

# The PhilateliKid

**The newsletter for Stamp Collecting Clubs for Kids (SCCFK)**

**Collect Stamps (The Most Educational Hobby)**

[www.stampcollectingclubsforkids.org](http://www.stampcollectingclubsforkids.org)

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## Happy Halloween!

Many adults do not know the importance of Halloween to children. To kids in America, the most important holiday is Christmas. The next most important day is their individual birthdays. The third most important day is Halloween!

This month's newsletter is franked with a Jack-O-Lantern stamp. These stamps were issued last year in booklet form only. There are four different Jack-O-Lanterns features. The easiest way to distinguish them is by the number of teeth the Jack-O-Lantern has. The stamps feature Jack-O-Lanterns that have 3, 4, 5, or 9 teeth. Check your envelope to see which one you received!

## Soviet Union

Back in 1957 when I began collecting stamps, nobody referred to the largest country in the world by its proper name – The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. It was called Russia, which was actually one of the “republics” of the USSR. Russia was by far the largest of the USSR republics, both in size and in population. Fourteen other republics were also part of the USSR.

In 1917, revolutionaries in Russia led by Lenin overthrew the czar, Nicolas II. The czar along with his wife the czarina and their five children were captured by revolutionaries and the entire family was murdered on July 17, 1918, and secretly buried in an unmarked mass grave that went undiscovered for 80 years.

Russia was founded in 882. It has been in existence for over 970 years when it issued its first stamps in 1857. Although the revolution occurred in 1917, the new name, the Union of

Soviet Socialist Republics did not appear on stamps for a few years. In 1923, the abbreviation of the name, CCCP first appeared.

Scott Catalogue continued to list CCCP stamps under Russia. On December 26, 1991 the Soviet Union broke up into 15 separate countries, one of which is Russia, officially named the Russian Federation. Stamps from the new Russian Federation are also still being listed in Scott under Russia.

Several countries that became part of the Soviet Union, issued stamps for a few years under their own names, or overprinted stamps of Russia: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Estonia, Georgia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Ukraine. After the breakup in 1991, those countries, along with Byelorussia, Kazakstan, Kurgistan, Moldavia, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan are now issuing their own stamps. – More next month.

The following article is reprinted by permission of its author, Stan Cronwall. It first appeared in the October 2017 issue of *The Post Boy*, the monthly newsletter of the Nevada Stamp Study Society (sometimes called the Reno Stamp Club.)

### **The Lure of a "Dead Country"** by Stan Cronwall

Note: In stamp collecting jargon, a "dead country" is a country that once issued stamps under its own name, but now does not. "CTO" is the abbreviation for Canceled to Order stamps. These are used stamps that never were used for postage, and often still have the original gum on the back.

In an effort to get some of you off the dead tree stumps you are sitting on, and back into the fray, I want to share why I decided to dive head first into one of what are often described as "Dead Countries". I've pretty well completed my quest for German stamps from the 1933-1945 era, as well as the stamps relating to the occupied areas under the Third Reich. Those I don't have are priced to severely stress your credit card, so I have moved on. I also have 53 and counting albums of primarily postcards and covers from that area of specialization. "Ridiculous!"

Now, where to go. I didn't want to become just another doughnut eater and coffee drinker at our meetings. Do I go backward from 1933 to the 12 years of the German Weimar Republic and the inflation era, farther back to the Empire of the Kaiser, World War I and the rush to acquire colonies even though they were of dubious value by comparison to the Brits, France and even Spain. Maybe I should go even farther back to the German States before unification and the time of Bismarck. Or, do I come forward to the occupation of Germany after World War II by the USSR, USA, France and Great Britain.

It took some time for each to get their respective postal systems up and running, while continuing to use Third Reich stamps and postal products with overprints and obliterations to make them seem less onerous. Then came the stamps of Western Germany or the Federal Republic including separate issues for West Berlin and the CTO (hard currency raising) barrage from the Soviet controlled East Germany or Deutsche Democratic

Republic/DDR. Then there are always the stamps from the re-united Germany that continue to this day.

About four or five years ago, I opted to start a new venture into the stamps of the Deutsche Democratic Republic/DDR largely because it is one of the "Dead Countries", and also somewhat familiar to me. The country is gone. But, I know what they have issued with both a start and end date. How to begin? A dealer I knew who was going out of business was offering up collections of both Mint and Used DDR. My strange approach to this new venture was to buy the used DDR collection. My rationale was that I would buy the used collection and some albums to house it. I was certain that the collection had a lot of CTO's, so I planned to gradually replace them with real postally used stamps. (That process continues to this day.)

Because the purchased collection was on loose album pages, I would use the process of transferring the stamps to my new albums as a familiarization exercise. At the same time, I made notes on any that were damaged and created a list of the CTO's to be replaced. At a SACAPEX Show in Sacramento later that year or the next, a dealer I knew had a One Dollar Booth in addition to his regular booth. The Dollar Booth had hundreds of DDR covers priced at 50 cents each. I recollect that I bought about 90. What a great way to pick up some "postally used" stamps. Either leave them on the cover, or do a bit of soaking and drying.

Within the last six months, I decided to get into our own (Nevada Stamp Study Society) Penny Boxes. Somebody has taken the time to separate out the DDR stamps from the rest of Germany. I found several strips of three, pairs and other postally used issues. A total of about 200 DDR stamps fit nicely into my collection. I'm certain there are more than enough "Dead Countries" so that every member of our group who has partially or totally given up on collecting can get back into the "game." Why not give it a shot?

Stan Cronwall is a member and Past President of Nevada Stamp Study Society and his collecting interests include Germany: Third Reich 1933-45 and the areas it occupied (stamps covers & cards). He also collects U.S. World War II Patriotic Covers and Cards; Civil War Patriotic Covers (both U.S. and CSA); U.S Naval Covers; DDR stamps; and, Post WWII Soviet Zone Hitler Head Obliteration stamps, covers & cards.

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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