



The newsletter for Stamp Collecting Clubs for Kids (SCCFK)

Collect Stamps (The Most Educational Hobby)

www.stampcollectingclubsforkids.org

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Pass the Baton

In relay races of Track and Field, a baton is used, which must be passed from one runner to the next. If the baton is not passed, dropped, or if it is incorrectly passed, then the race is over, and your team has lost. In a non-profit organization, “passing the baton” has a special meaning. In specific, it means that the people who have been serving in officer/leadership positions **MUST**, as their first priority, ensure that competent members are sufficiently trained to take over when each officer’s term in office is complete. In cases where the term is indefinite, then a “back-up” needs to be ready to take over when an officer retires, resigns, dies, or is unable to continue because of other requirements such as relocating to a far-away city, health issues, or family issues. As you can imagine, there is a high likelihood that an officer will experience one of these issues, and his/her replacement needs to be ready. Another way of looking at this is that if the current officers have not trained replacements, then they are ENSURING THAT THE BUSINESS WILL CEASE OPERATIONS. You could say in those circumstances that the officers are: **PLANNING ON THE BUSINESS TO EVENTUALLY FAIL.**

Planning? Actually, they are not doing any long-term planning at all, which, of course, is a guarantee of eventual demise.

To see that a non-profit organization continues to thrive, of course, includes more than just training replacements. It also requires that members who can one day eventually serve as replacements are being recruited and become active members. One definition of an active member is a person who is interested enough to attend meetings, and actually volunteer to serve in some capacity. A member who just pays dues, but does not attend and volunteer, is of little value to the continuation of the organization. The value of such an inactive member is limited to the amount of dues helping the financial health of the organization.

We must remember that in volunteer organizations, wealth is **members**. It is not money in the bank. To illustrate this, consider an organization with a million dollars in the bank, but insufficient members to have a quorum. Without a quorum, no business can be done, and therefore the business is dead. However, an organization with a thousand active members, but just one dollar in assets, is NOT dead. With all those members it is easy to raise money by just

asking every member to give a dollar or two, and with that amount of manpower to sponsor several fund-raisers, which could even be going on simultaneously.

The American Philatelic Society (APS) was formed in 1886, almost 140 years ago, under the name of The American Philatelic Association. The first President was John K. Tiffany, a well-known lawyer in St. Louis, Missouri. He served as the President for 10 years. The organization thrived and steadily grew in membership. It has been successfully serving stamp collectors ever since **because future officers were trained and knew what to do.**

The APS now has over 24,000 members, and has net assets of over \$15 million! That sounds impressive, and it is impressive. However, membership has been steadily declining, for several reasons, but as far as I can tell, the major reason is NOT that members are getting old and dying. The decline is because we are not getting new stamp collectors. The hobby just 60 years ago was everywhere, and especially it was popular with children, (back then predominately boys.) Now, it is almost a dead hobby with children. Many children under age 12 do not even know how to address and mail a letter, and most do not know where to obtain a postage stamp, and very few even know how much a postage stamp now costs. (73¢ for a one-ounce letter mailed within the U.S.) All that can be summed up into one phrase: Lack of knowledge. The fact is that once children are given knowledge about our hobby, they become incredibly enthusiastic. Many of you who now are reading this newsletter joined Stamp Collecting Clubs For Kids when you were in elementary school, within the past 24 years.

To me, it is sad to see that the leaders in our hobby for the past 50 years have not recruited and trained enough young people, and gotten them “hooked” on this extremely fun and extremely educational hobby. I do not have an answer to this lack of interest of our leaders for the future of stamp collecting. There have been a few who were dedicated and successful, of course, but they have just not been in large enough numbers to keep us growing. Many of us long-time stamp collectors have seen a dramatic drop in the number of stamp dealers, and the fact that very few stamp dealers today can afford to cater to beginners and youth, who rarely have large amounts of money to spend on stamp collecting. The advertisements and publications about stamp collecting have dropped off, and I now see that paid subscriptions to *Linn's* is just a few thousand. We have been seeing more and more philatelic writers forecasting “gloom and doom” but all I can say about that is: Our hobby will decline even more if we do not do two things: 1. Make ourselves **attractive**, and 2. Make ourselves **desirable**.

I have spoken on this subject numerous times, and I often give this example:

A person goes into an art gallery and sees hundreds of paintings for sale. Many, if not most are very **attractive** to the customer. But the one piece of art **that he buys**, is the **desirable** one.

So, the question is, what can we be doing to make ourselves attractive, and desirable as a hobby, in a world where many other attractive and desirable activities compete with our time. I will write my opinions about that in future *The Philatelikids*, and I welcome your input.

DEAD COUNTRIES

Beginning in October 2024, we illustrated stamps from “Dead Countries.” We looked at Bavaria, Croatia, Cyrenaica, Hawaii, and Newfoundland. This month we will look at **Basutoland**.

Lesotho was formed in 1824 by King Moshoeshoe I. As a result of foreigners encroaching on his land, the King made an agreement in 1868 with the United Kingdom to become a Protectorate, which turned into a British Crown Colony. Basutoland is now named the Kingdom of Lesotho. It is located in the southern part of Africa, and was a British colony from 1884 to 1966. During that period of time the monarchs were Queen Victoria, King Edward VII, King George V, King Edward VIII, King George VI, and Queen Elizabeth II. Basutoland gained its independence from the United Kingdom on October 4, 1966 and was renamed the Kingdom of Lesotho. The Kingdom of Lesotho has lasted from then to the present day. The current monarch is King Letsie III.



