

THE SRSC NEWSLETTER

The Santa Rosa Stamp Club: Promoting the study, knowledge, and enjoyment of stamp collecting.
APS Chapter 1584



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Club News

As we wrap up another year, the Santa Rosa Stamp Club faces some changes that should make us even stronger as we approach 2016. We now have a new meeting date, the first Wednesday of the month, that enables us to stay at the Brookdale Lodge in a room that is much more conducive to the kind of meetings we have long enjoyed. We have four candidates willing to serve as club officers for 2016: Steve Brett for President; Victor Ivashin for Vice President; Susan Dixon for Treasurer; and Dennis Buss for Secretary. And, as a result of a unanimous vote, we approved of a dues increase to \$12.00 per year starting on January 2016. We have accomplished much in 2015 and we have much to look forward to in 2016 as we share our interest in the great hobby of stamp collecting with fellow club members.

“Why I Collect Germany” by Steve Brett

"Alas poor Germany . . . too large for Europe, too small for the World." I've always been a worldwide collector but Germany has always held a special place in my heart and in my collection. In scholastic terms, worldwide is my major; Germany is my minor. Alas poor Germany, too small to satisfy my worldwide hunger, but too large to fit into one volume (or even two).

To me, Germany is intriguing from both an historic and cultural basis. My wife came from Germany as did my paternal grandparents who came to America as teenagers in the mid-1890's from a small town outside of Dresden. I wound up working for Allianz, a major German insurer and traveled often and at length to their home office in Munich. Starting in 1980 we began vacationing in Germany visiting the famous sites – cultural, religious including a number of spas. Business took me to Hannover and Berlin. It's a beautiful country obviously affluent by any world standard. The people I met and worked with were serious about their occupations, vocations and were generally highly educated. One doesn't have to find a manager in a department store to have a question answered. Starting at the doorman (who knows everything about the store) every salesperson we ever met knew most everything about anything pertaining to the store. That sort of responsiveness finally died out at Sears in the early 80's and is nowhere to be found today in the US.



There's a lot to admire about Germany and yet it remains a perplexing country. How does one of the most advanced nations in the world fall off its tracks so often? This is what fascinates me about Germany and why I specialize in it within a general stamp collection. Through my reading and by collecting its wide variety of stamps I am always trying to find out more about what makes this country tick. Part of the intrigue is the dual nature of Germany. My collection has two very fat binders: One is Germany and the other is the DDR. In that regard we have another "split personality" of Germany. How quickly one segment of its society went with the West and the other followed the Soviet Bloc (perhaps in some cases reluctantly) but it became, as one would expect, a powerhouse within the Bloc.

If one loves art, then German stamps have that topic covered in depth especially the exceptional reproductions of Expressionism that began in Modern Germany. Of course, there's a lot of Classical and Romantic German Art on her stamps and all the color and reproduction is first rate. I have a penchant for stamps with the topic of Engineering and Industry and I can't think of any other country that is more replete with topics of mining, chemical works, industrial equipment, textile works and the like. Germany also highlights its own culture with frequent issues depicting musicians including their great conductors, which is rare in other countries. I don't think they've missed a single famous poet or writer, either. Their natural environment is also frequently displayed such as their parks, lakes, mountains, ports, and flora and fauna.



While one would be hard-pressed to name one German comedian (try it, please), they frequently celebrate their cinema, actors and playwrights. They also portray their politicians. What I find fascinating about these stamps is that they somehow capture the real person and their personality traits. I think that American stamps showing presidents and politicians often provide an idealized portrayal and rarely convey the "real person." What picture of Washington on a stamp tells you what the real man was like? German stamps show the politician smoking a cigar if that was his habit – much more interesting than the idealized portrayals we have. It takes talent to make Harry Truman and LBJ look so bland. Somehow we have managed to do that. Whereas US stamps show cartoon characters (and that's becoming an epidemic), the German's celebrate their vast heritage of fairy tales. These are particularly charming and nostalgic stamps to collect.



Here is one country that is obviously proud of all that they have and they portray it in a vast number of stamp issues. Like much of what Germany is about, they take their stamp issuance policy very seriously. The quality and quantity exceeds anything that a country of 80 million people would be expected to produce.

One pleasure of stamp collecting that I think we all share is the opportunity of feeling like we are visiting a country and holding something tangible of it though we are not actually there. To me, German stamps promote this experience to an extent greater than most countries and this is why I keep building this specialty within my general collection.

“How to Increase the Value of Your Collection?” by Jay Smith

Editor’s Note: Jay Smith is a stamp dealer from Snow Camp, North Carolina who specializes in Scandinavian stamps. He sends out a periodic newsletter via email. This excerpt from a July 2015 email, reprinted with his permission, is on a topic that should interest all of us.

The "smarty" answer to that is "buy more stamps". Duh! However, you can probably increase the value of your collection without spending a dime -- all it takes is some time.

