

Owen Sound Stamp Club
Chapter 191
Royal Philatelic Society of Canada

Next Meeting: Wednesday, August 20th 2014 @ 7 PM

From the President...



I am writing this greeting at the end of the Kincardine show. It was a good day with many collectors present; from all over the GRVPA area and the dealers seemed to be happy with the sales at the end of the day. I saw many of our own club members searching for additions to their own collections and maybe someone will share something about what they found with the club. It was also very nice to see a good number of GRVPA executives there, including the new President, Joe Servos. It is drawing collectors from a large area that helps to make a stamp show successful.

Bob drove John Lemon and me over to Kincardine, and as we entered the show, we were greeted with the show table with an opportunity to purchase tickets for door prizes and the show prize. This sort of greeting is pretty standard fare for local shows and one that is an important source of income for the club to offset the show expenses. Knowing this, I usually purchase from \$10-20 worth of tickets, which means I get a large number of tickets to sort through when the time for door prizes comes about. As in all lotteries, the more tickets you buy, the better the chances there is to win! Wouldn't you know it, one of my tickets was the first one to be drawn, and a few more throughout the day, to the point that Dave Hailey said everybody look at your tickets except you Phil!

Our meeting this month will be held in the cafeteria of St Mary's High School. The Oxford Philatelic Society will be bringing their club circuit books along so that your stamp fix can be satisfied for another month. At the beginning of the meeting we will have some time to discuss business from last meeting as well as get a few things into place for the show in October.

I hope to see you at Hillyer Hall on the evening of the 20th at St Mary's High School. Good health and happy collecting till then.

Phil Visser
President
OSSC

**Regular Meeting Place at the St Mary's High School at 555 15th
St. East!**

Club Business

At the July meeting some of the discussion items raised questions, as well as there was unfinished business, therefore this addition to the newsletter is included for your information.

Some more information has been found out about having a web page which will be shared on the 20th. One of the items that has been asked to be on the web page is the stamp collecting interests of all the club members. Although I have received this information from some club members, not everyone has provided the information. Please take a moment to do so at this coming meeting.

Also, one person has volunteered to set up a club circuit book system for our club, but we need a few more people to assist before we can go ahead. These extra people are necessary to ensure that the books are not a potential problem within the club in the future. If you are interested in participating with the organization and operation of circuit books, please contact Chris Tschirhart either at a meeting or by telephone.

Finally, the GRVPA has two awards that are presented annually. The first award is the Howard Bryce Memorial Trophy which is presented annually to a club member of the GRVPA in recognition of her/his contributions to the success of their local club or to the benefit of the association in general over a number of years. The second award is presented to a member of the GRVPA who other members think the candidate has made a major contribution to the progress and success of philately in the past year within their local club. The closing date for nominations is September 30th. Please consider if either of these awards apply. I will have a few copies of this information available at the meeting if you are interested in nominating someone for these awards.

Gathered Stamps, Now What?

By Phil Visser

One of the functions of a stamp club is to be a place to further the hobby. Club meetings are places where any member is able to ask from others about something that they don't know. Usually there is a person present who can offer suggestions, hints or provide the answer. A question arose recently from a new collector, "I have a collection of stamps, but what do I do now?" This query prompts a series of articles about stamp collecting, from the grass roots to the specialist. There is one qualifier to these articles, **I don't know everything!** What the hope is that these articles will prompt others to offer suggestions, tips or corrections, and I am sure the newsletter editor will gladly add the thoughts that other collectors have had about the previous article into the next newsletter.

The person that was wondering what to do with an accumulation of stamps had done some form of sorting through that accumulation of stamps. The topic of sorting is limitless, but some common ways of sorting stamps include putting stamps from the same country into a container or envelope. Generally, a person will have more stamps from the country they live in than from other countries in the world. For the sake of this article, the assumption is that this person is living in Canada. However, any stamp from another country would go into the "foreign" box or even a separate container for that country if there are several stamps from there.



A nicely cancelled stamp ready to soak off

At some point, the collector will want to organize what has been gathered. It follows that the imagination can do the organization in different manners. For example, stamps can be sorted into packages of the same postage value, or packages of stamps with Queen Elizabeth on them, flags, scenery etc. It may seem to be overwhelming for the beginner, at which point a visit to the local library may provide some guidance. Librarians at the library will direct the seeker towards the catalogues section and the topic of stamp catalogues will be another article in the future. The collector can use the catalogues to organize the stamps by date or period of issue, for example, the 1950's. After doing the

preliminary sorting, what does the novice do from there?

