

Stamps & Tongs

The E-mail Newsletter of the
Dallas-Park Cities Philatelic Society



APRIL
2009

Spring Cleaning Bourse



The Second Annual Spring Cleaning Bourse was held at the Edgemere on March 11. The turnout was good despite poor weather. The tables were set up in a square allowing eager collectors easy access to the stamp goodies. DPCPS dealer members Jim Myers and Tom Cunningham brought their dealer stock to the event. Tom suggested that we have two bourses a year. In addition to Tom and Jim, we had a number of members bring their extra items for sale (Rick, Steve, Jack, Harold, Harry and Tom). Overall it was a fun night, and many stamps exchanged hands. Some of the cool things available were stock books for storage, old approval books filled with stamps and old collections.

This has been a good addition to our slate of programs and all members look forward to the next Spring Cleaning Bourse.



Rick Houghland in the Philatelic Spotlight

Rick Houghland entertained the membership on March 25 with his story of how he caught the stamp collecting bug. Rick's supplemented his early collecting days as youth by selling the GRIT newspaper. His collection grew as he spent time in the military in Germany and South-east Asia. A move to Dallas brought him to the early DPCPS when the group met in a Methodist church. What was funny about those early meetings was that the church was unaware that the DPCPS was meeting at the location! Eventually they were kicked out after asking for a better meeting room! If you are interested in being in the philatelic spotlight, contact Harry Pedersen at the next meeting or e-mail him at harrypedersen@tx.rr.com.

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Notes from the Editor



The stamp world is never boring. Take a look at two organizations that play a heavy hand in our community: the USPS and the APS. Once again, we have a rate increase. I am not so concerned about that, I just wish instead of a 44 cent rate, they would round it up to 45 cents. But what will come out with the rate increase may be a very controversial and at the same time popular stamp issue: the Simpson's. At the time I write this, the Citizen Stamp Advisory Committee (CSAC) has advised that the Simpson's will be featured with their own stamps. How will the collecting community react? Heck, we already have Disney stamps and Star Wars stamps. The Simpson's issue should be good for the bottom line of the USPS, with many desk drawer collectors buying up the sheets and putting them away for future gain (Good luck with that!). We will see how this works out. As a fan of the Simpson's I am a bit ambivalent on honoring the show with their own stamps.

The other issue I want to touch on is the American Philatelic Society, which recently let go Executive Director Peter C. Mastrangelo in a cost cutting move. The APS is in serious danger of losing its relevance with membership dropping below 40,000 members, the Match Factory problem, and the Ken Laurence lawsuit. As an APS member, I am very concerned in the direction of the organization, especially during this near depression economy. I hope the APS rights their ship and continues to earn my dues. -DM.

April-May 2009 Philatelic Calendar

April 6 DPCPS Board meeting @ The Edgemere.

April 8 Program: "UN Peacekeeping Stamps and Postal History" speaker Doug Moss.

April 10-11 TSDA Bourse, Richardson Civics Center.

April 22 Quarterly Auction! Get those lots ready to sell! Use the Auction Sheets in this newsletter!

May 13 Program: "Hungary Part III" speaker Jack Urish.

May 27 Mini-Auction and Philatelic Spotlight.

To volunteer for a presentation or Philatelic Spotlight, contact Harry Pedersen.

Bring a friend to the next meeting! Encourage them to join the DPCPS!

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Metroplex Postal History of the Month



The April Postal History of the Month item is a cover sent from Ireland to a real estate agent in Dallas. The Irish city of origin is Baile Átha Cliath (can you guess the English name of the city?) mailed on August 13, 1936. The cover is franked with two 2 pence stamps (Scott 68). What makes the cover interesting is the postmark, imploring the recipient of the letter to “USE THE TELEPHONE.” Not sure why the Irish Post Office would want to encourage this sort of behavior. And I do not think it would have been cost effective in 1936 to call Baile Átha Cliath from Dallas. The cover deserves more research to learn more about Robert Ralston and his real estate dealings in Dallas in the 1930s.-DM

New DPCPS Member Matt Langendorf

We welcome another new member this year with the addition of Matt Langendorf. Matt lives in Garland and is employed at Texas Instruments. He is some sort of Rocket Scientist or Physicist at TI. Matt is a worldwide collector with specialties being Vatican City, UN and Germany. He is just getting back into the hobby after a long hiatus. So the next time you see Matt at a meeting, introduce yourself and welcome him to the DPCPS.



