



Owen Sound Stamp Club

Newsletter

Next Club Meeting: April 18th April 2001

Just six weeks to get your exhibit together!!

OK, the snow's all gone and you've raked your lawn so now is your chance to sort through those old albums and pick out some good looking stamps that you can put together for a fine looking exhibit for our show (May 27th, just in case you'd forgot)! Actually, we seem to be heading for a busy month as far as shows go – Saugeen Stamp Club has its Show on May 5th and Stratford's is May 6th (further details on page 4).

Now we have the exhortation out of the way, lets move on to other things....

OSSC Library

A couple of months ago, I brought in some back issues of *Scott's Monthly* and *The American Philatelist* for members to borrow, read, and return. Several members appear to have found these old journals interesting. Whilst there is no problem in continuing to bring in these magazines, maybe we could develop this a bit to include books, catalogues, and other philatelically related material.

Would any member(s) be interested in becoming the Club Librarian(s)? How such a library would work would be very much up to the librarian, but could include anything from simply looking after the boxes of magazines and making them available to members, to acquiring new material, cataloguing, indexing, or whatever. The obvious problem is the practical matter of where to keep the stuff, and how to get at least some of it to meetings. If anyone would be interested in taking this any further, please get in touch.

Bob Watston (President)

New Look

Some of you might notice that the style of this issue of the Newsletter is a bit different to the last. This has absolutely nothing to do with the fact that this is being written on a holiday weekend and the photocopy store is closed. It is, rather, something of an experiment which will allow the use of colour and give improved graphic reproduction – in other words, pictures of stamps should now look a bit more like what they are meant to represent.

The only downside to this new format I see at present is that the newsletter now comes as two pieces of paper rather than a single folded sheet.

Any comments on this “new look” will, as always, be most welcome.

Bob Watson (Editor)

Perfins - A Little Background

Just about every collector will have come across “perfins” (perforated initials) amongst their older definitives. Most also know that these were used by companies and institutions to control theft by employees in the mailing office. Joe Coulbourn has a Web page (<http://www.perfins.com/>) explaining the history of this security device which was invented by one Joseph Sloper of Walbrook, England, in 1868.



Now, it would seem that thieving postage stamps had been a problem almost from their introduction in 1840 and various schemes had been devised to limit this including embossing

and printing the company name on the back of the stamp. The P.O. was sympathetic to the theft problem but was wary of letting anyone deface stamps – that was their privilege – and, with businesses being businesses, it wouldn't be long before the “anti-theft device” included advertising slogans and who knows what else. With the support of many businesses, Sloper was able to persuade the Post Office to allow the use of his patented device for perforating stamps and perfins soon came to be the standard security device used around the World. Although seldom seen these days, there are still some 200 companies around the world using stamps with their perforated initials.

Bob Watson

Armenia

In the last Newsletter, when I announced the release of a stamp to celebrate the 1,700 anniversary of the Armenian Church, it was just another stamp. However, a little later it dawned upon me that an anniversary of 1,700 years is certainly different from your average run-of-the-mill anniversary.

Stamp collecting means different things to different people. I sometimes like to look through the pretty little pictures to find out what's behind them. This new stamp set me thinking and searching and allow me to share a little of what I found, with you. By no means should this be considered an in depth study of the subject but it may trigger you, to delve even deeper and in turn, maybe, share it with us.

2,001 AD minus 1,700 brings us back to... 301 AD — the year in which the, then reigning, King of Armenia declared Christianity the State Religion. (Imagine for a moment, if Mohammed, who was born much later in 570(?) AD in Mecca, had been born in Erivan instead. He might have well been an Armenian Christian and would never have founded Islam!)

Let's first try to find Armenia on the map. It is in a corner of the Earth where Europe meets Asia. It straddles the 40° latitude line, south of the Caucasus mountains, between Georgia and Azerbaidzhan. It's east of the Black Sea and North of the eastern part of Turkey and Iran.