There will be free advice available to the beginning collector from family members, neighbours, and so typically, someone will say that soaking the stamps off the envelope is the thing to do. Soaking already tells a lot about the procedure to follow, but there are options available to the collector. The options include using hot water or cold water. In the last century, hot water removed the stamp from the



This stamp is creased at least four times and has a missing lower right corner

envelope backing quickly but there was a chance of having residual gum staying on the stamp. Using cold water is equally effective, and perhaps will take a little longer for the stamp to soak off the paper. Whatever method used, the key thing to do is to allow the stamp to separate itself from the envelope paper. The challenge is not to grow impatient by trying to hurry the process by pulling the paper off the stamp. Not a good idea to try because of the chance of damaging the stamp. Once the stamp is separated from the paper, remove the stamp from the water, and usually this will be done using a pair of tweezers, one of the tools of the hobby (another future article). Another option for removing stamps is to steam them off the paper/postcard, something more time consuming than soaking off a larger number of stamps at once, but it may be an option for a harder to find stamp.

The soaked off stamp is then put onto paper to dry. Since there is a chance of having residual gum on the back of the stamp, the stamp is placed on the paper face down. By placing the stamp face down, the stamp is allowed to dry without the chance of having the stamp stick onto another piece of paper and having to repeat the process. All kinds of disasters have happened in the past because collectors used old newspapers to put the soaked off stamps on. Colour advertisements had a tendency to transfer the ink from the newspaper to the stamp, but the transfer of ink from newspapers to stamps doesn't seem to be as much of an issue today (this point is open for debate and the experiences of others to share).



Another damaged stamp with a crease in the upper left corner and a possible tear in the lower right side



Upper Right Corner torn off.

Stamps that have been soaked off will have the tendency to curl, so something has to be done to those stamps so that we can display them or put them into our albums (another topic for the future). After the stamps have dried, or mostly dry, they would be put in a book and the pages carefully closed so that the stamps won't fold over/under and therefore become creased and be rendered undesirable. When all the stamps are put in the book, close it and put some other books on top of it and a few days later they can be removed from the book and added into a stock book or album. It is at this time that the discovery of any residual gum on the stamp becomes apparent, because the stamp may not be able to come off the page! Water may solve this problem, but the book may suffer, so use a book that is deemed to be surplus. Alternatively, there are tools of the trade called drying books, which is what I use now for drying purposes (more about this in the future).

As a lad, I had the tendency to soak off every stamp that came into our home, which I suspect was an imitation of the example set by my father. The goal was to use the extra stamps to trade with classmates

and other stamp collectors I would meet in the neighbourhood. It was my son who taught me the “Law of the Conservation of Energy,” which is to say that, why soak off every stamp from every envelope? Great wisdom indeed, and from a teenager at that! This wisdom is now appreciated because of the other areas of philately I have ventured into.

To conserve energy and time, the novice stamp collector should look at the stamps accumulated and decide which ones to soak off. Here is where the quality of the collection is established. Before soaking off the stamp the collector needs to look carefully at the stamp on the envelope. Things to look for are obvious damage to the stamp itself, such as tears in the stamp, or perhaps the stamp was creased/bent over during its passage through the post handling system, or perhaps the perforations have been trimmed off before the stamp arrived into your home. Any stamp that is damaged can stay on the paper envelope and the conservation of energy will be applied. From the stamp collecting perspective, the ideal stamp will allow the collector to see the design of the stamp and be cancelled somewhere along the outer regions of the stamp. Dotted throughout this article are examples of bad stamps and a stamp that some collector may find acceptable for their collection.



The 45c stamp has a cancel hiding the design



This stamp is cancelled with a light series of wavy lines

Now we arrive at the stamps that have been issued over the last number of years. Modern stamps come in the peel and stick format. There is nothing inherently bad with that, since it avoids having to lick the stamp and get the taste of the gum in your mouth. As many of the collectors today are finding out, some of the peel and stick variety of stamps can not be removed with no amount of soaking in water (people may debate that point!). A few years ago, one of the club members shared a method of removing those stamps from the paper with a substance called “Bestine.” Bestine can be found in art and crafts shops and the can says it is a solvent and thinner of rubber cement. The liquid is applied to the paper behind the stamp and in a few minutes the paper can be removed. There may be a tacky feeling on the back of the stamp but patting the back with baby powder will take the tackiness away. Another person swears that using a lemon/citrus based furniture polish can achieve the same results. This is outside my experience, so if anyone would like to discuss how to use the polish successfully, please let us all know.

Finally, this article ends with why I keep the excess stamps on paper. After filling up the album, collectors will run into the law of economics that can be paraphrased as “your eyes are bigger than your wallet.” Since this is a hobby, the cost of filling in those last holes in the collection becomes expensive and perhaps



Another nicely cancelled stamp



This slogan cancel can be useful for making a display

even unaffordable. I reached that point with my main collections and then got introduced into philately, which is the study of cancels. Searching for town cancels can keep your hunting habits in gear. Besides looking for town cancels, the post office introduced slogan cancels which can fit into a particular collecting area. These town cancels would be ideally completely on the stamp, but it can be partly on the paper and the stamp as long as the cancel hasn’t been trimmed off when the paper was cut off the original envelope.

