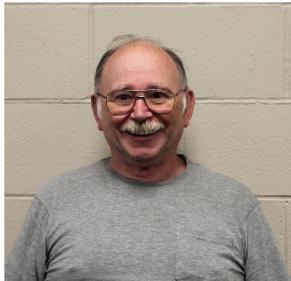


Next Meeting: Wednesday, March 20th, 2019 @ 7 PM  
St Mary's High School, Hillyer Hall, 555 15<sup>th</sup> Street East, Owen Sound

### Volume 6 Edition 3

#### From the President



Hello Everyone, I hope you got dug out and did not freeze. I was remembering back to Feb. 2<sup>nd</sup>, Ground Hog day, and it looks like he (the Rodent) is going to be right after all - 6 more weeks of winter.

Looking back through history, the way some of the events that were laid out seem to warm people up, and help them to forget a little of the hard winter and think a bit of the warm weather ahead. Starting out with Valentines Day (Feb. 14), for showing their love. Robbie Burn's Day (Feb. 25th) to cuddle up with a book of poetry, and to have a feast of Haggis with our loved ones and guests. Then we have St. Patrick's Day (March 17th). Seems to be a little ironic, so closely related to what is needed for life itself. And to top it off we can pick between the going beverage, that of Irish or Scotch Whiskey, Green Beer or Guinness. What a great idea, I guess the old relatives did know what to do, to break up those last 6 weeks of winter.

Our next meeting, we will have our, usual business, a chance to look over the items in our first silent auction, then to look over our clubs circuit books. To end up to announce the winners of the auction.

See you at the meeting Mar. 20, 2019, same place and same time,

**John C. Lemon**  
President  
OSSC.

**From the Editor**  
**Phil Visser**

We begin a new month with something different! Our meeting coincides with the Spring Equinox, the day when the Sun crosses the Equator from the Southern Hemisphere into the Northern Hemisphere. It is said

to be the day where the night time is the same length as the daytime.

Theory suggests that our stamp collecting hobby will begin to decrease as we are drawn to the great outdoors. Hopefully, that is not true, or at least completely true. The upcoming shows listing is full taking us into the month of May were a reminder is given about the Saugeen Stamp show. But that show does not end the show listings. The last listing in this newsletter is for the Grey Bruce Simcoe Circuit Book Club Fair. I was happy to find it listed on the Canadian Stamp News website.

A recent contact with the Harry Sutherland Philatelic Library (Kathy Hartley) shared that member Gordon Speers made a trip to visit the library. How about others, is there an interest to do some philatelic research? Kathy will gladly assist in that search and maybe even point you to some unknown tidbits of information. Go ahead, it is worth the trip. There is also a link to the Foundation on our web site.

Further in these pages is a members perspective on buying stamps on line. Lots of good pointers, and perhaps a seed to have other members share experiences about other ways of finding those long sought after gems, either through auction houses or other web sites.

And now for a teaser scan!



## Stamp buying on eBay The Good the Bad and the Ugly by Chris Tschirhart

Over the past three years I have added to my collection of stamps making a good number of purchases from eBay. For the most part I have obtained very nice items to add to my collection. However, given the amount of purchases I have made I now have some observations and some practices I would like to pass on to fellow members.

### The Good:

There are a lot of reputable and forthright dealers out there which make up about 85 percent of the people I have dealt with. I have enjoyed doing repeated business with some dealers I have come to trust and with the neighbourhood of around 100 purchases under my belt I have only been burned once and that was not on eBay. I have had only one stamp never show up and I got a refund on that item. As a rule of thumb if the seller also shows the reverse of the stamp or indicates “lightly hinged” or



**Figure 4** A sale on eBay that is well described. This stamp sold for \$326.51 US or \$438.14 Can

“thin” or “small flaw upper corner” this person is legitimate and you will get what you are looking at. Also other items from this same person will prove to be of good quality. If you find someone who has nice product, go back to them and click on their store if they have one. A number of people who have numerous items are local dealers but in a different part of the country. They are like the people who come to sell at our own shows, and enjoy the business as much as a dealer you have come to like at the shows you go to in your own geographical area.

### The Bad:

Caveat Emptor (buyer beware). Lots of stamps have flaws. Be sure and look at the magnified version of the stamp. Often the highest price copy is on the first page you look at. Put it in your “watching

category”, you can remove this easily with a click latter. Package deals or groupings can hide a substandard stamp in the bunch. Always go through each stamp in magnified mode.

