

The PhilateliKid

The newsletter for Stamp Collecting Clubs for Kids (SCCFK)

Collect Stamps (The Most Educational Hobby)

www.stampcollectingclubsforkids.org

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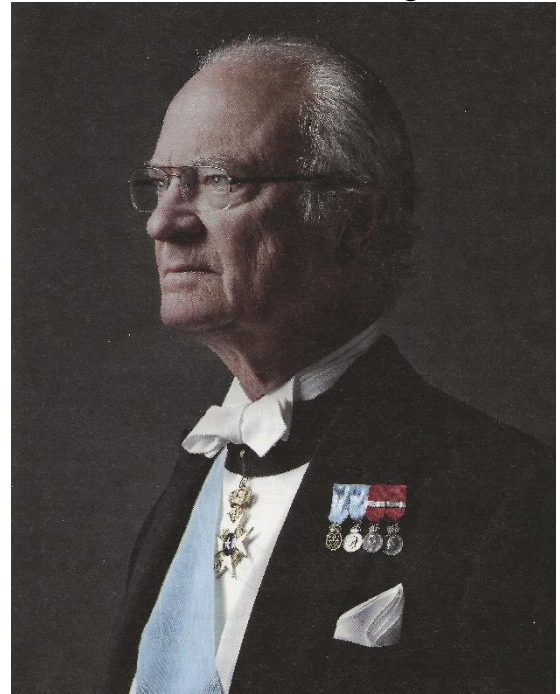
Worldwide Stamp Collecting

One of the many benefits of being a stamp collector is meeting other stamp collectors, who can be found in every country on earth. But, you say, maybe you don't travel yourself to all that many countries, or even states. Well, allow me to do a little of that travelling for you.

As this edition of the *Philatelikid* is being written, I am in Stockholm, Sweden. I have been here all week attending the stamp show called Stockholmia 2019. It is being

held in Stockholm, but it is a celebration of the 150th anniversary of the RPSL, the Royal Philatelic Society London, which was founded in 1869.

Postage stamps were first used in Great Britain in the year 1840, which means that the RPSL was created when postage stamps had been in existence for only 29 years. There were two Patrons of



Stockholmia. The first was H M Queen Elizabeth II.

She did not attend. The second Patron was H M King Carl XVI Gustaf. He opened the ceremony and gave a short speech in English. I met him. (Well, I was in the audience when two gentlemen with trumpets entered the auditorium and played a minute-long fanfare. Then the King was escorted in and formally opened the Exhibition. I was seated in the audience, about 15 feet from him. Sure, there were others present. About 300 others. I think I saw him smile at me, though.)



I have attended many stamp shows on local levels, regional levels, national levels, and now three international level stamp shows. (The other two international shows I attended were both in the United States.) During each show there are several distinct parts that stand out. First, there are dealers. They come to not only sell stamps (and everything else related to our hobby) but they also are there to purchase stamps. If they don't purchase new merchandise, they soon would lose many of their customers who would have seen all they have to offer.

Second, there are exhibits. A one-frame exhibit has 16 pages, each one 8 ½ x 11 inches. A single exhibit in the United States can be as many as 10 frames - 160 pages. International exhibits are limited to eight frames. You can imagine how many stamps can fit on a single page, so you can only get a vague notion as to what can be included in a multi-frame exhibit. Large international stamp shows can have over a thousand exhibits, taking up acres of floor space, so it requires a large convention center for all those dealers (often more than 50) and exhibits.

Third, there are philatelic societies that have booths, where members can meet and greet other members, and interested stamp collectors can find out about the society, and apply for membership. There are societies that apply to just about every area of philately including topical collectors, perfin collectors, precancel collectors, first day cover collectors, postal stationery collectors, philatelic authors, postmark collectors, collectors of errors, freaks and oddities, collectors' clubs from many different cities around the world, and collectors of certain countries, or groups of countries. I don't know if there is a society of watermark collectors, but if a few people are interested, a new society will be created. Attending stamp shows is a fun way to learn and to share knowledge about areas that interest you!

Fourth, the local post office is usually there selling postage stamps, and often hosting a ceremony for the release of a new stamp – a First Day of Issue ceremony (FDOI), along with dignitaries from the post office and sometimes even the designers/ artists who created the stamp. Sometimes there are relatives of the person being featured on the stamp, which in the United States is always a person who has died. (Countries other than the US often feature living people, including living kings and queens.)

