



Owen Sound Stamp Club

P hilatelic O wen S ound T imes

Next Club Meeting: February 16th

January/February 2005

The main order of business at the upcoming meeting will be the selection of Club Officers. As mentioned at the January meeting, I will not be standing for re-election so I hope as many people as possible will turn up to choose our next President. Bob Ford and Charles van Rompu have indicated that they will both stand for re-election as Secretary/Treasurer and Vice-President respectively. (Incidentally, I do look forward to continuing as POST editor).

A glance at the “Upcoming Events” listed on the back page will demonstrate that we are definitely into the show season and this is to remind you that ours is scheduled for the 29th May. Still some time off, but it is not too soon to think of putting together some pages for a display.

For those of you not familiar with such things, a display typically comprises somewhere between eight and sixteen letter size pages that tell a story profusely illustrated with stamps. These are put in a display “frame” (provided by the club) and admired by all visitors who attend the show. At major shows, the exhibition is taken very seriously and displays are judged according to stringent rules with respect to the content and style of presentation.

At local club level, the rules are far more relaxed with, I would say, the prime emphasis on “demonstration of the exhibitor’s interest/enthusiasm”.

Putting together an exhibit at even the simplest level does take a good bit of time and thought so it follows that it should only be undertaken by those who enjoy the process. But *no* subject is ever “too obscure to be of any interest to others”. Even if you are the only person you have ever heard of to just collect the Machin portrait of Queen Elizabeth, other collectors will be genuinely interested in what you have found and, indeed, why you made that choice in the first place.

Next month, I plan to have a bit more on the practical side of putting together a display.

Bob Watson

Stamp of the Month...

I recently acquired a number of British Commonwealth stamps issued between 1930 and 1960 (to supplement those Caribbean ones featured in the Holiday Quiz special last December).

While the concept of pictorial stamps had been around since before the turn of the century, those thirty years produced a huge number of beautifully engraved issues.

I have tried to find out just who was responsible for the engraving work but without much success. It seems that, for the British Colonies at least, three printers were in fierce competition at this time: Waterlow; De La Rue; and Bradbury-Wilkinson – all based in London. It would seem that each of these companies had their own in-house engravers who worked anonymously.

This particular “Stamp of the Month” depicts the not-so-very-grand Government House on the Falkland Islands, presumably as it appeared in the early 1930’s. The inset recent photo indicates that little has changed over the years and even the glass houses are still maintained much as they were.

The stamp (Scott #72) was part of a series issued in 1933 to mark the centenary of permanent British administration of the islands. The series remained in use until replaced by the George VI pictorial definitive series of 1938.

Apparently flags wear out quickly in the Falklands – it’s a windy spot!



Odds & Sods ...

The following snippets are mostly gleaned from the Internet and some sound decidedly more probable than others!

Reuters recently reported that Ascension Island has been without mail from the UK since October because the Royal Mail has been diverting properly addressed mail either to Paraguay's capital, Asuncion, or to Guyana which also has its capital named Georgetown.

"Steps have been taken to make sure it doesn't happen again," a Royal Mail spokeswoman said. "The number of flights we can use is limited, so it is taking time, but this mail is not all lost".

Ascension Island is a UK territory in the mid-Atlantic, pop. 1000, and is a communications network hub for cables between South America, Africa, and Europe.

In a related story...

In 2003, the British territory of the Falkland Islands in the Southern Atlantic was given its own UK postal code: FIQQ 1ZZ. This was in response to complaints that mail to the Falklands was being sent to the wrong destination (usually either Falkirk in Scotland or the Faeroe Islands). The introduction of the postcode, valid for all local addresses, also helps Islanders to fill in mail order forms online, many of which insisted on a valid postal code.

The Universal Postal Union has long had a rule that member countries (except for the UK) should include the name of the country (in Roman characters) on their stamps. Another rule states that the "name" should not include a reference to the type of government.

A quick glance through any stamp album/catalogue will demonstrate that both of these rules have often been ignored.

For many years, France identified its stamps with "Republique Française", often abbreviated to just "RF", before complying with UPU rules and marking its stamps simply "France" in 1975. Six years later, "Republique Française" was back and used on French stamps until last year. Now, perhaps after some UPU persuasion, French stamps again bear the acceptable identifier "France".

Linn's Stamp News found that 44 percent of its subscribers (average age 65.8) used computers for their collecting last year, compared with 34 percent in 1996.

A few months back we had news that the Royal Mail was to discontinue the use of mail trains in favour of road and air transport. Just before Christmas, it was announced that a new contract had been arranged which would bring back four trains a day working up and down the country in an effort to improve the mail service – though these would not include the legendary Travelling Post Office sorting facilities.

The original decision to abandon the rail service was the result of a much-criticised cost-cutting review undertaken in 2003. Last year, Royal Mail failed to meet any of its 15 performance targets and the author of the review has been moved on. Postwatch, the consumer watchdog, has said it was expecting to hear some 40,000 complaints in 2004 (up from 6,000 in 2002).