### The Ugly:

Some dealers seem to have bots that bid up a stamp to the price they want it to sell for. I have come across a couple of dealers who do this consistently even though the initial bid is one cent. I have stopped bidding on stamps from one individual since the same bidder always shows up to bid up the stamp no matter what the stamp or the version. You can discern this if it keeps happening. Keep track if the same bidder keeps showing up. While you may have a legitimate competitor, if for example n\*\*\*n shows up every time you bid on a stamp with a given dealer it indicates they are using a bot to drive you higher. One dealer uses a combination of three bots to keep the bidding going and there have been multiple occurrences over a number of months on the same sellers site. This is particularly so if you notice this when you bid on examples of the same stamp. If this continues to occur it is not worth dealing with this dealer.

### Some tips:

I have had some discussions with other club members about their experiences and I have put together a list of tips based on their experience and my own. These tips are in no particular order.

1. Use the Catalogue and have a number that you will not bid above and keep to it. Amazingly that stamp that is so hard to get and was bid up is not lost. Two days later another example appears!
2. Put in what you think the stamp is worth to you. However, only do this in the last day of bidding if you can. There are lots of bots out there to bid you up.
3. If you are the only bidder bid within the last hour of the time frame if you can. I have gotten some amazing deals this way. Put in what you are willing to pay even if it is higher than the present bid. This will prevent another last minute bidder from scooping it from you for an extra 25 cents. However do not exceed your maximum number.
4. Check to see if the picture is over lit,

particularly if the stamp carries a heavier cancel. Over lighting can make the cancel seem lighter than it is in real life.

5. If you have success with a dealer over a number of orders put that dealer in your saved file and go back from time to time.
6. If possible undertake multiple orders with the same dealer at the same time. Any time I have done this I have emailed the dealer to combine the order and they refund you the excess postage.
7. If the stamp is not as represented send it back. I only had to do this once and the order was refunded when the dealer got the stamp back.
8. Wait 30 days for delivery. I have to say that things have arrived much earlier than this in the allotted time frame but I have had some that have taken quite a time to show up (Even dealers from in Country)
9. If after 30 days the item does not arrive, email the dealer and they are required to give you a refund. (This has only ever happened to me once.)
10. Keep track of dealers who always seem to have bidders that drive you up. Also keep track if the same bidder keeps showing up. While you may have a legitimate competitor, if for example n\*\*\*n shows up every time you bid on a stamp with a given dealer it indicates they are using a bot to drive you higher. Particularly if you notice this when you bid on examples of the same stamp. If this continues to occur it is not worth dealing with this dealer.
11. Watch for a last minute bid that drives you out. It can be a legitimate competitor, however if it is in the last minute chances are it is a bot and there was a reserve price on the item in the first place. If it happens with the same dealer often it is not worth dealing with this dealer.
12. Always magnify the stamp, often you will see small spots or flaws that do not show up on the regular size.
13. Make sure that once you get the stamp and are going to keep it go back and complete the feedback option. If you are not satisfied indicate it in the evaluation. EBay keeps tabs

on its vendors and bad ones are eliminated by negative feedback after so many strikes against them.

14. Be aware of the exchange rate for foreign sites. A quick check of today's exchange rate on the internet will let you know what you are truly offering. As a rule I try and stay in Canada and I avoid Canadian sites that deal in US dollars only.

### **February Meeting Highlights**

Some 14 members were present for this meeting. The two motions put forward in the last newsletter were passed. It is now up to the Circuit Book team to set up suitable arrangement that will facilitate member payout at the time that sufficient sales warrant that to happen.

A long standing gap in the club executive has been filled. Marion Ace was nominated for the position of Vice President, which she accepted, and with no further nominations from the floor, Marion was acclaimed to that position. Now Marion has to worry about John L's health!

The second motion for discussion was passed and an "unofficial" silent auction was held. The March meeting will have its first official Silent Auction. There will be some more later in the year as well as evenings dedicated to regular auctions.

John/Chris reported an interest in having an exchange evening with the Burlington Stamp Club where their books come to our meeting and our books head to Burlington. A great idea to open the philatelic market beyond local club members. No official date has been set for these evenings, but certainly after winter has thrown it last mix of snow, rain and freezing rain. The month of May was mentioned but we await further reports from either the Executive or the Circuit Book team.

### **Catalogue Value: Part 2**

#### **CATALOGUE VALUE v. REAL VALUE**

**Summary Tip #24:** No money spent: little value

Dear Philip,

One of the problems of producing a catalogue is that without prices most people will not be interested in buying the catalogue! Even today we refer to 50 year old reference books such as Robson

Lowe (Publisher: Billig) - a world famous philatelist and dealer/auctioneer whose name you will find on many expert committee certificates.

You would think that the prices / information in these 50 year old catalogues would be useless but how wrong you would be. Such specialist catalogues are full of information that collectors who purchase SG catalogues today would find fascinating - such as premiums for multiples (always useful) and proofs, essays, forgeries and the like - surely an opportunity there for SG? Quantities printed / issued for example would shed so much light on catalogue values (Michel often includes this).

