

P.O. Box 2907 Sparks, Nevada 89432

N.S.S.S. meets on the 2nd and 4th Saturday of each month at 10:00 am  
in the Sparks Heritage Museum at Pyramid and Victorian Avenue

# N.S.S.S.

February 9, 2002



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It was a cold, blustery Winter's day in Sparks. A storm was brewing over the hill and a freezing wind was blowing the storm our way. Still, more than thirty members showed up for the meeting

At our last meeting on the 26th of last month opened with the mention of several up-coming stamp shows in California including The APS Ameripex in Fullerton on February 8-10th. Should be a good show to see.

**Stan Cronwell** will be going to Mesa Arizona for a couple of weeks. While he's down there he plans to stop for the Aripex that will be going on February 15th to the 17th. This one is sponsored by the GPS (German Philatelic Society). Stan Collects German Occupied Countries from WWII. Hope he brings back some nice covers. Maybe we can entice him to do a show and tell for us. Because he is in Arizona, Stan won't be able to make it to the next meeting.

Our scheduled program giver for the day wasn't able to make it to the meeting. Considering the weather, he was probably one of the wiser of us. So, **Frank Fey** volunteered to give an impromptu program in his place. A great show it was, too. He produced many items most of us have never seen before, such as a ten thousand dollar revenue stamp. Government made a killing the day that was used. Also included was a crash cover from 1930 and a 1927 cover commemorating the first flight of a B-19, "the largest plane in the world". There was also a post card from Kroger-Piggly-Wiggly that

gave us a taste of the grocery prices in the 20's. A picture post card from Venice, California. The picture was of the beach in Venice (wow! Sexy beach wear). A bisect stamp on cover from Great Britain. Maybe he ought to keep that one in a vault. A Post card from the 1904 Saint Louis World's fair. A folded letter from Great Britain, dated 1844. Let's not forget my favorite, the first ever stamp. this one was dated in September of 1840. An almost first day of issue of the first stamp. Frank had too many more to be listed here. Suffice it to say it was a really good show. Thanks, Frank.

Next meeting is February 9th, 2002. See you all there.

### Closed Albums

Two more members of the NSSS have passed on. They are **Charles Clipper** and **Sam Clarke**.

**Charles Clipper** was a past member who left the club several years ago. Some of our older members will remember him. He passed on the 9th of January, 2002. Services were held on January 15, 2002. He was 84 years old. In lieu of flowers, the family is requesting donations be made to the Nevada Cancer Society.

**Sam Clarke** left us on the 15th of January, 2002. Services were held on January 21, 2002. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Nevada Diabetes Assoc. 1005 Terminal Way, Reno, NV 89502. Sam was a collector of United States and Canada.

So, you thought America's airmail was the First? Well, read on my friends. I found this through a website called "Polish Stamps" Austrian airmail through Poland. It was a link on the site that directed me to further information. It comes from the Austrian Philatelic US society website, <http://www.apsus.esmartweb.com>. I had to condense it to get all the information on two pages and eliminate the pictures. Sorry.

## **THE WORLD'S FIRST REGULAR AND FIRST INTERNATIONAL AIRMAIL SERVICE**

**By Ingert Kuzych**

Official and military correspondence was sent free of charge. All such letters posted in Cracow or Lemberg received the following handstamp: "K. u K. Fliegerkurierlinie Wien-Kyiv Flugstation Krakau [or Lemberg]" (K. u K.= Imperial and Royal; Air Courier Route Vienna-Kyiv Flight Station Cracow [or Lemberg]). These postmarks also served as receiving markings at these two cities and were in use from 20 March to the end of October 1918. Letters with these official markings are quite scarce and valuable

"Post and Telegraph Order No. 15" designated Vienna, Cracow, and Lemberg as arrival delivery sites; only the main post offices—Wien 1, Krakau 1, and Lemberg 1 respectively—were authorized to accept mail for air delivery. The stamps were canceled with ordinary round handstamps of the post office of origin. Additionally, a special round "Flugpost" postmark had to appear on the front of the cover, usually next to the canceled postage stamps, to indicate that air delivery was required. These postmarks were also used to back stamp incoming airmail.

