

The PhilateliKid

The newsletter for Stamp Collecting Clubs for Kids (SCCFK)

Collect Stamps (The Most Educational Hobby)

www.stampcollectingclubsforkids.org

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Stamp Shows, Part II

By Lawrence Oliver, 26 March 2018

Your latest *Philatelikid* (March 1, 2018) prompted me to write, as the current concern amongst some APS members to eliminate unprofitable shows threatens the hobby. The points I want to make or emphasize are the following:

1. The APS exists to further the hobby, not to make a return to investors. Granted, the old saying still applies: “No money, no mission,” but that refers to the balance sheet, not any individual event. Any organization with a social goal must have an outreach function to increase awareness and expand the hobby. That goal implicitly carries a risk of non-profitability. But to deny outreach for the sake of profit dooms the primary mission.
2. People who collect stamps have as a primary interest to make their albums something of which they can be proud and enjoy, admittedly, usually in the privacy of their home. For those of us who do philatelic research and write or exhibit on it, the goal is similar, even though the outcome of it differs: we like to add to our collections in a way that furthers the research ! The goal of expanding the collection **requires** dealers (including auction houses). Many dealers are really strapped financially. Table rentals are really very high. The time dealers spend working up purchased collections and searching for the best saleable material is very time-consuming and the return-per-hour is abysmal. I’ve been there – Parchment Stamp Company, Kalamazoo, Michigan, a brick-and-mortar store that was a wonderfully enjoyable time, but with little return. Bottom line: we need the dealers, and stamp shows ABSOLUTELY MUST NOT rely on them for the income to sustain the show.
3. Recognition and inclusion of youth members in events is vital. The idea of including youth members in the recognition dinners – the high cost “rubber chicken” dinners – would be inspiring as well as rewarding. We need to have a better understanding of how the next generations are viewing stamp collecting. They are not going to be able to collect and do research on the US Classics from the 1840 -1850’s – it has been done and is way beyond the budget of most collectors. Let us allow them to explore new areas in the field, and learn from their explorations and enjoy them.
4. My last comment relates to those of us who are in the “advanced” age of collecting. We are often retired. We have a lifetime of traveling, but wish to reduce the travel agonies. We are now able to and desire to spend time with the collection. Placing the primary national stamp shows at locations on the east coast is severely detrimental to the participation of us so-called

“mature” collectors. Our request to the APS: keep and expand placing shows across the span of the US: we all need it !

Larry lives in North Carolina has traveled extensively as a dealer and stamp collector. He is active in his local stamp club, the Ashville Stamp Club.

Face-Different Collections

Many stamp collectors take satisfaction of having a “complete” collection. The concept of what is “complete” is open for interpretation, because if covers are included (as is often the case in exhibits) then a collection will never be complete as long as one cover exists that is not part of the collection. For that matter, every used stamp with a cancellation differs, at least slightly, from every other used stamp. Some exhibits at stamp shows seem to attempt to include every known possibility, but aside from that, one fun way many collectors use is to attempt to obtain one copy of every face-different stamp in a series.

Stamps are face-different when they substantially vary from other stamps. Robert W. Martin has developed a definition of face-different stamps that attempts to be quite specific. It specifically addresses differences in perforations, coils, booklets, souvenir sheets, and imperforate varieties (not face-different.) Minor engraving differences, secret marks, paper varieties, gum differences, printing methods, and minor color changes are addressed also. (Not face-different.) Changes in the tiny date located outside of the main vignette ARE face-different. Changes in color by at least one different band of the rainbow (like from red to yellow) are face-different, but from “deep red” to “dark red” or similar variations are not face different. At a certain point, being face different becomes subjective, so no definition can be universally applied, but as one Supreme Court Justice observed about an obscenity case before the Court, “I cannot define it, but I know it when I see it.”

The fun aspect of collecting face-different stamps is that a collection can be declared complete much more easily when minor differences are ignored. Those minor differences are important to specialists, but to the vast majority of collectors, face-different is what counts.

Here is an example of a set of face different stamps that I find particularly enjoyable. Each stamp is noticeable different from the others because of one (or more) of the following, and it makes a nice mini-collection: country, denomination, color, and/or design elements. Scott Catalogue defined a series like this as a “common design” (symbol “CD”) which are illustrated and defined in the first few pages of each volume. This mini-collection is identified in Scott as CD301: Silver Jubilee. Windsor Castle and King George V. According to Scott, there are 249 stamps in this CD set. (Some have different designs but are for the same commemoration of the Silver Jubilee so Scott includes them anyway.) So, as you can see, the collection is nowhere near being complete, and I am still looking to add the ones I am missing. None of these stamps is particularly rare or expensive. Kids like these stamps for several reasons: 1. They all feature a King wearing a crown. 2. They are colorful – not monochromatic. 3. They feature a famous castle – at least most of them do. 4. Many are from exotic, far-away places. 5. Some are from “dead countries. 6. They feature different currencies.

Note: In making stamps “pop” to kids, I always try to add some background information. For example, when stamps from Jamaica are discussed, I ask how many kids present have been to Disneyland. (Most have.) I then ask how many have been to see the “Pirates of the Caribbean.” Usually I then ask the kids to find the Caribbean on the globe. (We always have a globe of the world at our meetings.) Jamaica is then found, and I inform them that the Pirates of the Caribbean were from Jamaica.



What do you think? Thoughtful comments are welcomed and will be published, so please feel free to write! (150 words or less, please.) Mail it to Robert W. Martin, P.O. Box 1809, Kihei, Hawaii 96753-1809. It should be written as if the reader knows nothing about your topic, so beginners can understand it.



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