



Owen Sound Stamp Club

Newsletter

Next Club Meeting: January 21st January 2004

As Christmas fades into memory and we move into the New Year, we have the traditional reminder that membership subscriptions are due. As of this time, the rates are as last year (see back page for details). If you are planning to attend the next meeting and pay then, great. If you aren't able to make it, don't be shy about using Canada Post to convey your subscription to our treasurer (Bob Ford's address is on the back page) to ensure continued receipt of the Newsletter.

The January meeting is the traditional time for our annual general meeting and this year will be no different.

Also at this time, our thoughts turn to preparing for this year's show (May 23rd). Some preliminary work has been done but many details have yet to be dealt with. Perhaps some of these can be discussed at the coming meeting but, as always, if anyone has any ideas on this subject, don't hold back! Let's hear all about them.

In the last Newsletter, I asked if members would bring in items from their collection in a kind of "Show & Tell". One of our newer members, Perry Cockburn, did indeed bring in two items of great interest. One was a cover (and letter) tied by

postmark to one of the most significant events of the 20th century. The other was a stamp album that clearly demonstrated the confused history that some countries/regions of this world have experienced over the past 150 years or so. I do hope the Newsletter gets the chance to explore both these items in much more detail in the months ahead.

Although unrelated, both of these items demonstrated very succinctly just why collecting could be so interesting. I can't speak for Perry's motives, of course, but for myself it was not the stamps themselves that struck me, it was the way in which they could be used as tickets to past events.

Bob Watson

In Great Britain, the Mail Trains have reached the end of the line. After more than 160 years of service, the Travelling Post Office - where post is sorted en route on special train services - is no more. The TPO made its first journey in 1838 from London to the Midlands. The service proved worthwhile and was expanded reaching a peak of 130 trains in the early 1900s. As roads in Britain improved the number of TPOs was cut back. By 1945 only 43 services remained and there were further cuts in the 1980s leaving just 10

Royal Mail
Travelling Post
Office
 1838 – 2004
R.I.P.

of the special cars in use in the final days. While 3,000 letters an hour can be sorted on the overnight trains, automated equipment is now capable of handling 30,000 per hour. The decision to transport mail solely by air and road means the end to the "Victorian solution to a Victorian problem" of moving post around the country. The move will save Royal Mail \$20m a year. Staff members, past and present, as well as postal and railway enthusiasts, accept the demise of this service with fond memories and deep regret.



One pouch caught – two to go. Three yet to be collected

One aspect of the TPOs that has always caught the imagination is the high speed pickup and drop-off of mail. Actually that had to stop in the '70s when trains speeds increased to the extent that risk of damage to the mail became likely. Enthusiast groups in England have restored mail coaches and the pickup/dropoff apparatus. It seems that about one bag in fifteen or so misses the collecting net and can end up just about anywhere!



Setting out a pouch for pickup at about 100kph

At this early moment of the new year, everything is new. If you receive Canada Post's "Details" or subscribe to Canadian Stamp News, you are reasonably aware of what's coming in the near future. We may have seen or even used, the Monkey King. These beautiful stamps were issued on January 8th and will certainly have a chance of winning the most liked stamp of 2004.

The NHL, Bonhomme Carnival, Ramon Hnatyshyn, the joint issue with Norway and Greenland to honour Otto Sverdrup, who did so much to explore present Nunavut and the Army cadets issues, will keep us all busy. But imagine that we could all go home or elsewhere in the Light Rail /Urban Transit commuter trains, as designed by Debbie Adams. Look in detail at the full pane of 16 stamps. It took me a few moments to realize the complexity of this sheet design. A full pane is what we all should get on March 30th 2004.

And when we get it, what will we do with it?

We have all been to stamp shows, all sat down in front of the dealers, opened the, preferably very small – even tiny – wish list of items we are missing. And wait in anticipation to see if Mr. Dealer has any of them or not.

Grown men and women move very carefully from table to table to see if they can find what they are looking for, at a reasonable price, of course.

Have you ever watched what people do when they have found the missing link in their collection? They pay, put it in a small cover, especially designed for the occasion, and put it in the old fashioned, very thin, briefcase and that is likely the last time anybody sees or hears of it. Exceptions are those people who are members of stamp clubs who display in the annual show.

It's often humiliating to see people spend a lot of money, time, creativity and hunting skills to catch and gather these little works of art or culture while if they show it to friends, family members or colleagues, they do not even bother to look past the first four of five pages of these beautiful created albums.

We are all stamp collectors, and whether we do it as an investment (good luck), for the antique value, to learn about other cultures, birds of other countries or continents, a myriad of different reasons apply to each one of us. Is it then not a pity that all that work we do, to collect what we like, stays unnoticed in an album, in a cupboard or on a bookshelf, for no one else to enjoy.

Not only does it give a good feeling, to notice that others appreciate what you are trying to achieve, it could also lead to a learning exercise, if others have positive criticism.