Most of us probably don't collect stamps for reasons of money or value. However, if we get to the point that we want to sell our collection, then, of course, we would like to get the most for it that we can. Furthermore, if we have a serious health problem or move on to the philatelic bourse in the sky, we certainly want the collection to be of the greatest possible value for the benefit of our family.

This subject came to mind yesterday while viewing the collection of a life-long collector in our region. He had come to the decision to sell his collection -- I told him the same thing that I am writing here.

His collection is fairly large (Bonnie [Jay’s wife and business partner] and I brought home 31 cartons in our first trip) and includes a wide range of stamps from the usual common issues to scarcer stamps. There are many albums in the collection, however, many of the stamps are not in the albums. Many of the new purchases were put into folders with the idea that they would "someday" be integrated into the albums. That day had not yet come. (However, organizing them, by country, in the folders, was a great idea and does help in several ways.)

Whenever a dealer, or any potential buyer, views a collection with the intent of buying it, the better organized and neatly presented the collection, the more the buyer should be able to pay. This just makes sense. Scarcer stamps are more obvious when in the proper place in the album instead of potentially hidden among common stamps in a big envelope. It is easier to see that a set of stamps is complete when it is all in one place in an album. It is easier to view the quality when in an album. If a dealer is thinking that he or she might sell one of the single-country collections intact to a collector, the more presentable it is, then the more the dealer can pay for it because it will be easier for the dealer to sell.

Most of the time, this organizing can be done with little or no expenditure of money. Also, we are talking here about basic organizing, not polishing to perfection! Maybe you do need another stock book or such, but you may be amazed at how much you can accomplish with the resources already at hand.

This is all just common sense stuff. However, the reality is -- and I certainly have the same problem myself -- that there just never seems to be enough time to integrate the latest purchases into the album, or get the scarce stamps properly labeled, or to make a note in the album that the #123 has a certificate in the certificate binder.

All this reminds me that I should focus a bit more on organizing my own collection. We will see how that goes . . .

**HOLIDAY LUNCH PARTY
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 8 AT THE UNION HOTEL, SANTA ROSA**

“Why I Bought This Cover” by Dennis Buss

I recently purchased the cover shown below from an Ebay offering. What initially attracted me to it was the use of the first Netherlands airmail stamp (10 cents in red). Before I made my purchase, I decided to bring the cover to the attention of fellow members of the Netherlands Philatelists of California club. Below is a reprint from an article that appeared in the November 2015 edition of the club’s newsletter. It is based on a discussion at a recent club meeting and the further research conducted by the newsletter editor Franklin Ennick. What follows is an example of how knowledge of postal history can reveal interesting insights into the past from a single cover.



Dennis Buss passed around a copy of an interesting cover obtained from the Ebay Internet site that illustrates the turbulent economic conditions in Europe in 1923 after WW I. This is a *maakwerk* (made-to-order) cover constructed by prominent Hilversum resident, Dr. G.W.W. Bölian. The registered cover features a curious mix of stamp issues in use in 1923, including a 5-cent 1913 Jubileum, a 10-cent 1921 airmail issue, and the 5 and 10 cent 1923 imperforate Wilhelmina issues. The 10-cent airmail was first issued for use only on airmail letters but was withdrawn, then later allowed for use on surface and airmail letters.



The imperforate 5 and 10 cent Wilhelminas were issued to a list of specific post offices for use during the 1923 Enschede printers strike, but Hilversum was not one of these post offices so Dr. Bölian likely had to go elsewhere to obtain them. The cover was addressed to Mevrouw L. Charlouis in Den Haag April 17, 1923. The significance of the number 3171 is not determined, but most likely is an administrative marker indexing received registered letters. On the reverse is a 5-cent charity sticker (benefitting German children) that contains the Biblical verse, Matthew 25:40, from the sermon describing the

Last Judgment, which states, “(And the King will answer) I tell you solemnly, in so far as you did this to one of the least of my brothers, you did it to me.” During the 1920s, there were many such charity appeals in local media benefitting children all over Europe due to the devastating economic conditions after WW I caused by rampant inflation, massive unemployment and wide spread labor strikes.



Members are encouraged to submit articles for the newsletter. Using the prompts such as “I collect ----- because . . .” or “I bought this stamp, or cover, or collection because . . .” is a useful way to get started. Submit your manuscript to Dennis Buss and share your enthusiasm.

The Santa Rosa Stamp Club

Membership is open to anyone interested in stamp collecting and who agrees to abide by the club By-Laws. Starting in 2016, dues are \$12.00 per year, pro-rated on the month of joining. Meetings are held on the first Wednesday of the month at 7:00 pm at the Brookdale Lodge at Paulin Creek, 2375 Range Avenue, Main Entrance, Santa Rosa.

For information about club membership call Dennis Buss at 707-774-6296 or send an email to srsc2012@yahoo.com

2015 SRSC Officers

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