O.S.S.C.

Owen Sound Stamp Club
Newsletter

Next Club Meetings: May 21st / June 18th

May/June 2003

Another great show! While the Show Committee haven't met for a "wrap-up" meeting yet, it seems to me that things went pretty well and a good time was had by all participants whether they were visitors, members, dealers or organizers.

It was great to see a number of past members and we also had several visitors from a number of other clubs interested in just keeping in touch. The actual number of visitors was rather more than last year with about 65 people registering to participate in the silent auction.

An obvious, and very much appreciated, innovation this year was the opening of the kitchen and serving of hotdogs and coffee. Hopefully this covered its costs and several dealers remarked how they hoped it would become a permanent feature.

By popular request, the show cancelled envelopes were again made available – this year they bore a cachet showing the *Athabasca* (see p2.) along with one of the Audubon bird series stamps – and all 50 printed were sold.

It would have been nice to have had some more entries in the "exhibition" part of the show as many visitors get obvious pleasure from seeing how different people approach the hobby. Next year we will have more display frames available and, I hope, more of our members showing off what they can do!

On a completely different note, please note that this is a joint May-June issue of the Newsletter. It will be too late to remind you of the May meeting but don't forget the June one.   *Bob Watson (President)*

Charles van Rompu and Barb Shelson with two visitors at the Club table

Kim Scarrow in "Kids' Corner"

Alan Charlesworth with a customer

Many thanks to Bob Ford for the pictures.

Royal*2003*Royale

As I am sure all our readers are well aware, the Saugeen Stamp Club in Hanover are hosting this year's Royal Canadian Philatelic Society Annual Exhibition from Friday, 30th May to Sunday, 1st June. These shows are a major event in the philatelic calendar and it is not often that the like will be found anywhere so near to home.

For those (such as myself) who have never been to a national show, Jim Measures of the Saugeen Stamp Club has sent the following notes to give some idea of what to expect…

What to expect at a national stamp show such as ROYAL*2003*ROYALE

- Over 200 × 16 page frames of exhibits showing some of the great rarities of philately. Included is a 1 frame exhibit on the Canadian "12 penny Black" – Canada's rarest stamp.

- An Official stamp-launch ceremony hosted by Canada Post on the Friday morning. This year we launch a stamp to honour "Volunteer Firefighters" at Hanover Raceway.

- Canada Post usually have a booth with a full line of Philatelic products. This year the German Post Office will also have a booth in Hanover.

- About 30 dealers from across Canada and the United States. This year we also have a dealer from Australia registered.

- Two banquets; President's reception on Friday and Awards Banquet on Saturday evening. We have arranged outstanding entertainment, with some surprises, for both evenings.

- A Variety of activities and give-aways for juniors or new collectors. This year we are holding Canada`s first Stamp Camp for children in grades 4 - 12.

- A variety of activities for spouses or others not interested in stamps. Tours showcase the local area from Mennonite country to a boat tour in Tobermorey.

- RPSC Convention and other seminars and meetings of interest to philatelists. This year Canada Post issues a pre-stamped envelope honouring 75th RPSC Convention.

- Lots of Free Parking, Free Admission, and Good friendships (both old and new).

It is going to be, in the words of Ed Sullivan, "A Really Great Show" so don't miss it!

Jim Measures

ROYAL*2003*ROYALE
HANOVER
ONTARIO
MAY 30 – JUNE 1
75th
"The Place to be…" in 2003
CONVENTION

From the Internet … ——————— *Bob Watson*

The following story was originally told by Messrs. Hardy and Bacon in their book "The Stamp Collector" and later republished in Mekeel's Weekly Stamp News Feb 4, 1911.

No doubt King Ferdinand II of Sicily regarded such public conveniences as postage stamps with indifference, but policy at last induced him to issue them. And what a fuss there was about their design!

Everybody agreed that the stamps should bear his Majesty's portrait, his armorial bearings having been previously employed for the separate stamps of Naples, but numerous patterns were submitted, before a likeness thought to be suitable (executed by Signor Aloisio) was adopted.

