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Hobby Notes

- newsletter of the
Warrenton Stamp and Coin Club



Fauquier County Courthouse
in Old Town Warrenton

Special points of interest:

- Door prizes donations are **always** needed (especially coin-related)
- Give us your ideas for future programs (our cupboard is bare)

March 4th Program: Show-and-Tell

This month's program is another Show-and-Tell. Bring in something you want to share, and tell us why you think it is so cool. As usual, it can be a stamp or a coin, but it doesn't have to be. It can be a new acquisition, or a treasure you picked decades ago. It might have a story attached to it, or you might not even remember where or when you got it (you might not even remember why you bought it - I have *lots* of stuff like that). Bring us an item you bought at the biggest Show you ever attended, or from the smallest. Tell us about the greatest distance you ever traveled to buy an item, or the most unlikely remote location where you found a stamp or coin shop.

You get the idea - Show-and-Tell is simply an excuse to chat with friends.

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Annual Stamp and Coin Show

This month brings the 2nd Annual Show of the Warrenton Stamp and Coin Club. It will be held on Saturday, March 27, 2010, from 9:30 am to 3:30 pm, at the John Barton Payne building in Old Town Warrenton (across from the Library). Flyers and directions will be available at the meeting. Parking is available on adjoining streets, and this year we may again be able to park in the Bank's lot behind the building, so long as we use the lower lot, leaving ample space for Bank customers (we should have confirmation at the meeting as to whether the Club received permission from the Bank). There will be several dealer tables selling coins and stamps, and a special showing of stamp exhibits from the collection of Lee Morrison, the Postmaster of Flint Hill, Virginia.

Assistance will be appreciated, both before and after the show, with tables, chairs, lighting and signs.

See you there!

MONTHLY MEETINGS

Guests and new members are always welcome. Drop by and join us.

Meetings are held on the first Thursday of each month (except for the January holiday dinner) at the SunTrust Bank in Warrenton. SunTrust is located at the intersection of Routes 17 & 29, in the Warrenton Center shopping center, near Rankin's Hardware (Enter the front doors

of the bank and go downstairs to the Meeting room).

The meetings start at 7:00 pm. We conduct our business, and then begin an informal 30-minute program, which alternates between coin and stamp coin topics. The program is followed by an auction of stamps, coins, and

other hobby items. We finish around 9:00 pm.

SunTrust Bank
680 Warrenton Center
Warrenton, VA 20187

ABOUT THE CLUB

"If you like stamps or coin, you're welcome to join"

The Warrenton Stamp and Coin Club is a not-for-profit organization based in Warrenton Virginia, but has members from all over the region, including Casanova, Manassas, Culpeper and Fredericksburg. Meetings are held each month, and the programs are broad enough to interest both stamp and coin collectors. Annual dues are \$12 for adults (although junior members pay no dues). Visitors and guests are always welcome. Prospective members shall be able to receive two consecutive editions of the newsletter before being dropped for non-payment of dues. The Club actively supports the Boy Scouts' merit badge programs, and has raised funds for local high school scholarships.

UPCOMING EVENTS FOR WS&CC:

March	27	Annual Stamp and Coin Show
April	1	TBA
May	6	TBA
June	3	TBA
July	1	TBA

Noted in passing...

The Club's volunteer webmaster, Cristy Faurot, continues to format and upgrade our web site, and would like to include links to material associated with past monthly programs. So if you gave a presentation that included or referred to material that is available online, please contact Tony so he can pass it along to her.

The Sunday *Washington Post* had an interesting article by John Potter, the Postmaster General titled, "5 Myths About Your Mail" (page B3 of the Outlook section). I thought he did a fine job of explaining the difficulties facing the Postal Service, and dispelling some of the misconceptions that exist about the USPS. As a former Postal employee, I can recall addressing many of the same myths with friends and acquaintances, and wishing that the organization would tell its story better. I still feel that way, even though my Postal career ended 20 years ago. If you didn't already read the article, dig up a copy of the Sunday paper and have a look. I will bring my copy to the meeting.

WEB SITE OF THE MONTH:

This month we feature a portion of the web site of the Postal Service, dedicated to postal history, and a history of the USPS and its predecessor, the Post Office:
<http://www.usps.com/postalhistory/welcome.htm>

The page has links to many topics, including a history of stamps, photo galleries, rates over the years, and moving and delivering the mail. Under "Photo Galleries" I found great pictures of letter sorting machinery, post office buildings over the years (including one in Vermont that looked like an outhouse to me!), and great shots of airmail delivery planes. There is also an 84-page booklet on the history of the Post Office, 1775 to 2996, available online.

Upcoming Hobby Shows

March	6-7	SPRINGPEX, 40 th annual Springfield stamp show
March	13	Alexandria Coin Show
March	20	Winchester Coin Show
March	27	Warrenton Stamp & Coin Club Show
March	27	Richmond Stamp Fest
April	17	Charlottesville Coin and Currency Show

RAYMOND'S COLUMN

– NOTES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Philatelic Olio

Franklin Z grill:

In February 1868 the Postal Office issued a 1¢ postage stamp honoring Benjamin Franklin. This stamp had a “grill” pressed into the paper making small indentations which permitted better absorption of the ink used to cancel the stamp, preventing reuse of cancelled stamps by washing out the ink. [The “Z” does not indicate the shape of the grill - it is a catalogue designation for identifying the grill variety among other types of grills]. The grills proved impractical and their use was discontinued. Experts consider the Franklin Z grill among the rarest and valuable of U.S. postage stamps, although the 10¢ Washington and 15¢ Lincoln also enjoy extreme rarity. Only two Franklin Z grills with cancellations exist, one in the Benjamin Miller collection at the N.Y.C. library and one privately owned. Mr. Sundman of Mystic Stamps bought one in 1998 at auction for \$935,000 and in 2005 and traded it to William Gross for a block of inverted Jenny stamps with a value of about \$3 million. Mr. Gross now owns the only complete set of 19th century U.S. stamps.

