

Bulletin of the Rossica Society of Russian Philately

Number 14

Bruce Bain, Editor

December, 1991

EDITORIAL

Well, here it is December already and time for the winter issue of the Rossica Bulletin. Since the last Bulletin a great deal has happened in the world. One could say the whole world has turned upside down. First we had "the Coup", followed quickly by the breakup of the Soviet Union into umpteen loosely confederated republics, the worldwide recognition of many of the Republics as independent nations, the emergence of a "Slavic Commonwealth", and the designation of Minsk as the capital of a new "Slavic Commonwealth". What does all of this mean philatelically???

On the Rossica scene there has been a changing of the guard in the recent election. In brief only Dave Skipton (Librarian) and Leon Finik (Chairman of the Audit Committee) remain in the same office they held in the 1988. Gary Combs was elected to continue as Treasurer, a position he has held since Norman Epstein stepped down (see pages 2 & 3 for complete results).

The Bulletin has a new editor. After doing a great job Paul Spiwak stepped down as editor for personal reasons. Paul left the bulletin in good shape for me to

pick up and run with. Thank you Paul. Your new editor is Bruce Bain. I joined Rossica in 1987 and I am continuing to learn at every turn in the road (i.e. I am not an expert). I apologize in advance for the mistakes I am bound to make. Please feel free to let me know whenever I make them. My address is Bruce Bain, P.O. Box 2928, Merrifield, Virginia, 22116-2928. Please flood the box with suggestions, notes etc.

Finally we had an outstanding issue of the Rossica Journal (Number 117), many exhibit winners, a Puzzler winner, and unfortunately the final closing of several albums.

WORLD'S RAREST STAMPS

Many Philatelists believe that the 1856 British Guiana 1 cent black on magenta is the world's rarest stamp. There are many items, with but a single known copy, in philately. In Russian Philately alone there are several items believed to be unique. One of these is the Russian Zemstvo district of Kotelnich's 3 kop black and yellow stamp of 1869. The full stamp consisted of two parts, one to be affixed to the letter and the other to be retained by the post office as a counterfoil. Only the counterfoil portion

was ever been found. The Belgian dealer J. B. Moens illustrated an intact copy in his 1880 catalogue (figure 1), thus there is some evidence a complete copy did exist somewhere (Keep looking!).

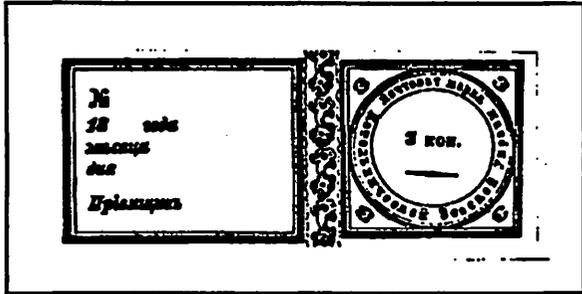


Figure 1

Another valuable Russian issue that has only one known copy is the 3 kop, black on rose, 1872, Byzhetzk Zemstvo issue (figure 2).

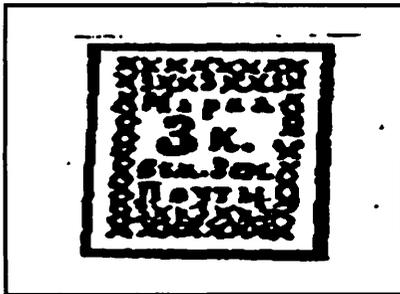


Figure 2

BULLETIN PUZZLER



Figure 3

Here's the story behind the last Bulletin's "Puzzler". The stamp is one of a set of six prepared in 1916, by a photographic process, in sheets of 12,. The stamps were printed on board the British Royal Navy's ship HMS Ark Royal, for use on Mount Athos. They were printed on the orders of Lt. Commander Harry Pirie-Gordon as part of his plan to occupy the island in the Anglo-Russian expedition. In a memorandum dated 25 December 1915 to the Vice-Admiral of the Eastern Mediterranean Squadron he reported that the governing council of Mount Athos should be allowed to issue its own postage stamps. He further stated that this was "a lucrative privilege greatly coveted by the shrewd and avaricious monks". Evidently, the stamps are the only ones ever to have been printed on board a ship in time of war. In addition they are the only ones to have been inscribed in three languages and alphabets (Greek, Russian and English) as well as with three units of currency (pence, lepta and kopek). The denominations are: 2k (1/2d, 1l), 4k (1d, 2l), 10k (2 1/2d, 20l), 18k (4 1/2d, 45l), 24k(6d, 60l) and 48k (1s, 120l).