Prices from 50 year old Robson Lowe catalogues are easily related to catalogue values / prices today. Occasionally even now we come across unpriced specialist catalogues - they may be fine for purists but my experience of collectors is that part of the attraction to stamps is their relative rarity value. We all seek a 'find' and many who search diligently will make them ... but in practice so many collectors say to me "what is your best find?" ... and generally how disappointing the answer is. Full time 'philatelic professionals' do not have the time to turn each stamp and check for watermark / specialist varieties - anybody who collects / handles stamps knows how stamps 'suck' time and what a wonderful therapeutic hobby philately is for those who are incapacitated ...

But to return to the subject of catalogues requiring prices one must then examine the relationship of the catalogue producer to the actual market place. So often this is overlooked ... yet one only has to look at a Stanley Gibbons catalogue to see the 'caveat' that their minimum catalogue price does not necessarily reflect value - rather it is the price that the only(?) public listed Stamp Company on any stock exchange worldwide - in stamp terms a large company - is prepared to sell that stamp for. If your company has a market value of £77 million pounds and a yearly turnover of £35 million then you can not sell 1p stamps for 1p - you are forced to have a minimum catalogue price .... BECAUSE what many people do not realise is that Stanley Gibbons catalogue price is actually the price that they will supply/sell that stamp in high quality to you. In practise I believe their Strand shop has long had a minimum selling price per stamp/set of £1 regardless of the stamp's market value.

So, it follows that if you have dozens of the same stamp and then thousands of different stamps in varying quantity - all catalogued by Stanley Gibbons at say an average of 50p each ... making a theoretical total catalogue value of £10,000 .... you may have 20,000 assorted stamps but your stamp holding may literally be worth as little as £50 or £2.50 per 1,000 stamps !

It is so easy to obtain thousands of stamps for so little money. For example our Avon Mixtures business will sell you a packet of over 2,000 assorted stamps - all off paper - for as little as £15 or less than this to pick through. Just consider how much catalogue value there must be in this packet and how small an amount of money we are charging, and what a small price is asked for so much fun to sort through them.

[http://www.upastampauctions.co.uk/contents/en-uk/d3\\_Mixtures.html](http://www.upastampauctions.co.uk/contents/en-uk/d3_Mixtures.html)

Now, let's turn our attention to the status of other catalogue publishers. It follows that if you see a recent stamp catalogue with minimum catalogue values of literally a few pence/cents for the most common stamps then this is likely to be a more independent catalogue publisher pricing stamps by scarcity rather than by a minimum commercial price at which one could theoretically (but not really in practice) handle the sale of such a stamp. Such catalogue producers are unlikely to be able to supply such stamps to you at these prices or indeed may not sell stamps at all .... but typically low unit prices are what you may expect to pay for common stamps when purchased in mixtures.

The conclusion to draw is that 'catalogue value' depends upon the commercial status of the catalogue publisher and price for cheaper stamps may be totally unrelated to catalogue value.

An interesting question to pose might be "at what catalogue price level does a stamp actually have real value?" .... so that say for example you are offering a collection of stamps to my company UPA for us to consider purchasing or handling upon a commission basis ....

.... we'll discuss this in my next article ....

Happy collecting from us all,

Andrew

PS. If you find this 'tip' interesting please forward it to a philatelic friend.

Andrew McGavin

### Upcoming Shows

#### MAR 23

##### **National Postage Stamp and Coin Show**

March 23, 2019 to March 24, 2019

Hilton Mississauga/Meadowvale hotel, 6750

Mississauga Rd., Mississauga, ON, L5N 2L3

National Postage Stamp and Coin Show featuring about 50 professional coin and stamp dealers from across Canada. Highlights include the 76th Annual North Toronto Stamp Club Exhibition; two-day live auction by Colonial Acres; seminars featuring Yvon Marquis on how to dispose of your collection; Steven Bell on Banknote Certification; and, Jeff Fournier will be returning with a workshop. As well as the Young Collectors Table, the popular Free Kids' Auction will be held on Sunday. Admission \$3 on Saturday and FREE on Sunday. Show hours 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. Saturday, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. Sunday. Parking is Free. For show updates, visit website. Presented by Canadian Coin News and Canadian Stamp News. Phone: 1-800-408-0352  
Email: info@trajan.ca  
Web: <http://www.stampandcoinshow.com>

#### APR 6

##### **Lonpex 2019**

Ramada Inn, 817 Exeter Rd., London, ON, N6E 1W1

The London Philatelic Society will be holding their annual Stamp Bourse from 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. with 12 dealers. Free admission, free parking. Everyone welcome.

