

MEETINGS ARE HELD ON THE 2nd & 4th

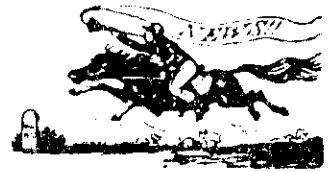
SATURDAY OF EACH MONTH IN THE PHYSICS BUILDING

UNR-RENO AT 2:15 PM. BRING A FRIEND, THE MEETINGS ARE OPEN TO

ANYONE WHO SHARES OUR LOVE OF "STAMPS, COVERS, ETC."

PHOENIX, ARIZ. • SPARKS, NEVADA 89432

SEPTEMBER, OCTOBER, 1989



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STUDY
SOCIETY

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AIR RACE CHAIRMAN

JACK BARRIAGE

Well the Air Races are behind us, and we must report another successful year, with the usual exception of volunteers to help out. JACK & PAT BARRIAGE and GUS & DOT GEIGER gave about 150% of themselves and their time, with WALT SOMMER RENE ST. PIERRE, THE DREILINGS-DEE, DICK & RUTHE, KAY WILLIAMS, GENE VANCE, LARRY SCOTT, AL SHAY & a friend of Rene doing the rest - doesn't seem like very many when our membership numbers about fifty, does it? I count 14 and three of them are not stamp collectors - WHERE WERE YOU?

GOOD NEWS - effective September 1, 1989 - NSSS collects no commission on your auction lots - you bring them in - maximum of ten each meeting - our auction is held with DICK DREILING, LARRY SCOTT or RON SCHULTZ acting as Auctioneer - and total proceeds are yours.

POST BOY

We have lost the FREE use of the NEWMAN CLUB for our CHRISTMAS party, since GUS & DOT GEIGER will be leaving the NEWMAN CLUB management as of the end of October, so if we want our party there this year, we will have to pay \$100.00 for the use of the hall and \$100.00 for the use of the kitchen, so at present we are searching for a new location, and will let everyone know, when the BOARD settles on the place - the date will be on Saturday, December 9th as things stand right now. Put that date on your calendar and plan to attend, we always have a lot of fun and those of you who don't attend, miss a real good dinner and a real good party.

DEE DREILING sent us the following from the SPARKS TRIBUNE of September 6th:

POSTAL INSPECTORS WERE STILL SEARCHING FOR EXPLANATIONS IN JULY FOR THE BEHAVIOR OF LETTER CARRIER JOHN CADE, 36 WHO LIVED ALONE NEAR BOULDER, COLO., EXCEPT FOR TWO CATS, TWO FERRETS, A BOA CONSTRICTOR AND 6,500 POUNDS OF UNDELIVERED MAIL, WHICH HE HAD BURIED IN HIS YEARD.

THANKS DEE.

If you have an article, a news clipping, a cartoon, a philatelic puzzle, on anything you think would be of interest to the club members, please send it to me, I always need things for POSTBOY. Have a fine article from DOUG WILLICK this month - Thanks DOUG.

UPDATES & CHANGES:

RON SCHULTZ can be reached only by mail at this time, for reasons of his own - he no longer has a telephone.

RENE ST PIERRE - new address: P.O. Box 185
Meadow Valley, Ca. 95956

Telephone: 1-916-283-2817 or 1-800-767-7363

VERN KELLER - new address 695 Brown Street
Reno, Nv. 89509
same phone number as before

NEW MEMBER:

PHYLLIS SMITH - 7900 North Virginia Street - # 119
Reno, Nv. 89506
phone: 677-2511
collects WORLD WIDE

BE SURE YOU MAKE THESE CHANGES EACH MONTH ON YOUR MEMBERSHIP ROSTER, TO KEEP IT UP TO DATE

AUGUST 26th - Raffle winners were KAY WILLIAMS, RON SCHULTZ, RAY E. ELY AND \$7.00 cash to DEE DREILING. OUR PROGRAM ON SPECIAL CANCELLATIONS WAS PRESENTED BY RON THURNER, A VISITOR FROM THE PETALUMA STAMP CLUB.

SEPTEMBER 9th - Raffle winners were WALT SOMMER, RENE ST. PIERRE, CLAY HARROLD AND \$9.00 cash to TOM MORRISSEY. OUR PROGRAM WAS ON WHITE ACE PAGES PRESENTED BY RENE ST. PIERRE.

