

Philatelic Society of Lancaster County



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

Club Meeting: Wednesday, 14 July 2010

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

Bluebird Commons / Woodcrest Villa. **Tonight's host:** Marilyn Shirley

Stamp Trading to Begin Following the Evening's Program

Message from the President

John R. Ahlfeld

We look forward to being back in the Bluebird Commons room at Woodcrest Villa for our July 14th meeting. Unlike the Garden Café, the Bluebird room can be darkened, so the timing is good for our APS slide show about stamps and the World's Columbian Exposition. For those who are new to the club and have not been to Bluebird Commons before, it's easy to find. Turn right at the

end of the entrance drive, and follow the signs.

Following up on our brief discussion at the last meeting, I checked with the Lancaster Public Library downtown and discovered that they do purchase a set of *Scott's Catalogues* each year, both the 6-volume worldwide set and the 1-volume *United States Specialized*. (They currently have the 2011 edition of worldwide volume-1 and

the 2010 edition of the other volumes.) The newest edition of each volume remains in the reference section, and may not circulate; the more recent out-of-date volumes go to the regular shelves and may circulate. Therefore, it is not necessary for us to further consider buying a set of catalogues for the main library. However, are there other philatelic references **See President on Page 2**

Meeting Alert: Starting with the July meeting, we will be returning to Bluebird Commons. See page 3 for directions or contact the editor for further clarification.

July Program: *Columbian Expo*

This program is a 54 minute slide presentation from APS. It was prepared for APS by James Doolin and Gordon Bleuler in 1991.

The World's Columbian Exposition, held in Chicago in 1893, was intended as a commemoration of 400 years in the progress of mankind. The Exposition was a showcase of great inventions and new ideas.

This program discusses the set of U.S. stamps issued to commemorate the Exposition. Examples of postal usage are

shown, along with covers, cancellations, and collateral items that promoted or originated from the event. Viewers receive not only a philatelic review, but an interesting look at the culture of the times.

For PSLC club members with inquiring minds, the following book might be perused before this presentation: *The Devil in the White City* by Erik Larson (NY: Crown, 2003). This historical book gives a good background material on the 1893 Columbian Expo.



Tonight's meeting corresponds to **Bastille Day**. The above cancellation is related. What is it? See Pg. 3

Volume 73, Issue 7

July, 2010

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PSLC Meets the 2nd Wednesday of the month (except August) at The Bluebird Commons / Woodcrest Villa, 2000 Harrisburg Ave, Lancaster, PA at 7:00 PM

President:

John R. Ahlfeld

Vice President:

John Bray

Secretary:

Joy Bouchard

Treasurer:

Clair Smith

Newsletter Editor:

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Soaking Off the Unsoakable?

The literature says it simply can't be done! Stamps that won't soak should be kept on cover or trimmed. This is the conventional wisdom according to Mr. Peter Butler, Exec. Director of the Royal Canadian Philatelic Society. Several years ago he found a way to soak the unsoakable without any damage to the stamps to date. And he reports that this has worked with every stamp he has tried including the new British Machins with their security slits. Here's how.

Two products are available:

1.) *Bestine*TM is a commercial solvent. This is a thinner that is used in the art field. Available in art and hobby stores, it is a liquid substance in a metal can with applicator brush.

2.) *Pure Citrus Air Freshener*TM. This is spray which is available in stores like Home Depot and Wal-Mart. It should state: 100% non-aerosol, 100% citrus based, and 100% non-volatile.

With either product, brush or spray the back of the envelope to which the stamp is affixed.

After about 5 seconds, carefully peel off the stamp.

When dry, give a light coating of talcum powder or corn starch.

The adhesive is not removed in this process; it is only softened. The talc or cornstarch inactivates it. When possible, the stamps should dry for several hours before the application of the powder to insure full evaporation of the orange freshener or Bestine. Another method is available to remove adhesive, but this is for another day. Ed □

Secretary's & Treasurer's Reports Joy Bouchard & Clair Smith: June, 2010

President John Ahlfeld opened the meeting at 7:00.

Membership: Lucy Eyster introduced two visitors, Bob Rothen, a U.S./U.N. collector and Jack Sherts who collects "A little of everything." Our return to Bluebird Commons is not yet set due to additional contracting needs. Watch newsletter for update.

Meeting Programs: Due to the uncertain return date to Bluebird Commons in July, we will be flexible with scheduled educational programs. Paul Petersen announced an opening in Nov. for a presentation and offered tech support to help any member put his/her items on PowerPoint.

Free Journals: Paul also noted a table with a variety of old and recent philatelic publications for members.

Picnic: This will be held at 6:00 PM on 11 August at Millersville Boro Park. Information is forthcoming.

Stamp Trading: John A. would like to see this ramped up so that more members participate. Paul said that members should let him know what they plan to bring to a meeting, and he will publish it in that month's newsletter.

May 2010 Minutes: These were approved as written.