At left are stamps from Basutoland. From left to right they feature King George V, King George VI, and two stamps featuring Queen Elizabeth II. The green stamp at left is listed as Scott no. 1.

The first two stamps are denominated $\frac{1}{2}$ d and 3d. The third stamp is denominated 1/. The diagonal line after the number is the symbol for “shilling.” The red stamp is an overprinted stamp. An overprinted stamp is a stamp on which additional information has been added by the Post Office prior to selling the stamp. The lower-case letter “d” is the symbol for “**pence**.” The singular of pence is penny. So, the green stamp’s denomination is a half pence, or half penny, pronounced “Hay Penny.” The blue stamp is denominated “three pence,” which is pronounced “Thrup-Pence,” and the purple stamp is denominated “one shilling.”

Twelve pence = one shilling. 20 shillings = 1 pound. Basutoland never issued a stamp that had a denomination of 1 pound or higher.

The red, overprinted stamp was originally denominated “two shillings, six pence.” When the currency changed in 1961 to go to the decimal system, the stamp was overprinted and sold for 25¢. ¢ is the symbol for “**cents**” – the same symbol that is used in America for “**cents**.” However, in Basutoland, 100¢ = 1 **Rand** (not 1 dollar, as in America.) The symbol for “Rand” is a lower case “r.”

Scott Catalogue lists only 108 stamps issued by Basutoland, and only nine have a catalog value over \$10.00. That means it is fairly inexpensive to get a collection of almost all stamps issued by Basutoland.

After Basutoland – the Kingdom of Lesotho

Lesotho is NOT a “Dead” country. It is a tiny country which issues a lot of different stamps every year, many are very colorful stamps featuring cartoon characters. Lesotho is one of just a few countries that were licensed by Disney to issue stamps featuring Disney characters and Disney movies. According to

Scott Catalogue, Lesotho issued 1,428 stamps between 1966 and 2008. The Scott Catalogue does not list any stamps issued by Lesotho after 2008. I guess the reason for that is that Scott Catalogue has a policy to not list stamps that were not issued to be used as postage, but instead the stamps were made to be sold to stamp collectors.

The Kingdom of Lesotho, formerly Basutoland, is one of three sovereign nations that are **enclaves**. An enclave is a country that is completely surrounded by another country. The other two enclaves are Vatican City, and San Marino, each of which is surrounded by Italy. Lesotho is surrounded by the country South Africa, and therefore is completely landlocked.



The two stamps at left are denominated 3 cents and 15 Lisente. The symbol for Lisente is “s.” From 1966 to 1979 the currency in Lesotho was the same as it was in Basutoland in 1966: 100 cents = 1 Rand. The names of currency was changed in 1979 to 100 Lisente = 1 Maloti.

Most of the stamps issued by Lesotho list the country’s name simply “Lesotho.” A few issues list the country name as “Kingdom of Lesotho.” The 15s stamp at the right is one of the few stamps that say “Kingdom of Lesotho.” The 3c stamp at left features in the upper right-hand corner a portrait of King Moshoeshoe II. Here he has a beard and wears eyeglasses. Earlier stamps of Lesotho featured King Moshoeshoe II with no beard and no eyeglasses.

At the present time Lesotho has approximately 2.2 million people, of which 99.7 % (nearly all) are Bathoso, making Lethoso one of the most ethnically homogenous countries in the world. The language is called Sesotho.

In the May 2022 issue of *The Philatelikid*, we began brief descriptions of various “Back of the Book” (“BOB”) listings in the Scott Catalogues. In subsequent issues we looked at stamps which begin with the letter “B,” “BK,” “C,” “CB,” “CBO,” “CE,” “CL,” “CM,” “CO,” “CVP,” “D,” “E,” “F,” “FA,” “J,” “JQ,” “K,” “L,” “LO,” “LOX,” “M,” “O,” “OXF,” “-P,” “PC,” “PN,” “PR,” “PS,” “Q,” “QE,” “QI,” “R” (Part 1), “R” (Part 2), “RC,” “RD,” “RE,” “REA,” “REF,” “RG,” “RH,” “RK,” “RL,” “RN-D,” “RO,” “RS,” “RV,” “RY,” “SPCVP,” “TD,” “U,” “UC,” “UX,” “UY,” “WS,” “WX,” “#X,” and State, followed by a number. This month we will look at “-S.” All stamps illustrated are from the author’s personal collection, unless otherwise noted.

Stamps Ending with the suffix “S”

Stamps with the suffix “S” are Specimen stamps. Specimen stamps are listed by Scott number for the stamp itself, then followed by the letter “S,” which then is followed by a letter ranging from “A,” to “Q,” which signify the style and size of lettering used in the overprint. At right is Scott no. 63S B.

The Civil War in the United States began on April 12, 1861. The Earliest Known Use (EKU) of this stamp is August 17, 1861. That means that this stamp was used in the North, beginning just 4 months and 5 days after the Civil War began.

Specimen stamps are not valid for postage. Hence, all are valued in Scott in mint condition.



Stamp Collecting Clubs for Kids is a 501(c)(3) organization. Donations are greatly appreciated and if \$10 or more you will be sent a written receipt. You also can donate via PayPal on our website: www.stampcollectingclubsforkids.org or www.yummystampcollecting.org which redirects you to the same website.