SEPTEMBER 23rd - Raffle winners were DOROTHY JOHNSON, JERRY FENWICK, PHYLLIS SMITH, RUTHE DREILING AND \$6.00 cash to RON SCHULTZ. OUR PROGRAM ON TIBET WAS PRESENTED BY LARRY SCOTT.

STAMP MISIDENTIFIES PREHISTORIC ANIMAL: The presses are rolling and they won't be stopped by the U. S. Postal Service, not even to correct the name of a dinosaur pictured on a new four-stamp series that will be issued October 1.

Rep. George Brown, D-Calif. said he sent a letter to Postmaster General Anthony Frank urging him to change the identification on one stamp of the incorrectly named brontosaurus, which he said an entire generation of children already know is an apatosaurus. But Brown's plea prompted by a letter from Ruth Kirby, director of the Junpa Mountains Cultural Center in Riverside, Calif. came too late, said Jim Murphy of the Postal Service. (From Reno Gazette-Journal of August 15, 1989)

THEY CALL THIS JUSTICE: Just a short note to ponder how our human race, especially the Americans mete out justice when justice is due. For example: RICHARD NIXON & WATERGATE - Action, a slap on the wrist. THE AYATOLLAH KHOMEINI, Kidnapper - Action, none. OLIVER NORTH IRAN-CONTRA AFFAIR - Action taken, a slap on the wrist. JUDGE CLAIBORNE, TAX EVASION, Action taken, a slap on the wrist. CARROL RIPPY, 5 time DUI and pedestrian killer, Action taken, a slap on the wrist. CHILD MOLESTERS, released to do it again. RAPISTS, released to do it again. MURDERERS, living quite well on taxpayers money. PETE ROSE, gambling, action, banned for life from baseball, reputation ruined. Doesn't seem quite fair, does it? VINCENT MARIN, Reno

FROM RON SCHULTZ - borrowed from his Gem & Mineral Society news letter:

DON'T YELL AT ME -----I'M A VOLUNTEER TOO!!!!!!

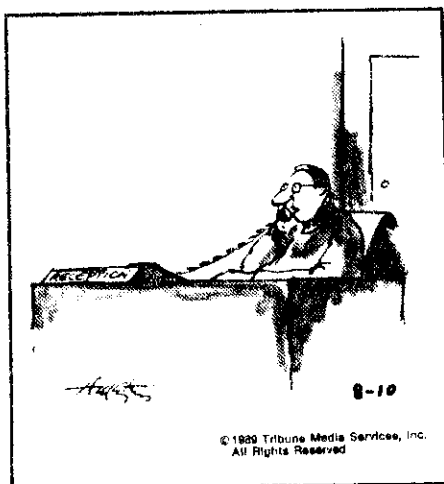
How true that statement is. So many people can only find fault with what others do but will not do anything themselves. Remember that all of your club officers, directors and chairpersons are volunteers and most of these have full time jobs besides serving our club.

We have just had an election of officers for our 1990 club year. Why don't you volunteer for one of the many committees. The more active members we have, the better the club will be. ALWAYS REMEMBER NUMBER 6 OF THE "SIX STAMP COMMANDMENTS" (adjusted wording to fit our cause)

1. Thou shall not touch they neighbor's stamps unless he places them in they hand.
2. Thou shall not test the strength of stamps by punching, squeezing or biting.
3. Thou shall not drop thy neighbors stamps for many do not bounce.
4. Thou shall not place they neighbor's stamps in thine own pocket.
5. Thou shall not test thy neighbors stamps for color or texture by rubbing them together.
6. THOU SHALL NOT COMPLAIN ABOUT OR DENOUNCE ANY CLUB OFFICER UNDER THE PENALTY OF BEING AN ELECTED ONE THINE OWNSELF.

Thanks RON. They have some 300 members and have problems, so maybe we aren't alone.

* * * * *



"Mr. Philbitty is not in today. He's home with a cold, working on his British Colonials preparatory to entering the Tri-State Philatelic Show."

