



The Circuit

AFFILIATE OF: APS & COPO

The Official Journal of the International Society of Worldwide Stamp Collectors

ROSTER ADDITIONS

- #413 William D. Radford..... 10/25/89 No Both
5144 I-AH-Maytah Rd.
Oshkosh, WI 54901
- #414 Solomon Studnitzer..... 11/06/89 Yes Used
100-02 Dreiser Loop
Bronx, NY 10475
- #415 Russell G. Ryle..... 11/16/89 Yes Used
P.O. Box 2466
Bloomington, Ind. 47401
- #416 Karl F. Steinberg..... 11/25/89 Yes Both
P.O. Box 12017, A Beckett St.
Melbourne 3000, Victoria, Australia
- #417 Allen F. Soule..... 11/25/89 Yes Both
736 Chomley St.
Windsor 3181, Victoria, Australia
- #418 Wolford K. Dow..... 11/25/89 Yes Both
3337 Cesery Blvd.
Jacksonville, FL 32211
- #419 Susan Myhra..... 11-27-89
P.O. Box 505
Huntington Beach, Calif. 92648
- #420 John W. Hoard..... 11/28/89 Yes Both
3204 17th St. N.E.
Washington, DC 20018
- #421 Joe Palko..... 12/11/89 Yes Both
779 Trottingham Drive
Schenectady, NY 12309
- #422 Charles B. Leavenworth..... 12/11/89 Yes Both
9025 E. Calle Playa
Tucson, AZ 85715
- #423 Elvin Henson..... 12/22/89 Yes Both
2050 Sweet Briar Lane
Jacksonville, FL 32217
- #424 James E. Lyman..... 12/27/89 Yes Both
152 Oak Knoll Circle
Millersville, PA 17551

(Look for address corrections in Secy.-Treasurer. Herb Holland's report.)

CLERKS REJECT RECENT STAMPS

Some recent U.S. postal issues have been rejected by postal clerks as "pictures of stamps." Some clerks failed to recognize imperforate souvenir sheets, or stamps cut from them, as valid postage stamps. Also rejected by some was the self-stick Eagle stamp.

Not only were the stamps canceled or defaced, but they were also returned to the sender with postage due.

This wouldn't happen if the USPS refrained from creating postal novelties meant to be sold to collectors, hoping they would never be used for postage. That's not the proper way to end the postal deficit.

British commemorate Penny Black with set of five definitive stamps

This sounds like a philatelic first—at least, it sounds rather odd: The British Post Office issued on Jan. 10 a set of five definitive stamps to commemorate the origin of penny postage 150 years ago. The stamps look exactly like the Machin head definitives already in use except that a bust of Queen Victoria is placed behind that of Queen Elizabeth II.

The Penny Black was issued in May, 1840, but the commemorative-definitives came out well before the anniversary date and will remain on sale throughout the year.

The denominations are 15p bright blue (second-class rate), 20p black (first-class rate), 29p purple, 34p slate and 37p red. They are printed by Harrison and Sons, Ltd.

Prior to 1840, the high cost of postage was usually paid by the recipient, based on distance and number of pages. The Penny Black and its two-penny blue companion were issued in 1840 and are credited with revolutioniz-

ing the social structure of England and the rest of the world, making it possible for anyone to mail and receive letters.

Today, the postal service founded by Sir Rowland Hill handles more mail in a week than in all of 1840, delivering some 54 million pieces of mail to the nation's 24 million addresses.

The Penny Black is often thought to be rare and expensive but it is neither. Like the U.S. Zeppelin airmails, they have become status symbols among collectors and the story behind the stamp makes it popular and sought after. Excellent copies can be had for less than \$100, and plenty are available.

NEW EDITOR NAMED

Big news of the month: *The Circuit* has a new editor, effective with the next issue. Rita Kallal (#26), the first to hold the job, has agreed to take it on again. She had continued to handle the printing and mailing but her duties in the family-owned print shop didn't allow time for putting it together. That situation has changed, fortunately for ISWSC members.

James Burt (#189), who accepted the editorship for about a year simply to prevent the demise of the newsletter, has enjoyed doing it but really didn't have the time to spare from his monthly publication, *Mid-South Golfer*, and had been neglecting his stamp customers. The change should make everybody happy.

Send copy, advertising and address changes to:

Rita Kallal (#26)
611 Northwood Drive
West Monroe, LA 71291

2 PRINTERS PRODUCE 1990 LOVE STAMP

The 1990 Love stamp was released Jan. 18 in Romance, Ark., a little over a year after the design was unveiled. The stamp will be a little larger than a definitive, a little smaller than a commemorative.

The sheet version was produced by the U.S. Bank Note Co., the first stamp produced by that company since it purchased American Bank Note Co. last year. The booklet stamps are produced by the Bureau of Engraving and Printing.