I hope this article has been helpful and challenges the readers with new ideas to keep on being involved with a stamp club.

Coming Events...

- AUG 23, Brighton ON
- South – Central / Eastern Ontario Stamp, Postcard & Coin Fair Brighton Community Centre / Hockey Rink Complex, 75 Elizabeth St. / Hwy 2 East, Brighton, ON. Hours: 10:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Free admission and parking. Our 38th year in business, with more than one million worldwide stamps, postcards, covers, coins and currency notes. Related hobby supplies also available, many at discounted prices. Email: dejackson8138@gmail.com
- SEP 6, Brighton ON
- South – Central / Eastern Ontario Stamp, Postcard & Coin Fair Brighton Community Centre / Hockey Rink Complex, 75 Elizabeth St. / Hwy 2 East, Brighton, ON. Hours: 10:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Free admission and parking. Our 38th year in business, with more than one million worldwide stamps, postcards, covers, coins and currency notes. Related hobby supplies also available, many at discounted prices. Email: dejackson8138@gmail.com
- SEP 7, Brampton ON
- Brampton Coins, Stamps, and Trading Card Show. Century Gardens Recreation Centre, 340 Vodden St. E., Brampton, ON. Hours: 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Free parking, admission \$3, under 14 free. Coins, medals, tokens, paper money, trade dollars, supplies, stamps, trading cards, children's tables. Funds raised for children's charities. Sponsor/Affiliate: Rotary Club of Brampton. For more information contact Willard Burton, B W Coin. Phone: 905-450-2870 OR 416-254-6569 Web: <http://bwcoin.com>
- SEP 13, BRUNPEX 2014
- Century Gardens Recreation Centre, 340 Vodden St. E., Brampton, ON, Riverview,, AL The Fundy Stamp Collectors Club will be hosting its annual stamp show and sale on Sept. 13/14 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Admission is free with free parking. Please note the new location which is at the Dan Bohan Family Center, 5 Fatima Drive, Riverview, NB. The auction will be held at 1:30. Hope to see you there. If you require further info please contact Mike Steeves a 506-875-3751 or at mstevves@nb.sympatico.ca for further information.
- SEP 13, North Toronto Stamp Club Show and Bourse
- Yorkminster Park Baptist Church, 1585 Yonge St., Toronto, ON. Hours 10 a.m to 4 p.m. Free admission, about 40 free parking spaces on site, easy subway access (St. Clair subway station), wheelchair access, 20+ dealers, club sales circuit, about 100 hundred 10-cents stamps books, door prizes, and snack bar available. Sponsor/Affiliate: North Toronto Stamp Club. For more information contact Matt. Phone: 647-990-4073. Email: ntsc.programchair@gmail.com Web: <http://northtorontostampclub.ca>
- SEP 20, Burloak Stamp Fair
- Seniors' Centre, 2285 New St., Burlington, ON. Hours: 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Eighteen years of regular monthly shows on the third Saturday of every month. Six to nine dealers, active buyers, and always something new. For more information contact Steve Simon, telephone 905-575-2950, email basd6@bell.net.
- SEP 20, Best Western Stamp Show
- Niagara Room, Best Western Hotel, QEW at Lake Street, St Catharines, ON. Hours: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Free parking, free admission and free appraisals. Specializing in the stamps and covers of Canada and the British Commonwealth. Sponsor/Affiliate: Roy's Stamps. For more information contact Roy Houtby.

- SEP 20, Cambridge Stamp Club Show and Bourse
- Newfoundland Club, 1500 Dunbar Rd., Cambridge, ON. Hours: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Free admission and parking, 10 dealers, club sales, circuit, snack bar. For more information, contact Steve Klages, telephone 519-622-6204.
- SEP 27, COPEX 14
- Salvation Army Hall, 59 Ballantine St., Cobourg, ON. Hours: 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Eight dealers with a wide selection of stamps, club consignment sale, food court, door prizes, free admission and parking. Sponsor/Affiliate: Cobourg Stamp Club. For more information contact Harold, telephone 905-885-0075, or Michael, telephone 289-252-0785.

From the Editor...

This is my last instalment as the temporary newsletter editor. For this newsletter to continue, we still need a volunteer to become the printer of the newsletter, so please consider if you are able to help the club out. I can't say enough about the importance of club members staying connected. I hope you are able to come on August 20th at the St Mary's High School.



The Owen Sound Stamp Club meets at 7:00 pm on the third Wednesday of each month in the cafeteria of St Mary's High School, 555 15th Street East. Meetings will vary between having visiting club circuit books, speakers and an auction. Guests and new members are always welcome. Annual membership fees: \$15.00

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