

# Philatelic Society of Lancaster County



An Affiliate of the American Philatelic Society: James Buchanan Chapter, # 173

**Club Meeting: Wednesday, The 13th May 2009**

Bourse opens at 6:30 PM and Meeting starts at 7:00 PM

BlueBird Commons / Woodcrest Villa. Tonight's host: Dick Shaefer

## Message from the President

Wm. P. Snyder

Another highly successful LANCOPEX. There were a significant number of attendees and 21 dealers who reported generally good sales. The return of spring weather undoubtedly helped attendance for which we are all thankful.

Every club member contributed in some capacity, thereby assisting organizers Jim Boyles and Dick Shaefer. So kudos to everyone for making LANCOPEX-2009 the best of the regional stamp shows.

Two items in the April philatelic news caught my attention. Several years ago I quit Linn's Stamp Monthly. The roughly \$40 annual subscription rate was better spent on stamps. In the

04/09 *American Philatelist* was an ad from *Linn's Stamp News*. Linn's is now offering the weekly on-line. The price is right too—\$9.99 for a yearly subscription. I reviewed the April 20 issue, and found the site easy to access, the display generally easy to read, and movement from page to page manageable. As a result, I have no hesitancy in recommending the on-line version to LCPS members.

The second item catching my attention was the Linn's monthly report on stamp market sales. Linn's reports that stamp sales are "sluggish." Still, prices have not dropped precipitously: Quality US stamps, all categories, are lower by just over

one percentage point in price than they were a year ago. Perhaps this means that collectors are staying with their hobby and seeking economies in other parts of their lives.

And a special congratulations to club members who won awards for their exhibits at the show.

Don Smith: "Telegraph stamps of the world," Gold Medal and LCPS Award.

Bob Noble: "Precancels, History & Types," Silver medal and APPE Award.

Again, thanks to one and all for all of your contributions to another highly successful LANCOPEX 2009.

*Bill*

## May is Auction Month for the PSLC

A great opportunity to buy and sell your material

Auction time is coming around again at the May club meeting. Now is your chance to acquire new or shed the old. The auction rules remain the same.

### Auction Rules:

- ◆ There is a ten lot limit / person
- ◆ Minimum bid is \$1.00 or more

Please label lots as follows:

- ◆ Item description
- ◆ Cat. value, if known
- ◆ Minimum bid accepted
- ◆ Auction Number

*Your auction number will be assigned when you arrive at the meeting at Wood Crest Villa.*



The modern technology of V-mail kept the families informed back home during WWII.

**Volume 72, Issue 5**

**May-2009**

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-Wm. P. Snyder

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PSLC Meets the second Wednesday of the month (except August) at BlueBird Commons, Woodcrest Villa at 7:00 PM

President:

William P. Snyder

Vice President:

John Ahlfeld

Secretary:

Joy Bouchard

Treasurer:

Clair Smith

Newsletter Editor:

Paul Petersen; 717.299.5640



### USPS vs. the People

Club member Al Schaub draws our attention to a recent issue of *Linn's Stamp News* (13th April) In his **Washington Watch** column, Bill McAllister notes the USPS view on stamps and retention income. This is an issue that collectors have been concerned with for years, that the annual issues produced by USPS far exceed what is required for postage. Were they primarily being sold to collectors for retained revenue and pure profit?

Among other statements filed with the Postal Regulatory Commission in March, USPS went on to state that even though commemorative stamps represent purchases of postage just as regular stamps do, they are "offered primarily for reasons other than the payment of postage." There you have it, folks. They said it! But if USPS needs the money so badly, why did they close all the philatelic windows across the country?

### Stolen Stamps?

If your stamps are ever stolen there is a new website to help. In the April '09 *Stamp Magazine* (pg. 31) Chris Goodeve-Ballard describes [www.just4stamps.com](http://www.just4stamps.com) in his "Soapbox" column.