Club Trips: Roy Baardsen announced a successful trip to APS last month. Several plan to go again soon. He also noted the cancellation of our 20 October trip to the MegaEvent in NYC.

International: RD Noble conveyed correspondence from Dick Colberg in France about his latest

philatelic finds. Dick also had the opportunity to attend the international show last month, London-2010. Bob then circulated *The Irving Weinberg Newsletter* to those interested.

June Drawing: This was won by Lou DiFelice.

June Program: Truyde Greiner, Greg Macaluso, Roy Baardsen, Paul Petersen, Lucy Eyster, and RD Noble participated in the "Show 'n Tell." **Joy**

Treasurer's Report: Clair Smith noted that the net profit from this year's Lancopex was \$1,200, twice the amount of that earned last year (2009).

The Treasury:

- Opening:** \$5,780.93 (1 May)
- Income:** \$737.25
- Expenses:** \$589.86
- Closing:** \$5,928.32 (31 May)

Plan Ahead-Club Picnic on 11 August

President: From Pg-1 we could donate, or other libraries in the County that should have a set of *Scott's Catalogues*?

As usual, the *American Philatelist* lists upcoming shows throughout the country. Upcoming ones in our region include METROEXPO in New York City, July 9-11; the APS Stamp Show in Richmond, VA, August 12-15; and Balpex in Hunt Valley, MD, September 3-5. I went to APS Stamp Show in →

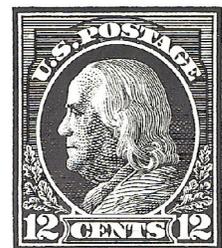
Hartford in 2008, and it was impressive-many dealers in a spacious venue-so consider a trip to Richmond in August!

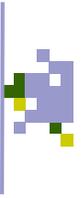
Please be thinking ahead to our picnic in the Millersville Boro Park on August 11. There will be an opportunity to sign up at the July 14 meeting. Spouses and other guests are welcome.

In the meantime, enjoy the July program on the World's Columbian Exposition. **John**

Aids to Research

Previously these 2½" by 3" B&W images were used by philatelic researchers and collectors to record die and plate irregularities as they searched for new varieties. With major finds, the marked images were used to illustrate articles in the stamp publications.





Miscellaneous Club Notes: Programs/Hosts, Stamp Trading, & Shows

2010 Programs and Hosts

14 July: *World's Columbian Exposition*, an APS Slide Show. Host-Marilyn Shirley

11 August: *Summer Picnic*. No host

8 September: *Club Auction*. Host-Dick Shaefer

13 October: *King George V and the Royal Collection*: Paul Petersen. Host-Lucy Eyster,

10 November: *Hearts on Stamps*: Diane Meek. Host→

Host-John Brownell

8 December: *Christmas Party*.

Stamp Trading: RD Noble will have U.S. revenues for sale at a percentage of catalogue value. He will also have Bureau pre-cancels for trade for local or other precancels, or they will be for sale at 5 cents each.

Upcoming show reminders: *Some 1st Sunday Stamp Shows*, Farm & Home Center: • 1 August, • 3 October, • 7 Nov.



The Eiffel Tower is symbolic of Paris, evoking the romantic images of days gone by. Hardly any contemporary contests its beauty and presence in the Paris landscape. After all, what would Paris be without the Eiffel Tower?

Gustav Eiffel won the competition to build an icon for the 1889 Paris Universal Exposition. Once the design was approved and the contract negotiations were over, his troubles began. As the foundations were being laid for this 1000 foot iron structure, an open and angry protest to its construction was widely published. Worse, it was composed and signed by forty-seven of France's most elite intellectuals and artists. It was alternately mocked, despised, and admired.

As the structure progressed, several lawsuits were filed to halt its construction. With perseverance, the tower took on a personality of its own.

The French government invited all nations to participate in the Expo, but the event faced some stiff challenges. .

The proffered theme was to celebrate liberty, science, and technology. Underlying this was the commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the French Revolution and the founding of the Republic.

Not surprisingly, the European monarchy saw this differently. As the event centered around **Bastille Day**, the crowned heads saw the expo as celebrating the downfall and beheading of kings and queens! They wanted no part of it.

While the French did not panic, this dearth put a lot of pressure on the U.S., South and Central America, and Japan. About the only Royal to break the ranks was the Prince of Wales (later King Edward VII of the United Kingdom) who attended the show and rode shotgun alongside Buffalo Bill in one of Bill's world famous stagecoach acts.

The U.S. more than pulled its weight. Thomas Edison lit the tower while the Otis Brothers

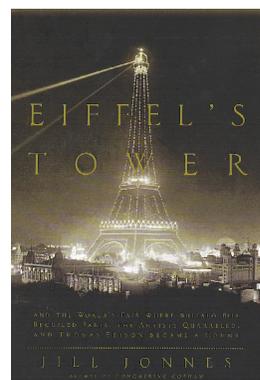
(Please verify ahead with James G. Boyles: 394-5118)

Meeting location: Beginning this month, the meetings will return to BlueBird Commons.