It is a small and mountainous country with a population just short of 4 million and is an Island of Christianity in an Ocean of Islam. The country has a long history of being overrun by its neighbours as well as forces from afar. As a result of its strategic location between the Black and the Caspian Sea on the crossroads between North and South and East and West, it has experienced many foreign armies coming and going, as well as seeing large chunks of its landmass regularly being taken over by its neighbours. Armies from Medea and Persia, Romans, Arabs, Mongols, Turks and, last but not least, troops from the Soviet Union, were constantly fighting in and around Armenia.

Genesis details the story of Noah and the Ark. His trip supposedly ended on the flanks of Mt. Ararat (5,156m). This mountain used to be in Armenia but is now in Turkey (wars and politics can even move mountains). Legend has it that

Armenians are direct descendants of Noah.

Pressures put on them by their neighbouring countries to change to Islam led eventually to the Genocide in April 1915. It was recently stated that most grandparents of today's generation of Armenians in North America, arrived here as orphans.

The population of Armenia is very intelligent and has high moral and ethical standards, and many have very well succeeded in their chosen art and/or profession; Cher of song; Mike Connors of movies; Agassi of tennis; Deukmejian of politics (Governor of California); Atom Egoyan of film; Garabedian of opera; and Karsh of photo are just a few. People whose name ends with "ian" are almost always from Armenian stock.

Armenia became an independent republic after the demise of the Soviet Union in 1991 and their red, blue and yellow flag is raised proudly. A long standing dispute with neighbouring Azerbaidzhan over the enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh, a territory completely encircled by Moslem Azerbaidzhan but populated mostly by Armenian Christians has led to hostilities between the two countries in recent years.

The oldest churches and monasteries, of which many are still standing, and of which many date back to before 300 AD, have domed, stone ceilings. Armenian builders and architects were undoubtedly involved in helping the French in the building of their cathedrals in Rheims and Paris in the 12th and 13th centuries.

Much more can be said about Armenia, about the climate, their economy, their alphabet, etc. but a few words about stamps:

Stamps were issued initially as National Republic and Armenia's first stamp was a 60 Kopecks Orange stamp issued in 1919. From 1919-23 as Soviet Socialist Republic and from 1923 as Transcaucasian Federated Republics. In September of 1991 they announced the introduction of their own stamps which first appeared in 1992.

The Post Office, which can be seen on a 1921 stamp with Mt. Ararat in the background (Scott #288), can be reached by writing to: NAMAKANISH, Ministry of Communications, 22 Sarian Str. 375002, ARMENIA. Information about WWW site(s), e-mail, telephone and/or fax is not available. [I did find a Web site about Armenia, including good pictures of some more recent stamps (and currency) at www.hyetch.nareg.com.au - Ed].

The Canadian stamp, to be issued May 16th, will show a stone cross, an image of Christ and a fragment of "The entry to Jerusalem". The stone cross will also feature on the First Day Cover and on the cancellation stamp as well as on the pane of 16 stamps which is arranged in four blocs of four stamps each surrounding a cross with text imprinted.



Charles van Rompu

What's New from Canada Post...

Very little news this time – on the Calends (First Day) of June, Canada Post will release a 47¢ stamp in honour of The Royal Military College of Canada. Its going to be a 13+ perf. stamp in 4 colours of which they printed five million copies.

That's all for June, folks...



Special notice for TOPICAL collectors looking for nice paintings.

If your interested in the works of Hans Gartner (1853–1914), the Postal authorities of Liechtenstein have donated some FDC's, issued March 1, 1993 which will be in the Silent Auction on May 27th, our 6th show.

Charles van Rompu

\$1,000,000 Questions...

Before going to the next two One Million Dollar Questions, the answers of the last two.