Congratulations to Philip E. Robinson of Sheffield England. Philip knew the answer and the whole story behind the issue. He was sent a packet of cinderella stamps for his response.

Editors Note: due to time constraints in the turnover of the Bulletin I have not had time to think up a new puzzler. I need all you Rossica trivia buffs to help me out here and come up with suggestions.

ELECTION RESULTS

This year's election produced the closest result in a Presidential election in Rossica History. Adolph Ackerman narrowly out-pollled Howard Wienert 39 votes to 38. There was an error on the ballots which were sent out. When the ballots were produced, they were made from an old copy of the Constitution. That Constitution still listed the Chairman of the Membership Committee as an elected officer. In 1988 that office was eliminated. Your new officers are:

President

Adolph Ackerman
629 Sandbridge Circle East
Worthington, Ohio 43085 USA

Vice-President

Peter Michalove
307 S. McKinley Ave.
Champaign, Illinois 61821 USA

Treasurer

Gary Combs
8241 Chalet Ct.
Millersville, Maryland 21108 USA

Secretary

Bruce Bain
P.O. Box 2928
Merrifield, Virginia 22116-2928 USA

Librarian

Dave Skipton
50-D Ridge Rd
Greenbelt, Maryland 20770 USA

Chairman of the Audit Committee

Leon Finik
Box 521
Rego Park, New York 11374-0521 USA

Board of Directors:

Gordon Torrey
5118 Duval Drive
Bethesda, Maryland 20816 USA

James P. Mazepa
Box 1217
Oak Park, Illinois 60304 USA

Mike Renfro
P.O. Box 2268
Santa Clara, California 95055 USA

SOCIETY MEETING

This year the society is holding its annual meeting on May 24, 1992, in conjunction with the World Columbian Exposition in Chicago. We have not been assigned a time or room yet, only the day. We will notify all members as the date approaches as to the time, room, etc. Also, please check the show agenda on the day of the meeting for last minute changes. The show hotel is the Hyatt Regency O'Hare. Other nearby hotels include the Radisson Suite Hotel, the Hotel Sofitel and the Holiday Inn. You can make your reservations directly with the hotel or contact Glenview Travel (1-800-253-2408 or 708-998-8110). Ask for the World Columbian Stamp Expo Rate. Let's all try to show up and do some 'meetin and greetin'.

If you work at it, you can probably come up with some clever ways to get to Chicago. I know of one local stamp club that is chartering a bus to go for a weekend to the show. Members will be able to travel in the comfort(??) of a bus for only \$30-50 each, depending on how many members decide to go. Let's see how many members we can get to come.

Please let one of the new officers know if you are planning on coming so that a Rossica name tag will be available for you. This count also will help us plan other events for the show.

BREAKING UP IS HARD TO DO

Since the last Bulletin the Soviet Union has been coming apart at the seams. All the Baltic States (Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania) have had their independence recognized by the Gorbachev Government. Additionally they have all begun issuing stamps again. They should be removed from the "dead country" list. Reportedly some of the new issues from Estonia and Latvia have a limited printing of 20,000. Those of you who collect these areas should consider getting them now while you can. With those kinds of numbers they will likely be difficult and expensive to acquire in the future.

Armenia is also reportedly coming off of the "dead country" list. The November 11, 1991, edition of "Linn's Stamp News" reports that AT&T and a recently installed satellite dish will be commemorated in the first new issue from this recently independent republic. The issue was to be printed in Armenia, which, according to Linn's, does not currently possess that capability.

The December 23, 1991, "Linn's" also reports that there are new Latvian overprints on Soviet stamps. The overprints are simply black bars obliterating the "NOYTA CCCP".

The most recent additions to the independent republic list are Ukraine and Khazakhstan. Some of the new republics

are also setting up philatelic societies. I guess this means that the Rossica library will have to be expanded into Dave Skipton's kitchen to accommodate the new exchange copies we will hopefully be getting of their journals -- if and when they print any.

NEW PUBLICATION

The Midwest Chapter produced a very nice 32 page pamphlet, "*Introduction to Russian Philately*", which was distributed free at the Rossica table at CHICAGOPEX '91. Those of you who were unable to attend and would like a copy, please contact Peter Michalove at 307 S. McKinley Ave., Champaign Illinois 61821 USA. Please include \$1.00 to cover postage.