Then there was the question of colour. Colours after all are limited in number, and the House of Bourbon was extremely sensitive in this matter, and strong in its hatred to those hostile to it or its traditions. Red and green (both very serviceable for postage stamps) were wholly tabooed, as they formed component parts of the banner and cockade of the Italians. Some suggested one colour for all values, as in the case of the first issue of Naples, but the drawbacks of such a plan were already apparent, and the possibility of fraud on his Majesty's revenue a proved fact. So at last a compromise was reached: red and green were both employed, but of different shades to the red and the green in the Italian national colours.

But there arose another terrible dilemma. The stamps had to be obliterated as they passed through the post, and that would mean disfiguring the features of the great ruler of Sicily.

On this point Ferdinand only gave way when it was pointed out to him that his exchequer would suffer materially, unless some indelible, cancelling process was used for the stamps; and he did so the more readily on being informed that by employing a postmark of novel design he might be spared the indignity of having his features rudely struck by a post-office employee. This postmark was in the nature of a three-sided ornamental picture frame, and when carefully applied would not in the least disfigure his Majesty's countenance; it would also have the value unobliterated.

An example of the Sicilian 2 grana stamp depicting Ferdinand II with the "frame" cancellation – applied a bit carelessly in this case.

(from J.A. MacKay's "Dictionary of Stamps")

Heinrich von Stephan — Founder of the Universal Postal Union

Born in the little town of Stolp in Pomerania on January 7 1831, Heinrich Stephan was the son of a farm labourer who later became a master tailor. Although the Stephans were a poor family, the boy showed exceptional promise and won a scholarship to the local high school from which he graduated first in his class in 1847.

He passed the Prussian civil exam with flying colours and entered the postal service as a junior clerk. Marked out as a high flier, von Stephan was transferred to the foreign branch of the Prussian postal service at Berlin in 1851, shortly after the formation of the German-Austrian Postal Union. After steadily working his way up through the ranks, in 1865 he became a member of the governing body of the General Post Office, at the remarkably early age of 34. At about this time, the problems of handling international mail had reached a point where postal authorities everywhere knew something had to be done. Montgomery Blair, the U.S. Postmaster General, had convened a postal conference at Paris in May 1863 (Stephan was one of the Prussian delegates) but no general agreement was reached. Subsequently, proposals to set up an international body were bedevilled by a series of wars in Europe.

As a result of the 1867 "Seven Weeks War" with Austria, Prussia acquired the territory of those German states that had backed the losing side and the Prussian postal administration was now faced with the task of welding the disparate political units, each with its own currency system and separate domestic postal tariffs, into a cohesive whole. At the same time the postal service of the new North German Confederation purchased the postal network of Thurn and Taxis for three million thalers.

In a paper of 1868 dealing with these matters, von Stephan proposed a postal union embracing all countries, with uniform tariffs and a streamlined system for international accounting.

As a start, he envisaged a European Postal Union and proposed that a postal conference take place at Paris in 1870.

This conference was cancelled (on account of the Franco-German War) but, four years later, in September 1874, delegates from 22 countries met at the Standehaus in Berne and founded the General Postal Union. The postal treaty, ratified by member countries, came into effect on July 1, 1875. Two years later, the name of the organization was changed to the Universal Postal Union.

Not a man to rest on his laurels, Stephan continued to work on the development of the German and International postal systems for the next twenty years during which time his achievements were recognised both in Germany and abroad — in 1884 he was ennobled by Kaiser Wilhelm II and became known as "von Stephan".

At the relatively early age of 66, Heinrich von Stephan died on April 9, 1897, shortly before his last great project, the Reichspost Museum, was inaugurated. By the time of his death, however, the UPU had grown to encompass virtually every country, and had instituted uniform low tariffs, as well as the standardization of the handling of registered and insured mail. In the past century it has gone from strength to strength, and was the only international organization that continued to function smoothly through both world wars.

