

Bulletin
of the Rossica Society
of Russian Philately

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CAPEX '87



Toronto, Canada was the host for the international stamp exhibition CAPEX '87, with more than 3000 frames of exhibits, a bourse of 125 dealers and 40 worldwide postal administrations. Rossica President Gordon Torrey spent a working holiday there at the Robson Lowe booth and brought back this report.

Although comparable to last year's AMERIPEX in the number of exhibit frames, there were considerably less numbers of meetings, activities, and planned social events during this show than at AMERIPEX which highlighted the success of that international show.

As to be expected, exhibits were spectacular, but the judging was very tough. Many fine exhibits which previously won Gold medals at other international exhibitions were knocked down a level or two, indicating the competition was very strong in the judges' opinions.

Several Rossica members were among the contenders. Moshe Shmuelly of Israel received a Large Vermeil plus a Special Award for "Around the Russian Borders, October 1917-1922, War-Civil War Intervention"; Per Andrus Erixon of Sweden won a Large Vermeil for "Russia 1812-1912"; Dr. James Mazepa earned a Gold for his "Poland Airpost to 1939."

Other exhibits of interest included "Postage Stamps of Soviet Russia and the USSR" by Boris Evgrasov of the USSR who won a Large Vermeil, "Imperial Russian Censorship Marks on Mail in the Period 1914-1917" by Mieczyslaw Lubinski who received a Large Vermeil with Felicitations, and a Vermeil winning effort by Arnold Engel titled "Postal History of Latvia 1780-1915." An exhibit by Robert Smith titled "A Canadian in Siberia 1918-1921" won a Silver Bronze. A topical collection "Animals of USSR Reservations" was awarded a Silver Bronze to Viktoria Perugina of the USSR in the Youth Section.

These winners are to be congratulated for their fine efforts. This list was compiled from a quick search of the list of winners and it is possible some may have been overlooked. If so, we will try to include them in our next bulletin. Nevertheless, one can see that these international exhibitions have nice representations of material interesting to Rossica members. This should encourage all collectors to visit such events and, better yet, to try make an exhibit of their collections for others to view and enjoy.

A New Rossica Publication

David Skipton's translation of "The Russian Posts in the XIXth Century" by K. V. Bazilevitch is going to press. Originally published in 1927, this is a detailed description of the formation and operation of the Russian post by an authoritative Soviet historian who made use of original archive materials. The book traces the development and structure of the post from its beginnings, finely detailed down to the postmen's uniforms and types of postal conveyances. The book will be hardbound, printed on quality paper, profusely illustrated. Watch for price and ordering information in Rossica Journal or further announcements.

1986 and 1987 Award Winners

The following Rossica members were successful in late 1986 and early 1987 philatelic exhibitions as indicated in the press. Apologies to those we missed but congratulations to all who exhibit.

- John M. Hotchner "Stamp Separation: From 1840 to Modern Times"
Gold Omaha Stamp Show, Omaha Nebraska
Gold MIDAPHIL '86, Kansas City, Missouri
Reserve Grand, Best Research Award, Virginia Philatelic Federation Award SPRINGPEX '87, Springfield, Virginia
Gold ROMPEX '87, Denver, Colorado
Reserve Grand & Gold NAPEX '87 Washington, D.C.
- G. Adolph Ackerman "Soviet Airmail - The Early Years"
Grand Award AIRPEX '86, Dayton, Ohio
"Soviet Air Mail 1922-1930"
Gold non-competitive Worthington Stamp Club Show, Worthington, Ohio
"Soviet Airship Construction Issue 1931"
Merit Worthington Stamp Club Show, Worthington, Ohio
"Soviet International Air Mail Service - The First Season 1922"
Special Columbus Philatelic Club Award, COLOPEX '87, Columbus, OH
- W. Thomas Waters "Stamp Foolery in the Russian Civil War"
Silver LEBPEX '86, Lebanon, Pennsylvania
- Bohdan Pauk Third Annual Julian G. Maksymchuk Award of the Ukraine Philatelic and Numismatic Society for his work for Ukrainian Philately at AMERIPEX UKRAINPEX '86, Kerhonkson, New York
- M. R. Renfro "Markings of the Russian Post Abroad"
Vermeil Filatelic Fiesta, San Jose, California
- Russell Ott "Russian North Pole Drifting Stations"
Vermeil SANDICAL '87, San Diego, California
- Joseph Taylor "Allied Intervention In Russia 1918-1920"
Large Silver and Postal History Award, SONEX '87, New Haven, CT
Vermeil NAPEX '87, Washington D.C.
- George Shaw "Czechoslovak Government in Exile. The UK Period 1940-1945"
Silver SPRINGPEX '87, Springfield, Virginia
- Dr. James Mazepa "Poland: Airpost to 1939"
Gold & American Air Mail Society Gold
WESTPEX '87, San Francisco, California
- David Skipton "Russian Postal Development from 1870's to 1917"
Gold & Postal History Society Award NAPEX '87, Washington, D.C.