During the first two months of operation, most of the mails being sent between Vienna, Cracow, and Lemberg were of a philatelic nature, frequently overfranked to show all three stamps of the set. On 1 June, after the flood of philatelic mail had dropped off, the airmail service was extended to other major towns in the empire, 12 in Austria and 20 in Hungary. All such mail was delivered by train on a priority basis from these outlying post offices to the central post offices in Vienna, Cracow, or Lemberg. From there it was forwarded to its destination through the normal way reserved for airmail. Such letters, to or from outlying locales, are not easy to come by and command a premium.

All airmail delivered to Vienna was taken directly from the airfield to "Wien Telegraphenzentralstation P", which served as the main distribution point for Vienna's postal system. This central post office distributed the mail by means of pneumatic tubes to various terminals within the city. All the airmail delivered to Vienna after 15 April bears the receiving transit postmark of that post office. After the service was extended to other cities in June, this practice seems to have been discontinued. Attending postal clerks numbered all airmail letters consecutively, usually in the lower left corner, at the time of mailing.

### **Mail to Kyiv, Air Service**

The carrying of private airmail to Kyiv was allowed by the end of June 1918. However, the leg between Lemberg and Kyiv was not extensively used for private correspondence. In Kyiv, all of the mail was handled by Field Post No. 258, which used exclusively Austrian field post stamps for prepayment of fees on private airmail going out of the city, and the cancellation "K. u K. Etappen P. O. No. 258" (Imperial and Royal Communications Base No. 258) instead of an ordinary handstamp. Letters originating in Kyiv and franked with field post stamps are considered philatelic rarities and only Kyiv to Vienna examples are known, none from Kyiv to Lemberg or from Kyiv to Cracow. No special Ukrainian airmail stamps or cancels were ever produced.

At the beginning of September 1918, a third printing of airmail stamps took place consisting of a 7 K overprint on the existing reddish-brown 10 K stamp. This action was undertaken to meet an expected increase in airmail traffic between Vienna and Kyiv. (The lengthier leg Lemberg-Kyiv was charged a double rate since it actually consisted of two flights: Lemberg-Proskuriv and Proskuriv-Kyiv. Each of these flights was billed 1.5 K, bringing the total for four flight segments plus the conveyance fee to 7 K.) Because the anticipated increase in mail volume did not materialize, these stamps were never released. All but 500 of the 53,500 stamps prepared were destroyed in 1925, the remainder went to the Postal Museum in Vienna or was distributed to governmental officials. During World War II, most of these stamps appeared on the philatelic marketplace.

## Milestones

As previously mentioned, the first regularly scheduled flight from Vienna via Cracow and Lemberg to Kyiv took place on 31 March 1918. The majority of the letters on this flight bear 30 March Vienna cancellations and 31 March airmail postmarks (Figure 8).

This first flight carried 184 covers from Vienna to Cracow and 264 covers Vienna to Lemberg. The official mail to Kyiv is unrecorded. The first return flight to Vienna took place on 3 April 1918.

A total of 103 pieces of mail were carried Lemberg to Vienna and 81 from Cracow to Vienna. Soon daily flights began to leave both Vienna and Kyiv heading in opposite directions. In the first 90 days of operation, 80 successful one-day flights were made from Vienna to Kyiv. On the other days, bad weather prevented take off or the completion of the entire journey. Regular flights of the Vienna-Kyiv line formally ended on 15 October 1918.

The war was drawing to a close and the schedule could no longer be maintained. Nevertheless, occasional flights between the cities continued. Letters bearing postmarks with dates between 20 March and 31 March 1918, that is before the inauguration of regular mail service, or with dates after 15 October, are extremely scarce but do exist.

During the period of airmail service the following quantities of items are known to have been carried between the cities:

- \* Vienna-Cracow 6,488 items
- \* Vienna-Lemberg 9,428 items
- \* Cracow-Vienna 8,332 items
- \* Lemberg-Vienna 11,038 items.

So, about 20 percent more mail was delivered to Vienna than left the capital.