Pitcairn Island stamps:

When mail first began to leave Pitcairn Island in the 19th century, the hand stamping on the envelope indicated, “posted on Pitcairn Island, no stamps available.” Passing ships carried stamps and received postal stamps and cancellations at ports of call. In 1926, due to ship passengers mixing their mail with the “no stamps” system, the practice ended and, in 1927, a postal agency was established on the island to sell New Zealand stamps. On October 15, 1940, Pitcairn Island issued its first stamps in eight denominations. The Pitcairn Island philatelic bureau coordinates the island’s stamp program which issues up to 6 commemoratives yearly and new stamps every 5 years. The 1940 set now sells for \$65 (Australian) mint never hinged and \$30, fine used. Pitcairn Island has issued stamps honoring both Fletcher Christian and Captain Bligh. [The Mutiny on the Bounty took place in 1790, when Christian and much of the crew took the ship from Captain Bligh, and cast him adrift. They provided Bligh and the eighteen of his crew who remained loyal with a 23-foot launch (so heavily loaded that the gunwales were only a few inches above the water), with four cutlasses and food and water for a few days to reach the most accessible ports, a sextant and a pocket watch, but no charts or compass. Bligh, who had learned navigation from Captain Cook, steered clear of the dangerous nearby ports, and completed a 47-day, 3600-mile voyage to safety in Timor. Christian and his fellow mutineers settled on Pitcairn Island].

Centralia, PA:

The town was first named Bull Head and it never had a huge population, reaching 2761 when coal was king. This metropolis now boasts a population of 9 as a result of a coal mine fire that started in 1961 and is still blazing. As a further insult, the U.S. Postal Service revoked Centralia’s zip code, 17927. The spunky Centralians plan to return in 2016 to open a time capsule buried in 1966.

At Last Month's Meeting...

At the February meeting, Raymond noted that he will miss the April meeting, and that Tony will preside. Bill Miller asked to be replaced as Doug Harms co-presenter at the Boy Scouts' Merit Badge Midway on March 13. Bill has assisted with the Boy Scouts for many years, but for personal reasons he needs to spend the time at home. Doug will still do the principal work with the Scouts, but he could really use the assistance of a member, especially to complete the forms and paperwork for each Scout as the session is in progress. [No volunteer came forward at the meeting, but there is till time to contact Doug at the March meeting if you need directions to the site in Culpeper, or want more information on what is required].

The Alan Blair auction in Fairfax was postponed due to the coming heavy snow [and a good that thing it was! That day was one of our record snowfalls]. Doug told us of his trip to the Coin Show in Florida with his new employer, Wizard Coin Supply.

We discussed plans for our 2010 Stamp and Coin Show on March 27. The Show will open at 9:30 am and conclude at 3:30 pm. Flyers were available showing the schedule and location, and volunteers were solicited to help with setting up. It was suggested that someone should contact the Bank to request permission to park in its lower lot (behind the Bank), as was granted to us last year.

We had a Show-and-Tell, which had a suggested theme of "love" (for Valentine's Day), or Washington and Lincoln (for their birthdays this month). As usual we saw and heard about a wide range of topics and treasures. There were rare Lincoln cents, silver coins, currency showing Lincoln, stories of unusual auction lots, and covers from the US to Burma franked with stamps depicting George Washington. Someone remarked that it was one of our best meetings yet.

We concluded with the auction.

- BCS

FROM THE EDITOR...

I read in *Linn's Stamp News* that the Inspector General for the USPS, on its website blog in January, noted that the printing, transporting, storing and accounting for stamps is very expensive, and for the stamps that remained unsold, there is the additional expense of securely destroying them. The IG poses three questions regarding the financial viability of stamps, and then requests comments on the answers given. When I looked there were nearly a hundred comments and suggestions. The IG site is located at: <http://blog.uspsoid.gov/?m=201001>. I read only a few of the comments, but in general I thought they were thoughtful and well-expressed. It's hard for me to imagine a post office without stamps, but I do understand the budgetary pressure facing the Postal Service.

I wonder if the IG is "running it up the flagpole," to gently introduce a subject that can be expected to be controversial. My cynical side whispers that the decision may already be made, but here is at least one opportunity to express your opinion. You ought to consider logging in and taking the survey.

- BCS

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This month's featured stamp

This month's stamp honors the Purple Heart medal, and those veterans who earned it by being wounded in combat.

It was first issued to meet the 37¢ first class rate, and then it was re-issued in denominations of 37¢, 39¢, 41¢, 42¢ and now 44¢. It is a very popular design, and I believe we can expect it to be re-issued in the future whenever the first rate increases.



- BCS