

# Owen Sound Stamp Club

Chapter 191  
Royal Philatelic Society of Canada

Next meeting; Wed. August 19th 2009 @ 7:00

## Attention Everybody...Picnic Alert!!

Our September meeting will be a potluck picnic at Harrison Park in Owen Sound. We will start things at 6:00. Family and friends are welcome to this event. See the note 'from the Editor' on page 6 for more information.

## From the President...

Greetings to my fellow Owen Sound Stamp Club members. I hope this message finds you in good health and spirits enjoying the fine summer weather. At the time of writing this message, it is humid and overcast, and if you take a moment to reflect on the weather during these summer months, you might just wonder "where has the summer gone?" But with that, comes the reminder that our hobby is a year round adventure and we should remember that our regular meeting is on Wednesday, August 19th and will be at its usual location in the basement of the St George's Anglican Church.

Last month I purchased a lovely lot on eBay. Despite a few missteps in completing the purchase (the vendor doesn't use the eBay payment method) I finally received the lot through the mail and added several stamps to my numeral cancels collection. In fact, some of those stamps will appear in the topic of this month's meeting. I have always been fascinated with the cancels on the used stamps I have been collecting all these years. Of the many different types of cancels, something always grabbed my attention to Number Cancels, and so over the last few years, I finally started a Number Cancel collection. But more about that as I present the topic for this month about numeral cancellations on Wednesday evening.

Following the presentation, we will be holding a club mini auction. Just as a reminder, Bob and I would greatly appreciate if your assistance in making the auction as efficient as possible. To help, please let us know what items you wish to sell at the mini auction before the meeting. The importance of this request is that we can start the meeting on time, that everyone will have time to look at the items before the auction, and we can keep the records straight. If you have never put items for sale in the auction, perhaps this would be a nice adventure to start. The format has been changed to try and bring order into this part of the meeting. We

ask members to limit the number of items for sale to no more than 5 items. It would be greatly appreciated if the descriptions of the items are emailed to either Bob or I before Wednesday night.

I hope you will be able to attend on the 19th and I'm looking forward to seeing everyone there.

Phil Visser  
OSSC President

### Coming Events...

#### **AUG. 15, Kincardine, ON.**

KINEX 2009, Royal Canadian Legion Hall 219 Lambton St. Hours 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Eight to 10 tables of dealers, displays, door prizes, youth table, food available. Sponsor/Affiliate: Kincardine Stamp Club. For more information, contact John Cortan (519) 395-5817 or email [jcortan@hurontel.on.ca](mailto:jcortan@hurontel.on.ca).

#### **AUG. 22, Bracebridge, ON**

MUSPEX 2009, Muskoka Riverside Inn, 300 Ecclestone Dr. Hours: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Exhibits, 10 dealers, Canada Post, member's table, and door prizes. Free admission and parking. Sponsor/Affiliate: Muskoka Stamp Club. For more information, contact Larry Matthews, email: [muskokapost@sympatico.ca](mailto:muskokapost@sympatico.ca).

#### **AUG. 23, Markham, ON**

2009 Postcard and Paper Show, Thornhill Community Centre, South & Centre Hall, 7755 Bayview Ave. Hours: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Admission \$2, free parking, snack bar on site, 25 dealer tables specializing in old postcards. Some postal history, ephemera, historical photographs, books, posters, newspapers and stock certificates will also be present. Sponsor/Affiliate: [www.Postcard-Directory.com](http://www.Postcard-Directory.com). For more information, contact Janet Dalton, telephone: (705) 792-0672, email: [shows@postcard-directory.com](mailto:shows@postcard-directory.com). Website: <http://www.Postcard-Directory.com/SHOWS>.

#### **SEPT. 19, London, ON**

London and Middlesex Stamp Show, Argyle Mall, 1925 Dundas St. Open 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Free admission and parking, draw prizes, wheelchair accessible, 20 dealers and 100 frame judged exhibit open to all. Go to website for application form. Sponsor/Affiliate: London and Middlesex Stamp Club. For more information, contact Pat Delmore, telephone (519) 471-7139, email: [patrickjdelmore@hotmail.com](mailto:patrickjdelmore@hotmail.com). Website: <http://www.middlesexstampclub.com>.

#### **SEPT. 19, Toronto, ON**

Fall Postage Stamp Bourse, Yorkminster Park Baptist Church, 1585 Yonge St. Hours: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Free admission, club sale circuit, wheelchair access, refreshments available.

Sponsor/Affiliate: North Toronto Stamp Club. For more information, contact Herb, telephone (416) 445-7720, email ntstampclub@yahoo.ca.