1. Language of Åland ???

Åland is an autonomous province of Finland. It's a group of 6,554 islands covering 1500 km² in the mouth of the Gulf of Bothnia between Finland and Sweden. Only 80 islands are inhabited with c.25,000 people. They have been issuing their own stamps since March 1st 1984. Interesting enough, Finish stamps may be used in Åland but Åland stamps cannot be used in Finland.

And they speak ?????? SWEDISH!!!!!!

2. Man cleaning after dog ???

On September 19, 1991 a 3.50 Kr Red and a 4.75 Kr Blue showing respectively cleaning up after dog and picking up litter were issued by ??? DENMARK. !!!!!! (Scott nos 945 and 946 Perf. 13+ and Engraved).

Questions for this month.

1. What Is Marcophily ??

- A German watching his savings account balance
- Postmark collecting
- Reading about Pres Marcos of the Philippines
- Estonian Coin collection

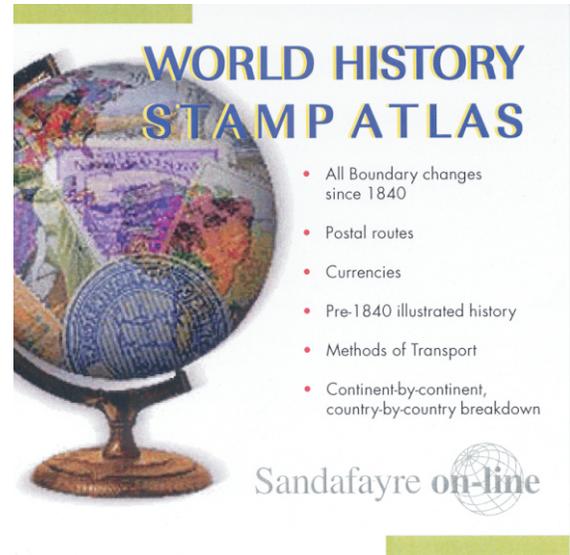
2. Who or what is Helio Courvoisier ?????

- Designer of stamps
- Someone who likes to drink it.
- Printer of stamps
- Engraver of stamps

Answers in next Newsletter.

Charles van Rompu

CD Review



Sandafayre is an English stamp dealer and auction house that has a large web site with excellent images of many older stamps from just about every stamp issuing identity. They have also recently released an updated version of Stuart Rossiter and John Flower's Stamp Atlas on CD. The original printed edition was published in 1986 and, judging from comments in the rec.collecting.stamps.discuss newsgroup, was considered a most useful resource.

The CD lists about 180 distinct stamp issuing identities and for each has a concise general description of the political and postal history. The supporting maps show historical borders through their changes over the last 150 years.

Sandafayre have chosen to structure the entire CD as a simple HTML web site with GIF and JPEG images so that it can be viewed by anyone with a web browser. No fancy javascript or other sophistications so there is nothing to go wrong and both text and images can be easily copied and edited.

So far so good. Unfortunately, every time I use this Atlas I am left with an overwhelming feeling of missed opportunity. The maps are ok, but could be so much better; the text is useful, but could have been expanded to include something of the stamp production history as well as postal history. Sandafayre certainly have the pictures to include a few examples of memorable/significant issues for each country.

Technically, there are strong hints that this CD was put out rather hastily (better that than not at all, mind): cross referencing is minimal and the rendering of the maps is not nearly as good as it could be. Worst of all, it would appear that sections have got lost somewhere. There are some good maps of the Australian states, but no way I could find to get to them from the program!

Cost: £14.95 + £2.00 postage which came to a total of C\$38.06.

Published by Sandafayre Ltd., Marlborough Close, Parkgate, Knutsford, Cheshire, WA16 8XN, United Kingdom, or email: nikki@sandafayre.com.

Bob Watson

At the last meeting:

Another lively meeting with an excellent turnout! There was little business to discuss except that all members were encouraged to put an entry for the exhibition.

Next Meeting: April 18th.

