



Next Meeting: Wednesday, February 15th 2017 @ 7 PM

From the President...

Hi everyone.

At our next meeting we will have an auction, so please bring any duplicates or anything else you want to get rid of. This is a real money auction. Help to enrich your fellow members. I am going to the Bramalea Stamp Show and I'll report on this at our meeting. I am going to try to get them to send up their circuit books.

Cheers.

Larry Crane
President
OSSC

Club News

There were approximately fifteen members present at the January meeting. As it is the beginning of the new year, elections for the club executive was the first order of the agenda. After serving a little over eight years, Phil Visser stepped down as President of the Owen Sound Stamp Club. In the following part of the meeting, Larry Crane was acclaimed as the President, John Lemon was acclaimed as the Vice President and Bob Ford remains as the Secretary Treasurer. Best wishes to the new executive and hopefully all the members will be able to support them in their new roles.

Following the elections, Chris Tschirhart and Randy Rogers explained more about the circuit book computerization process. The big hope is that the annual review in the summer will be much quicker and error free. It is also a big urge for the members to enter pages of excess stamps. Who doesn't have too many stamps. Even though they are excess to the owner, guess what, there are many collectors within and outside the club who may be interested in finding those extras. If you are unable to print the pages, contact the club executive or the two other members to print pages and enter them in the binders.

Heads Up!

The meeting in March will be held at the New Life Centre of the Christian Reformed Church, 199 4th Ave West, Owen Sound. Due to the March break, the St Mary's High School will be closed. You don't have to come early because I will likely arrive closer to 7 PM because of late classes.

A Philatelic Mystery

By Phil Visser

Last month's newsletter was short on pictures of our favourite hobby, and so a number of different stamps were included with a theme or topic that they could all be associated with. At the meeting there were several voices who did guess the theme. Although the theme is known to the people who attended the meeting, there are several members not present and there was nothing written about the stamps themselves. Therefore the topic of this article is the stamps that were included in last month's newsletter.



The first stamp that appeared was issued by the United States on May 24th, 1944. Scott #924 celebrates the 100th anniversary of the first telegraph message sent in that country. Some research opens the door to the definition of telegraphy. Telegraphy includes the use of flags, mirrors and even smoke signals, but this stamp honours electrical telegraphy. The development of electrical telegraphy is credited with originating in the United Kingdom, but following an independent path, the United States transmitted its first message a few years later. History seems to agree that this invention came about in the 1830's and perhaps it can be said that the mail system as we know it today, was already out of date before Sir Rowland Hill started the concept of penny postage in 1840.

A great race started with the mass form of communication of telegraphy, but the next step in the development came from an Italian inventor, Guglielmo Marconi. Mr. Marconi lived from April 25th 1874 to July 20th 1937. Building on the ideas and concepts of other physicists, Marconi was the first to transform these ideas into wireless telegraphy. Initially rejected by Italy, his home country, Marconi went to the United Kingdom and demonstrated the ability of communicating messages without wires. The invention was widely accepted by the Admiralty of the United Kingdom. One hundred years after his birth, Canada issued a stamp honouring Marconi. This is Unitrade #654 issued on November 15th, 1974. The stamp design shows Marconi's image as well as that of the view from Signal Hill, overlooking the harbour of St. John's N.L.



The significance of Signal Hill may have faded in memories over the years but it is from this location that Marconi received the first trans-oceanic radio communication in 1901. The Newfoundland stamp shows what is properly called Cabot Tower, which opened in 1900. This stamp is listed as #155 of Newfoundland under the BNA category of the Unitrade catalogue. Cabot Tower is located on Signal Hill and is now a National Historic Site. It is at this site that Marconi flew kite antennas to try to receive a telegraph signal transmitted from Poldu, Cornwall, United Kingdom. Having visited the Signal Hill site, the interpretive plaques do make a suggestion that since only Marconi heard the signal from the UK, there may be a possibility to challenge Marconi's claim based on technical radio facts. Either way, we know that telecommunications is capable of reaching across continents and oceans today.