First Time Winners and Other Exhibits

From the list of award winners above we find two new Rossica exhibitors M. R. (Mike) Renfro and Joe Taylor. Both were very successful in their first attempts. They have listened carefully to the judges' critiques and hope to improve their exhibits accordingly for subsequent shows. Mike Renfro is currently working on his second exhibit about Estonian forerunners. Both agree the first page was the hardest.

Dr. James Mazepa is rightfully proud of his children Rana and Stephen who won a Silver Award at CHICAGOPEX '87 for their first time junior exhibit of U. S. "Transportation Coils." Now we know why Jim carefully franked some of his mail with these U.S. issues and asked for the covers to be returned to him.

In the listings of winners in the philatelic press, there are numerous titles of Russia or Russian-related exhibits by non-Rossica members. We note the numerous Ukraine exhibits, including the exhibition devoted entirely to this theme. Other titles include "Polish Forces in Russia" by C. Kulpinski, "Bolsheviks, Bombs and Borders: The Polish-Soviet War" by T. J. Gobby, "Poland From 1720 to 1923" by Dr. M. Kamienski, the numerous other Polish exhibits at POLAPEX, "Hockey : Canada vs. USSR" by N. Hardy and a Gold Award for "Tannou Touva" by B. Arch.

We see that many people are successfully exhibiting things that Rossica members collect. It is all the more reason that more Rossica members should exhibit, not only to win awards, but to share with other collectors their philatelic material, knowledge and research. Fine exhibits serve as an inspiration to organize and display one's material according to some theme.

Rossica Members in the News

Russell Ott served as a judge at Filatelic Fiesta and at OKPEX'87. John Hotchner was judge and jury chairman at WESTPEX '87 and journalism judge at MIDAPHIL '86. Dr. James Mazepa was an apprentice judge at MIDAPHIL. Dr. Gordon Torrey served as judge at ROMPEX '87, NOJEX 87 and exhibition chairman at NAPEX '87.

How did these people become judges? It was by studying their philatelic interests to the point that they became experts, by exhibiting their collections and winning top awards, by attending American Philatelic Society seminars on exhibiting and judging, by serving as apprentice judges at local and regional shows fulfilling APS requirements, and finally by having a willingness to share their time, experience and philatelic knowledge with others.

Joe Taylor of New Haven, CT is active with the Ben Franklin groups in his area, encouraging youngsters to collect stamps (and postal history, Joe's favorite) and to learn to exhibit their efforts.

Mr. Walter Frauenlob of Bern, Switzerland who has Rossica membership no. 40 mentioned in correspondence that he and his wife have celebrated their 49th wedding anniversary this year. Our best wishes to the happy couple and may they enjoy as many more.

Americans on Soviet Issues

In the previous issue of the Bulletin, we noted a 1985 Soviet commemorative stamp for the American schoolgirl Samantha Smith and asked how many other Americans have been commemorated on Soviet issues. Here's one list. Are there any others?

1956 Statesman Benjamin Franklin on the 250th anniversary of his birth. This stamp was part of a set honoring international representatives of world culture.

1960 Author Mark Twain (Samuel L. Clemens) on the 125th anniversary of his birth.

1962 Writer O. Henry (William Sidney Porter) on the 100th anniversary of his birth.

1971 Party and labor leader William Z. Foster on the 90th anniversary of his birth. For many years he was the Communist Party leader in the USA and a four time candidate for president in the 1920's and 1930's.

1975 Astronauts Tom Sheppard, Vance D. Brand, "Deke" Slayton, participants in the Apollo/Soyuz Test Project, a linkup in space of American and Soviet spacecraft.