This is a very new web site for dealers, collectors, and auctioneers. There is a Forum section which contains a window for lost/stolen items.

It is assumed that a collector has made digital images of the better material for both the police and insurance man in case of theft. Now these images can be posted for free on the website for all to see. This will make it much harder to sell if buyers and dealers are aware that the material is stolen. The more the website is used, the more effective it becomes.

## Secretary's/Treasurer's Reports-4/09 Joy Bouchard and Clair Smith

The meeting came to order at 7 PM. Visitor John Pyle (Lititz) was introduced to the membership. He collects British Empire and is looking forward to returning to the hobby. He has his father's and his grandfather's worldwide collections.

**Drawing** (\$5.00): Al Schaub.

**March minutes:** Approved.

**Lanopex:** Jim Boyles asked that the front desk volunteers keep the doors closed to the bourse area prior to 10 AM on both mornings and at 5:00 and 4:00 pm on Saturday and Sunday. Dealers had concerns with customers

millling around during both set-up and break down of their tables. Jim also sent around the volunteer signup sheets, as there are far too few to make this show happen. Only seven signed up to set up and take down (the same seven people!), and this is not enough. We will not be able to hold Lanopex next year with so few volunteers.

**Membership:** Lucy Eyster prepared the mock-up roster, and all should check it for accuracy. She wants to finalize this and have it ready for distribution in May.

**Library Exhibits:** The display is in place in Mt. Joy. Al Schaub will

be speaking on the 22nd. Several club members volunteered to bring an album this date and share with those who attend. A date is being set for a presentation at the Lititz library. Volunteers have also signed up for this. Date will be announced as soon as available. Elizabethtown is available for June, July, or August.

**Program:** Peel 'n Stick Night as prep for Lanopex.

**The Treasury:**

**Opening:** \$4,364.49 (03/01)

**Income:** \$1,133.21

**Expenses:** \$59.49

**Closing:** \$5,438.21 (03/31)

## Help for New Collectors of Germany Michel Junior Catalogue is a big hit

Collecting the stamps and postal history of Germany can be both fascinating and frustrating for one new to the country. After all, it takes every *Scott's Catalogue* just to organize them.

lished in English, but initial reviews were mixed. Besides an exorbitant cost, it only went up to 1940. Some collecting areas were absent.

Enter the *Michel Junior Catalogue*. This 4.5"x7.5" format has 560 pages in colour. Broken down into 23 chapters, it represents a chronological timeline.

The first chapter contains the 18 entities (in alphabetical order) from Baden through Württemberg and the North German Confederation. In chapter-2 is the German Empire from 1872-1949. The DDR (Chapt-18) is thorough, as is the last chapter containing West Germany through reunification (1949-present).

While these four chapters cover much of what is needed, it is the additional

19 chapters that contain the pearls. Some of these include the German occupations in the world wars, the allied occupations of post war Germany (chapters are by allied countries), The Saar, Berlin; Colonies, Feldpost, the Sudetenland, and others.

At €9.90, it is a bargain, compared to nearly \$100 for the "big" Michel. While simple and utilitarian, there are a few considerations. The numbering is the Michel system (not Scott's), and the prices are in euros. It is by far not a specialized catalogue of German philately addressing varieties, covers, and others. A final caveat is that it is written in German. Though one with a background in general philately and smattering of German history should do all right. It is a very helpful catalogue to get started.