A stamp that was considered to be included in the mystery scans, but was not in the mystery topic, is the one illustrated now. Because it was a little too direct to the mystery, it was left out of the illustrations, but does fit into this article. Listed as #1628 from Great Britain in the Scott's catalogue, it shows Marconi and the sinking ship "Titanic." The Marconi Company trained and supplied radio officers to shipping companies. The White Star Line hired two radio operators for the "Titanic" who were credited with getting the message out to other ships about the disaster and are partly responsible with the saving of 706 lives.



Without a doubt, radio communications, wireless telegraphy and voice telephony, has changed the shipping industry. The personal interest in this stamp (#1628) comes from a few different directions. A first direction is that due to radio signal bounces off the atmosphere, the distress call from the Titanic was received in Tobermory, ON, besides the other nearby ships and the radio station at Cape Race, N.L. There was nothing that could be done for the Titanic from Tobermory, but just an interesting tidbit about radio communications.

An urban myth that some may have heard, and is shown on the stamp, is that the radio signal sent by the Titanic was SOS. Many people say that SOS is short for “Save Our Souls” but that is a myth. To correct the myth of SOS, two inquiries, the first one held by the US Senate and later the official investigation by the British Board of Trade, both confirm that the radio operators transmitted the signal CQD. It is claimed that these letters are an acronym for “Come quick disaster.” Neither acronym for SOS or CQD is correct, they were simply words to help remember the key need, which is a plea for help. To put into perspective the importance of telecommunication, prior to the arrival of radios for ships, sailors went to sea and many times were never heard from again. Over the last one hundred years or so, radio communications is directly responsible for saving of many lives in danger of being lost at sea.



Another stamp from the United States was included in the mystery topic. The stamp is a portrait of Samuel Morse. Look at all the medals on his chest! This particular stamp is part of a larger series of famous Americans. This series was issued in 1940 and featured seven different categories of famous people. Morse is included in the Inventors category and the stamp is listed as #890 in the Scott’s catalogue. The Inventors category is the last of the seven series issued to remember the contributions of Americans to society. Mentioned above, Morse independently began electric telecommunications with the first message transmitted being “what has God wrought.” This message is also a part of #924, but is difficult to see due to the cancellation. Naturally with telegraphy moving in several different areas of the world, standardized communications was necessary, and so Samuel Morse is remembered for the “Morse Code.” Each letter of the alphabet and numerals, is broken into a series of dots and dashes. This form of communications was standardized world wide in 1865, even though the original code devised by Morse is different from what is now accepted internationally as being the Morse code.

Prior to the Samuel Morse stamp, *telecommunications* was thought to be the topic of the stamps. A few voices suggested that idea as the answer to the mystery, and it is certainly acceptable. With the inclusion of the Samuel Morse stamp and now this final stamp, there is a more precise answer to the mystery topic. But first the final stamp. The person on the stamp is well known in the world and was issued by Germany in 1942. Scott’s catalogue lists this stamp as #511b. A variation of this same design and colour but printed by an engraved press is listed as #513. An intriguing part of this stamp is the Morse code symbol of dots and a dash followed by the letter “V” underneath. This overprint is not listed in the Scott’s catalogue and so poses a real mystery!



Fortunately, a fellow club member, Dieter Albrecht, was able to clear up the origins of the unknown overprint. Even though the overprint is skipped by the Scott’s catalogue, we must never forget that there are several other catalogues that collectors and philatelists can make reference to. The answer to the overprint is found in the “Michel Deutschland Speizal 1996 catalogue (Michel Specialized Catalogue of Germany, 1996)”. The listing for this stamp with the overprint says that this overprinted stamp was done in the city of Westerstede, in the state of Lower Saxony. This state is right next to the border with the Netherlands and so was occupied by the British Army in 1945.

