

THE SRSC NEWSLETTER

The Santa Rosa Stamp Club

Promoting the study, knowledge, and enjoyment of stamp collecting.
APS Chapter 1584



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Editor's Note

Dennis Buss

As we are about to enter our tenth year as a stamp club it is important to remind ourselves of the kind of support that is needed to make membership in the SRSC such an enjoyable and worthwhile experience. Besides regular meeting attendance, we need members willing to contribute by serving as club officers or board members. Even if you serve in such a capacity for only a year, you make it possible to help plan meetings that are interesting and serve the needs of all members. You can contribute auction items for our monthly auctions. You can write articles for this newsletter (see below for more this topic). You can prepare a presentation that shows off your philatelic expertise for the enjoyment and edification of your fellow members. Your contributions will go a long way toward sustaining the SRSC as the friendly place to go to sustain our interest in this wonderful hobby of stamp collecting for another ten years.

AMAZING STAMP STORIES # 12

Stephen Brett

The 1963 film, *Charade* starring Cary Grant and Audrey Hepburn, is described as "The Best Alfred Hitchcock movie Alfred Hitchcock never made." The director was actually Stanley Donan. This enjoyable film is built on a foundation of our ignorance about the value of postage stamps. "Three rare valuable stamps serve as a kind of reverse MacGuffin," according to Frank Moraes, the columnist who publishes *Just Philately*. Everyone is looking for a quarter of a million dollars that is hidden in plain sight in the form of these stamps.



Here are the three stamps in *Charade*: The Swedish yellow 3 Skilling; the "Hawaiian Missionaries" 2 cent blue; and the 81 para blue Romanian (Moldavia) "cap de bour" on blue paper. In the movie, these three stamps needed to be worth a quarter of a million dollars. That was fifty-eight years ago.

Now, here's what's truly amazing. Today, the Scott catalog values are as follows:

- (1) The Swedish yellow 3 skilling, Scott 1a unwatermarked Perf 14 (1855) used is catalogued at \$3,000,000;
- (2) "Hawaiian Missionaries" 2-cent blue, Scott 1 unwatermarked typeset imperf is catalogued at \$660,000;
- (3) The Romanian hand stamped 81 para in blue "cap de bour" on wove paper, Scott 4 unwatermarked coat of arms of 1858 on wove paper imperf is valued at \$50,000 mint. The total Scott value of the three stamps is presently \$ 3,710,000.



According to the latest market information about the three stamps, the *Charade* movie had the 1851 Hawaiian Missionaries blue as worth \$65,000. In reality it is currently worth slightly less than three quarters of a million dollars. The Swedish orange 3 skilling was worth only \$85,000 in the movie, it sold for \$2,000,000 back in 1996 and is estimated to be worth more than \$3 million today. Strangely, the 1858 Romanian 81 para blue that was worth the most in the film, is worth the least in reality. In the film it was valued at \$100,000, but the current catalogue value is only \$50,000. To summarize, the market value for the three stamps today is set at \$3,957,000.

If you catch the movie, you will enjoy a wonderful scene at the end of the film of the Paris stamp street bourse. If that isn't amazing, what is?

Ask Phil

Dear Phil,

I have an Irish collection in 3 albums + 7 binders of postal history and documents, with a few going back to the early 1700's. It includes a binder of Northern Ireland which is part of Great Britain. Some fellow philatelist claim that Northern Ireland is not part of the Republic of Ireland and should not be collected. What do you think?

Gaelic Lover

Dear Gaelic collector,



First, what you collect is up to you. There's no wrong way to collect. Second, given the long and negative history of Great Britain in Ireland, I can understand why some people are upset, even if it's for a non-philatelic reason like politics and national pride. That being said I would suggest you be circumspect about this and separate the one volume from the rest. You don't want your collection to engage in civil war. It could get messy. So, keep the Northern Ireland collection. On the other hand, one never

knows what the future may bring. Most people in the Republic hope the six Northern counties will join them. Hope and support for this outcome has increased since Great Britain left the European Union. Brexit has had a negative impact on the industrialized Northern Ireland, where the economy is still an important asset to Great Britain, however diminished.

Slainte mhaith*

Phil O'Tellick

AKA Paul von Gottfried

Note: Phil is currently in Ireland visiting as many pubs as possible. Unfortunately, he is not incognito, but is decidedly incoherent due to inebriation.