OUR NEXT QUARTERLY AUCTION IS APRIL 22!
GET YOUR ITEMS AND BID SHEETS READY FOR THE BIG NIGHT!
SEE THE LAST TWO PAGES OF THE NEWSLETTER!
Tell a friend about the DPCPS! Invite them to a meeting!

Back to the Basics: Sand dunes, Iron Curtain & wallpaper

What do sand dunes, an Iron Curtain and wallpaper have in common? Over the years these terms have described less than desirable stamps. During the 1960s through the 1980s, many stamp advertisements listing world wide stamps would include the phrase “No sand dunes or iron curtain.” Sand dunes was the euphemism given to stamps issued by many Arabic countries solely to make money. These stamps had no real philatelic value and it was dubious that they would ever see real postal use in the nations who issued them. Why would an Arabic country put out a Christmas stamp? Some of the culprit “sand dune” issuing “nations” were Umm al-Quwain, Ajman, Sharajah, Dubai and Ras al-Kaimah. Most of these stamps are cancelled to order (CTO). Often dealers would include “No CTOs” in there description as well. More about CTOs in a bit.

An Iron Curtain is a stamp issued by one of the many Soviet Satellites during the Cold War. These states included East Germany (DDR), Hungary, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Romania, Albania and Bulgaria. These stamps would often feature the great heroes of the proletariat or the socialist worker’s paradise, Karl Marx, Vladimir Lenin, Joseph Stalin and other leaders of the socialist uprising. A majority of these stamps were CTO. How do you identify a CTO stamp? Usually it has a perfect cancel in one corner that does not obscure the design of the stamp. And one other thing, the stamp still has all of it’s gum! If you began collecting in the 1970s, the sand dunes and iron curtain stamps probably filled that first album.

After the fall of the Berlin Wall, the term “wallpaper” seems to have replaced those early descriptions of the less desirable stamps. Most often you will find wallpaper issued by many of the small islands in the Caribbean Sea. Many African countries currently issue stamps that are considered mere wallpaper. For example, why would an African country put out a set of stamps honoring Leonardo DiCaprio or a small island nation issue NBA and major league baseball stamps? Good luck at finding any of these glorified stickers on a postal used cover. All of these incarnations, be it sand dunes, iron curtain stamps or wallpaper, most were driven by the greed of postal administrations (or the companies handling their worldwide stamp distribution) to separate the collector from his money (some will argue that is what the USPS is doing, but that is another story for another day). So beware when you are looking through *Linn’s*, *Mekeel’s & Stamps* or are on e-Bay, watch out for those words if you want to steer clear of undesirable stamps.



A fine example of a “sand dune” stamp from Sharajah. Notice the perfect quarter cancel in the bottom left corner. This stamp still has it’s original gum, too!

The Texas Philatelic Association



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- ★ Support philately in the state of Texas.
- ★ Receive *The Texas Philatelist*, bi-monthly color journal.
- ★ Participate in Oklahoma Philatelic Society (OPS) stamp circuit.
- ★ Participate in TPA-OPS auctions.

JOIN US! Membership fees and dues are pro-rata based on the quarter an application is received: \$12 for January-March; \$9 for April-June; \$6 for July-September; \$13 for October-December (includes next full year). Membership may be applied for online at the TPA website, www.texasphilatelic.org, or an application may be obtained by writing to: Lyle Boardman, 3916 Wyldwood Rd., Austin, TX 78739-3005.

Lot #

Dallas-Park Cities Philatelli Society

Auction Lot Information Card

Owner Name: _____

Member Number: _____

Country: _____

Catalog (other than Scott): _____

Catalog Number: _____ Catalog Value _____

Minimum bid: _____ Condition: _____

Description: _____

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