Using the internet program called Babylon (<http://translation.babylon-software.com/german/to-english/>) The information written in the Michel catalogue, and then translated into English, is the following about these stamps; “*The (over)printing was carried out on the initiative of the British officer for public transport; before*

marks on postal customers could be delivered (before the stamps could be postally used) *were* (as the) *military authorities seized* (the overprinted stock).” Michel also warns philatelists to have any of these stamps authenticated before purchasing the set. Obviously, following the end of hostilities, many soldiers were looking for souvenirs to take home, and naturally raiding the post office was one way of getting a souvenir. Adding an overprint is not a very difficult matter to do at some later date, especially if it increases the value of the stamp.

But the Morse code overprint was the intriguing factor in adding this stamp into the mystery assemblage. What the precise answer to the mystery was about is the *Morse code*. There were a number of voices who did give this answer, congratulations and thank you for participating. However, before ending this article, some more background about the “V for Victory.” At the beginning of the Second World War, Prime Minister Churchill from the United Kingdom, was advised to use the symbol of two fingers in the shape of the letter “V.” Many people can say that the symbol was intended to encourage the population and armed forces to hold on for Victory. There is a lesser known reason that can be added to the use of this symbol.

Propaganda was part of the “Military Intelligence” division of the British army. While the V for Victory symbol was intended to encourage the general populace, propaganda is not limited to the home audience. One of Hitler’s ideologies was the purity and superiority of the Aryan race. Thus many things happened to follow the purity doctrine. One of them was that the music of non German composers’ was not allowed to be played publically, while two Germanic composers, Ludwig von Beethoven and Richard Wagner received special attention and favour in that period of time. To the musicologist in the crowd, the opening bars of Beethoven’s 5th Symphony go “dit dit dit dah” (repeatedly on and by different instruments). Those four sounds are the Morse code letter V! To compound the use of that symphony, all BBC radio broadcasts to the European continent during the Second World War began with the opening bars of the 5th symphony. In essence, playing these bars before the British version of the news was trying to humiliate the Hitlerian doctrine of racial purity.

This article is written about philately and the many strange things that the hobby can produce. Sadly, human history is full of strife between brothers, families and nations. For those readers of Germanic background, there is no intent to inflame or claim superiority from a terrible number of years in which many civilians from many nationalities paid a severe price in the loss of lives, homes and permanent injuries. Let us all hope that those years are not repeated again.

Coming Events...

- FEB 25th St. Thomas Stamp Club 31st Annual Stamp Show
Community of Christ Church, 105 Fairview Ave., St. Thomas, ON, N5R 3X4
10 dealers, exhibits, door prizes. Free admission, free parking. No stairs to climb. Phone: 519-631-8180
- FEB 26th 36th Annual Toronto Postcard Club Show
Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre, 6 Garamond Court, Toronto, ON, M3C1Z5
10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Free parking, TTC accessible. 40 tables of vintage postcards Admission \$5.
Email: info@torontopostcardclub.com Web: <http://torontopostcardclub.com/toronto-postcard-show/>
- MAR 11th North Toronto Stamp Club – Spring Bourse
Yorkminster Park Baptist Church, 1585 Yonge St., Toronto, ON, M4T1Z9
Hours: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Easy subway access at St. Clair subway station. Free admission. 22 dealers, over 100 sales circuit books including recent issues, over 100 ten cents books, members table, door prizes, snack bar, wheelchair access, parking at the Church and on nearby streets, families and children welcome.
Phone: 647-990-4073 Email: ntsc.programchair@gmail.com Web: <http://www.northtorontostampclub.ca>