The next meeting of the Owen Sound Stamp Club will take place at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, **April 18th**, in St. George's Church, Owen Sound (as usual).

Matters to be discussed will include:

- Fritz Siedel will be demonstrating the use of a sophisticated watermark detector that really works!
- The 2001 Show.

Upcoming Events

The 6th Annual Show and Bourse will be held on May 27th at the Bayshore Arena. Mark that date!

From Other Clubs in the Area...

Kincardine Stamp Club

On Wednesday, 2nd May, the Kincardine Stamp Club will be having an auction which will include the following lots from a member's World collection (these seem to be generally valued at \$2-5):

- 75 Philippines, Mexico, Cuba, Argentina (all different)
- over 150 Topicals
- 50+ Scandinavia
- 50+ Commonwealth
- 80+ India, Pakistan, Ceylon
- 26 Hong Kong
- 80+ Jugoslavia, Spain, Portugal
- 60+ Africa
- 130+ Belgium, Switzerland, Netherlands
- 130+ China, Japan
- etc. etc.
- Postcards
- Various covers

The Auction will be at the Anglican church hall in Kincardine at 7.30 pm. Doors open at 7.00. There will be a total of about 50-60 lots. For further details, contact John Cortan (K.S.C. President).

Information from John Cortan, President

Saugeen Stamp Club

The Saugeen Stamp Club is holding its 3rd Annual Show on Saturday, **May 5th** at the Knights of Columbus Hall in Hanover.

Stratford Stamp Club

The Stratford Stamp Club is holding its 19th Annual Mayday Show on Sunday, **May 6th**, from 9:30am to 4:30pm at the Army, Navy, & Air Force Hall, 151 Lorne Avenue E., Stratford. Admission is free and there will be Exhibits, Mayday Covers, a Silent Auction, and Door Prizes.

OWEN SOUND STAMP CLUB

Chapter 191

Royal Philatelic Society of Canada

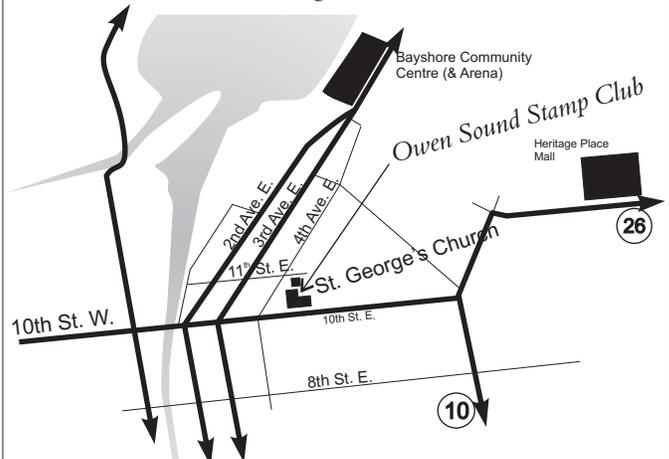
www3.sympatico.ca/rhwatson/stampclub

The Owen Sound Stamp Club meets at 7:00pm on the third Wednesday of each month in the basement of St. George's Anglican Church (on the corner of 10th St. E. and 4th Ave. E.). The main business of the evening is typically to check out the stamps in circuit books from the North Bay Philatelic Society, the Royal Philatelic Society and/or the Peninsula Philatelic Circuit. Members also trade stamps and covers between themselves.

There are presently about 20 members whose interests cover just about everything at all levels from beginner to expert. New members are always most welcome.

For further information, see us on the Web or contact any of the following Club officers:

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The OSSC Newsletter

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The OSSC Newsletter is distributed monthly to members of the Owen Sound Stamp Club.

Opinions expressed by contributors to this newsletter are those of the named author and do not necessarily represent the official views of the Owen Sound Stamp Club (nor of the editor).

Contributions are always most welcome. If any reader has news, information, opinions, or announcements that might be of interest to the OSSC membership, please contact the editor.