In the last Newsletter of 2003 Bob W. asked us all to bring in some of what we have, a sort of show and tell. I think the best display in the Royal show, past May, was the "Mozart" one. Others may think different, but I bet that many people did not see them at all. Let's do it as a sort of preview, we like to see these endangered species, Kings and Queens, Germany, Åland, Birds, Ships, with or without research, which today is so easy to gather on the internet. Let's show page-design for albums and since preprinted album pages of producers are mostly more expensive than the stamp we put on them this is a very worthwhile experience, we can gain, in the basement of St. George's Anglican church every third Wednesday of the month at 7 PM.

Hope to see you all there on the 21st of January 2004!

Charles.

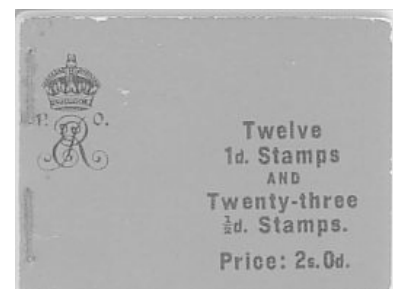
The First Stamp Booklets

It has been widely (and incorrectly) reported that "The first stamp booklets were issued by Luxembourg in 1895 and later introduced in Great Britain in 1904". However, the Luxembourg booklets were actually issued in 1906 although they contained stamps of the 1895 Grand Duke Adolphe issue.

As far as the readers of rec.collecting.stamps.discuss have been able to determine, the chronology for the introduction of booklets was:

Date	Country	Contents
1900	USA	2 panes of 6×2¢ selling for 25¢ (face value 24¢). [18th April]
	Canada	2 panes of 6×2¢ Queen Victoria Numerals. [11th June]
1901	New Zealand	2 panes of 6×1d "Universal Postage" stamps @ 1s ½d 5 panes of 6×1d "Universal Postage" stamps @ 2s 6½d
1902	Netherlands	4 panes of 6×1c. selling for 25¢ (face value 24¢).
1904	Great Britain	4 panes of 6×1d selling for 2s 0½d (face value 2/-)*.
1906	Japan	?
	Luxembourg	4 panes of 6×5c. (Adolphe profile) selling for 1.25fr. 2 panes of 6×12½c. (Adolphe face) selling for 2.15fr.

* It was soon decided that 2/- was a more convenient price for the booklet and so the contents was changed to 2 panes of 6×1d, 3 panes of 6×½d, and 1 pane of 5×½d with a green St Andrew's Cross printed in place of the 6th stamp



Stamp on the Envelope ...

The following poem was commissioned by the Royal Mail for a documentary about the Travelling Post Office in 1936. It should be read to the rhythm of steel wheels running on 66ft rails. The music for the film was by Benjamin Britten.

Night Mail

by W H Auden

This is the Night Mail crossing the border,
Bringing the cheque and the postal order,
Letters for the rich, letters for the poor,
The shop at the corner and the girl next door.
Pulling up Beattock, a steady climb:
The gradient's against her, but she's on time.
Past cotton-grass and moorland boulder
Shovelling white steam over her shoulder,
Snorting noisily as she passes
Silent miles of wind-bent grasses.

Birds turn their heads as she approaches,
Stare from the bushes at her blank-faced coaches.
Sheep-dogs cannot turn her course;
They slumber on with paws across.
In the farm she passes no one wakes,
But a jug in the bedroom gently shakes.

Dawn freshens, the climb is done.
Down towards Glasgow she descends
Towards the steam tugs yelping down the glade of cranes,
Towards the fields of apparatus, the furnaces
Set on the dark plain like gigantic chessmen.
All Scotland waits for her:
In the dark glens, beside the pale-green sea lochs
Men long for news.

Letters of thanks, letters from banks,
Letters of joy from the girl and the boy,
Receipted bills and invitations
To inspect new stock or visit relations,
And applications for situations
And timid lovers' declarations
And gossip, gossip from all the nations,
News circumstantial, news financial,
Letters with holiday snaps to enlarge in,
Letters with faces scrawled in the margin,
Letters from uncles, cousins, and aunts,
Letters to Scotland from the South of France,
Letters of condolence to Highlands and Lowlands
Notes from overseas to Hebrides
Written on paper of every hue,
The pink, the violet, the white and the blue,
The chatty, the catty, the boring, adoring,
The cold and official and the heart's outpouring,
Clever, stupid, short and long,
The typed and the printed and the spelt all wrong.

Thousands are still asleep
Dreaming of terrifying monsters,
Or of friendly tea beside the band at Cranston's or Crawford's:
Asleep in working Glasgow, asleep in well-set Edinburgh,
Asleep in granite Aberdeen,
They continue their dreams,
And shall wake soon and long for letters,
And none will hear the postman's knock
Without a quickening of the heart,
For who can bear to feel himself forgotten?

The Lunar New Year series seem to be Canada Post's favourite project and there is no doubt that they put all their resources into the two stamps representing this Year of the Monkey.