## An Extension of the Line

On 4 July 1918 the airmail service was extended to Budapest from Vienna. This service had a direct connection to the Vienna-Kyiv route. The intention was to create a second service to Ukraine via a "southern route" from Vienna to Budapest, through Arad and Bucharest, with Odesa as the final destination (Figure 2). This second line was never established, but the Vienna-Budapest leg operated for a short while—until 23 July 1918. The first flight Budapest-Vienna carried 530 pieces of mail.

Hungarian airmail stamps were created for this service by overprinting two values of the Hungarian Parliament set "REPULO POSTA" (air mail): the 75 filler value was redesignated 1 K 50 f and the 2 korona became 4 K 50 f. The Hungarian rates were a bit more complicated than those in the Austrian half of the empire and will not be elaborated upon here. Since the Hungarian route was inaugurated after the opening of the service to more population centers in June, letters could be forwarded not only to the main cities on the line, but to the 32 other connecting towns.

Some published reports stating that the link to Hungary closed because of lack of use are not creditable. The numbers speak for themselves:

- \* Budapest-Vienna
- \* Other Austrian destinations 6,247 items
- \* Budapest-Cracow 405 items
- \* Budapest-Lemberg 192 items
- \* Vienna-Budapest 1,845 items.

In reality, the shutdown was caused by a couple of unfortunate plane crashes, the first on 13 July and the second on 21 July, both of which saw the two-man crews killed.

## Epilog

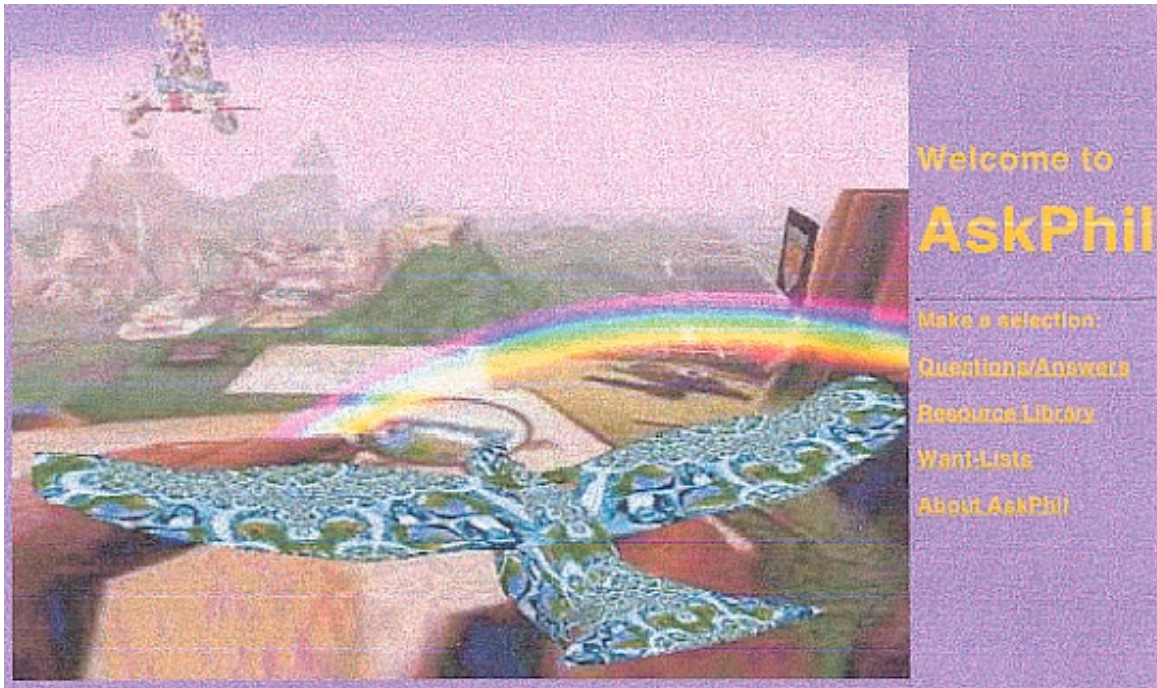
The pioneering Vienna-Cracow-Lemberg-Kyiv airmail line gave birth to the airmail service that we today take for granted. In as much as it traversed Austrian, Czech, Polish, and Ukrainian territories, and briefly also Hungarian, it should be of interest to philatelists who collect any of these countries.

