

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.



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JUNE 14., 2003

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Well, the summer is finally with us. Flowers are chirping and the birds are blooming. At least I hope they are because I am writing this in May while the wind is falling and the rain is blowing.

Last month's presentation about Preservation and Restoration of stamps and covers was given by **Howard Grenzebach** who learned a thing or two about giving presentations. Its not as easy as it looks. He has come away with a deeper respect for those who have given presentations before him as well as those who will. A tip of the hat to those members who have stood before this knowledgeable group of collectors to reveal their own areas of expertise.

"Changing Directions - Starting New Stamp Collecting interests". This will be the program for the month of June given by **Terri and Harvey Edwards**. They have recently been re-focusing their own collections and would like to let us know how they're doing it.

In July, **John and Marla Wetterling** will be telling us about Circuit books and how they work. In August, there will be a workshop to put the circuit books together. I remember discussing circuit books at one of our meetings and everyone

seemed to think it was a good idea. Now's our chance to go ahead with this idea so, get your stamps together, we're going to make a circuit book!

For those of you who are computer geniuses, this month's Computer Page has a site for you that is unusual. Check it out and send an email to Bob Ingraham. Tell him what you think of it. If you know of a site our members might like, send an email to the editor of this publication.

There are several offices coming up for election at the second meeting in July (on July 26th). Nomination are set for the first meeting in July. Installation of officers will be at the picnic on August 9th. Those offices (the recommendations from **Dick Dreiling**, our President) are;

President (Stan Cronwall)

Secretary (Nadiah Beekum)

Board Members

(Leon Wembly)

(Terri Edwards)

(Barbara Stanfield)

(Tara McAuliffe)

I think Dick has offered us some excellent choices. If you have other nominations in mind, please bring them up at the July 12th meeting. Talk to your nominee first to be sure he or she is a willing participant.

Competition and Change

Delivery barcode sorter, Long Island, NY, 1992 Despite improved technology, the Postal Service faced mounting financial and competitive pressures. Following a decade of prosperity in the 1980s that saw a dramatic increase in mail volume, the nation entered a period of slower economic growth in the 1990s. Bankruptcies, consolidations, and a general restructuring of the marketplace reduced the flow of business mail. In 1991, overall mail volume dropped for the first time in 15 years. The following year, volume rose only slightly, and the Postal Service narrowly avoided the first back-to-back declines in mail volume since the Great Depression.

Competition grew for every postal product. The rise of fax machines, electronic communications, and other technologies offered alternatives for conveying bills, statements, and personal messages. Entrepreneurs and publishing companies set up alternate delivery networks in an attempt to hold down the costs of delivering magazines and newspapers. Many third-class mailers, finding their mailing budgets reduced and their postage rates increased higher than expected, began shifting some of their expenditures to other forms of advertising, including cable television and telemarketing. Private companies continued to dominate the market for the urgent delivery of mail and packages.

To become more competitive, the Postal Service began to change and restructure. In 1990, the Postal Service awarded two contracts to private firms that now independently measure First-Class Mail service and customer satisfaction. The Postal Service also began working more closely with customers to identify ways to better meet their needs and expanded customer conveniences such as stamps on consignment. With the help of business mailers, the Postal Service continued support for rates reflecting customer work-sharing features, many tied to automation, to give customers more flexibility. At the same time, the Postal Service began implementing Customer Advisory Councils, groups of citizens who volunteered to work with local postal management on postal issues of interest to the community. By the summer of 1993, 500 Advisory Councils were in place.

In the summer of 1992, under the leadership of newly appointed Postmaster General Marvin Runyon, the Postal Service intensified its drive for competitiveness. After consulting with mailers, the Governors of the Postal Service, postal employees and their representatives, and Congress, Runyon set a 120-day agenda to reduce bureaucracy and overhead, to improve service and customer satisfaction, and to stabilize postage rates.

To help accomplish these goals, the Postal Service created a new organizational structure, starting at the top. The Postal Service reduced the officer corps by nearly one-half, eliminated layers of management to speed decision-making, and trimmed overhead positions by nearly one quarter, or 30,000 positions. By offering early-out retirements and other incentives, the Postal Service reduced overhead without layoffs or furloughs.