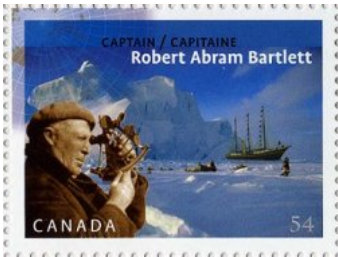
**SEPT. 19, St. Catharines, ON**

Holiday Inn Stamp Show, Niagara Room, Holiday Inn, QEW at Lake St. Hours: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Free parking and admission. Specializing in stamps and covers of Canada and the British Commonwealth. Sponsor/Affiliate: Roy's Stamps. For more information, contact Roy Houtby, telephone (905) 934-8377.

**SEPT. 19, Owen Sound, ON**

Owen Sound Stamp Show, West Hill Secondary School, 750 9th St. W. Hours: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., free admission, dealers, exhibits, kids corner, silent auction. For more information, contact Phil Visser, telephone (519)376-6760, email psvisser@hurontel.on.ca.

On the Cover... 'Captain Bob'



The life of Captain Robert Abram Bartlett is the stuff of legends. Known as 'Captain Bob' he was the most renowned ice captain of the Arctic Ocean of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. He is in fact one of Canada's 23 Legendary Canadians of Yore and Lore as declared by the National Library of Canada and a 'person of importance' by the Historic Sites and Monuments

Board of Canada. He was an excellent mariner and sailed doing everything from sealing, exploring and scientific study.

One hundred years ago Captain Robert Abram Bartlett brought Admiral Peary's expedition

It was one hundred years ago this past April that Robert Peary, Matthew Henson and four able Inuit arrived at the North Pole by dog sledge. Captain Bob got Peary's ship, the Roosevelt to a latitude of 87\* 48' North, the furthest north a ship had ever been. The steel hulled Roosevelt was designed to ride atop the ice and have the weight of her

break open a path where other ships would get caught and crushed between the ice floes. Captain Bob laughed and cursed as he shouted orders from the crow's nest when they sailed the sea of ice to that northerly point on Ellesmere Island.

Although there was only 133 miles between the ship and the Pole it was still a major production to reach their goal. This was the third time the Captain escorted Peary and his crew for (On the Cover continued on page 3 )



Admiral Peary was honoured on this Greenland souvenir sheet for his

(On the Cover continued from page 2) an attempt to reach the intangible North Pole. They had substantial experience exploring the Arctic and the shores of Greenland and so learned much in their

travels. They redesigned everything from the ship to the sledges, clothing, cook stoves, food and technique. The trip was done in stages with a number of camps set up so that when the members who were to make the entire trek got on their way, stations were ready to accept them and keep them moving forward quickly. Do not think for even a moment that this means that the trip was easy. They traveled as lightly as possible. Over the last legs of the trip, the weakest sledge dogs were being fed to the other dogs to keep the team alive. Some adventurous souls have lost their lives trying to do the same trek, even with more modern equipment and of course many were unsuccessful before the 1909 expedition.

For his role in the expedition to the North Pole Bartlett was awarded the prestigious Hubbard Medal for Arctic exploration from the National Geographic Society. It is hard to imagine surviving in the cold, cruel environment of the Arctic, but to excel in its environs and to return again and again to navigate as much as 640,000 km. is simply fantastical! He spent the last 20 of his seafaring years at the helm of the Effie M. Morrissey on scientific expeditions that ran about 16,000 kms each. It is easy to see why the man is considered a legend but it was after he Captained the *Karluk* as part of what was Canada's largest scientific expedition to the Arctic to date in 1913 that he became heralded as a true hero.



Canadian ethnologist Vilhjalmur Stefansson was famous for his study of Inuit peoples and infamous for a number

Captain Bob Bartlett was a little leery of accepting the mission of captaining the wooden hulled *Karluk* with its crew and scientists. The vessel was older and underpowered and although it had been reinforced to withstand the pressure from ice floes, a new steel hulled

ice breaker it was not! His job was to deliver the scientists along with four Inuit hunters and a seamstress with her two children to Herschel Island north of the Yukon. It was never intended that the *Karluk* should remain at sea through the winter but the ever unpredictable Arctic winds caused the *Karluk* to become trapped in ice by August the 13<sup>th</sup>. The ice floes drifted with winds carrying the trapped ship. After a lull in the winds in September, Vilhjalmur Stefansson, the leader of the Canadian Arctic Expedition set out from the *Karluk* across the ice with five others for a ten day hunting trip. The winds picked up again and the hunters did not make it back to the drifting ice floe. They traveled southwest to Alaska by dog sledge.

In the middle of the night the ship's side was punctured and it began to sink. You must remember, this was no ordinary night, this is the Arctic, so in this case, the middle of the night was January 10<sup>th</sup>, 1914! This was an expected event so Bartlett already had the crew building igloos on the ice floe and transferring food and goods to 'Shipwreck Camp'. They camped there until February 17<sup>th</sup> when the Captain felt the sky was light enough to take the inexperienced group trudging

across the ice in search of land. A group of four men were unhappy with Captain Bob's plan to wait and left on their own accord heading south during the darkness of January. The Four men were never seen again. Later in January four other men were sent ahead of the rest to set up supply caches and to look for Herald Island. They were never seen alive again.