*I drink to your health

Dear Phil,

I possess this block of 4 from Germany, which I think is #289, the 50,000,000 mark stamp of 1923. I cannot find the overprint listed in any catalogue. Can you also translate the overprint please?

Classic Collector

Dear Classy,

The block of 4 is indeed #289, issued during the inflationary period of post-World War I. The overprint is privately issued. The overprint is by Karl Hennig of Weimar, a city in Thuringia, Germany. It is an advertisement by Hennig, a well-known stamp dealer at the time, offering stamps for sale. By the by, 50 million marks in 1923 during the period of rampant inflation, would probably have bought a loaf of bread. In today's money, pre-European Union, say 1999; approximately \$30.3 million dollars would probably have bought 6 million loaves of bread.

I'm going to label this segment

EAT AT JOE'S

Phil (I'm suddenly hungry) A. Tellick

AKA Paul von Gottfried



Dear Phil:

My folks were killing a little time at the Ben Gurion Airport in Tel Aviv in the Gift Mall before settling in for a long flight back to Los Angeles. They gifted me with a Worldwide Stamp Album printed in Israel. I think you'll find of interest that as Hebrew is written from right to left, the album begins with Zululand and ends with Abu Dhabi. Accordingly, stamp sets begin with the highest denomination on the left and end with the lowest at the right. Uncle Phil, should I start mounting stamps in this album? And, will anyone buy a collection in an album like this someday?
Yours, Seymour Kensil

Dear Seymour:

I've never encountered this issue, but I certainly don't recommend swapping the gift for an album printed in Australia, unless you can stand on your head.

Phil

AKA Stephen Brett

Dear Phil:

I found a very early British stamp with corner letters in a mixture I just purchased. The letters are in the two lower corners but reversed in the upper corners. Maybe it will be helpful for you if I mention that the top letters are K & E and on the bottom E & K. I don't recall a King Elizabeth but perhaps there was an Elizabeth the King? Maybe these are an early example of Gender Neutrality?
Sincerely, Adam Schmiff

Dear Adam:

The letters in the bottom two corners of early British postage stamps were intended to function as a security measure against forgery. The stamps were printed in sheets of 240 arranged in 20 rows of 12. The first stamp in the sheet was AA, the second AB and so on. The second row began with BA and went to BL. The final stamp in the row was TL. And, that doesn't mean The Loo.

Phil

AKA Stephen Brett

Dear Phil:

I enjoy collecting souvenir sheets. Do you know the derivation of this form of postage? And, do you have a favorite sheet yourself?

Thanks,
Gary Giftz

Dear Gary:

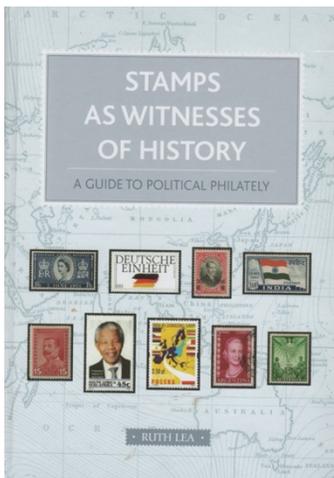
The first souvenir sheet is claimed to be a sheet of 10 stamps issued by Luxembourg in 1906 to commemorate the accession of Grand Duke William IV to the throne. Up to the 1970's souvenir sheets were pretty much reserved for special occasions and the major countries showed restraint in issuing them primarily to observe major philatelic events. The first U.S. sheet was the so-called "White Plains" sheet issued on October 18, 1926 (Scott 630, \$480 mint). In answer to part B of your question, I collect them for the fun of it and my favorite is a Sharjah Sheet issued in 1971 commemorating the first salad bar in the United States.



Keep those letters coming.
Uncle Phil
AKA Stephen Brett

Book Review

Dennis Buss



Lea, Ruth. *Stamps as Witnesses to History: A Guide to Political Philately*. Croyden, United Kingdom: Filament Publishing Ltd, 2018. Listed in Amazon at \$57.22.

