

# Bulletin of the Rossica Society of Russian Philately

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Bruce Bain, Editor

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## EDITORIAL

Well here it is Summer again and once again its time for the ole Rossica Bulletin. I want to thank all of you who have written me since our last bulletin. I have found out that some of you really do care about Rossica, and what goes on in our world. But on to other topics.

First I would like to formally introduce myself as Your Editor. I mean that title in every sense of the words. I am here to put in the Bulletin what you want to hear. After all this is your Society. I will temper it with my own thoughts and opinions. Letters to the Editor are welcomed. I am reasonably tough skinned and will not take too much personally. I want the Bulletin to a forum of member exchange for information as well as collecting material. I cannot be the middle man on these transactions. If you want to put in an adlet write it up and send it to me. The rules and price are the same as in the journal. Sorry dealers but I am not ready to accept full blown ads yet. Also there appear to be some individuals in the Society who do not want me to continue as the Editor and Secretary. For what reason I do not know. I will continue to serve in both roles as long as I have your support and

that of our President. If you think I am doing a particularly good or bad job at these jobs please tell me so I can know. I have been collecting stamps since I was about 5 years old. My father was in the Navy and used to send me mission mixtures from the Far East. Each time I received one I thought I had died and gone to heaven. One year for Christmas I received a packet of 2000 Russian stamps from my Grandfather. I thought I had the world by the tail. I believed I had to have every Russian stamp that there was. there couldn't be that many more. Finally for my 9th Birthday my father gave me a Minkus Russian Specialty album. I was hooked. Now I am looking for Cinderella items. Especially on cover. Let me know what you have that you don't want or are willing to part with.

Second at the Officers meeting in Chicago in May the officers decided to try and coordinate our annual meeting with the Dealers who support our society(I.E. those dealers who advertise regularly in the Journal will be given advance notice of where the Rossica Annual Meetings will be held). This is so that they can get tables early and be in a position to advertise their presence at the shows. Dealers if you want to be a part of this please contact Gary Combs

IMMEDIATELY about ad space in the journal. We are attempting to help both the dealers and the members exchange material. We hope that this will cause more of our members to come to shows so that they can get good material from our supporting dealers and while they are there stop in at a Rossica meeting. Hopefully this will also allow our dealer friends to move more material so they can continue to support the society.

Third, in the last Bulletin we talked a great deal about the events taking place in the Soviet Union. Since then I have received a letter and gotten several comments critical of that practice. To those people I would like to say thank you for your opinions. I have considered the advice you offered and I find it to be inconsistent with the 17 letters and numerous comments I received supporting me on this idea. As such I shall continue to offer comments on the news of the world I as perceive it to effect Russian Philately. By the way does the phrase "Russian Philately" mean anything anymore? I'd like some of your opinions on what the change in that area of the world means to our Society's title. Can you help the officers define the scope of the Society?

#### Chicago

WOW. What a show. Your Editor overspent his budget by about 90%. However there was a fabulous amount of material available to everyone. If you couldn't find something you liked there you didn't look very hard. The list of people there was a veritable Who's Who of Russian Philately in North America. I was finally able to put faces to many

names that I had heard for years. The Midwest Chapter did a superb job in hosting the Society and we could not have had a better time. The officers had 8 of the 9 officers in the same room for the first time in years. We were all sorry that for personal reasons Mike Renfro had to cancel out at the last minute. It seems that had he been able to show up we would have had all of the officers and board members in the same room for the first time since the early 60's. Next year we'll all try to break that string. The Officers decided to meet in split session around Labor Day. The travelling president will meet with the officers in the eastern part of the US on Sept 6 at BALPEX. He will meet the following weekend at INDYPEX with those in the Midwest. In between he will talk to the West Coast officer. After those meetings we will announce where the next annual meeting will be.

#### Clarification

Apparently some members were confused about a mailing we did earlier this year. We received from the APS a list of all APS members who say that they collect Russia. We culled the list for current Rossica members. We got most of them and did not send them the letter. However a few slipped through. To those of you who wrote : You are still members -- You never stopped being one. I would like to apologize to the 12 members who wrote me and the rest of you who did not. The letters were not meant to confuse you but rather to solicit new members. We have gotten some 15 - 20 new members from these letters. Hopefully these new members will be with us a long time.

## **ROSSICA LIBRARY LENDING AND PHOTOCOPYING GUIDELINES**

All Rossica members in good standing are entitled to make use of the Society's Library, one of the greatest concentrated collections of Russian and related-areas philatelic literature in the West. This outlines both the members' privileges and responsibilities when using the Library.

### **1. LIBRARY LOAN REQUESTS.**

Most of the material in the Rossica Library can be loaned out to the membership. The only exceptions are when the items requested are too fragile to survive the journey by mail, or too expensive to replace in the event of loss (e.g. the original six volumes of the Tchilinghirian & Stephen work on Used Abroads, selling for hundreds of dollars on the few occasions they appear at auction). Rossica, BSRP, CSRP and other current society journals are not as a rule loaned out, but any articles therein may be photocopied (within reason!) at the standard rate. (See below on ordering photocopies.)

