

The Overprint

Newsletter of the Reading Stamp Collectors' Club

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NEXT MEETING: TUESDAY December 6th at 7:00 pm

Social Time from 6:30 pm onwards

Tis The Season so it's

A CHRISTMAS / HOLIDAY POTPOURRI

Bring along a Philatelic or Other Item related to the Christmas / Holiday Season.

NOTE: There will be no meetings in January and February 2023.

We plan to meet again on Tuesday March 7th

RSCC Events Recap:

October 15th Luncheon at the YRC in Wyomissing

Attended by over 15 members and their spouse or guest, this proved a very enjoyable gathering. The food was great and the camaraderie equally so as many had not seen each other since pre-COVID. Sadly, it would be the last time many of us would see and talk to Roy Baardsen, Club VP for many years as he passed on November 1st. Many have since commented that they were thankful for the opportunity to see him one last time.

November 4th 21st RSCC Stamp Show.

This was held at Leesport Farmers Market and had 7 dealers with their wares to tempt club members and visitors alike. While the number of attendees was lower than expected the dealers seemed to be happy with the event and have all agreed to attend again next year. So those who came must have spent a lot!! The club came away with a small profit.

2023 DUES ARE DUE:

If you have paid already, thank you: If not pop a check for \$10.00 in the mail. make the check payable to Reading Stamp Collectors' Club or RSCC (Not to Mike Bach as I will bank it as a gift to me !!!).

Send it to RSCC C/O Mike Bach 12 Colorado Avenue Sinking Spring 19608

As the meeting Theme is Christmas this issue will follow a similar theme. However, in line with prior issues I am continuing my first article as a tribute to Ukraine.

UKRAINE : CHRISTMAS AND EUROPA STAMPS

Didn't think we'd see Ukraine's EUROPA 2022 stamps

Written by catpaw November 22, 2022

This year's EUROPA theme was [Stories and Myths](#) and produced a thrilling array of stories from across Europe. Ukraine explored the Slavic origin myths of Svarog, Creator of the Universe (also god of fire) and Lada, Goddess of Motherhood. I suspect this set arrived too late to be considered for the competition, but, regardless, still nice to see them.



Visually, these are one of the most stunning sets that came out of the entire competition. Artist Миколай Кочубей Mykola Kochubey's use of modern imagery and tradition, backed with graphics that look like they are on fire, should be the winners in my opinion. The best part of the set is the visuals of angels plucking on DNA strands in the Lada stamp. The cancel is interesting. It mirrors the firestorm coming from Svarog's anvil and intertwines nicely with Lada's Yin and Yang theme.

Ukraine's Christmas issue theme is a country at war at Christmas.

The [Ukrainian](#) Postal Service has unveiled a picture of its poignant Christmas stamp, as the country continues to face a barrage from the [Russians](#). The image depicts a young woman sitting inside by a Christmas tree, while sitting behind her against the outside wall is a soldier preparing to fight as fires burn in the distance.



The stunning picture was designed by an 11th grade student from Mykolaiv who fled the city due to Putin's shelling.

First Christmas Stamps

Whenever we talk about “firsts,” a lot of contenders line up to make claims so it’s no surprise that there are a lot of firsts when it comes to Christmas stamps. That said, there’s little doubt that Canada can claim the first Christmas postage stamp connection, even if the stamp was not intended to specifically celebrate the holiday.



The 1898 2-cent stamp features a collage of Queen Victoria’s crown at the top, a Mercator map of the world with the nations and colonies of the British Empire displayed in red, “Xmas 1898” and the phrase, “We hold a vaster empire than has been.” Two varieties of what many philatelists consider the world’s first Christmas stamp, Canada’s Imperial Penny Postage stamp of 1898. It was Canada’s first bicolor stamp and has major color varieties involving the colors of the ocean and land.

But why does it say “Xmas 1898?”

The stamp was issued December 7 and its use went into effect December 25, 1898, the inauguration of the Imperial Penny Postage rate (which was 2 cents in Canadian funds).

There is an oft-repeated story that Canadian Postmaster General William Mulock developed the stamp and proposed that it be issued on November 9 to “honor the prince,” meaning the Prince of Wales. But when Queen Victoria asked “what Prince?” in a displeased manner, Mulock realized the danger, and answered “Why, madam, the Prince of Peace.”

Other Christmas Stamp Firsts:



Some have long held that Austria issued Christmas stamps on December 12, 1937. There is no Christmas imagery on the two stamps, which show a rose and signs of the Zodiac.

However, Kathy Ward, writing for the Christmas Philatelic Club, offers this: My suspicions were aroused when I purchased a first day cover of these stamps. On the cachet, it states that the Austrian post office issued the stamps to be used on 'birth-day (sic) congratulatory letters.' [That would explain the Zodiac symbols meaning an intent for year-round use.] A letter from Austria confirmed my suspicions: "The first official Christmas stamp of the Austrian Post has been issued in 1953."