Dr. Inger Kuzych is of Austrian and Ukrainian extraction and ardently collects the stamps of both countries.

He is the president of the Ukrainian Philatelic and Numismatic Society and the author of some 140 philatelic articles. His specialty is the postal history of Lemberg (Lviv). He may be contacted at: [ingertjk@gateway.net](mailto:ingertjk@gateway.net)

## The Computer Corner

**Ask Phil** <http://www.askphil.org>



Ask Phil (short for philately) is a site created by “the Collector’s Club of Chicago”. it started out as a question and answer site but has developed into something more.

**Questions / Answers.** this page contains answers to questions people have asked in the past. There is an archive of questions and answers numbered in groups of twenty five, from 1 to 675. You might find that your question has already been answered. If not, you can always ask a question of your own. You will usually get a response in a couple of days.

**Resource Library.** Here you can go to the “How to Articles”, “Salm Foundation Reports”, “Plan Your Philatelic Estate”, the “Reference Library”, “Auction Information or “My Favorite” The how to section gives information on everything from ..use a perforation gauge to ..get the most from a stamp show. The Salm Reports covers stamp album paper to flying fakes (interesting papers). Plan your philatelic estate is obvious as is the reference library. Auction information is about currency designations and how to protect yourself. My favorites. ?. Haven’t looked at that one yet. The link says “A Touch of Home”.

**Want Lists.** This is their latest page. You can look to see what other collectors are looking for or add your own needs to the site and others can look for your needs. E-mail addresses are given so you can “talk” to collectors about making trades.

**About Ask Phil.** A good place to start. They will tell you a little about themselves and how to best navigate the site. One bit of information is; “In addition to questions submitted directly to Ask Phil, we will be responding to questions sent to The Postal History Foundation of Tucson, Arizona, The Wineburg Research Library of Dallas, Texas and the Smithsonian Libraries of Washington DC.” Pretty impressive, huh?

Next time you visit your computer at the local library, check this site out.

## Cover from Bodie

I was digging around some covers in one of Roger Lauderdale's boxes when I came upon this one. Why did this one catch my eye? Two reasons. First, I have driven past the town of Bodie several times and meant to stop in one day and see what it was all about. Second, it has a letter inside (my idea of a true "entire").



The envelope is postal, Scott #U 385, issued in 1903. It's not valuable, just a little over minimum. So, what's so interesting about a common cover? Bodie was a gold mining town and is now a ghost town about 135 miles south of Reno, on US 395, in California. It was highlighted on the show "California's Gold" on TV. Bodie is preserved in a state of "arrested decay" and is attended to by California park rangers. It is open to the public as a tourist attraction. Bodie was a very active town when this letter was posted in December of 1905. It was sent to Santa Barbara, CA from Bodie on December 7th and arrived in Santa Barbara three days later. It had snowed in Bodie recently and the roads were dirt and mountainous. This newsletter will take two days to travel across town, if you're lucky.

As much as I hate to pry (ya, right) into people's personal mail, I read the letter. this is where I learned of the recent snow. Walter W. Bradley wrote the letter to Fred L. Johnston. The letter referred to an "electrical proposition" proposed by Mr. Johnston. Mr. Johnston was asking information of Mr. Bradley, which Mr. Bradley couldn't give, owing to company policy. Who are these people, What was the "electrical proposition" and what do they do? I started becoming interested in the lives of these people and, so, began my first research into the mails. this is what I have learned so far.

The postmaster at the time the letter was sent was (probably, some records are missing) William E. Reading.

Mr. Bradley worked for the Standard Stamp Mill. This information is not confirmed as most of the records in Bodie have been destroyed or have not yet come to light. Bodie is the first and largest stamp mill to use electricity in Bodie. It is apparent by the tone of the letter that Mr. Bradley was an electrical engineer.

Mr. Bradley mentions that a foreman was killed on August 24th. That foreman, according to the researchers in Bodie, was William Caine, who was killed on a flywheel on that date at the Standard Stamp Mill.