A person who was attempting to blackmail a grocery store by threatening to poison their food was recently jailed for seven years. He was arrested when he attempted to pick up the £10,000 he had demanded. He was required to give a DNA sample which matched the sample taken from the postage stamp he had licked and affixed to the threatening letter that he sent to the grocery chain.

New Zealand Post recently issued a new series of stamps which includes one of a very strange-looking merino sheep with two lambs. The stamp – of which about 1 million were produced – features a ewe with big, curled horns.

A New Zealand National Party MP, Katherine Rich, spotted the error, and pointed out that,

"Although a ewe can grow horns, such a magnificent set would be found only on a ram, and another rather important feature of a ram is missing in the stamp. The stamp is an absolute impossibility. Basically anybody knows a merino ewe doesn't have horns – and if it is a ram ... well, there'd be some tell-tale dangly bits, wouldn't there?"

Stud Merino Breeders Society chairman Robert Gibson, who has 7000 merino at his Malvern Downs property, agreed the stamp was incorrect.

"You'd never get a ewe looking like that. That's a ram with two lambs. "When a sheep is castrated they have little horns but he would have to have nuts to grow horns like that. That's dreadful."

The ewe/ram also appeared to have had a strange shearing experience: "It sort of looks like the ram's been shorn but they've left all the wool around its head."

Mr Gibson said the image was not good for the merino industry.

NZ Post spokesman Ian Long said artist Samuel Sakaria "had sourced information that a merino ewe could have horns although it was probably rare.

"We were assured by the artist of the accuracy and advised it was a true representation of a merino ewe.

Meanwhile, Sakaria admitted he had taken artistic licence.

"I thought just to add a bit of a dynamic I'd just add in the male equivalent as opposed to the female."



In 1879 Liege, Belgium, employed 37 cats to carry bundles of letters to villages. This service didn't last long as cats proved to be thoroughly undisciplined.

[Hey! Any cat person could have told them that.]

An Interesting Collecting Theme. . . —

As some readers might remember, in 2003 the Netherlands issued “coffee-scented” stamps to commemorate the 250th anniversary of the Douwe Egberts coffee importing company.

The idea of scented stamps has been around for a while and include:

- Bhutan issued rose stamps on scented paper over 30 years ago, in 1973.
- In 1999, Brazil opted for the smell of burnt wood on four of their stamps for forest-fire prevention.
- In 2000 South Korea issued four violet scented stamps.
- South Korea also issued a floral scented love stamp several months later.
- Also in 2000, Australia issued scented stamp booklets. The cover was scented, not the stamps.
- The most well-known scented stamp is the Swiss one produced for the 100th anniversary of the Swiss Association of Chocolate Manufacturers in 2001.
- Six jasmine-scented perfume stamps came from Norfolk Island in 2001.
- Norway issued two rose-scented booklet stamps.
- Hong Kong issued four tea culture stamps scented with jasmine tea.
- Also in 2001, Great Britain issued a stamp smelling of eucalyptus to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Nobel Prize for Physiology/Medicine.
- In Dec 2001, Brazil issued a coffee scented stamp to

promote its coffee industry.

- In 2002, South Korea issued four Greetings stamps. Three of the stamps are scented with smells of the sea, lilies and roses.
- Austria issued its first scented stamp on Valentine's Day 2002. The stamp pictured flowers and was rose-scented.
- In 2002, the Netherlands issued a pane of 10 stamps with six designs picturing and smelling like flowers in honour of Floriade
- In June 2002, New Caledonia issued three coffee-scented stamps which illustrated various stages of coffee production.
- ROC (Taiwan) issued flower scented stamps.
- In 2002 Switzerland issued a semi-postal set of scented rose stamps.
- Thailand released a series of rose-scented stamps in commemoration of Saint Valentine's Day in 2003.
- Russia joined the list with the “Gifts of Nature” series released in August 2003. The circular stamps feature strawberries, a pear, a melon, two apples and a pineapple.
- In 2004, French Polynesia released a vanilla scented stamp to promote the island's business in growing the spice.
- The Belgian Post Office has announced that it will issue perfumed postal stamps in 2005. The first Belgian scented stamps, which will smell like roses, will be released in April of next year to coincide with the Ghent Floraliën, a spectacular flower show that takes place every five years.

Unconventional Stamps – some thoughts...

The following is from an editorial in “Australian Stamp News” published in August 1973.

Earlier this year the tiny Himalayan state of Bhutan issued the world's first talking postage stamps - a series of round die-stamped stamps which, when played on a gramophone, tell the history of Bhutan and record folk songs of the country and the national anthem.¹

Bhutan has long been noted for its unusual stamps - three dimensional issues, stamps printed on silk, bas relief stamps, scented stamps etc - but the talking stamps has really set the cat amongst the philatelic pigeons. Judging by the howls of indignation and outrage from the purists one would think that the end of the (philatelic) world was nigh.