1979 Physicist Albert Einstein on the 100th anniversary of his birth. Though born in Germany, he did his Nobel prize winning work in Switzerland, returned to Germany and then to the USA in 1933 and became an American citizen.

The Name's a Game

We are all aware of the numerous changes of names of cities in Russia and the USSR, but changes of names of areas by catalog compilers can be just as confusing. Depending on which catalog you use, the same place may have a different name. As an example, a recent US auction catalog under the Russia section listed a lot as "stamps of the Berg Republic." Those who are familiar with the Michel stamp catalog know there is a "Berg-Republik" listed for a short lived Soviet state in the Caucasus mountains immediately north of Georgia. The word "berg" in German means mountain.

If you use a Scott catalog, there is no mention of this place at all. In the Gibbon's catalog it is called "Dagestan (The Mountain Republic)." But apparently it is not the exact same area as present day Dagestan Autonomous Republic if we believe the F. G. Chuchin catalog of The Caucasus published in 1926 in the USSR.

Chuchin called this area, in transliterated Russian, "Gorskaya Autonomnaya Sotsialisticheskaya Sovetskaya Respublika". Translated, this means "The Mountain Autonomous Socialist Soviet Republic." He said it was established January 24, 1921 and consisted of peoples of the Ingush and Checheno region, the eastern portion of the Caucasus near the Caspian Sea, the peoples of the Kabardino and Balkar region, more or less in the center of the mountain region, and peoples of the Karachai region, the more western portion nearer the Black Sea. Originally this Mountain Autonomous Republic consisted of 40,000 square kilometers with a population of 800,000. The principal occupation was agriculture and cattle raising. Vladikavkaz (presently Ordzhonikidze) was the republic's center.

Later, the Kabardino and Balkar regions split off to form their own autonomous region as did the Karachai and Checheno regions. Today we find them all part of the Russian Soviet Federation of Socialist Republic (RSFSR). From west to east their names are Karachai-Cherkassk Oblast (region), Kabardino-Balkar Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic (ASSR), North Osetian ASSR (where Ordzhonikidze is located), and Checheno-Ingush ASSR. Dagestan ASSR is situated running north to south along the Caspian Sea.

Consult your favorite detailed atlases for locations and current spellings which seem to vary from source to source.

The stamps of this republic which started this search consist of 5 hand overprinted Imperial coat of arms issues of 1909-17, a 2, 5 and 10 kopek perforated and a 2 and 5 kopek imperforated. The overprint is a crude solid five pointed star within a circle with the letters "F.C.C.P" around the star. The ink is greyish-black. The imperfs are considerably rarer than the perforates, according to all catalogs which list them. Michel catalog says covers are very rare. There is no mention of fakes in any catalog.

This game of names was inspired by a query from Rossica member Don West of Stockton, CA. We thought it might be interesting for others as well.

Information Wanted

Information and postal history of any Russian or Soviet gold mine area, company or joint enterprise with foreign companies and especially covers are wanted by a topical exhibitor. This is a rather unusual subject but somewhere there must be some covers or information. Please send any information to this Bulletin. (See address at very end.)

Information Received

In the last issue of the Bulletin, we asked if anyone had any information about actual construction of dirigibles by the Soviet Union as indicated on some of their postal issues. The response from readers was quite interesting as we show below.

A. Ackerman sent a xerox of a chapter from the book "The Achievement of the Airship" by G. Hartcup, 1974 with references describing the Soviet "V" series of airships. Dr. Ackerman also included a Soviet booklet "Release The Ship Into The Air" by V. Borozdin which was an account of the tragic flight of the airship USSR-V6 which crashed near Murmansk on its way to aid the four man team led by Papanin adrift on a breaking ice floe in the Arctic.

Richard Dallair found reference to Soviet use of dirigibles "Pobeda" and USSR-V12 in World War II in the Soviet Military Encyclopedic Dictionary. Mr. Dallair also asked the source of the statement used in the last Bulletin that airship USSR-V1 is pictured on 20 kopek stamp Scott #681 since it is not evident on the stamp. This description is given in the Catalog of Postage Stamps of the USSR 1918-1980.