SPECIAL AWARD

Rossica members Dave Skipton and Peter Michalove were presented with the 1991 Diane D. Boehret Award for excellence in Philatelic Literature for their book POSTAL CENSORSHIP IN IMPERIAL RUSSIA by the American Philatelic Congress. They were up against some very fine philatelic works and were deemed to be the best. Congratulations to both on a well deserved award. The book is available from the authors.

FROM THE OTHER SIDE OF THE POND

Philip Robinson advises us that he has recently published a reprint of the 1916 standard ATLAS OF THE IMPERIAL RUSSIAN RAIL SYSTEM. Philip also still has several copies of his second edition SIBERIA: POSTMARKS AND POSTAL HISTORY available. If interested contact

him at: P.E. Robinson, 2 Rydallhurst Avenue, Sheffield S6 4BG England

ALBUM CLOSINGS

Recently, the Society lost two of its members. Stig Anderson died in Denmark in August of this year. We have been unable to acquire any other details. If our European members could hunt up some details and forward them to Gary Combs for inclusion in the Journal he would appreciate it.

Norman Epstein, 72, a long time member, former Treasurer, and former Chairman of the Expert Committee passed away on November 21 after a long illness. Norman's extensive knowledge and unique perspective will be sadly missed by the Society.

INPUT NEEDED

The new officers would like member input on where to hold future annual meetings. Does the membership want to normally hold it at the APS's annual meeting (i.e. StampShow)? Do we always want it at a particular show and city (BALPEX, CHICAGOPEX, NAPEX VAPEX, or the like) or do we want to have it rotate between places and shows? Do we want it at one place and then have "SPECIAL MEETINGS" at major shows? Just what does the membership want?

The new officers want to set up a schedule several years in advance so that you the members can plan long in advance. If you want the meeting to move around, give the officers some suggestions for shows, cities, etc. Please note that I personally want us to have the

1997 Annual meeting at Pacifica '97 (Let's stuff the ballot box for that one). So tell the officers if, where and when you want the Rossica Travelling Road Show (Annual Meeting) in your own backyard.

Do you have any ideas you would like expressed or topics covered? Write and tell me. They will either be aired here or passed on to the officers of the Society

CHICAGOPEX

CHICAGOPEX meeting was a resounding success. Kudos to Peter Michalove, Jim Mazepa and the rest of the Midwest Chapter for putting on a great meeting. A great deal of comradery was generated at the meeting and hopefully this will carry over. Over 25 members were present including some of our more prominent European members. Additionally, the Rossica members took home a disproportionately large number awards from the exhibit competition. Great work Rossica members. Let's do it again at the World Columbian Exposition in May.

IDENTIFICATION HELP NEEDED

George Werbizky would like to know if any member can shed light on the stamps illustrated below (figure 4). The set consists of 17 stamps of different colors, printed on white paper, with yellowish gum. On top is the phrase "Autonomous Siberia". Anyone with information is asked to write George at 409 Jones Road, Vestal, New York 13850.



2, 3, 5, 7, 10 k



15, 20, 35, 50, 70 k



1, 2, 3, 3.50, 7, 10 R

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to Rossica member Bohdan Pauke who has been elected President of the Ukrainian Philatelic and Numismatic Society. Hopefully the two societies can become closer as a result of his election.

SYMPOSIUM

Our new President-Elect has asked me to poll the membership for interest in a Symposium on Russian Philately. It would be a time of seminars and other educational exchanges. In addition all attenders will be encouraged to trade and exchange material. Please write me and tell me if you would be interested in A) attending, B) leading a lecture/seminar C) should we allow dealers to be present at some point to hoc their wares D) should we open this to non-members and if so should we have 2 fee structures? E) where and when should we hold it -- at a show someplace, on a "neutral site" or what.

Adolph has suggested a Summer 1992 or 1993 time frame and possibly in State College, Pennsylvania.

The reason for suggesting State College is the APS's Research Library is there and this could be an opportunity for some to tour/use the APRL. Each summer the APS sponsors a summer session on Philately at Penn State University. We could possibly dovetail into that somehow.

Remember all of this is currently only a discussion topic and all of our options have been left open. If you have any interest at all please let us know as quickly as possible so we can asses interest and hopefully begin planning.

FINAL NOTES

As we go to press, the old "Soviet Union" appears to have expired. Does this mean the "Second Civil War" will follow the "Second Revolution" ? Will there be

a power struggle between the various factions? What will the philatelic implications be? Will we have 10,000 new overprints? Will all of the CTO'd material suddenly become scarce. Will each of the independent republics issue a few new stamps, or will they print thousands of new issues each. Only time will tell. Send your predictions and opinions on this matter to the editor.