The trouble seems to be that most people (and that includes philatelists) are very resistant to change, and are unable to shed basic concepts of what a postage stamp should be like. They are so wedded to the idea that a postage stamp MUST be a small rectangular shaped piece of paper that anything that departs from this norm disturbs them greatly.

The truth is that there is no need at all for a postage stamp to conform to the shape and size of the Penny Black of 1840. The first triangle-shaped stamps clearly demonstrated that, and the howls of outrage then were almost as loud as the anguished cries of the present generation faced with the novelty of the

Bhutan talking stamps.

The hard cold fact is that a stamp is merely a receipt affixed to mail to indicate pre-payment of postage. There is no need for it to conform to any shape or size within the ordinary practical limitations of what can be affixed to an envelope. Admittedly a fairly large envelope is needed to accommodate one of the Bhutan Talking stamps since the smallest is three inches in diameter, but other stamps or miniature sheets of Bhutan (and other countries) have been larger than this and have been used on commercial mail without difficulty. “Stamp News” has in its reference collection many entirely commercial and completely non-philatelic covers bearing the earlier controversial issues of Bhutan (such as the 3-D stamps) and no doubt in due course we will acquire commercial covers bearing the talking stamps.

It seems that collectors will just have to get used to the idea that stamps need not necessarily be small pieces of paper about an inch square. In fact, wondering what will be invented by Bhutan, or other venturesome postal regimes, makes the hobby of philately doubly exciting since one never knows what will turn up next in the morning post! Good luck to Bhutan for sweeping away some of the dusty cobwebs that have clung for far too long to our hobby.

¹ Scott #152-152E

Next Meeting ... Wed. Feb. 16th at 7:00 pm

Main item on the agenda for the next meeting will be "election of officers". Peter Broadfield has suggested a competition to "Guess the value of a box of stamps" which he will be bringing along. Maybe a prize (but don't bank on it)!

As always, if any member has any material to sell or trade, bring it along!

Upcoming Events:

Feb 20 (Sun): The Toronto Postcard Club is hosting the 24th Annual Postcard Club Show, Humber College Gym, Entrance "D," 203 Humber College Blvd. **Toronto**. Hours: 9:30-5. Admission: \$5. Parking: free

Feb 26 (Sat): Bourse at St. Bonaventure Church Parish Centre, 1300 Leslie St., **Toronto**. 18 dealers. Hours: 9-5. Admission: free. Parking: free

Mar. 5 (Sat): Bourse at St. Bonaventure Church Parish Centre, 1300 Leslie St., **Toronto**. 18 dealers. Hours: 9-5. Admission: free. Parking: free

Mar 12 (Sat): Oakville Stamp Club will be sponsoring Oakpex 2005 at St. Paul's United Church (east of the 4th Line on Rebecca St.), Oakville. Hours: 10-5. Admission: free. Parking: free

Mar. 12 (Sat): Bourse at St. Bonaventure Church Parish Centre, 1300 Leslie St., **Toronto**. 18 dealers. Hours: 9-5. Admission: free. Parking: free

Mar 19 (Sat): Oxford Philatelic Society is hosting OTEX/OXPEX 2005 at John Knox Christian School, 800 Juliana Drive., **Woodstock**. Dealers, exhibits, youth area, prize draws, refreshment booth, Canada Post counter. Hours: 9:30-4:30. Admission: free. Parking: free

Stamp on the Envelope ...

The art of fly fishing is to lay a hook, camouflaged to look like a fly, near a fish and to persuade that fish that it should grab it while it has the chance. Fly fishermen generally consider themselves superior sportsmen to the troller, and the person who makes the flies are the angler's equivalent of a golfing pro.

For this series, Canada Post commissioned professional fly-tyers to prepare examples of four long established designs which were to be used as models. Pictures of these were superimposed on four paintings by Alain Massicotte depicting fishermen on rivers around the country.

The booklet selvedge includes some background information on both the flies and the tyers.

<i>Series:</i> Fishing Flies	<i>Process:</i> Lithography (8 colours)
<i>Title:</i> Alevin; Jock Scott; Mickey Finn; P.E.I Fly	<i>Paper:</i> Tullis Russell Coatings
<i>Issue date:</i> 4th February, 2005	<i>Gum:</i> Self adhesive
<i>Denom:</i> 50¢	<i>Tagging:</i> General, 4 sides
<i>Layout:</i> Booklet of 8 stamps	<i>Size:</i> 27.5 mm x 56 mm
<i>Des.:</i> Circle Design Inc. of Winnipeg.	<i>Perf.:</i> Kiss cut
<i>Artwork:</i> Alain Massicotte	<i>No.:</i> 5,000,000
<i>Print.:</i> Canadian Bank Note	<i>Note:</i> Also available as a souvenir sheet (but not at Owen Sound Post Office).

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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