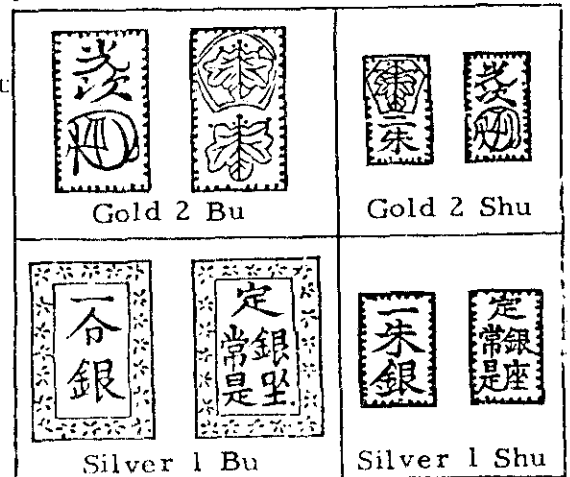
48 PLUS 48 EQUALS 100

Can 48 plus 48 ever equal 100? The answer is yes if one refers to certain Japanese postage stamps. The first four stamps issued by Japan in 1871 had denominations in MON but the next four stamps issued in 1872 had denominations in SEN. Moreover, the character at the bottom of the 1872 stamps, pronounced SEN, is the same character shown at the top of the 1871 stamps but there it is pronounced ZENI. The corresponding stamps in these two series had identical monetary value but the lower values in the 1871 series are 100 MON and 48 MON and in the 1872 series are one SEN and $\frac{1}{2}$ SEN. One would assume that since they are identical values, the MON series should be 100 MON and 50 MON, not 48 MON.

The world stamp catalogs do not help to explain this. MICHEL tells us that 10 SEN equals 1000 MON; MINKUS tells us that 100 MON equals 1 SEN and SCOTT tells us that 1000 MON equals 10 SEN. The obvious question which the catalogs ignore is if the MON was merely a subdivision of the SEN and the lowest denomination needed was only half of one SEN, why use MON at all? Then again, why 48 MON instead of 50 MON? And why do MICHEL and SCOTT give MON equivalents of ten SEN rather than one SEN? The confusion arises because the catalogs equations apply to the period after the MON stamps were replaced, not to the period when they were current. You could not convert MON into SEN in 1871 because the SEN did not exist. The catalog equations do not represent units within a single system but units between two separate monetary systems, after one of these had been superseded by the other. Moreover, the new monetary system of YEN, SEN and RIN did not replace just one older system, but three older systems that had been in simultaneous use.

The above is difficult to understand unless one makes a special study of the history of money. None of us have ever had any experience with the kind of monetary system that Japan had in 1871 and our thinking tends to be misled by false assumptions based on modern experience. We know that a dime is always one tenth of a dollar no matter what the value of the dollar is although a dollar buys less than it did five years ago. The dollar is always equal to ten dimes, no more and no less, no matter what its value is. This was not true in Japan in 1871. For centuries, Japan had three different kinds of specie plus a bewildering array of paper money.

They had gold coins of various denominations, the most important being in descending order of value, the 10 RYO or OBAN, the 5 RYO and the 1 RYO or KOBAN, the 2 BU, the 1 BU, the 2 SHU and the 1 SHU. In theory, there were 4 BU in 1 RYO and 4 SHU in 1 BU. However, these equations were upset when the government reduced the gold content, with or without adding more of some other metal to the alloy. Old and new coins circulated side-by-side and the known difference in gold content could cause coins of supposedly identical denomination to change hands at different values.



Silver coins were of two fundamentally different types. Initially, silver coins had no denomination but were exchanged solely on the basis of actual weight. Gradually, a second set of silver coins appeared and the coins of this second group had a specified value. For example, the 1 BU and the 1 SHU silver coins illustrated above were in common use among the upper classes.

Then there were base metal coins, chiefly of copper but sometimes iron or some alloy. The Japanese called these ZENI but foreigners called them CASU, a corruption of the Portugese word CAIXA and was not the same as the English word cash meaning money. Sometimes these were inscribed with specific MON values but usually bore only the characters for TSUHO literally meaning TREASURE WHICH CIRCULATES, and the character for the era name in which they were first minted. Every ZENI had a hole in the center usually square, so the coins could be tied together in strings of 100 or 1000 for larger transactions.