Having two printers produce the stamps is resulting in two distinct varieties.

Member shares pen pal's poem

Sue Hoover (#109) of East Wenatchee, Wash., each year in lieu of Christmas cards sends a one-page newsletter in which she comments on family activities, the economy, the ecology, and anything else that seems interesting, appropriate and timely. With her latest she included a poem sent to her by a "good pen pal stamp-trading friend" in South Africa. Whoever wrote it evidently has had good experiences in such relationships:

It's rather wonderful, I think,
When friends are made by pen and ink,
A piece of paper blue or white
And someone decides that he will write
To someone he has never seen
Who lives where he has never been.

A pen becomes a magic wand,
Two strangers begin to correspond.
Not strangers long, but soon good friends,
Just note how their last letter ends,
How pleasant their exchange of views,
Their comments on important news.

Two friends quite far apart
Can gladden each other's heart,
Can nourish, too, each other's mind
With goodly thoughts in letters kind.
It's truly wonderful, I think,
When friends are made by pen and ink.

SECRETARY-TREASURER'S REPORT

While this is being written on 28 Dec. 1989, by the time you read it we will be well into the new decade of the 90s. I hope you all had a very blessed Christmas and that your new year has started off well.

There certainly has been lots of world news lately and, of course, it all has philatelic repercussions. How many of us are used to turning our noses up at "iron curtain" stamps? Now what? How about special covers from Berlin the day the wall opened, or from Panama the day of Noriega's downfall? What will the new stamps from these countries be like? Any Romanian specialists out there? Yes, exciting times.

But there's still the routine. We have address changes for:

Nielsen (#29) to 5455 Sierra Dr., Apt. 1007, Dallas, TX 75231
Zarub (#329) to Sunset Hammock #8D, 94220 Overseas Highway, Tavernier, FL 33070
Stalling (#338) to Y70 Rt. 4, Lake Lotowana, MO 64063
Stromberg (#378) to 10335J Malcolm Circle, Cockeysville, MD 21030
Consenheim (#260) to P.O. Box 3188, Station D, Ontario, Canada M2R 3G6

The resignation, due to ill health, of Ron Rummel (#9), one of our hardest-working charter members, is announced with regret.

Seven of our number have failed to renew and are therefore dropped from the rolls: Thomas (#101), Ross (#103), Wilson (#107), Bejma (#108), Mazzano (#249), Bourlier (#320), and

Williams (#323). We have 12 new members and those roster additions will be found elsewhere in this issue. 79% of our members are on the October dues cycle. Thank you for your cooperation.

The following donations are acknowledged with thanks:

Bosler (#133) \$2.00
Douglass (#295) \$20.00

Also, thanks to those who sent donations in to Dave with their ballots.

Manuel Domingo (#375) has made what I think is an excellent suggestion: He says by using a series of code letters after the members' names and addresses in the roster a lot more information could be provided. This would facilitate finding other members who have interests or skills that would intrigue you.

I hope to put this suggestion into effect in 1990. To do so I will have to work out the codes and go through the records and code each member. This will be no small task. If any of you have suggestions on this process I am certainly open to them. I hope to hear from a lot of you on this.

As of this writing our treasury balance is about \$2,000. However, we still owe for the last issue of *The Circuit* and the roster. Nonetheless you can see we are in pretty good shape in this regard. A complete financial statement will appear in the next issue. Thanks to all of you for your help!

—Herbert Holland (#31)

VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Although only a few members attended the ISWSC meeting at VAPEX '89 in Virginia Beach, Va., the society received some good publicity through participation in the exhibition's youth program. Many young, smiling faces were observed at the show. Also, at least two members—Bunny Kaplan and John Hotchner—received awards for their exhibits.

Overall attendance at the show was good. The first-day-of-issue ceremony for the 25¢ Eagle and Shield adhesive stamp immediately preceded the opening of VAPEX '89 and added much to the philatelic activities.

A good supply of donated stamps is now on hand and will be parceled out as requests are received. Among others, donations will be sent to some of the organizations listed in the last issue of *The Circuit*. Assistance for this program has been offered by a new member, Edgar Noel, and more activity is expected in the near future. — Ken Costilow (#142)

Tom Ginsberg Reports On Catalog Orders

Writing Nov. 24, Tom Ginsberg (#70) reports that 26 volumes of the 1990 Scott catalogs had been ordered, by 12 members. (A few more have been ordered since that letter was written.) Tom said eight Vol. 1, eight Vol. 2, four Vol. 3, four Vol. 4 and two Vol. 5 catalogs were ordered.