It was only a few years ago when the *German Michel Catalogue* was first pub-



## Miscellaneous Club Notes: Programs/Hosts, USNPM, Display, & Shows

### 2009 Program & Snacks:

**13th May:** Club Auction. Dick Shaefer, Host

**10th June:** Bob Noble & Woody Hann: Precancel. Leslie Ann Botte, Host

**8th July:** APS: Video Guide to Stamp Collecting. Dennis Shumaker, Host

**12th August:** Club Picnic. No Host

**9th September:** *US Washington Franklins* (The 3rd Bureau Issue): Lou DiFelice. Lou Liedig, Host

**14th October:** Club Auction. Lucy Eyster, Host

**11th November:** Show & Tell: All club members can be involved: John Ahlfeld. Diane Meek, Host

**9th December:** Christmas Party. No Host

### 2010

**13th January:** Club Auction. John Ahlfeld, Host

**10th February:** *King George V and the Royal Collection*: Paul Petersen

### Library Displays

On 22nd April, PSLC hosted a program at the **Mount Joy Public Library**. Club member **Al Schaub** gave an informative presentation on the stamps, covers, and history of WWII. **Truyde Greiner** had a table with materials for new collectors, and was very helpful to a Boy Scout pursuing his Stamp Collecting Merit Badge.

The club members who brought albums to share with the community included Vern Marten (our community organizer), Lou Leidig, Joy Bouchard, Steve Wander, Paul Petersen, and Jim Ziogas.

In May the club display will be at the Lititz Public Library, and on Wednesday, 6th May, club member Michael Matusko will give a presentation entitled "Stamp collecting for young and old...Beginners and professionals. As with Mt. Joy, several club members will be present to share their collections with the community.

**Club Trip:** Save the date. Thursday, the 22nd October. **US National Postal Museum.** Visit other sites in DC as well. The cost is \$45 per person payable by the club picnic in August. About ten seats remain. Call Roy Baardsen today to reserve a space. (610) 927-3435

**Upcoming show reminders:** Jim Boyles' *Some 1st Sunday Stamp Shows*, Farm & Home Center: 7 Jun • 2 Aug • 4 Oct • 6 Dec (Dates may change)

## April Bio

### Lucy Eyster

Lucy's father was born in China in a missionary family and remained until he was 18. His collecting areas of China and US were passed down to Lucy. Though she has sold her US and worldwide, her goal is to consolidate the China holdings. She wishes to sell her Imperial China and concentrate on Red China and Taiwan from 1949-2008.

Lucy's other collecting area is "unusual" stamps, those of diverse characteristics such as scented stamps, thermographics, holograms, and several others. Since these stamps come from many countries, Lucy is able to keep up in a small way with worldwide collecting. Further, she has some of the stamps of Bhutan which have audio recordings on them, and she is seeking a means to "play" these miniature records.

In the 1980s Lucy joined the club and has served in many capacities from president to membership chairman. When the rental of the club's former meeting place increased significantly, it was Lucy who arranged to have our meetings in the beautiful Woodcrest Villa facility beginning in 01/08.

Given her interest in the "unusuals," you can understand why she is so involved in The American Topical Association. For the last eight years she has attended most of their national conferences. Here she helps to set up and take down the show along with other volunteer tasks throughout the week-long event.

A few years ago Lucy retired as a proofreader from Cadmus and is now able to devote more time to stamps and travel, the latter included Ireland, the Midwest, and an east coast cruise.

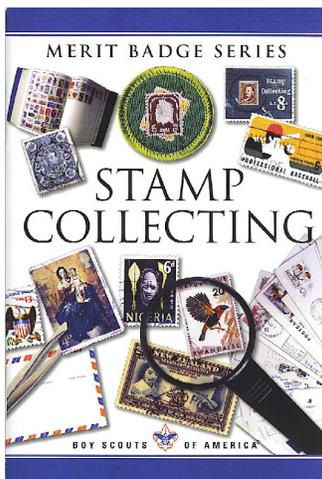
## More than "Be Prepared" For its price the BSA reference is the book to have

After learning about the club members working with the Boy Scouts, I visited the local BSA office on Janet Avenue to purchase their philatelic handbook. (\$4.95 + tax). It is a colorful 80 page introduction to the hobby. Updated in 2007, it even includes a short bio of Nancy Clark (of APS fame) and her collection.