Throughout the country, the five regions and 73 field divisions were replaced by 10 areas, each with a manager for Customer Services and a manager for Processing and Distribution. At the local level, 85 Customer Services districts and 350 processing and distribution plants were established, and a marketing and sales office was set up in each area. The new structure allowed postal managers to focus their expertise, improved communications up and down the line, and empowered employees to meet the needs of their customers.

The Postal Service also took steps to improve service in 1993. It invested in service improvements in the processing and delivery of mail at every major postal facility, expanded retail hours, and developed a more user-friendly *Domestic Mail Manual*. In cooperation with business customers, the Postal Service began to develop new services to meet specific mailer needs and to overhaul and simplify its complex rate structure. In 1993, it awarded contracts for two additional external measurement systems, one to survey the satisfaction levels of business mailers, the other to track service performance of third-class mail.

Postal finances also improved. The restructuring eliminated some programs, cut costs, brought in new business, and reduced the Postal Service's projected deficit of more than \$2 billion. This put the organization in a better position to try to hold rates steady, which means that rates will have remained stable for four years for the first time since the Postal Service began operations in July 1971. Furthermore, the independent measurement surveys already in place indicated that service was as good or better than ever since the restructuring.

Despite many challenges, the Postal Service plans to draw on its diverse strengths to become a model for government, a force to help American businesses be more competitive, and a more effective communications system that binds the nation together.

This is the third and final installment of "Stamp Grading and Condition" from the Glassine Surfer AKA Michael Mills. I hope this article has been useful to you.

Condition

Condition is a description of the physical characteristics of the stamp's paper, ink and gum in the case of mint stamps. An adequate description should be as concise as possible but use as many words as necessary to fairly describe the stamp.

A rare, early British colonial issue from the tropics may have several faults that must be addressed and the description might be as long as this paragraph. However, older issues with faults may still be desirable because of the price and rarity of faultless examples, some of which may no longer exist.

Positive Conditions:

- * Crisp, clear printing impression on a line engraved issue.
- * Wide margins between design and separations.
- * Rich, hot-off-the-press colors.
- * Selvage attached to the stamp, especially on older issues.
- * Unusual or rare cancellation on used stamps.

Faults: anything that has altered, damaged or changed the stamp or its appearance since printing other than a cancellation or other postal marks, such as overprints and precancels.

* Gum (*see below*): A regummed mint copy. No gum on an uncancelled copy. Something stuck in the gum, dirt or a fingerprint.

* Paper: missing piece, holes, tears, folds, creases, stains. Paper thinned, as if the back of the stamp has been peeled off, either in whole or in part. Heavy hinge remnant.

* Color: Chemical changes in color, stained. Attempts to remove the cancellation may change the color.

* Perfs: Shortened perforations or a row of perf tips cut off forming a straight edge indicating a scissor cut. Nibbed perfs, a singular or pair of perfs that were pulled off, or a single or pair that are noticeably shorter than the others.

* Face: Something stuck to the stamp. Scuffed. Pen, pencil or other marks of a non-postal origin, e.g. your child's crayon marks.

* Some repairs, tiny tears and thins may be seen only under high magnification, ultraviolet light examination, or in watermark fluid immersions.

* Stamp conditions can vary by country and standards are not the same for all countries, due to poor printing technology at that time and place. Sometimes you'll see the note, "Very fine for this country."

Gum: found on what now are called water-activated stamps, has its own lexicon.