Awards to Rossica Exhibitors

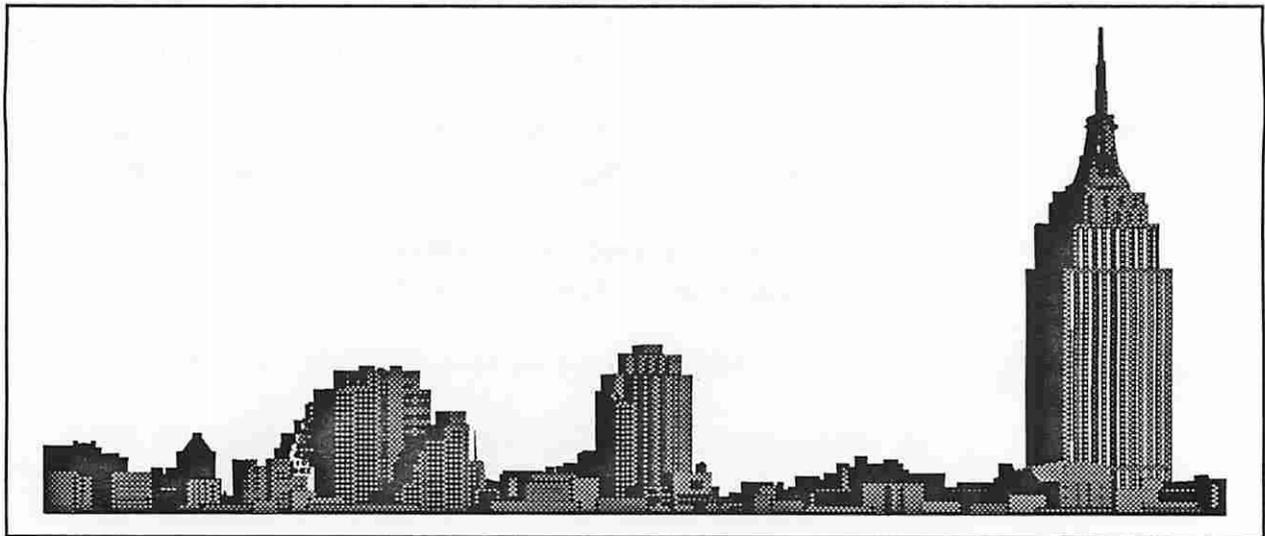
Rev. L Tann	Romanovs-Proofs, Essays, and Varieties Vermeil	Montreal Exhibit 91
Paul B. Spiwak	Zemstvo Stamps Used in the Ukraine Silver	UKRAINPEX '91
	Russian and Ukrainian Currency Stamps of 1915-18 Bronze	UKRAINPEX '91
Ron Zelonka	Military Operations in Western Ukraine: 1914-20 GOLD, President's Award, Best-in-Show	UKRAINPEX '91
	Military Censorship in Ukraine: 1914-19 GOLD	UKRAINPEX '91
Bruce Bain	1922 Armenia Regular Issue without Overprint Silver	VALPEX 1990
	Fantasy Issues of the 1st Russian Revolution Silver	VALPEX 1991
Paul Buchsbayew	Soviet Union 1917-1939 Vermeil	National '91
Mike Renfro	Russia Used Abroad, the Far East Vermeil	CHICAGOPEX '91
Bohdan Pauke	Beilarus (Byelorussia) 1915-23 A Postal Outline Vermeil	CHICAGOPEX '91
Mike Carson	Hard Times in Russia: The Inflation Era Vermeil	CHICAGOPEX '91
Andrew Cronin	Postal History of the Ukraine Vermeil	CHICAGOPEX '91
Ivo Steyn	The Coldest War, 1918-24 Vermeil	CHICAGOPEX '91
Joe Taylor	Allied Intervention in Russia Vermeil	CHICAGOPEX '91
G. A. Ackerman	Soviet Airmail - The Early Years Gold, APS 1900-1940 Medal, American Air Mail Society Award	CHICAGOPEX '91
David Skipton	Postal Censorship in Imperial Russia Gold, APS Research Medal, Best Exhibit of a Rossica Member	CHICAGOPEX '91

Gordon Torrey

Imperial Russia Offices Abroad
Grand Award Foreign, Gold,
Rossica Award for Outstanding Pan-Slavic Exhibit

CHICAGOPEX '91

And remember:



ALL ROADS LEAD TO CHICAGO