Fifth, there are meeting rooms where various speakers have been invited to speak about a philatelic subject on which they are experts. In larger stamp shows, there are so many speakers that sometimes it is a difficult decision on which one to attend because several are simultaneously being offered.

Sixth, at the bigger shows there frequently is an auction, which can be fun to attend even if you do not make a single bid. At these auctions stamps can be found for less than a hundred dollars, to over a million dollars! Listening to auctioneers talk about a specific stamp, cover, or cancellation can be extremely fun, highly educational, and costs nothing.

Seventh, many shows have an area for beginners and youth collectors. Even if you are not an expert, you can go there and share your enthusiasm with new stamp collectors.

Eighth, there are many opportunities to volunteer, and contribute to our hobby, from assisting in setting up or, after the show, breaking down exhibits to helping with registration, assisting with setting up rooms for lecturers, and dozens more things necessary to making a show be successful. You also can volunteer for future shows in areas such as publicity, and booth management. Just ask at the registration booth if you can be of help!

Ninth, there are award ceremonies where awards are given to exhibitors (and sometimes to non-exhibitors, such as authors). If you want to mingle with truly outstanding stamp collectors, an award ceremony (often called “Palmares”) is a great place to go, and usually there is a fine banquet involved. This will cost some money, and often times reservations need to be made prior to the beginning of the show. Waiting until the show begins can result in learning that the banquet is sold out. Even then, sometimes there are late cancellations, so you just still might be able to get a ticket.

So, if you haven't tried going to a stamp show – consider it, and if it has been a while since you last attended, come on back! There is something for everybody.

Stockholmia, Part 1 (more next month)

At stamp shows you can meet people from many different geographical areas. At Stockholmia I met and spoke with people from Australia, Sweden, Denmark, Finland, United Kingdom, South Africa, Germany, Switzerland, Iraq, China, Belgium, Canada, Israel, Norway, and the United States. People I met from the US included collectors from NY, NJ, IL, AZ, WI, FL, TX, MA, CA, WA and HI, and many more that I am not sure where they live.

As some of you may know, in 2016 I became a member of the Royal Philatelic Society London (RPSL.) Until May 2019, I was on the list of members who had never attended a meeting. (Hawaii is 12 time zones away from London, and getting to meetings is not an easy thing for me.) But, When I first heard about Stockholmia a couple years ago, I determined that I would journey to Sweden and attend the

Exhibition. During that two-year period, the RPSL decided to sell the location in London where they had held meetings for almost a century, and purchased a larger facility for over £10 million. More about that in the August *Philatelikid*.

My wife Linda, who is Swedish, and I planned our trip, and she learned through Ancestry.Com that she had some relatives in Sweden that she had never met. Some lived in Stockholm, and some in Malmö, Sweden, which is a 5-hour train trip south of Stockholm, at the southernmost part of Sweden, just across the bridge from Copenhagen, Denmark. (That bridge, the Øresund Bridge, crosses the Baltic Sea, and is about 11 miles long!) During the days I spent at the Exhibition, Linda got together with two relatives and got to know Stockholm from the viewpoint of the Swedish residents!

Stockholmia differed from all the other stamp shows I had previously attended in that it charged a fairly large (by our standards) entrance fee. Most shows in the US either are free or charge a nominal fee of \$2 or \$3 for the entire show. Stockholmia fees were (approximately – in US dollars) \$10 for a single day or \$25 for the entire Exhibition (five days.) I was always there before the opening each day and there was a queue of people paying for tickets, and I did not hear a single complaint. Official records of attendance state that over 7,800 attended.

I believe the reason nobody complained was that it was worth every Swedish Krona! The exhibition hall was enormous, and actually was located on two floors. Most exhibits were in English. I spent over 10 hours just looking at exhibits, and of course that meant I saw significantly less than half of them. There were 189 lectures and events, some overlapping. I attended more than 20 and was disappointed only once, when the lecturer was unable to attend due to family emergency, and another



person attempted to do the lecture but unfortunately did not have the computer file necessary. There was a special exhibition of world rarities. Sometimes there was a short wait to see a specific exhibit, but it did not matter to me. I was able to see from 10 inches away the famous Swedish Tre Skilling Banco. That unique stamp is yellow in color, instead of green, as are all other tre skilling banco stamps. The full name of the stamp in English is “Three Skilling Banco Yellow.” ... to be continued

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