Next year, he said, he would like to start earlier in an attempt to speed up delivery. As orders and money arrived in Oshkosh, Tom had to tell William Radford of Nordic Stamps how many to order from Scott. The catalogs came to Nordic and were turned over to Tom for reshipment.

With an early start, and with orders received a month before release date, he can ship them to buyers about two weeks earlier than the 1990s. Price and release date will be published in *The Circuit*.

The catalogs are quite expensive to mail, but Tom's price is postpaid. That's not all—the price is more than five dollars under most store prices. We are sure the members appreciate the service and the savings.

RAECH'S RUMINATIONS

By RH (#363)

By now the holidays have passed, the New Year is well under way and we have our "new" officers at the helm. Congrats, guys, and thanks for serving one more time.

I don't make New Year's resolutions any more. I don't keep them, anyway. I prefer to look back to see what last year was like. Did a lot of stamping, added a bunch of stuff to my collection(s), joined ISWSC, wrote a few articles for *The Circuit*, made some new stamping friends through the group and at a bourse I attend regularly. A busy year and a good year—at least for me.

Only sent in one lot for our regular auction. Didn't have time for any more, but I'm already gathering stuff for next year. Time has a way of moving along. If you didn't get the chance to submit something, it's not too early to start thinking about it. Sorry to hear that it was necessary to drop the Donation Auction.

Was going to comment on Bill Welch's "Editorial Letter" concerning the number of APS members (2,669) who are registered as general or worldwide collectors. Glad to see we are making an effort to contact these "lost" souls. If I remember, I think I registered as a general collector when I joined.

Just an observation, but I did drop out of the APS for about a year or so. They sent me an invitation to rejoin, which I did. Any thoughts about inviting our dropouts to re-enlist?

In an earlier RR column, I mentioned that I had started a Trains topical collection. Well, add to that the beginnings of a Trolley Car stamp and postcard collection (throw in a few Train postcards as well). Got to get a grip on myself. Always biting off more than I can chew. Also started a collection of Christmas stamps (maybe a few postcards) for my daughter and future grandchild. Maybe the bug will bite her—tried before but it didn't last long. Maybe this time! I'm sure you know someone with a special interest in something. Why not start a topical collection for them?

Let me make a few observations about the Scott pricing situation. At the bourse I attend, some dealers are using the Scott prices as they appear in the catalogs. Some haven't made up their minds. I received a mail sale catalog from a major house and they state, flat out, that they are staying with the 1989 cat. values. (Some dealers are still using the '88 catalog.)

One exchange I'm involved with has indicated that they will be making a cash adjustment but hasn't said when or on what basis. The APS sales circuit has always expounded about keeping prices low for "better" sales. Are they going to return all the old books so that members can adjust their prices? Their silence has been deafening.

When I joined the ISWSC, I fully intended to join the Exchange. I've

purposely held off, hoping the dust would settle. I'm still going to join, but when? Anyone else out there holding back for the same reason?

(Editor's note: If the net prices in sales books are reasonable, it should not be necessary to change them just because the catalog values changed. On the other hand, there is no equitable way to exchange on the basis of catalog values unless everybody is using the same edition of the catalog.)

OBITUARY Glenn Mitchell

We have been informed, belatedly, of the sad passing of one of ISWSC's most enthusiastic members and supporters, Glenn Mitchell of Santa Cruz. Glenn died in his sleep at a Veterans Home the morning before Christmas, 1988.

Many members will remember Glenn as the organizer of a Disabled Veterans chapter within ISWSC; Glenn himself spent much of his life as such and had a history of heart problems prior to his death. He was an active trader of stamps, including a frequent correspondence with me, and will be sorely missed by those of us whom he favored with his constant optimism and his hand-drawn greeting cards and stamp art. I will miss him, and ISWSC is something less without him.

—Dave Nelson (#25)

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Stamps at prices to please you. Tell us your collecting interests. (APS #52074, ISWSC #413.) Nordic Stamps, 5144 I-Ah-Maytah Rd., Dept. WW, Oshkosh, WI 54901. (2)

WORLDWIDE STAMPS ON APPROVAL
Quality stamps at a competitive price. Look over a selection in your home. Fill some of those empty spaces now. Don't wait. Call or write today. 704-321-4655. JACK SACKETT, P.O. Box 1524, Andrews, NC 28901. (6)

BANK MIXTURE—Recent postally used worldwide medium, high values from London banks, shipping. 1/4 pound, \$18.00. Single paper. WILLIAM GERLACH, Box 6637, Lake Worth, FL 33466. (6)



ISWSC SALES CIRCUIT

Clean those closets and turn those hoards of duplicates into CASH.

Enter them in the ISWSC Sales Circuit so other members can add them to their albums and add a little money to your pocket.