The classic equations in books are 1 RYO of gold equalled a quantity of silver coins weighing about 8 ounces or up to 4,000 MON of copper, iron or brass coins. But these values fluctuated both up and down. For example, in the 1860's, 1 RYO of gold was at times worth up to 13 ounces of silver coins and from 6,000 to 10,000 of base metal coins. Western traders further complicated the problem. The ratio of gold to silver in Japan was about 1 to 10 in Japan but 1 to 15 elsewhere. Western traders would buy Japanese silver coins, exchange them for Japanese gold coins and sell the gold coins abroad for a profit of 140%. In the last half of 1859, an estimated one million RYO of Japanese gold was drained out of the country and the shogunate was forced to revise the ratio of gold to silver to stop it.

A state decree of 17 August 1869 prescribed the equating of 1 gold RYO to 10,000 MON of ZENI. Another decree of 9 August 1870 changed this to "10,000 MON or less, depending on market values". Post offices in 1870 followed the 10,000 MON ratio. A full sheet of the high value (500 MON Dragon) would have cost 2 RYO in gold coins or eight of the 1 BU silver coins. One of the 1 BU silver coins would have bought a full sheet of the 48 MON Dragon stamps plus a single copy of the 500 MON, which would make a total not of 2,420 MON but of 2,500 MON for reasons which will be explained.

In 1868, there were anywhere from 20 to 60 different base metal coins in circulation throughout Japan. Only six of these were in large enough quantities for the government to enact legislation concerning their value and only four of these were of value large enough to concern us here. The four remaining included the elliptical 100 MON coin first minted in the sixth year (1835) of the Tempo Era and referred to be most Westerners as the TEMPO and three round coins of much smaller value. This 100 MON coin remained in circulation until 31 December 1891 and the other three were not invalidated until 31 December 1953 along with all SEN and RIN coins. These four coins were kept in circulation because they existed in such large quantities that recalling them would have cost too much.

The obverse and reverse of each of these four coins are shown here along with a table of their fluctuating values over the years. The elliptical 100 MON coin is the only one with a specific value (100 MON) and this inscription will be discussed later. The other three coins are inscribed TSUHO meaning CIRCULATING TREASURE or EIHO meaning LASTING TREASURE. When first minted, they circulated at a value of one, four and four MON respectively, but in time they were equated to six, eight and twelve MON respectively. On 4 June 1868 the Council of State revalued them at twelve, sixteen and twenty-four MON respectively and expressly provided that eight of the first, six of the second and four of the third one would be accepted as the equivalent to one of the 100 MON coins. It will be noted that multiplying the two figures together gives a total of 96 MON in each case. Here we have arrived at the reason for issuing a postage stamp in a 48 MON denomination rather than 50 MON and for treating it as the equivalent of half of 100 MON.

The obverse shows the characters '寛永通寶' (Kan'ei Tsūhō) around a square hole. The reverse is a plain square hole.	First Minted	Original Value	Later Value	1871 Value	1872 Value
Kan'ei Tsūhō (plain)	1636	1 mon	6 mon	12 mon	.10 sen (1 rin)
The obverse shows the characters '文久寶' (Bunkiyū Eihō) around a square hole. The reverse has a wave pattern.	1863	4 mon	8 mon	16 mon	.15 sen (1½ rin)
The obverse shows the characters '寛永通寶' (Kan'ei Tsūhō) around a square hole. The reverse has a wave pattern.	1767*	4 mon	12 mon	24 mon	.20 sen (2 rin)
The obverse shows the characters '天保通寶' (Tempō Tsūhō) around a square hole. The reverse shows the characters '當百' (Dang Hyaku) around a square hole.	1835	100 mon	100 mon	100 mon	.80 sen (8 rin)

* Though bearing the era name Kan'ei because it followed the pattern of the 1636 coin except for the addition of a wave pattern on the reverse, this coin was not actually minted until Meiwa 4 (1767).

This system of reckoning with base metal coins began long before 1868. Some Japanese scholars say it dates back to the sixteenth century. Three different explanations have been advanced for this so-called "96 system", which is called KUROKU in Japan. One theory has it that Japan simply copied the system from China where it had long been practiced. Another is that the difference between 96 and 100 MON represented a charge for either minting, for exchange or for passing through one of the barrier gates between domains. A third theory is that the 96 figure permitted even division into halves or thirds and thus simplified small transactions.