Phone: 519-472-0206

Email: donslau@execulink.com

#### APR 13

##### **K-W Stampfest 2019**

Trillium Lutheran Church, 22 Willow St., Waterloo, ON, N2J 1V5

The annual stamp show and bourse of the Kitchener-Waterloo Philatelic Society will be held from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Phone: 1-800-361-6631

Email: kwpskw@gmail.com

Web: <http://www.kwstampclub.org/stampfest/>

#### APR 26

##### **Springpex**

April 26, 2019 to April 27, 2019

St. John de Brebeuf Secondary School, 200 Acadia Dr., Hamilton, ON, L8W 1B8

Large silent and voice auctions Friday evening with viewing starting at 5 p.m. Saturday is a 20-dealer bourse with stamps, postcards, covers and supplies, plus youth booth and silent auction from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. GRVPA clubs circuit sales books Friday and Saturday. Light food and refreshments available with ample free parking. Sponsored by the Hamilton Stamp Club.

Email: southont@cogeco.ca

Web: <http://www.hamiltonstampclub.com>

#### MAY 4

##### **Annual Saugeen Stamp Club Show & Exhibition**

Hanover Knights of Columbus Hall, 963 Bruce Rd. 4, Hanover, ON, N0G 2V0

Hours 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Free parking and admission. 12 dealers, judged exhibits, lunch counter. Free stamps for kids. If you would like to try the exhibit for the first time this is the spot. We use 16-page frames and encourage new exhibitors. Contact us if you wish to exhibit.

Phone: 519-574-6536

Email: pkritz@mortgagealliance.com

Web: <http://saugeenstampclub.webplus.net/>

#### MAY 25

##### **Grey, Bruce, Simcoe & Area Stamp Clubs Circuit Book Club Fair**

St. Mary's High School, 555 15th St. E., Owen Sound, ON, N4K 1X2

Welcome to the first annual circuit book fair hosted by various clubs in the Grey, Bruce and Simcoe area. The show will be open from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. and feature circuit books from different stamp clubs. Door prizes, lunch counter, free admission and free parking.

Phone: 519-375-7161

Email: lembudd@yahoo.com

Web: <http://www.owensoundstampclub.org/>

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There are many philatelic website's to visit, but don't forget to look at your own club web site at [www.owensoundstampclub.org](http://www.owensoundstampclub.org). On the website you will find a "Links" button which can lead you to other areas. If there is something you think would improve the site, contact Randy and share your idea with him.

### The Final Word

So the teaser scan is actually referring to an eBay seller that I watch. This seller has many of the gems that would fill holes in a collection, but the seller consistently gets 20-25% of catalogue value stated in the description. Mostly the value stated is correct, but I have seen values that were overstated. Joe Riechenbach and I have discussed this seller and we think (because of the consistently high sale price) the seller uses an unknown means of raising the bids and forcing the buying price up. The sale of this particular stamp, and the XF condition, would be wonderful addition in a collection for such an early stamp. The decision to make is, if it is a **true gem** is it worth it?

As another note to Chris's input, many buyers are using sniper agents to place the last second bids, and so you lose by the eBay increment above your bid. Disappointing, but sadly a new reality on eBay.

The image shows an eBay listing for a green Canadian postage stamp. The listing includes a photo of the stamp, the seller's name 'nystamps Canada Stamp', the item title '# 18 Used UN\$200 VF (312479769428)', and the seller's feedback score 'nystamps | 291856 | 99.9%'. Below the listing is a table of bids.

Bidder	Bid Amount	Bid Time
r***y (9893 ★)	US \$77.76	23 Feb 2019 at 12:10:25 EST
r***y (9893 ★)	US \$77.76	23 Feb 2019 at 12:10:21 EST
y***o (430 ★)	US \$76.76	23 Feb 2019 at 12:10:22 EST
s***w (385 ★)	US \$60.00	23 Feb 2019 at 11:04:58 EST
t***o (2321 ★)	US \$55.00	23 Feb 2019 at 11:04:39 EST
s***w (385 ★)	US \$55.00	23 Feb 2019 at 11:04:54 EST
s***w (385 ★)	US \$50.50	23 Feb 2019 at 11:04:02 EST
2***2 (500 ★)	US \$47.00	21 Feb 2019 at 19:53:05 EST
d***0 (183 ★)	US \$47.00	23 Feb 2019 at 9:59:59 EST
o***o (4076 ★)	US \$45.00	22 Feb 2019 at 22:29:11 EST
o***o (4076 ★)	US \$43.00	22 Feb 2019 at 22:29:05 EST
l***t (1416 ★)	US \$40.66	21 Feb 2019 at 16:09:44 EST
o***i (1565 ★)	US \$40.00	20 Feb 2019 at 21:07:20 EST

Figure 5 How good is your copy of this stamp? Note that the catalogue value is stated correctly from Unitrade, but in US Dollars

Figure 6 This stamp sold for \$78.76 US. Note that the last two bids are the same, suggesting that the buyer used a sniper agent to make the last second bid.