February 17<sup>th</sup> the remaining 17 people traveled by dog sledge more than 160 kms. They probably considered themselves very lucky to find themselves on Wrangel Island north of Russia. It was now March the 12<sup>th</sup> 1914, they had left British Columbia June 13<sup>th</sup> 1913.

After settling everybody in Captain Bob Bartlett and Inuit hunter Kataktovick set out to find help. The two men spent almost three weeks dodging water lanes for over 300 kms. to reach Siberia. Then they traveled overland still with a dog sled team another 800 kms. to reach Cape Dezhnev. The Cape juts into the Bering Strait and is the closest point to Alaska. It was now the end of April but they had to wait until

(On the Cover continued on page 4 )



(On the Cover continued from page 3)

May 21<sup>st</sup> before a ship would set sail across to Alaska. Finally after their arrival in Alaska May 28<sup>th</sup> Captain Bob was able to wire the Canadian Government to inform them of the location of the ill-fated expedition members. Bartlett's legs and feet were so badly swollen by this time that he could hardly walk, even so he soon boarded the *Bear*, an American ship and headed for Wrangel Island. On the way there they came across the Canadian schooner the *King and Winge* on its way back from rescuing the last of the castaways. Three more men had perished. Although there was some disapproval about the whole misadventure from some quarters,

Captain Bob Bartlett was hailed as a hero by most and was given an award for outstanding bravery by the Royal Geographic Society.

What an amazing tale! What an amazing life! Captain Bob Bartlett is certainly worthy of having his likeness adorn this handsome commemorative stamp. The Captain is shown in the foreground using a sextant before an Arctic Ocean scene with the *Roosevelt* and Inuit people on the ice. Inuit people were invaluable

to all of the successful early Arctic explorations.

Captain Bob was born in Brigus Newfoundland August 15<sup>th</sup> 1875 and died April 28<sup>th</sup> 1946. Hawthorne Cottage in Brigus remained his home his whole life. The Cottage is now a

Labels for Wrangel Is. and Cape Dezhnev have been added to this Arctic Ice map. You can also see the route of the *Roosevelt* to the top of

National Historic Site of Canada and can be visited during the summer months. Four different mini plays can be watched on the grounds there. Brigus is about an hours drive from St. Johns.

As part of Celebrating Bartlett 2009 one of the last historic Arctic expeditionary schooners the Bowdoin of Maine will be touring ports of Newfoundland and Labrador this month. For more information please visit <http://www.bartlett2009.com/celebrations.asp>

Marion Ace

## Domestic Cats By Ralph Wyndham



The house cat is the most popular house pet around the world. One third of North American homes have a pet cat and worldwide, some 600 million cats live among humans. They have many features that we people find cute and I, for one, enjoy how 'chatty' a cat can be with its repertoire of meows, trills, chirps, squeaks, purrs and the like. Cats seem to have a soothing effect on people... lowering blood pressure and reducing the chance of heart attack.

There are two main cat families, the panther family including the lion, tiger, jaguar and leopard and the feline family, including the cougar, cheetah, serval and other smaller wild cats on down to our beloved house cat. All domestic cats are descendents of just one cat species, *Felis silvestris*.

*Felis silvestris*, the latin name for domestic cats is obviously the source for the names of such

*F. silvestris* is divided into five sub-species in separate populations spread around the globe from Europe to South Africa and across Asia. These five groups all look pretty well the same: a grey and black striped, or 'mackerel' tabby. So, just when and where did the wild cat become domesticated? Since the groups look very similar and can readily

interbreed, this was a difficult question to answer.

*(Domestic Cats continued on page 5 )*

*(Domestic Cats continued from page 4)*

Perhaps because ancient Egypt gave us the first depictions of domestic cats, it was thought that here, around 3600 years ago, cats first became human companions. Other theories suggested that separate domestications happened in different regions resulting in different breeds. However, extensive DNA-based research has shown that all domestic cats have just one common ancestor, the Middle Eastern wildcat, *F. silvestris lybica*, found in the Fertile Crescent region.



Located along the Euphrates and Tigris rivers from the Persian Gulf, through Iraq, Syria and Turkey, then along the Mediterranean shore through Lebanon and Israel, the Fertile Crescent was the birthplace of agriculture around 10,000

years ago. Agriculture gave rise to permanent human settlements, grain storage and, of course, garbage dumps. These things attracted plenty of rodents and other small creatures.