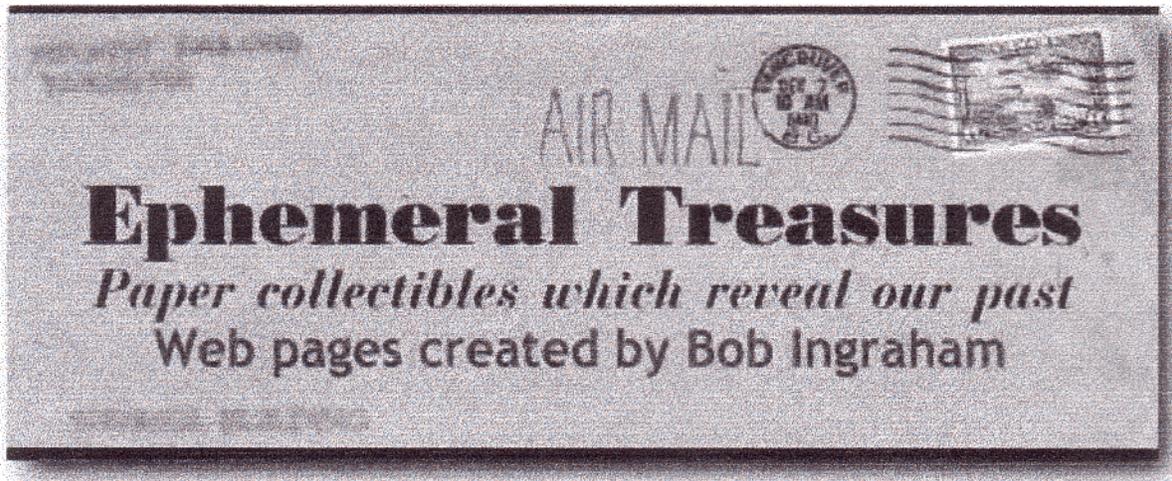
- * No Gum (NG): The gum has been removed or the stamp was issued without it.
- * Never hinged (NH): Undisturbed gum.
- * Lightly hinged (LH): Vestiges of a peelable hinge are seen in the gum.
- * Heavily hinged (HH): A bit of hinge is stuck to the gum.
- * Original gum (OG): Original, undisturbed gum.
- * Regummed (RG): A person has applied a new coat of gum to replace the damaged original.

* Regumming has become so hard to detect, some say impossible, that some collectors will not pay a premium for old stamps listed as OG.

The Computer Corner

www.ingraham.ca/bob/index.html

“Stamps and covers are artifacts which reveal our past.” So says Bob Ingraham on the opening page of Ephemeral Treasures. This is one of the more interesting and unusual websites about stamps on the WWW. As artifacts are the window to the past, these pages are the window to Bob’s stamp collecting soul. The stamps, covers and postcards offered to us on this site each have a story as to where it was collected, who it came from, why it is such a treasure and whatever else Bob wants to tell us about himself and his stamps.



Bob starts the site off with an airmail page. “Pigeons probably carried the first ‘airmail’ During the German siege of Paris in 1867,” he muses, but “The first recorded airmail flight occurred in India in 1911.” The next page takes us to The World of stamp collecting, where Bob tells us personal stories of his beginnings in stamp collecting and he gives us some information on how to collect and where to obtain some free stamps. Then on to Stamps and Covers of the World Wars. On January 14th, the US issued the Allied Nations stamp (Bob thinks it’s the most boring stamp ever issued), and our host was born.

Now we move on to Favorite Stamps and Covers. I guess that would be self-explanatory. He also has a Site Map, Links and last but not least The Attic in which he relates the story of a mountain he climbed and an airplane crash he survived. How many of us have done that?

One of the pages, "Joe Hicks and the Battle for Europe" was the subject of a Canadian Broadcasting Company interview with a National audience. An MP3 recording is available on the site. The same page was also featured in the Glassine Surfer as well as in the April 1st, 2002 edition of Linns. Bob’s credentials are pretty impressive too. He is a retired Teacher/Photographer/journalist with an education from the University of Missouri (Journalism degree, 1966). Perhaps his finest credentials come from serving our country with the US Marines from 1962 to 1966 as a hospital corpsman and he was wounded in Vietnam.

There is more to this site than I have covered here. There are pictures of stamps and covers as well as the stories that go with them. There are stories of the wars and opinions about Sumerians. You’ll gain new knowledge and insights.

This is a nicely designed site that is comfortable to navigate and easy to look at. With Bob’s background I can understand why this is such a well laid out website. This one is a winner for sure. Go there. I believe you’ll be glad you did.