Directions to Bluebird Commons: Enter Wood Crest Villa at 2000 Harrisburg Ave. At the T intersection turn right, then make an immediate left, than another right. This will bring you to the parking lot, and the BlueBird Room is at the east end of the building.

engineered an elevator system to the top after all other attempts failed. The French contractors were to be given priority in all aspects of construction. Annie Oakley complemented Buffalo Bill as another show stopper.

Jill Jones' *Eiffel's Tower* (Viking, 2009) describes the construction, and the agony



and ecstasy behind the scenes of the '89 Paris Expo.

The cancellation on pg. 1 is from this Expo, dated 04th August 1889 mailed to Polly Bagot in Dublin. While the philatelic literature is replete with info of the many Paris fairs, data and images from 1889 are quite scarce. Ed □

Bio of the Month

David Strayer

In two ways, the Boy Scouts were very influential in Dave's life. First, it was through this organization that he became a stamp collector at 12½, and then he spent his second career as a ranger at Camp Mack until his second retirement in 1985. Needless to say, Dave belonged to the BSA topical stamp group.

Dave remained active through high school, but he took ten years off for WWII and both starting his family and a 28 year career at the NCR corporation.

He had a generalized world wide collection with emphasis on about a dozen countries, Sweden being one of his favorites. Selling his foreign, he concentrated on U.S., mostly mint as affordable, and branched into plate blocks and some FDCs.

Dave notes a 1986 post office experience when he bought five booklets of stamps and returned home to observe missing black print in a pair of stamps in each book. Like with the discovery of the inverted Jenny, he returned rather rapidly to the PO to buy more, but they were all sold. He often wondered if the clerk bought the rest for herself.

His favorite cover which he had until recently commemorated the opening of the Lancaster Airport in 1936.

Married in 1943, Dave and Agnes have three children, seven grandchildren (two are collectors), and six great grandchildren with one on the way.

Dave's former co-worker and PSLC member, Reid Slick introduced Dave to the club, and he has been active ever since.



Musings: Computer Vended Postage, Anyone?

I recently found the time to peruse an article about APC (Automated Postal Center) updates by John Ryskamp in the 20 Nov. '09 issue of *Mekeels' & Stamps Magazine* (pgs. 22-23). I contacted Mr. Ryskamp for some clarification, and with his response, he offered reprints of his article to PSLC members who contact him by email. He can be reached at philneo@yahoo.com.

His article discussed and illustrated some of the changes and surprises in the current labels. They now include a variety of new distribution codes along with additional information printed on the postal receipts that may or may not be contained on the label itself. (See illustration.)

I did some immediate soul-searching, as I never looked at these labels! They must have flown by me unnoticed. In fact,



to be honest, I never noticed the details in any of the computer postage over the last 21 years. I just threw it away. Well, I take that back; when there was a picture on the label, I often looked at it.

A while ago I sent out several cards to friends, and each was franked with multiple and older stamps; some had cachets. In subsequent conversations with them, I asked how they liked the envelopes. Each one told me that they never even noticed! They just threw them away. How could they not notice? Touché!

It is said that appreciating computer vended postage (CVP) is an acquired taste. There has always been a cadre of very serious meter mail collectors accompanied by regular columns on metered mail in the journals, so why not CVP collectors?

Yes, CVP is with us for the long haul. *Scott's* has assigned prefixes and numbers to them. CVP-1 began in 1989. CVPs are labels printed at the PO by the employees or by the customer at stations where they can weigh, frank, and direct their parcel 24 hours a day, where available.

There is much information printed on these labels. It includes alphanumeric data, barcodes, and graph encryptions. The latter are the black and white images made up of small squares. They look like a modern Rorschach test or a recent 44¢ USPS J. Pollock stamp on American Expressionism.

The second Scott prefix is 1CVP-1 from 2000 and represents postage printed on the home computer. Readers are probably familiar with the philatelic articles about Neopost and Stamps.com, etc. One can customized postage labels from personal photographs to plain and ordinary looking computerized postage.

Consider the 1840 Penny Black data of the U.K. It was straight-forward. The stamp contained: 1. The face value (One penny); 2. The country identifier (Queen Victoria's image); 3. The purpose (Postage); 4. Check letters, and 5. Fancy engraved scrolling. The latter two features were to thwart postal counterfeiting.

Now look at the CVPs. There is the date, time, and



location of purchase, weight, transaction numbers, and so much more. I need not go into all that may be listed, as I am not sure about much of it myself. Let's just say that one CVP label has more data than my 1981 psychology dissertation, and that was based on a shoebox full of IBM punched cards!

While I may not become a CVP collector, I will definitely take more notice when one arrives at my door. It may be of interest to see how much of the data I can interpret. Like stamps, CVPs would be a good learning activity for kids who are technically savvy. They may be even more interested in CVPs than in our current postage stamps.

Commercial businesses are printing their own postage as are more and more postal consumers at home. CVPs may be the stamp of the future, so don't miss out. Ed. □



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