*A pair of kitties relax on a couch on this stamp that was part of Canada's*

Wildcats (and therefore, domestic cats) are obligate carnivores meaning that their digestive systems work exclusively on meat. While our domestic friends may like milk, they are actually unable to digest lactose (milk sugars) and it may give them digestive troubles. On the other hand, as outstanding hunters, they have an extensive 'menu' of over 1000 small creatures that they will hunt for food. Among the cat's prey are mice, rats, rabbits and snakes, all of which would be attracted to the abundance of food in the new settlements.

Any cat brave enough to approach these strange new places and hunt in the presence of humans might well have been encouraged to stay around. The humans, seeing that the cats were after the vermin that made a mess of their food stores, were perhaps less likely to chase the cats away with the day eventually arriving where the two became friends and cats were made part of the household.

The earliest archeological evidence that cats had joined human homes is a 9500-year old gravesite on the island of Cyprus in the Mediterranean. Here, a human skeleton was found buried with a young cat buried separately just 40 centimeters away, its body laid in its grave in the same way as the human. Cats are



not native to Cyprus so any cat found here was likely brought intentionally.

I don't think any society has revered cats as much as the Ancient Egyptians. Bastet, a goddess with the head of a cat became the official deity of the country. Bastet also had a sister with the head of a lion. For centuries it was illegal to export cats from the country and the death penalty awaited anyone guilty of killing a cat. Nevertheless, many

cats were sacrificed, mummified and buried in Bastet's sacred city, Bubastis. Mummified cats sometimes even had their own mummified mice to sustain them in the next life!

*This Cambodian mini sheet has an Egyptian theme and features a cat mummy at the left. The cat on the actual stamp has the 'mackerel tabby' coat colour of*

Despite all the reverence and affection given to cats over thousands of years, they remain largely unchanged except for coat colour. Dogs, thanks to their willingness to perform

tasks useful to people, now come in a wide variety of shapes, sizes and temperaments – traits bred into them to help them do their jobs. The feline temperament that cats are famous for, a tendency to independence and a lack of interest in performing tasks for people, means nobody could find any reason to breed cats that are anything more than what they are.

Of all the amazing things about cats, their ability to land on their feet is part of their most fantastic ability. That is that they can survive falls from very great heights. Once they have managed to get their feet under themselves as they fall, their loose-fitting skin acts like a parachute to slow their fall and when they land, their build and the way they land helps absorb the shock. (*Domestic Cats continued on page 6*)

*(Domestic Cats continued from page 5)*

In a study of cats falling from balconies and windows in New York City, cats that fell the furthest seemed to suffer the fewest broken bones. In the most extreme case, a cat that fell 32 stories suffered only a minor chest injury and a broken tooth.

While cats have changed very little during their long association with people, today some cat enthusiasts have been using science to change that. With techniques such as artificial insemination and in vitro fertilization, feline cross breeding that would never occur in the wild, such as a serval-domestic cat, is being done to create unusual new breeds. I just hope these new cats still have all the things that we know and love about our little feline friends.

*Thank you Ralph Wyndham for another interesting and informative article! The Ed.*

### From the Editor...

I hope that you noticed the picnic alert at the start of the newsletter. This will mostly be a social event with some chat about preparations for our stamp show the following Saturday. If there is something in particular that you'd like to bring to the picnic, let me know and I'll make up a list. We will not be barbequing, so keep that in mind when you decide what to bring. I hope that your spouses and friends will join us.

The Kincardine show is on Saturday. I'll be heading over there and I'm sure I'll bump into some of you. I look forward to some browsing.

At this month's meeting Phil Visser will be discussing numeral cancels. That should be interesting. There may be some discussion about the upcoming show – September 19<sup>th</sup>. I would like to know if any one has a crock pot that I can borrow to use at the show. We will not have the kitchen facilities that we are used to having, so we'll have to get creative.



I'm sure some of you are very busy working on exhibits for the show.  
See you on Wednesday.

Marion Ace  
Editor OSSC

# Owen Sound Stamp Club

Chapter 191  
Royal Philatelic Society of Canada

The Owen Sound Stamp Club meets at 7:00 pm on the third Wednesday of each month in the basement of St. George's Anglican Church (corner of 10<sup>th</sup> St. E. and 4<sup>th</sup> Ave. E.). The main business of the evening is typically to trade, buy and sell stamps and philatelic material. An Auction is often held at 8:00 pm. There are presently about 20 active members whose interests cover just about everything at all levels, from beginner to expert.

Guests or new members are always most welcome.

Annual membership fees: Full-\$10; Family-\$15; Junior- Free

Members and guests contribute \$1 at each meeting which is passed directly to St. George's Church in appreciation for use of their room.

The OSSC Newsletter is distributed to all members. Opinions expressed in the newsletter are expressly those of the individual author.

Contributions to the newsletter are most welcome. Please submit any news, information, opinions or announcements to the editor.

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