David Strayer, respectively, circulated amongst the picnickers. Since no one knew who they were, it was necessary to shake hands with everyone and to introduce yourself. It was a great icebreaker as everyone mingled. The tenth person to shake the hands of Mr. and Mrs. Money Bags received gifts of money.

Marilyn provided a large tray of fruit and vegetables, mostly from her garden and everyone was asked to guess the weight without picking up or touching the tray. Jim Boyles won the prize coming within a half pound of the actual weight of 19½ pounds. The prize was the contents of the tray. A number of other games were played and thanks to Marilyn's and Sarah's forethought, all could be played indoors.

The Scott U.S. Specialized Catalog, despite its flaws, is adequate for most beginners, and even has a few bright spots (such as the description of envelope papers in the introductory section). However, after the honeymoon is over, collectors will want to graduate to more detailed, specialized catalogs.

The UPSS (United Postal Stationery Society) publishes a number of advanced catalogs, and has more in the works. These catalogs aren't cheap, in absolute terms, but the amount of information they contain is vast, and they are quality works.



An employee who, upon receiving his paycheck, promptly went to his boss and said, "My check is wrong. You have underpaid me by \$1.00." His boss answered, "Last week you were overpaid \$2.00, but we didn't hear a single word out of you." Said the employee, "Of course not. I wouldn't complain about one mistake, but two in succession -- I can't keep silent about that." ... AAA Smileage

JOYPEX 1991

. . . . Saturday morning, August 17, I attended JOYPEX '91 which was being held at Days Inn, Lancaster. The banquet room is huge and could have accommodated four different hobby shows simultaneously. Delightfully air conditioned, coming in from the hot humid outside air, one was put in a good mood to browse. The first familiar face I saw belonged to Dick Shaefer, deep in animated conversation with a dealer. Moving from table to table, I figured there were about fifteen dealers in attendance. Leslie Botte was bustling about like a mother hen behind her table rearranging her wares. She was sure attendance would be up as more members of the sponsoring club, Mt. Joy, arrived. Surprisingly, to me, there were more First Day, Historic, Commercial, and Special Event Covers than stamps for sale. I estimated that collectors outnumbered dealers by three to one.

In the center of the room were a dozen frames, each containing sheets of butterflies, dogs, plate blocks, first day covers, postcards, circa 1920 with pictures representing a trip around the world. Since only a few exhibits had write-ups, I wondered if this was to be a competition with awards or a display of various themes using very attractive worldwide sets. As I was leaving about an hour later, I noted Dick as still sitting in front of the same dealer's table. We'd all enjoy a report by Dick on his "inside trading at JOYPEX!"