- MAR 18th OXPEX/OTEX2016
 Woodstock Christian School, 800 Juliana Dr., Woodstock, ON, N4S 8X3
 Exhibits, dealers, club circuit books, youth gift bags, prizes, draws, lunch/snack counter. Free admission, free parking. Everyone welcome. Phone: 519-529-5055 Email: vikings37@rogers.com Web: <http://www.oxfordphilsoc.com>
- MAR 19th Post Card Memories Show & Sale — Volume VI
 Bingemans, 425 Bingeman Centre Dr., Kitchener, ON, N2B 3X7
 Hours: 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Admission \$5 – kids free with an adult. Postcards featuring an unlimited array of interests. Royalty to race cars – trains to toads and towns & real photo cards, breweriana, sports dogs & cats and more! 10,000's of cards all in one well-lighted location. Leading dealers, free parking, hourly door prizes, lunch counter. Phone: 519-885-3499 (DM) or 800-361-6631 (LH) Email: stamphogg@hotmail.com
 Web: <http://postcardshow.blogspot.com>
- MAR 25th National Postage Stamp & Coin Show
 March 25, 2017 to March 26, 2017
 Hilton Mississauga/Meadowvale, 6750 Mississauga Rd., Mississauga, ON, L5N 2L3
 Presented by Canadian Stamp News and Canadian Coin News, the spring edition of the National Postage Stamp & Coin Show will be held at a new venue for 2017: the Hilton Mississauga/Meadowvale at 6750 Mississauga Road, Mississauga, Ont. The Saturday (10 a.m. – 5 p.m.) and Sunday (10 a.m. – 4 p.m.) show will feature stamp and coin dealers from across Canada, who are selling, buying and appraising all kinds of philatelic and numismatic materials. Admission is only \$3 on Saturday and FREE on Sunday. Parking is also free. Special room rate available at the hotel. Check out our website for show updates and list of dealers. Phone: 1-800-408-0352 Ext 228 Email: mwalsh@trajan.ca Web: <http://www.stampandcoinshow.com>
- APR 1 Lonpex 125
 Ramada Inn, 817 Exeter Road, London, ON, N6E1W1
 Lonpex 125 sponsored by the London Philatelic Society will be held on the Saturday from 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the Churchill Room. Exhibits, 12 dealers, draws, free parking and admission. For more information contact Don Slaughter. Email: donslau@execulink.com Web: <http://londonphilatelicsociety.com/>
- APR 8 Best Western Stamp Show
 Niagara Room, Best Western Hotel, QEW at Lake St., St. Catharines, ON, L2N 4G9
 Hours are 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Free parking, free admission and free appraisals. Sponsored by Roy's Stamps, specializing in the stamps and covers of Canada and the British Commonwealth. For further information, contact Roy Houtby Phone: 905-934-8377
- APR 15 Burloak Stamp Fair
 Burlington Seniors Centre, 2285 New St., Burlington, ON, L7R 1J4
 Hours: 9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Twenty years of regular monthly shows on the third of Saturday of every month. Six to nine dealers, active buyers, and always something new. Phone: 905-575-2950 Email: bas6@bell.net
- APR 22 STAMPFEST 2017
 ST John's Lutheran Church - Fellowship Hall, 22 Willow St., Waterloo, ON, N2J1V5
 NEW LOCATION 2017! Kitchener Waterloo Philatelic Society's annual STAMPFEST Show & Bourse. 19 dealers, sales circuit, competitive judged exhibition. Youth booth featuring the 'Sea of Stamps' and more. Phone: 800-361-6631 Email: kwpskw@gmail.com Web: <http://www.kwstampclub.org>

From the Editor...

Hopefully this month's article has revealed something new and gives ideas about what philately can be all about. Now that my only job is preparing the newsletter, I hope the time will allow for the continuous dispatch of a newsletter. There are so many different things that can be said about our hobby, it would be nice to hear what others may be able to contribute for the interest of the readers and to inspire others. Please try your hand at writing an article. As the editor, spelling and grammar becomes my job to catch and fix. Show information is included into the month of April so that plans can be made to visit the upcoming shows when an opportunity arises. I would also remind you that the Owen Sound Stamp Club maintains a web page at www.owensoundstampclub.org and hope you will take a few minutes to visit it.



During the school year, the Owen Sound Stamp Club meets at 7:00 pm on the third Wednesday of each month in the cafeteria of St Mary's High School, 555 15th Street East. Meeting agendas will vary between having visiting club circuit books, speakers and an auction. Guests and new members are always welcome. Annual membership fees: \$20.00

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