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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 appreciated*
- *Give us your ideas for next year's programs (we have a clean slate - choose your favorite month)*

November 3rd Program: JFK on Stamps

This month Lee Morrison will share with us items from his collection of stamps depicting John F. Kennedy.

Collecting stamps relating to a particular subject or theme is known as topical stamp collecting. Topics can be almost anything - space, animals, plants or aircraft. The variety of stamp designs is enormous, giving topical collectors plenty of scope to find stamps for their chosen theme. Among people shown on stamps, our 35th President is one of the most commonly depicted. The American Topical Association has a booklet titled "John F. Kennedy and his Family on Worldwide Stamps," with 123 pp. of listings. [see "Web Site of the Month" of page 3]

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Planning for Holiday Meeting / Meal and the Stamp and Coin Show

For the past few years we have met for our traditional holiday meeting and meal in January rather than December. It seems to have worked well. We have not had to compete with other groups in December, trying to find a suitable location.

For the last two years we met at Ledo Pizza in Warrenton. We were given a room of our own, and the food was reasonably priced. The year before that we met at El Agave, but it could not provide us a separate room. This month we should begin to plan for our Holiday meeting.

And we should begin to think about our plans for the next stamp and coin show, which in past years we have held in March. Once the Holidays are passed, March will be upon us in no time.

HOBBY NOTES

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 topics. The program is usually 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 (and junior members pay no dues). Visitors and guests are always welcome. All 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. Our website address is:

<http://www.wscc.site11.com/>

UPCOMING CLUB PROGRAMS AND EVENTS:

December	1	"I've Inherited a Collection - Now What?" - how to make it easier for your heirs. Bill & Brian will share their thoughts
January	5	holiday dinner meeting
February	2	German stamps - Gisela and Bob
March	1	Judging Coin Exhibits - Raymond Maguire

Noted in passing...

Linn's Stamp News reported a discovery that all of us dream about. A stamp collector was rummaging through old papers at an antique mall, and found a small booklet of stamps he did not recognize. He bought it because it was only \$3. They were very scarce revenue stamps, and only two other intact booklets are known. The catalogue value is \$14,000.

The Postal Service soon may be issuing stamps picturing live people. Until now, the policy has been that any individual must have been deceased for ten years before being honored on a stamp. The only exception was former Presidents, who are usually honored with a stamp on their first birthday after leaving office. I was unaware of any public pressure for such a change in policy. I imagine the idea is that such stamps might be more popular with customers and collectors. The Elvis stamp was certainly a success for the Postal Service, as many people who did not usually collect stamps bought sheets of The King, and never used them for postage. After the cost of printing, the rest is pure profit. So maybe we will see stamps of Brad Pitt, or LeBron James or Lady Gaga. I can't wait.

WEB SITE OF THE MONTH:

The site this month is a listing of handbooks available through the American Topical Association (ATA). <http://americantopicalassn.org/pdf/handbooks.pdf> [copy and paste the address into your browser]

As noted on the cover of this issue, topical stamps are a popular way to collect stamps. There are no rules on how to collect them, you just keep the ones you like. I collect lighthouses and helicopters. The handbooks try to list each stamp issued worldwide that relates to the topic, and they illustrate many of them.

Upcoming Hobby Shows

Nov	5-6	Vienna Quarterly Coin and Stamp Show
Nov	11- 13	VAPEX in Williamsburg
Nov	17-20	Baltimore Coin & Currency Convention
Dec	10-11	Annandale Coin Show

RAYMOND'S COLUMN

– NOTES FROM THE PAST PRESIDENT

DARE TO FLAUNT THE EXCESSIVE

A few days ago, the Perth mint produced the world's largest coin containing more than one ton of pure gold for use as a showpiece for sales of the Australian Kangaroo gold bullion coin. This coin is five times heavier than the world's previous largest gold coin, from the Royal Canadian Mint. Queen Elizabeth's face appears on the reverse, and a kangaroo on the obverse. The coin measures 80 cm. in diameter (31.5 inches) and 12 cm. in thickness (4.7 inches). One troy ounce weighs 31.1 grams and the avoirdupois ounce weighs 28.3 grams. One short ton contains 2,9166.67 troy ounces, so, with a spot gold value of \$1736 dollars per ounce, the Australian coin has a value of \$50,633,339 U.S. dollars.