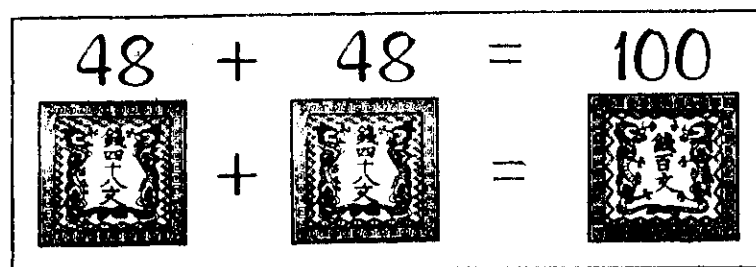
The "96" system was prevalent in most parts of Japan but not universal, particularly in northern Japan, then very sparsely populated, where the full 100 system was adhered to. The inscription on the reverse of the TEMPO coin has a bearing on this, since it reads "CORRESPONDS TO 100 (MON)". In other words, the TEMPO coin was to be accepted as 100 MON everywhere, whether in the 96 or the 100 system.

The Meiji government inaugurated a new system of coinage in 1871 but the small denomination coins were not put into circulation until February 1874. Thus it is probable that most purchases of the Dragon series stamps, the SEN as well as the MON issues, were paid for with the coins shown here. Most writers, both philatelic and numismatic, have asserted that that the MON and the SEN Dragons were precisely equivalent, that is, the corresponding denominations in the two groups were equivalent. This is true only to the extent that the government accepted MON stamps in lieu of the corresponding SEN stamps.

But the 1871 and the 1872 columns of the foregoing chart shows that the SEN stamps actually cost more money than the corresponding MON stamps. On 28 January 1872, the Council of State devalued the base metal coins. It now took 8 of the KAN'EI TSUHO plain coins to pay for one 100 MON Dragon stamp, but ten of them to pay for one 1 SEN Dragon stamp. It now took four of the KAN'EI wave coins to buy one 100 MON stamp but five of these coins to buy one of the 1 SEN stamps. And while a single TEMPO coin was enough to pay for one 100 MON stamp, it was not enough to pay for one of the 1 SEN stamps.

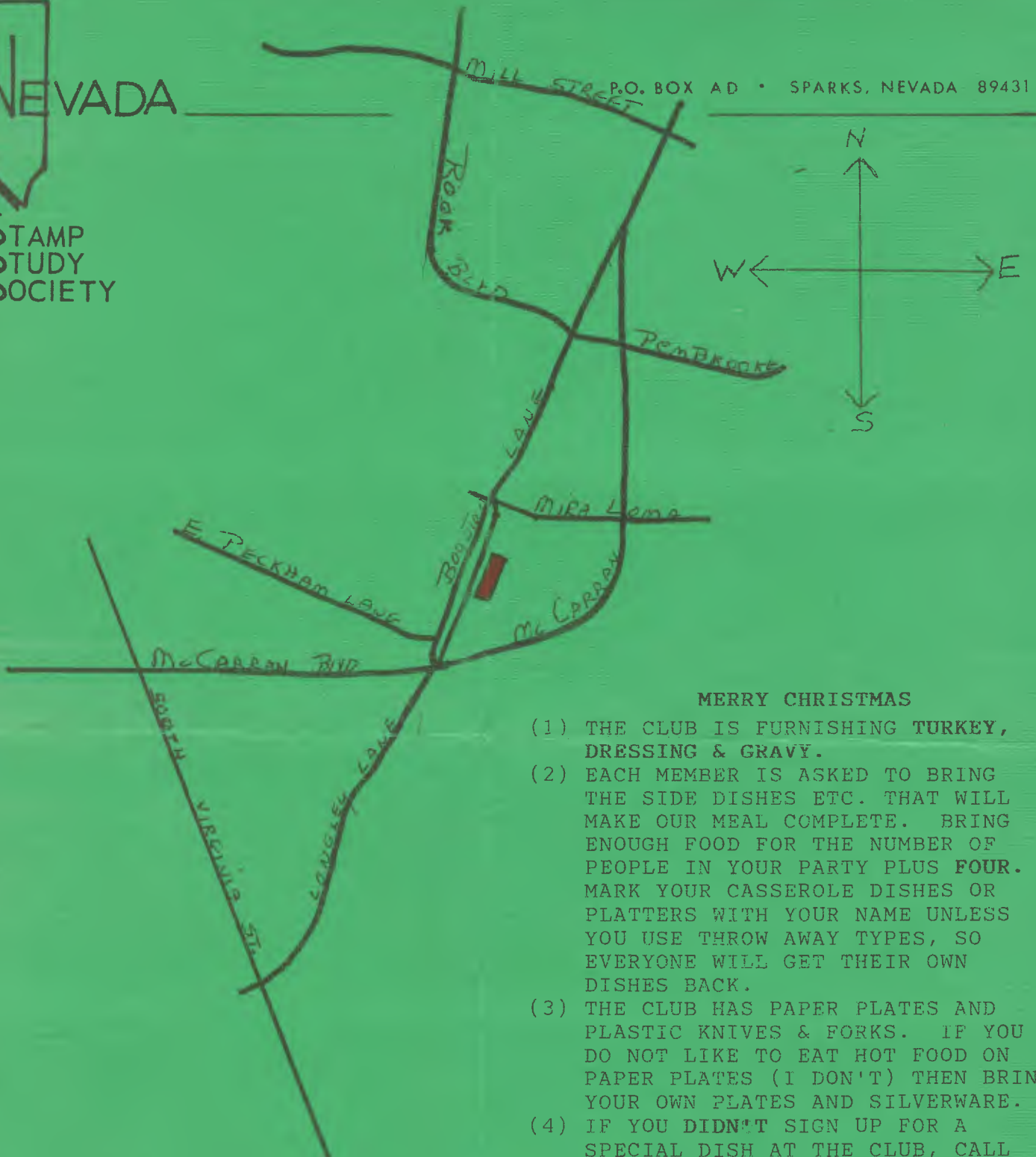
Moreover, the SEN dragon stamps not only cost more than the MON Dragon stamps but also paid for less. Postage rates varied by distance until 1 April 1873. In 1871, the unit of weight to which these distance rates applied was 5 MOMME, about .66 ounce but in 1872, the unit was 4 MOMME, about .53 ounce. This of course refers only to letter postage. On 14 January 1872, the unit was ordered reduced from 5 MOMME to 2 MOMME but this was raised to 4 MOMME later the same month and when the rates were converted from MON to SEN in April 1872, the 4 MOMME unit was reaffirmed.