In 1939–40, Brazil issued a set of four semi-postal stamps to raise money for charitable institutions. The first stamp, issued December 20, 1939, shows the Three Wise Men and Star of Bethlehem (leftmost stamp below).



First U.S. Christmas stamp issued in 1962: 60 Years On



Figure 1



Figure 2

After many years of petitions to the Post Office Department, the first United States Christmas stamp was issued on Nov. 1, 1962, almost 60 years ago. As shown in Figure 1, the 4¢ stamp depicts a wreath and candles (Scott 1205).

Despite the fact that the design was innocuous with no overtly religious symbolism, it ignited a brief firestorm of protest that included court filings to prevent the issuance of the stamp. They failed.

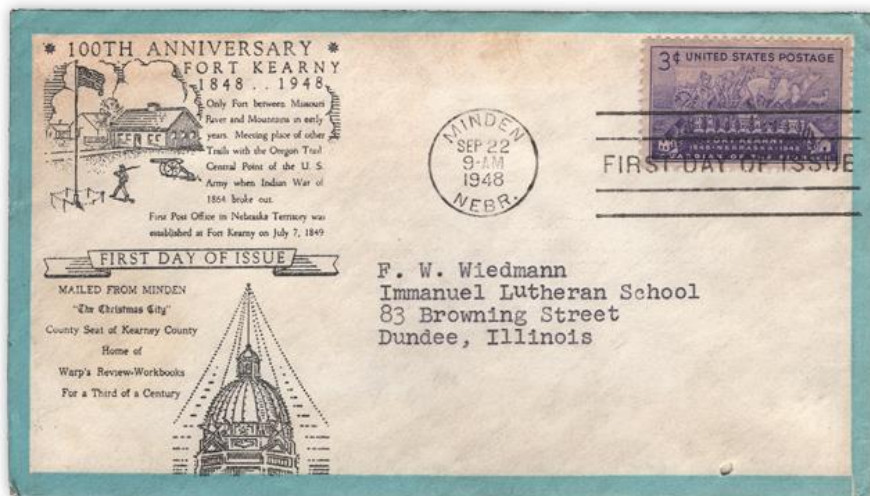
The issuance also proved that there was a pent-up demand for such stamps. More than a billion of the 1962 Christmas stamps were sold. As a result, the Post Office Department adopted the subject as a regular part of its stamp program from that day to this.

Figure 2 shows a commemorative cover from 2012 marking 50 years of U.S. Christmas stamps.

Collecting that first Christmas stamp in all its varieties and usages is a gift that keeps on giving. No doubt there are additional surprises to be found in dealers' stocks. The search makes it fun to visit stamp shows to see what dealers have for sale.

Why Minden, Neb., is the 'Christmas City'

U.S. Stamp Notes by John M. Hotchner



How hard do you have to look to find a Christmas connection on a philatelic item? You need a magnifier to see the connection on the first-day cover shown here for the 3¢ purple Fort Kearny stamp (Scott 970) issued Sept. 22, 1948. Both the stamp and the cover commemorate the 100th anniversary of the fort.

Where is Fort Kearny, and why did it deserve the honor of a postage stamp?

The cachet on the cover lists the reasons: “Only Fort between Missouri River and Mountana [sic] in early years. Meeting place of other Trails with the Oregon Trail. Central Point of the U.S.

Army when Indian War of 1864 broke out. First Post Office in Nebraska Territory was established at Fort Kearny on July 7, 1849.”

The cover bears a first-day cancel from Minden, Neb., which the cachet tells us is “The Christmas City,” revealing the Christmas connection. This seldom-seen cachet was sponsored by the Warp Publishing Co. of Minden, which according to an enclosure “pioneered numerous books of poems and other helpful material for teachers.”

Another enclosure explains how Minden came to be called the Christmas City: “There was a time when Minden, only a few miles from where Fort Kearny stood, was dark and inadequately lighted. Then Minden, perceiving the effect of light, began expressing its pioneer spirit in lights. ... The lights in old Fort Kearny signified the hopes of the pioneers that a day would come that would be a better day — a day when comfort, peace, serenity, prosperity would rule. No less do the lights at Minden each Christmas signify the same thing. ...”

Indeed, Minden, which now bills itself as “Nebraska’s Christmas City” puts up over 12,000 lights in its courthouse square each year, about four times the number of city residents. It has done so since 1915, more than 100 years. Minden also presents an annual pageant titled *The Light of the World* and is happy to welcome visitors to enjoy the show.

CELEBRATING CHRISTMAS AROUND THE WORLD

Here are a sample of the many philatelic tributes to Christmas for 2022
\$ 10:00 to the first reader to send me by email me the list of countries
depicted below.





Wishing all OVERPRINT Readers their families and friends a joyous Christmas Season and a prosperous and healthy 2023.