The basics of philately range from perfining and watermarking, to laying out an album page. Other topics include stamp design and production, use of the "catalogue," stamp ID, and computer resources.

Readings are recommended from basic through advanced with many in between. They

list several periodicals and over two dozen organizations such as APS/APRL to the Precancel Stamp Society.



Finally it includes pertinent websites and information for foreign postal administrations. Along with an illustrated glossary are some stamp stories such as one on Baden Powell and another on the 1¢ British Guiana. My favorites were the illustrations from John Lennon's childhood album which is now owned by the Smithsonian. One highlighted where Lennon irreverently colored in beards and mustaches on the album illustration of Queen Victoria and King George-VI (Scott-252).

This text is highly recommended as a most thorough reference for new collectors from junior high to adult.



## Musings from the editor

### What color is your collection?

In a painting project last year, my wife and I had a challenge with the paint chips, the little pieces of paper with various colors on them. These are taken home to use in deciding which paint colors to choose.

There were several varieties of white and of beige, etc. and all had meaningless names, names as valuable as the street names in new housing developments.

Once home, the fun began. The chips changed under different lighting conditions from the fluorescents downstairs to the incandescents upstairs.

“Let’s wait till morning,” we thought. Then under the more natural sunlight, the chips took on even newer casts.

What were we to do? We picked the color that looked best in the PM with incandescent lighting. But even here, there was a problem. The finished painted walls did not match the chips. Or better said, they probably matched fine, but the result was not what we thought it should be.

Finally, there was something we never considered. The paint job looked different again after we replaced the furniture and rugs. Apparently the reflected light became another variable.

What if we rearranged our living

room bookcases some day? Would the new paint fade around the bookcases making the walls look different?

If we needed more of the same color, was there a guarantee that the new batch would match the old paint?

Our color escapade came to mind after reading the editorial in the 03-09 issue of *The German Postal Specialist*. Editor Jim Grau with input from Anthony Torres, Jr. discussed the problems of determining color varieties. They were responding to the recommendation for an online repository of color varieties. With this in place, the collector would have a standard with which to compare their stamps for proper color identification. For a variety of reasons, they do not promote this as a practical solution.

Starting with the technology, there is limited reliability and consistency in most color scanners and monitors. These devices vary considerably in color rendition and price. Is the device calibrated? If so, how is it calibrated? Does the owner know how to calibrate the device, and is he/she willing to calibrate it regularly?

These authors believe that

expertizing with color is at most a “best guess.” There will always be color variations, but which ones are significant; which are not?

For example, consider the following scenario. In a print run, it is decided to increase the number of stamps. So more ink is needed. The second batch of ink may be just a bit different. As the first batch of ink runs out, the second batch is added. Almost half the stamps will be the color of the first ink, while the other half will be the color of the second batch. There may be some stamps printed in color varieties somewhere between the mixed batches of ink. When present, these comprise the minor color variations.

In fact, the authors noted that stamps which appear of identical color to the eye, can appear very differently under UV light.

Color variation due to print methods are only part of the challenge. Color expertizing mint stamps is one thing, but with used stamps, further variables come into place from going through the mail process and perhaps the

soaking process.

Finally there are the environmental variables that influence color on a paper stamp. How were they stored? Was it too dry, too humid, too hot, too cold? Were improper PVC mounts used? Was the album page acid free? And so on.

As can be seen, challenges to color ID are legion. What do the authors recommend? Place the color varieties side by side in the exhibit, and let the viewers decide. Names are meaningless (just consider the red “lake” stamps), and the eye and machine may have reliability problems.

How about using a spectrometer and measure the wavelength of a stamp’s color? In place of a non-descriptive name, give it a number! Stamps would be numbered along the visible light spectrum between 400 nm at the violet end and 700nm on the red end.

Just be sure that the spectrometer is calibrated. But is this a little too reductionistic? And where is the fun in this? Calling a stamp “carmine lake” is much sexier than naming it 655nm! Ed □



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