It's time to get a little tougher. But not too much tougher. I have elected to go to Great Britain for this quiz. All the questions pertain to our Mother Country even though it may not be mentioned by name. Ready? Then curl up with a tall Gin & tonic (or just tonic) and Sir Scott and answer these questions.

- 1) What member of the Royal Family is featured on a 1969 set?
A. Princess Diane B. Prince Charles C. King Henry VIII
- 2) The centenary of the birth of what Indian leader is marked by a 1969 commemorative?
A. Mohatma Gandhi B. Indira Gandhi C. Geronimo
- 3) What British author of the "Pickwick Papers" is honored on the centenary of his death in 1970?
A. Sir Arthur Conan Doyle B. William Shakespeare C. Charles Dickens
- 4) What British stamp is reproduced on the 1970 issue for the London Philatelic Exhibition?
A. 2 pence blue B. Penny black C. Penny red
- 5) The wedding of what royal couple is marked by a 1973 set ?
A. Princess Anne & Capt. Mark Phillip B. Dianne & Prince Charles
C. George VI & Edith Wharton
- 6) The centenary of the birth of which British leader is marked by a 1974 set?
A. Neville Chamberlain B. "Monte" Montgomery C. Winston Churchill
- 7) What type of vessels are shown on a 1975 issue?
A. Battleships & Carriers B. Sailboats & Yachts C. Rowboats & Sculls
- 8) A 1975 set of five marked the sesquicentennial of public railroads in Great Britain. What railroad is represented on the seven pence value?
A. B & O B. Stockton & Darlington C. Grand Edwards
- 9) The silver jubilee of what ruler is marked by a 1977 stamp set?
A. Edward VII B. George V C. Elizabeth II
- 10) British wild flowers are shown on a 1979 set of four. Name any two of the flowers.
A. Daffodils & Bluebells B. Roses & Petunias C. Daisies & Crocuses

As Winston Churchill once said, We are two countries separated by a common language. Hope your English is as good as your American.

With all the great scores coming in from these quizzes, maybe I should do one on the paper varieties of Azerbaijan issues of 1914. Maybe not. You've all been doing so well I think I'll keep it just as it is. Here are the answers for last month

1. - B. #1803, This was part of the "Performing Arts" issue featuring W. C. Feilds. It was put on sale on January 29, 1980.
2. - A. The first stamp of the Champions of Liberty (Ramon Magsaysay, #1096) series was an eight cent stamp, only. All the rest were in Four and Eight cent denominations
3. - B. New York, originally being a Dutch settlement would naturally have a Dutch ship.
4. - A. Eight (#1530-1537) paintings are pictured by various artists of the world, including American artist Thomas Gainsborough
5. - B. # 863, the second stamp of the second set of the series sold for Two cents.
6. - C. Charter Oak, a tree that stood in Hartford, Conn., until 1856. Colonists used the tree to hide Connecticut's 1662 charter from Sir Edmund Andros, who was authorized to establish a Dominion of New England. Scott # 772.
7. - C. Phillipines, # 380, baseball was the subject of the 2 cent stamp along with tennis (6 cent) and basketball (16 cent).
8. - C. Gerard Davis. # 1799. You will find the painting in the National Gallery of Art in Washington D.C.
9. - C. November 5, 1970. #'s 1415-1418, also were issued as "precancels".
10. - C. Eugene O'Neill. # 1288 and 1288B were designed by Norman Todhunter. The two numbers represent two colors used in the printings (Maroon and dark rose claret).

On the last quiz, published in April, **Frank Fey** pointed out to me the answer to # 1 (what is the denomination of the first U.S. airmail stamp?) was actually 24 cents, a number I hadn't included in the answers. I looked it up. The 24 cent air-mail was issued on the 11th day of may, the 16 cent on July 11th and the 6 cent on December 10th, all in 1918. Guess C3 should be C1 and vice versa. Thank you and ten Auction Bucks to Frank.

The Eugene O'Neill issue has more varieties than I realized. Aside from the two colors, there are tagged and untagged, type one, type two and a possible type three along with the Zip code and Mail early selvages. As usual, 100 Auction Bucks for ten correct answers.