In September, a former Philadelphia Mint policeman pleaded guilty to theft of presidential dollars with blank edges. He sold these to a California dealer, garnering \$2.4 million U.S. dollars profit. He will be sentenced for stealing government property and for income tax evasion on December 20, 2011. As part of his plea agreement, news sources report that the policeman forfeited \$2.3 million in cash, two row houses in Philadelphia, five motor vehicles, and a boat.

The Mint will not comment on how the thefts took place. The Treasury Department has not released the name of the dealer who received the coins, and will not confirm or deny if there is a separate ongoing criminal investigation.

The coins were first minted in 2007, and examples with missing inscriptions on the edges were soon identified by collectors. They began selling at a premium. The Mint admitted that thousands of these errors had been mistakenly bagged for shipment without having been stamped with the edge inscription. Procedures were changed, and fewer examples surfaced thereafter.

At Last Month's Meeting...

In October, we welcomed back Gunther Morse, who had not joined us in a while.

Dwight mentioned the relative value of platinum versus the price of gold, and noted that for the first time he could remember, gold prices had surpassed those of platinum. He wondered if this might be the time to invest in platinum.

President Bill gave the presentation on his collection of coins, and showed examples of parts of it. He told us how he began to specialize in various areas, and it was interesting that at first he intended to collect stamps. His father was a coin collector, and that might have had a great influence in Bill's choice of hobbies! Bill's coins showed the depth of his collection, and viewing so many coins was especially interesting to those of us who do not collect them [I liked the proofs - they are stunning works of art].

We had just enough time to hear more about Argentine stamps, and then we closed with the usual auction.

-BCS

FROM THE EDITOR...

The news media has reported that The Postal Service financial woes have reached a crisis stage, and that if additional funding is not forthcoming, it will not be able to pay its bills after November 18th. The Postal Service became independent in 1971 and had not received tax-payer funding since the early 1980's. In the last six year it has posted over \$600 million in net operational profits, but it can't meet the expense of pre-funding employee health and retirement benefits. I am not aware of any other government agency or private company which is required to pre-fund such costs, but that is beside the point. The Postal Service is unable to meet its expenses with its current business plan, and is destined to fail if things don't change soon. Perhaps small offices will close, and Saturday delivery will end, but I doubt these measures will be enough. People need to decide if mail service is something of value that ought to be retained. If not, we will have only private carriers, and most of them will not serve remote areas. Many, in fact, do not serve remote areas now - they drop off such mail to the USPS for delivery. What happens if the Postal Service is gone?

[Sorry for the seriousness - I worked 15 years for the Postal Service and truly love it]

We have programs scheduled through March, and if you want to present a program be sure to contact our Program Coordinator, Bill Miller. The March meeting will be about coins, so we'd like to see a stamp-related program for April. And if there is ground-swell for a show-and-tell, we can fit it in.

**WARRENTON
STAMP
AND COIN CLUB**

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This month's featured stamp

This month we feature a semi-postal stamp, "Save Vanishing Species." A semi-postal is a stamp for which the cost of the stamp includes the normal first class postage, plus an additional amount to benefit a particular cause, in this case the endangered species. The stamp costs 55¢, so 11¢ of each sale goes to funds promoting tigers, great apes, marine turtles, African and Asian elephants and rhinoceros, among others.

The USPS does not issue semi-postal stamps very often. The most recent was Breast Cancer Awareness, which was very popular. It received several extra printings, and raised significant amounts to fund research.