*The airplane Buddy Holly died in was the "American Pie." (Thus the name of the Don McLean song.)*

Theodore Hoover was the superintendent (big cheese) of the Standard Stamp Mill from 1903 to 1906. He liked to go camping with his family, his managers and his brother (Herbert Hoover, later to become president) and his brother's family in the Sierras during the summer. Mr. Bradley mentions in the letter that the foreman was killed while he was camping in the Sierras. Mr. Hoover wrote memoirs called the "Hoover Memoirs" that are housed in a collection at Stanford university, Mr. Hoover's alma mater. Those papers contain the names of the people he hired for the stamp mill. Mr. Bradley's name on that list, hence some confusion as to Mr. Bradley's place at the stamp Mill.

The body of the letter is transcribed below. There are references to other people (Carl Frye, Mrs. B., Mr. Bradley's wife, I presume and W.S. Adams) but I have not yet learned anything about them. If anyone in the club is as curious about these people and the lives they led, I would welcome any help in further research. Since this is my first attempt at digging into the past, I am lacking in the skill it takes to complete this project. I would like to present the finished product to the town of Bodie as a gift of the NSSS. Any takers?

Bodie, Cal; Dec. 6 - 1905

My Dear Fred:-

I am at last starting a letter to you - a thing I have been intending to do, lo these many weeks .Your last letter, in answer to mine, I believe was received while I was camped in the Sierras in August. You asked for some date in regard to our power plant. In the first place, the figures most serviceable to you (of cost and maintenance) are not available to me, and secondly we are not permitted to tell such things if we do know them. I am sorry I cannot assist you in this regard, as I would do so, if possible.

I am now nill foreman, and have been since Aug. 24, when our foreman was accidentally killed.

We are having some fine fun in Bodie these days,- sleighing and coasting on the snow. Last evening I had Mrs. B.

two young ladies and Carl Frye, Y. C : 06, out coasting on a long bob-sled. Talk about sport!!!

I had a letter a few days ago from W.S. Adams as corresponding sec'y of the Abracadabra club. He spoke of the numbers of members, building fund and other items of interest.

Hoping you are in good health, and that your electrical proposition is prospering. I am

Sincerely,  
Walter W. Bradley

contact me:

write me Howard Grenzebach  
180 Pompe  
Lemmon Valley, NV  
call me 972-6301  
e mail me artfulputz@aol.com

*Hershey's Kisses are called that because the machine that makes them looks like it's kissing the conveyor belt.*

A short quiz this time, only six questions. But watch out, it may be tougher than you think. The first question will be worth 10 auction buck for each correct country. The next five questions are worth ten auction bucks each. Good luck.

1. Name the five smallest stamp-issuing countries of the world?
2. The dove is often seen as a messenger-bird in Europe. What bird is the messenger symbol in China?
3. What country "canceled" its postage stamps by tearing, or cutting, a piece out of them?
4. What country issued a stamp with a face value of 50 billion?
5. Which United States stamp correctly shows 15 alternating red and white stripes?
6. What was the first country to issue a commemorative stamp, and what did it commemorate?

Here are the answers to the last quiz:

1. The Hope diamond was insured for about \$1,000,000.
2. In 1918 the airmail flight paths were extended between New York and Chicago.
3. The popular style of stagecoach was named for Concord, New Hampshire.
4. Cliff Claven was portrayed by John Ratzenberger.
5. The tunnel shaped mailbox was designed in 1915.
6. Highway Post Office service ended in 1974.
7. Dog sleds were replaced by airplanes.
8. There were 700,00 miles covered by Rural Free Delivery Service.
9. V-mail was microfilmed to save on badly needed transportation space.
10. Postal vehicles were painted mostly white in the 1970s.

How did you do on last issue's quiz? Hope you did better than I did. Good luck on this one.

Next page. The start of something good.

*The term "the whole 9 yards" came from WWII fighter pilots in the Pacific. When arming their airplanes on the ground, the .50 caliber machine gun ammo belts measured exactly 27 feet, before being loaded into the fuselage. If the pilots fired all their ammo at a target, it got "the whole 9 yards."*

# HOW TO PREPARE STAMP EXHIBITS

By C. E. FOSTER

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*The reason firehouses have circular stairways is from the days of yore when the engines were pulled by horses. The horses were stabled on the ground floor and figured out how to walk up straight staircases.*