Scott #2157

The ship featured on our Show Poster, the Show Cover, and the Show Card, was the "*Athabasca*" from the 1964 stamp (Scott #703) in the series "Inland Canadian Vessels" which was, in turn part of a more general Transportation series that ran from 1965 to 1996 covering Canadian Ships, Planes, Locomotives, and Vehicles. All 16 stamps in the Canadian Vessel series were designed by Tom Bjarnason and printed by the Canadian Bank Note Company using a dual process of engraving and lithography.

The Canadian Pacific Railway entered the Upper Great Lakes shipping business by purchasing three steel sister ships, the *Alberta*, *Algoma* and *Athabasca*, from a Scottish shipyard. In 1883 the three vessels sailed across the Atlantic to Montreal where they were cut in half so they could fit through the St. Lawrence and Welland lock systems. They were reassembled in Buffalo

and remained there for the winter before finally arriving in Owen Sound in May, 1884, ready for service on the Lakehead run.

Whilst their primary purpose was for the transportation of passengers, grain, and general cargo, they were also used as troop carriers in the Riel Rebellion of 1885. They were the first lakers to be equipped with electric lights, and were so well constructed that people believed "twenty feet could have been ripped off the bow of the boats without endangering their seaworthiness."

Although *Agoma* was wrecked on Isle Royale in November, 1885, the other two ships served for many years and *Athabasca* was lengthened from 270 to 299 feet in 1910 and was only scrapped after World War II.
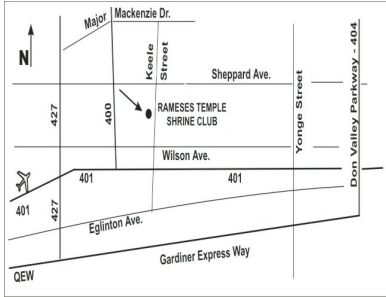
Next Meeting: 7:00 pm, May 21st.

Or, if that has already passed by the time you see this, then:
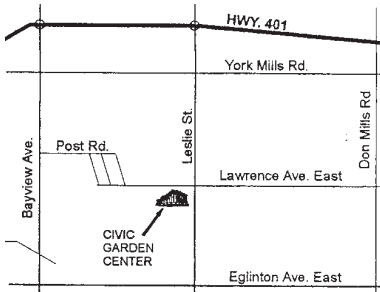
7:00 pm, June 19th.

Upcoming Events:

May 30 – June 1: Royal★2003★Royale will be held in Hanover at the Hanover Regional Aquatic Centre and Coliseum.

June 20–22: Unipex Toronto Stamp Show (sponsored by Unitrade) will take place at the Rameses Temple Shrine Club, 3100 Keele Street, Toronto. Hours: Fri.:11–6 ; Sat: 10–6; Sun: 10–4.

June 21: North Toronto Stamp Club will be holding their summer exhibition/bourse at the Civic Garden Centre, Edwards Gardens, 777 Lawrence Ave. East (at Leslie Street), Don Mills, Toronto.. Hours: 9–4.

The Stamp on the Envelope…

Some time ago I decided to join the Royal Philatelic Society of Canada. When filling in the application forms for this, there is a check box to indicate whether you wish your name and address is to be published which I forgot to mark and have since received at least a couple of auction catalogues per week. With few exceptions these are mailed using stocks of old Canadian stamps.

I have since found that some dealers are advertising quantities of unused Canadian stamps for face value or even less.

Now, these are sold for postage rather than as collectables so the customer does not have much say in what he/she gets for his $50 (or whatever) but I did try one of these packages and was given a pretty good variety.

I guess the moral of this story is: if you are disposing of a collection of Canadian stamps from the last 50 years of so, chances are you will do better to use them as postage than try to sell them to a dealer. But even better, find a new collector who will really appreciate them.

In the meantime, let the stamps on this cover remind you of a time gone by!

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 trade, buy, and sell stamps and philatelic material. An auction is held at 8:00pm.

There are presently about 30 active members whose interests cover just about everything at all levels from beginner to expert. New members are always most welcome.

Annual Membership fees: Full: $10; Family: $15; Junior: Free. In addition, all members and visitors are asked to contribute $1 each meeting which is passed directly to St. Georges's Church in appreciation for allowing us to use their room.

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.

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