



Sno-King Stamp Club Philatelic News

Everett, 2nd Wednesday, 7:30 PM – 9 PM
Snohomish County PUD
2320 California Street

Edmonds, 3rd Friday, 7 PM – 9 PM
South County Senior Center
220 South Railroad Avenue

Volume 23

April, 2017

Number 4

Online at: <http://sno-kingstampclub.freehostia.com/> copies of these newsletters available there, too!

Everett Meeting - Wednesday, April 12th, 7:30 PM

- **Auction Time.** Assemble your auction lots and roll over your duplicates into cash for somebody else's duplicates! No limit to how many lots you can offer. Suggested – maybe \$2-\$10 lots, items could be modern or the well-aged variety, singles for more desirable items, group lots for lesser value items. Details page 2.
- Bring some auction money & as always, bring some Show and Tell items to talk about.

Most meetings also include **show-and-tell**, along with time to **buy and sell** stamps

Edmonds Meeting - Friday, April 21st, 7 PM

Join us in Edmonds! We always have a nice time visiting and looking through stamps.

Bring along your duplicates to sell and trade.

Bring some Show and Tell items to talk about

2017 Club Officers

President:	Steve LaVergne	206-361-3774;	stampingsteve42@hotmail.com
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Webmaster & Newsletter Editor:	Kurt Lange,	425-357-0551;	http://sno-kingstampclub.freehostia.com/ ktk.lange@frontier.com

Everett 2017 meeting dates at the PUD: (2nd Wednesday of each month)
4/12, 5/10, 6/14, 7/12, (Aug BBQ), 9/13, 10/11, 11/8, (Dec dinner)

Edmonds 2017 meeting dates at the South County Senior Center: (on the 3rd - or sometimes 4th - Friday of the month)
4/21, 5/19, 6/23, (none-July), (Aug BBQ), 9/22, 10/20, (none-Nov.), (Dec dinner)

President's Column

I had hoped to make our April meeting in Everett the first of this year's dealer nights. However, that will happen in May. So, our **April** Everett meeting will be a club auction. Generally, about two meetings a year are devoted to auctions, which gives members a chance to showcase their more desirable duplicates.

I encourage members to follow certain guidelines. These are not mandatory. However, I believe that following them will boost sales. Auction items should be moderately priced, perhaps between \$2 and \$10. They should fall in that realm that separates the common from the unaffordable. Modern stamps are more appealing when offered as country lots. Older material sells well when presented as singles or in sets.

You will need to provide necessary information. You should describe the item sold. Usually, a Scott catalog number will suffice. You might add details if your stamp is a watermark, perforation, or printing-method variety. You should enter both the catalog value and your reserve value - that being the minimum you will accept for your stamp or lot. One final item - Don't forget your name.

Keith Ferris, who is based in Marysville and who is a fixture at local stamp shows, will kick off the 2017 lineup of dealer nights in **May**. Carol Edholm will showcase her Peafowl Philatelics stock in October. We have dealer night openings in June, July, September and November. I have spoken to three additional dealers who have expressed interest. Some may need to pay dues in order to qualify.

Months that don't attract a dealer will be devoted to either a club auction or another round of APS circuit books. March's offerings of APS circuit books proved popular, with club members spending more than \$400.

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What is going on with philately in Whatcom County? The American Philatelist, organ of the American Philatelic Society, reported in February that six collectors in that county had applied for membership. Four of those live in Lynden. In all, there were 10 applicants from Washington State.

Each issue devotes a couple of pages to changes in membership, covering applications, deaths and resignations. It behooves members to peruse these pages, simply to make sure the Grim Reaper hasn't shuttered their Scott Internationals. The March issue had a heading labeled "corrections." We were informed a Pennsylvania woman and an Ohio man had been incorrectly listed as "deceased."

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I previously reported on my exertions helping with the move of the Collectors Club of Seattle library. I rescued issues of Weekly Philatelic Gossip (WPG) from the late 1930s and early 1940s. I will mine this trove for nuggets to include in the club newsletter. That era was an interesting time for the hobby then in transition.

In the early 1930s, stamp collecting seemed to involve flocking to the nearest post office on the first day a newly issued stamp was generally available. Collectors would load up on sheets, plate blocks and other multiples. Later in the decade, collectors discovered the appeal of foreign stamps.

Even in the 1930s, philatelic writers bemoaned the folly of attempting a worldwide collection. They decried the profusion of new issues that made a global collection an impossible undertaking. It is ironic that the stream of new issues then was a trickle compared to what the hobby has experienced in recent decades.