This article shows that there is more to "philately" than the mere possession of postage stamps. Sometimes if one digs deep and hard enough, the background story of the postage stamp is more interesting than the story of the postage stamp itself.





STAMP
STUDY
SOCIETY



MERRY CHRISTMAS

- (1) THE CLUB IS FURNISHING TURKEY, DRESSING & GRAVY.
- (2) EACH MEMBER IS ASKED TO BRING THE SIDE DISHES ETC. THAT WILL MAKE OUR MEAL COMPLETE. BRING ENOUGH FOOD FOR THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE IN YOUR PARTY PLUS **FOUR**. MARK YOUR CASSEROLE DISHES OR PLATTERS WITH YOUR NAME UNLESS YOU USE THROW AWAY TYPES, SO EVERYONE WILL GET THEIR OWN DISHES BACK.
- (3) THE CLUB HAS PAPER PLATES AND PLASTIC KNIVES & FORKS. IF YOU DO NOT LIKE TO EAT HOT FOOD ON PAPER PLATES (I DON'T) THEN BRING YOUR OWN PLATES AND SILVERWARE.
- (4) IF YOU DIDN'T SIGN UP FOR A SPECIAL DISH AT THE CLUB, CALL RUTHE AT 359-2030 AND TELL HER HOW MANY IN YOUR PARTY AND FIND OUT WHAT TO BRING.
- (5) REMEMBER - GUESTS ARE WELCOME-- BUT SINCE WE DO HAVE A GIFT EXCHANGE BE SURE AND BRING A GIFT FOR EACH OF YOUR GUESTS SO NO ONE IS LEFT OUT.
- (6) AS IS OUR USUAL POLICY, GIFTS SHOULD COST AROUND \$5.00 - AND WE DO NOT USUALLY MAKE THEM PHILATELIC BECAUSE MOST OF OUR GUESTS ARE NOT STAMP COLLECTORS.
- (7) IF YOU WANT COCKTAILS BEFORE DINNER OR WINE WITH YOUR DINNER - FINE, BRING YOUR OWN BOTTLE, THE CLUB WILL HAVE COFFEE & SOFT DRINKS ONLY.

SEE ALL OF YOU ON DECEMBER 9th, OPEN AT 6:00 PM - DINNER AT 7:00 PM