The 49¢ and \$1.40 designs both illustrate scenes drawn from a popular epic tale from 16th century China known here as "The Monkey King" or, more familiarly in China as "Journey to the West".

The tale is divided into three parts and combines elements of traditional fables, fairy tales, legends, superstitions, popular beliefs, bits and pieces of Taoist and Buddhist religions, and even a little real history.

Part one tells that the Monkey King was created out of rock and raised by a Taoist master who taught him many skills – like how to transform himself into seventy-two different forms such as a tree, a bird, or a bug; or how to use clouds to travel thousands of miles with a single somersault.

He was a powerful being but, not only was he not a god, but he had many ideas that were not in accordance with time-honoured tradition. Inevitably, he offended the powers of heaven and had many battles with the celestial armies. Although he was immortal, he was eventually bound under a great mountain from which he could not escape.

Part two has its roots in actual history and tells us about the formative years of a 5th century monk named Xuan Zang (without undue regard for accuracy).

Part three is based (very, very) loosely on the journey of the real life Xuan who travelled to India to obtain a copy of the Sutra, the Buddhist holy book, which he brought back to China and translated. Xuan is credited with making a major contribution to the development of Buddhism in China.

In the story, before setting out on his journey, Xuan frees the Monkey King who is so grateful that he becomes a faithful companion and guide.

On their journey, they acquire two other disciples and face 81 dangers and calamities before their task is complete.

As with many other such epic tales, like the Odyssey, Canterbury Tales, or Lord of the Rings, The Monkey King can be taken on many different levels. At its simplest, it is a collection of children's adventure stories, but there is no doubt that it was written as an allegorical work criticising the authoritarianism of the times.

The design is by Louis Fishauf based on water-colour illustrations by Anita Kunz, both of whom have produced stamps before.

Louis Fishauf is responsible for several series including the 1982 and 1983 Christmas stamps ("Santa Claus around the world"), and the "Supernatural Creatures" series of 1997.

Anita Kunz has also illustrated a Christmas series (the 1981 Christmas tree bicentenary) but is better known for her many covers for news magazines including *New Yorker*, *Time*, and *Newsweek*.

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Next Meeting: 7:00 pm, January 21st.

Upcoming Events:

Jan 17-18 (Sat-Sun): 55th Annual **CATHEX Stamp Show**, Fairview Mall, Geneva Street, **St. Catharines**. Hours: Sat. 9-5; Sun. 10-5. Free admission, 14 dealers, silent auction, club circuit.

Jan 24 (Sat): Bourse at Civic Garden Centre, Edwards Gardens, 777 Lawrence Ave. E., **Toronto**. Hours: 9-5 p.m. 18 dealers. Free parking and admission.

Jan 31 (Sat): Bourse at Civic Garden Centre, Edwards Gardens, 777 Lawrence Ave. E., **Toronto**. Hours: 9-5 p.m. 18 dealers. Free parking and admission.

Feb 7 (Sat): **Bramalea Stamp Club** are holding their 2004 Annual Show and Bourse at the Jim Archdekin Recreation Centre, Conestoga Drive, **Brampton**. Hours: 9-4. Member's exhibits, 10 dealers, free stamps for kids, prizes, free admission and parking.

Feb 14 (Sat): **Burlington Stamp Club** is sponsoring BURLPEX 2004, at Appleby Mall (corner of Appleby Line & New Street), Burlington. Hours: 9:30-5. Free admission, free parking.

Feb 21 (Sat): **The Niagara Philatelic Society** is hosting NIPEX 2004 at Stamford Lions Club, 3846 Portage Road, **Niagara Falls**. Hours: 10-5. Free admission.

May 23 (Sun): **Owen Sound Stamp Club Annual Show** at the Bayshore Arena.

Stamp on the Envelope ... *cont. from p.3*

Just as a reminder, the so-called "Lunar New Year" stems from a conference of the animal kingdom convened by Buddha. Only twelve animals showed up and each was assigned a year in its honour. In due course, it was noted that the years tended to take on the characteristics of the beast for which it was named.

Canada Post's first Lunar New Year Stamp was "Year of the Ox" in 1997. Since then we have had the years of Tiger, Rabbit, Dragon, Snake, Horse, Goat/Ram, and yet to come are the years of the Rooster, Dog, Pig, and Rat. By the time we get to the last (c. 2008), we should be getting something on the lines of a hologram that plays a tune when you touch it.

Title: "Year of Monkey"
Issue date: 8 January, 2004
No.: 49¢: 8,000,000
 \$1.40: 2,200,000 (souvenir sheets)
Des.: Louis Fishauf
Illustr.: Anita Kunz
Print.: Canadian Bank Note
Process: 9 colour lithography + clear and gold foil + embossing.
Paper: Tullis Russell Coatings
Gum: PVA
Size: 30mm × 40mm
Perf.: 13+ (actual: 12½ × 13¼)

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. George'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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