In 1937, America was still struggling to find its way out of the worldwide Depression. According to WPG, the average collector could afford to spend only two dollars a week filling his album.

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Speaking of the Collectors Club of Seattle, that venerable organization will resume its monthly auctions in April. That club hasn't held an auction since October. The religious organization that leased the building declined to renew the Collectors Club sublease. The April, May and June auctions will take place in a church building on the east side of Bellevue. During the next three months, the club will decide on a permanent location for its auctions.

Lacking any permanent space, the Collectors Club will divest itself of its considerable library, currently in storage. It will explore offering certain items to the Oregon philatelic library. The club has already hauled truckloads of obscure philatelic periodicals, such as the Monthly Bulletin of the Trinidad Philatelic Society, to recycling.

The Collectors Club will auction its holding of recent Scott catalogs, which it bought to make available for lending to members. Without a permanent library location, loaning catalogs to members is simply not feasible.

While sorting through this library, I came across a member handbook, which some club officer endeavored to update in 2000. One section was entitled, "Bylaws." I opened the handbook to the bylaws section. There, it read, "We are still searching for the bylaws. They will be included when they are found." The club currently has possession of its bylaws.

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Unlike other stamp clubs, the Collectors Club charges sales tax on auction purchases. I recently learned the reason. In 1961, the proprietors of the Willard stamp shop in downtown Seattle filed a lawsuit, contending that exempting the Collectors Club from any sales tax requirement gave the club an unfair advantage. The State Tax Commission intervened, agreeing with the Willards. So, for 55 years, the Collectors Club has been charging sales tax. Sadly, it's way too late to organize a boycott of Willard's.

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Speaking of the profusion of modern stamp issues, I recently saw a dealer's ad offering 500 different France. This collection covered a mere six-year span. That represents 83 stamps a year. France seems to have a practice of not settling for a single stamp when twenty will do.

I have a fondness for Japanese stamps. To house my 21st Century collection, I purchased album pages covering the period from 2003 through 2014. In one set of pages covering four years, I mounted 500-plus stamps. It seems I still have an equal number of empty spaces.

Despite relatively high catalog values, postally used Japanese stamps can be purchased inexpensively in bulk, such that the pages might be more costly than the stamps which fill them.

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According to the Edmonds Beacon, changes are coming to the fast-food royalty intersection close to Aurora Stamps, the intersection where a Dairy Queen sits kitty-corner from a Burger King. That intersection is going on a road diet familiar to Seattle motorists.

Currently, there are two lanes of traffic in both directions of 76th Avenue West. The City of Edmonds will replace that scheme with one lane in each direction, with left-turn lanes. In addition, there will be bicycle lanes in all four directions.

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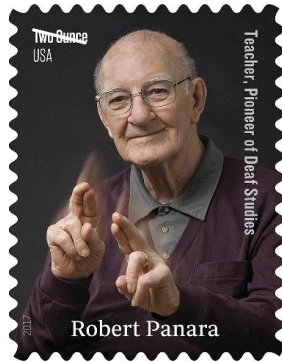
I recently read a newspaper account of an internal Vatican tiff involving the Knights of Malta. Near the end of the article, I read that the Knights of Malta issues its own postage stamps. What? In which volume of Scott's will I find listings for the Knights of Malta? Upon further inquiry, I learned, not surprisingly, that stamps issued by the Knights are Cinderellas and not valid for postal use.

I discovered that the Knights of Malta recently issued stamps, in euros, commemorating the 50th anniversary of its first stamps, whose currency was expressed in "scudi." I also located a dealer who offers 200 different "Sovereign Military Order of Malta" stamps for \$59.50. If you buy, don't expect an abundance of postally used specimens.

During its 900-year history, the Knights of Malta periodically exercised sovereignty over certain Mediterranean islands, Malta being the last. Napoleon expelled the Knights from Malta in 1798, and France ruled that island until Napoleon's forced exile. Currently, the Knights of Malta is headquartered in Rome. The organization leases a fort from the Maltese government, but that agreement grants the Knights no authority to operate a postal system.