From Cheryl Ganz, editor of "The Zeppelin Collector, who wrote at the suggestion of Dr. James Mazepa, we learn that the "1977 Jane's Pocket Book of Airships" edited by Ventry and Kolesnik lists over 30 Soviet owned airships, many of which were built in the USSR. She added that the bulletin of the Lighter-Than Air-Society, called "The Buoyant Flight", is running a series titled "My Five Years With Soviet Airships 1931-1936" by General Umberto Nobile, the Italian designer of semi-rigid airships.

This response clearly shows that Rossica members constitute a vast pool of information on many subjects. Many thanks to all who responded.

Local Rossica Chapters

There's an axiom that says whenever two people share the same interest, they form a society. With three people, they hold meetings, collect dues and publish a journal. Although Rossica Society meets this definition, not all can attend the national meetings. But you can still attend a local meeting or even form a new chapter.

Local chapter meetings are held in the Washington, D.C. area. Check with Rossica president Gordon Torrey for time and place of these meetings.

In the Chicago area, meetings are planned to be held at the major midwest stamp exhibitions, CHICAGOPEX, MILCOPEX and INDYPEX. For more information check with their coordinator Dr. James Mazepa.

In the San Francisco area, meetings are also held at major stamp exhibitions, Filatelic Fiesta, WESTPEX, and the East Bay Collectors Club Show. Contact Mrs. Michael Ann "Mike" Gutter, the newly elected chairperson of the Northern California Chapter.

There are reasonable numbers of members in the Southern California area, Seattle, Washington and New York City. Check your membership list that you received with the last issue of the journal for members close by and get in touch. The opportunity to meet and talk over mutual philatelic interests leads to fine philatelic friendships.

Soviet Definitive Challenge

Just as the so-called Small Heads definitives of the USSR in the 1920's provided philatelists a challenge with numerous combinations of paper, printing and perforations, the current Soviet definitives of 1976-86 appear headed the same way. Although consisting of 20 values from 1 Kop. to 5 Rub., at least 87 individual stamps have been identified. (Reference: A. Andreev, Filateliya SSSR No. 1, 1987, page 34). There are 2 types of

printing - offset and engraved; there are 2 basic paper types - ordinary offset paper and chalk surfaced; both papers are found with or without a diamond pattern network, when viewed with transmitted light; the gum can be dull or shiny, rippled or smooth. Various combinations of all these parameters yield the 87 types but do not include any inevitable printing varieties, perforation freaks or any fluorescence anomalies.

The numbers issued of the 1920's definitives were massive. Yet some of the more interesting Soviet rarities were found among them. Perhaps this may be true of the current definitives which also are issued in massive quantities. An added challenge is to try and find all these types postally used. Now who said modern Soviet material couldn't be fun?

Treasurer's Report as of December 31, 1986

Income		Expenses	
Dues	7055.00	Library Funds	185.09
Sales of journals	1499.39	Printing and stationery	926.06
Ads	6.00	Postage	705.74
Sales of Prigara's	226.44	Journal (printing, typing and postage)	3282.88
Refunds on purchases	5.20	Bulletin (printing and postage)	159.60
Postage	5.00	Ameripex	411.37
Contribution	5.00	Film for camera system	179.36
		Computer (system, supplies service)	6634.28
		Copy machine	1520.00
		Miscellaneous	15.00
	<u>\$ 8020.03</u>		<u>\$ 12893.32</u>

Bank account balance as of December 31, 1986

Fund for printing books	12,000.00	(to be replaced from book sales)
Amortization fund for equipment	3,500.00	(to be set aside each year)
General fund	<u>3,730.25</u>	
TOTAL	<u>\$ 19,230.25</u>	

An Invitation

The health of any society is judged not only by its solvency, journal and numbers of members, but also by the active participation of its members in its operations. Many societies make a special effort to change its officers and editors frequently to assure new ideas, viewpoints and perspectives.

With this in mind, let me make the following invitation. This issue of the Bulletin is the fifth that I have put together in an effort to provide members a forum between issues of the journal. If anyone would like to put out the next four or five issues of this Bulletin, I would gladly assist on the next issue, then leave you on your own. If you like this kind of newsletter or feel some other approach should be tried, have a flair with a typewriter or wordprocessor, enjoy receiving letters of inquiry from other members and making new philatelic friendships along the way, give serious consideration to this invitation. If you would like to take a stab at this bulletin, write to me at the address given below.

In the meantime, any comments, inquiries or information for the Bulletin should be addressed to George V. Shalimoff, 20 Westgate Drive, San Francisco, California 94127.