Write to:

ISWSC Sales Circuit
Bruce C. Negrycz (#331)
33 Franklin Ave.
Clifton, NJ 07011
USA

Have lots of blank spaces to fill in your albums? Write for a trial selection from the Sales Circuit.

Scott-Bashing a Popular Indoor Sport

What subject had the most articles and the most total words printed about it in all of 1989 in the philatelic press? We don't know where you can find an official count but we'll bet it was the Scott catalogs and their new pricing policy. We clipped a mountain of items and the file got so bulky we gave up and threw it away.

The amazing thing about it was that the writers were not all saying the same thing. Each had something to contribute. And it's still going on. Here's a few new ones for your consideration, starting with one from ISWSC Pres. Ken Jenkins:

An Opinion on the New Scott Pricing Policy

I have been following all of the pros and cons of the new Scott pricing policy. In going thru the old (1988) and new (1990) catalogs, I find that Scott is just about right on in most cases. Stamps that were selling at 50% to 60% of catalog are now priced at that level. Many better issues that were selling at full cat. or more are now priced at that level. Naturally, there are some errors, but the percent is infinitesimal when compared to the total number of entries in the catalog.

The natural tendency of human nature is to fight change and I believe that is what we are seeing here. I have copies of Minkus, Stanley Gibbons, and Michel; I much prefer Scott. I must add, though, that I am not able to make full use of Michel as I am not fluent in German.

My biggest complaint about Scott is incompleteness. When I have stamps in my collection that are on paper and postally used, they should be listed and not relegated to a trash heap because of political reasons.

'Information Obsolete, Accuracy Quite Suspect'

K. Allard of Schaumburg, Ill., writing in *Stamp Collector*, has this to say:

"... First, there could not possibly have been data on all stamps listed in the catalog. Therefore... Scott must have applied a percentage factor to all

stamps that they did not have a published price for..."

"The second major area that hasn't been presented is best characterized by those who have praised Scott for joining the rest of the catalog publishers in valuing stamps in retail terms. This simply is not true."

Allard goes on to say that retail priced catalogs are issued by firms listing prices at which they will sell stamps; this is not the case with Scott, which does not stock or sell stamps, and the prices listed in Scott are prices in effect six months to a year before the catalog was published. "Of what use," he asks, "is the 1989 price of a car when you are looking at a 1990 model?..." Please keep in mind that the information is both obsolete and the accuracy must be quite suspect. Use your own judgment and shop with a dealer you trust."

Want Lists Dropped, Investigation Begun

Kurt J. Weiss, longtime specialist in Guatemala, says in *Stamp Wholesaler* that he has suspended all want list services and also will not supply new issues of Guatemala or mint by-the-year sets. He says Scott's price-cutting is under investigation preparatory to filing a complaint with the U.S. Federal Trade Commission "to get us some relief from further price butcherings that reportedly are even right now pre-planned for Volume 3 of Scott's 1991 catalog."

Weiss said "someone outside the

stamp trade... a brilliant international lawyer... came up with a startling revelation—nowhere in these books is it stated that the numbers on the right-hand side are price valuations in U.S. dollars... are the prices in U.S. dollars or are they simple numbers without any monetary significance?"

Editor Adds His Two Cents' Worth

Scott's pricing of United States stamps is so suspect that *Stamp Collector* has begun publishing Brookman Stamp Prices, one page each week. It is the retail price list of the Brookman firm, using Scott numbers for identification.

I have long been critical of Scott pricing, which has made their catalogs useful for little but identification of stamps. And there, too, Scott has many failings, many inconsistencies.

Many collectors prefer chronological listings of stamps rather than putting semipostals into a separate section with numbers preceded by "B," airmails in another list with numbers preceded by "C," etc. Even worse is their failure to stick to this system. You will find both semipostals and airmails listed with regular stamps in some countries.

For a flagrant example look at some of the Latin American countries, most of which issue little but airmail stamps. In some of these country listings there is a hiatus of quite a few years where no new airmails are shown. Then look at the regular listings and find footnotes saying that certain values of sets are airmail stamps.

Scott's U.S. Specialized should be the most complete listing in the world of U.S. stamps, but the Michel catalog of Germany lists varieties apparently unknown to Scott.

The Scott-bashing will continue because there are a lot of unhappy people out there wishing someone would come along and publish a better catalog. But, hey, in the meantime the publisher is reaping the benefits of the controversy and the attendant publicity and selling record numbers of catalogs. That will continue until someone does publish that better catalog.

USPS Innovations

In a letter to *Linn's*, Carlos Sarabia of Houston, Texas, proposes some "innovations" the USPS might want to consider for future issues:

Glow-in-the dark stamps; set-tenant coils with continuous designs; stamps made with recycled paper; stamps with flavored gum; triangular stamps, and Christmas stamps in coil form.