When as youngsters many of us began collecting stamps upon receiving a worldwide album and packet of stamps as a birthday or Christmas gift. We became fascinated with identifying and locating the country of origin and placing the stamps in the appropriate album spaces. We began learning about the geography, history, and the culture of exotic places throughout the world. This interest has never waned and we continue our venture into worldwide collecting to this day. This book by Ruth Lea, *Stamps as Witnesses to History*, was written for us. It is quite a tome, 608 pages in length, large in size (8 ½ by 12") and heavy in weight.

The pages are formatted in pairs with explanatory text on the left page and with the right page depicting beautiful color illustrations of related stamps.

Lea explains why she wrote the book, "stamps fascinate me because they are witnesses to history . . . stamps are tangible pieces of historical evidence." Readers will find the book to be a guide to how stamps have reflected and witnessed seismic global political events since the first British penny black appeared in 1840.

The book's fourteen chapters are organized geographically. The first five chapters are devoted to European nations including Russia and its successor states. Four chapters describe the stamps of Asian countries, three chapters portray the stamp history of African and South Atlantic Island nations, one chapter examines the stamp issues of Oceania and Antarctica, and the book concludes with two chapters on North and South American stamp issues. However, the book is not meant to be a history of philately. Instead, in keeping with the political theme of the book, Lea places the stamps in chronological order to illustrate the important historical events associated with each country. This background gives greater meaning to the purpose and significance of the stamps we collect.



To me, this latter point explains the central value of the book as an essential reference for worldwide stamp collectors. For example, recently I have taken an interest in the stamps of Germany. Like Italy, Germany was late in its political formation as a nation state. Consequently, collectors must decide to either start with the various German states that began issuing their own stamps in 1849 or to begin with the unified Empire issues of 1872. Lea begins her treatment of the stamps of Germany by describing the history of these early German states and then proceeds through the period up to and including World War I and its aftermath with the Weimar Republic from 1919 to 1933 including the inflation issues. She then covers the Nazi era stamps ending in 1945 along with the post-World War II Allied occupation issues including the later formation of the separate West and East German issues that end with national unification in 1990. By reading Lea's account of these momentous events and the stamps that reflect this history, we gain a greater appreciation of these small bits of paper that comprise a Germany stamp collection.



Filling the spaces in our albums is a satisfying accomplishment. Reading Lea's *Stamps as Witnesses to History* adds to our enjoyment and appreciation of stamps as a window to the great events of history. It is for this reason that I recommend this book to you.

PENPEX 2021 STAMP SHOW

December 4-5, 2021

Community Activities Building, 1400 Roosevelt Ave.,
Redwood City



SRSC

The Santa Rosa Stamp Club meets on the first Tuesday of the month from 6:45 pm to 9:00 pm at the Finley Community Center, Room #1, 2060 W. College Road, in Santa Rosa. Membership dues are \$20 per year. Following a discussion of club business matters, the meetings feature a philatelic presentation and a member auction. For information about the club visit our website at <http://www.santarosastampclub.org/home.html>

SRSC OFFICERS FOR 2021

President

Bill Anklam

Vice President

Stephen Brett

Secretary

Corrie Leisen

Treasurer

Susan Dixon

Advertising & Public Relations

Stephen Brett

Newsletter Editor

Dennis Buss

Webmaster

Bill Anklam

Auctioneer

Barry Sovel

Executive Committee Members

Bill Anklam, Stephen Brett, Corrie Leisen, Susan Dixon.

Members At-Large: Dennis Buss, Barry Sovel, Hank Kelty, Paul von Gottfried



The SRSC Newsletter

Members are invited to contribute to the Newsletter. You may submit articles on a philatelic topic that reflects your interest and expertise. Such articles can range from 100 to 500 words. Illustrations are encouraged. You can scan covers and stamps and attach them to your text. Another category of interest entails a short paragraph or two on your favorite stamp, stamp set or cover with a description of why it attracts your interest. Multiple entries are encouraged especially if you have a favorite US stamp as well as those from other countries. You can submit your own stamp autobiography or interview a fellow club member and report on how he or she got started in collecting including his or her current interests. If you are unable to scan stamp images, let me know the catalogue number of the stamp(s) and I can find a public domain illustration of the stamp to illustrate your text. In the case of a unique cover, let me know and we can arrange to have it scanned. Send your contributions to me as an attachment to an email (denlyn59@yahoo.com). Microsoft Word format is preferred although I can accept articles in *pdf* format.