USPS - New Issues for April 2017

April 11 **Robert Panara**
ROCHESTER, NY



April 20 **Delicioso**
ALBUQUERQUE, NM



April 28 **Green Succulent - Global Forever**
SAN FRANCISCO (WESTPEX)



The Controversial Zeppelin Stamps That Enraged 1930s Collectors

The U.S. Post Office ended up destroying most of them.

from www.AtlasObscura.com

By Cara Giaimo MARCH 20, 2017



[The rarest and most expensive of the 1930 *Graf Zeppelin* stamps. U.S. POST OFFICE/PUBLIC DOMAIN]

On May 21, 1930, the world's biggest airship, the *Graf Zeppelin*, floated over the Cape Verde Islands and slowed down over an unusual target: the Porto Praia post office. When the ship had maneuvered to just the right spot, its crew threw something out of the gondola, attached to a small parachute. As frightened crowds gathered below to watch, the mysterious object fluttered down from the sky and landed right on the building's roof. It was a big sack of mail.

Over the next few weeks, the *Graf Zeppelin* would complete its first Pan-American tour, flying to Rio de Janeiro, Ohio, and New Jersey, and then back over the Atlantic to Spain and its home country, Germany. Although much glitz and glamour accompanied the airship's comings and goings, its journey was funded by something more mundane: those sacks of mail, via the stamps affixed to the letters inside.



[The *Graf Zeppelin* itself, flying over Brazil during its 1930 Pan-American Tour. DESCONHECIDO/PUBLIC DOMAIN]

At 775 feet from nose to tail—about as long as the Golden Gate Bridge is tall—the Graf was the largest flying machine the world had ever seen. Its operating costs were proportionate, clocking at about \$4 per mile (or \$54 per mile in today’s money). Although passengers paid steep ticket prices, especially on early flights, the ship could only hold about 20 of them at a time, limiting that revenue stream. And despite the fanfare that greeted its every move, attempts to charge admission to view it on the ground didn’t go over well with the public, who were generally hurting from the Great Depression, and who wanted their close-ups for free.

Instead, the Graf’s parent company, German Zeppelin Airship Works, decided to recoup costs by commissioning special stamps from the countries on the tour route. Only letters with these stamps on them would be accepted onto the airship, which would then deliver them to their destinations. This was the only commercial transatlantic air mail option available at the time, and was days faster than sending a letter by boat. Brazil, Bolivia, Germany, and Spain all made the Zeppelin stamps, and 93 percent of the proceeds from each stamp was funneled back into German Zeppelin Airship Works.



[At 65 cents, the green *Graf Zeppelin* stamp was the least expensive. U.S. POST OFFICE/PUBLIC DOMAIN]

After some debate, the U.S. Post Office decided to get in on the game as well, designing and printing a run of *Graf Zeppelin* stamps in a matter of weeks. They called this a gesture of goodwill toward Germany, and pledged to also contribute 93 percent of the revenue to the Airship Works. Secretly, though, they expected that an enthusiastic population of American collectors would snap up most of the stamps, keeping them out of circulation, and ensuring that the Post Office held onto most of the money.

So on April 19, 1930, the USPO issued three stamps, each with a different design and for a particular amount. The first, a 65-cent stamp, was green, and showed the Graf cruising eastward above the sea. This stamp would get a postcard over the ocean once, from the U.S. or Brazil to Spain or Germany. The second, a \$1.30 stamp, was brown, and featured the zeppelin heading west over a cropped map of the world labeled with the tour’s three main cities (although New York, here, stands in for New Jersey). That one would get a letter across the sea.



[This letter's three *Graf Zeppelin* stamps let it travel across the ocean twice. U.S. POST OFFICE/PUBLIC DOMAIN]

The last stamp, in a bright sky blue, cost \$2.60, and displayed the Graf high in the clouds, superimposed over a small globe. This one was more fun than practical—it would get your letter round-trip, over to Europe and then back again. (One young boy from Ontario sent himself a letter this way, and made the papers.) The stamps' release was trumpeted in newspapers from New York City to Santa Cruz.

The joke, though, was on the post office. The economic hardship that led so many Depression-era Americans to be buoyed by the sight of a massive airship also made it difficult for any of them to pay \$4.55—50 times the cost of a loaf of bread—for a set of three collectible stamps. The U.S. printed 1,000,000 of each color, but only sold about 227,000 zeppelin stamps total, most of which actually did end up on mail delivered by the Graf.

The Post Office eventually destroyed the remainder of the stamps, making collectors, who quickly accused them of creating artificial scarcity, even angrier. But that's what happens when you try to cross the world's biggest zeppelin.

[Stamp of Approval is an occasional column on Atlas Obscura that explores the designs and backstories of the world's strangest stamps. Have a stamp you want investigated? Send it along to cara@atlasobscura.com.]

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