Members who borrow material from the Library are expected to reimburse the Rossica Society for all postage, insurance or registration costs involved in sending the items to them. While it isn't necessary to send money in advance to help defray these costs, it is appreciated. Mailing expenses come out of the librarians' pockets and are not reimbursed by the Treasurer until a bill with receipts is submitted. When the member returns the loaned material, a check made payable to "Rossica Society" should accompany it, in the amount of postage plus any insurance or registration. If the

loaned material comes registered, insured or certified, it must be returned the same way.

Unless otherwise specified, materials should be returned no later than one month after date of receipt. On occasion, if more than one member has requested an item, the Librarian will ask that it be returned sooner.

The member is responsible for replacement costs of any lost or damaged material on loan.

### **2. PURCHASING PHOTOCOPIES FROM THE LIBRARY.**

The Rossica Society Library has a photocopier, and can provide members with copies at 10 cents per single page. Members are limited to requests totalling 50 pages or less per four month period UNLESS the request is from a single item. In that event, the librarian can take the item to a local photocopy firm and have them do it. Please bear in mind that the Rossica librarians serve as volunteers, and that all orders must be attended to after a regular day's work. It may take awhile to respond with all (or most) of the material you've requested.

Another thing to consider is copyrighted items. If a member requests photocopies of a copyrighted work, and that work is still being sold by an individual or a society, it is advisable to order an original from the publisher. If ever you decide to sell or trade your personal philatelic library, no one is going to offer you as much for photocopies as for the real thing. It pays to accumulate as many original publications as you can. This is

especially true for back issues of various societies' journals. Purchasing an entire journal instead of a few pages of photocopies from it is better in the short and the long run. It benefits the society monetarily, cuts down on the librarians' workload, and gives the member something of value for possible resale.

### 3. ORDERING MICROFILM FROM THE LIBRARY.

The Rossica Library has a fair holding of microfilmed items, primarily in the form of Imperial-period official publications. The Librarian can have microfilm duplicates produced if the member so desires, or can loan the Library's copy to the member for reproduction in his area. None of the microfilm in the Library's possession are under copyright any longer.

### 4. MISCELLANEOUS.

When ordering items on a subject basis, e.g. "everything the Library has on topical insect collecting", it helps a lot if you specify which languages you read. At present, the Library has large holdings in English, Russian and German, and smatterings of Bulgarian, Dutch, Estonian, Finnish, French, Latvian, Lithuanian, Rumanian and Ukrainian. With the breakup of the Soviet Union, it is likely even more languages will be added to the mix, as philatelic journals there proliferate.

Blanket orders such as "everything the Library has on Imperial stamps" simply can't be filled. Please narrow the scope of your requests as much as possible; the librarians' job will be much easier, and you'll get your loan or purchase items

much more quickly. If you're not certain what the Library contains on any given subject, please feel free to ask. (And don't feel bad about it - in many instances, the librarians aren't sure what all is there!)

## THE ROSSICA LIBRARY

The Rossica Society's Library has grown immensely in the past decade (1980-1990), thanks to the generosity of many individuals in donating material or time to it, and to an aggressive acquisition and exchange program. Titles have been acquired from the Library of Congress, the Slavic Reference Service at the University of Illinois in Champaign-Urbana, the United States Army Russian Institute in Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany, the Munich Staatsbibliothek, the New York Public Library, Yale, and a host of other places. A lot of effort and time have gone into building it, and it's there for you, the Rossica member, to use.

One of the benefits of being a Rossica member is the privilege of using the Library. This privilege is extended only to members, with an occasional exception made for requests from other societies, or from non-member individuals if granting the request would aid the Rossica Society in some substantial way.

A major shortcoming in the past has been the lack of a comprehensive subject index, which made library requests an iffy business. Were it not for the British Society of Russian Philately's "Cumulative Subject Index", updated periodically since the 1970s and reflecting much of what was available in this

Library, Rossica members would have had little to go on. Two abortive attempts were made to keep up with the explosion of literature in the 1980s, but filling out 3x5" cards by hand or typewriter quickly became a losing proposition. Currently, a new subject index is underway, this one being compiled on the Society's computer, using the Bookends program. In early July, 1992, the index reached 9,400 entries, estimated to be less than one-half of all the Library's holdings. Every effort is being made to complete this massive project, whereupon the Index will be made available to the membership, and updates issued from time to time.

The Library's tremendous expansion, while a matter for rejoicing, was also a cause for despair. Simple lack of space to house all of it in one location, and an ever-growing demand on the Librarian's time, resulted in a three-way split. In the summer of 1992, the Library was divided along language lines:

- 1) The Russian Section, plus archives & subject index,
- 2) The English Section, plus photocopying,
- 3) The "All Others" Section.

It's a bit more cumbersome to manage, but the Society doesn't have the luxury of a real library building staffed by fulltime professional librarians. At the rate the amount of philatelic literature in our area of interest continues to grow, there may be even more splits in a few years. Our aim is to provide the membership with the best Library we can, and we hope you'll use it to enhance your understanding of this tremendous collecting field.

Names and addresses of the various librarians can be found in the front of your next Rossica Journal. (Thanks for this bit goes to Dave Skipton).

### Policies and Procedures

One of the offshoots of the Chicago meetings has been the idea of a policies and procedure manual. This library policy and discussion is the first installment. This is to allow you the members to know what the Societies policies and procedures are and how to better utilize our resources.

### Survey

The following survey is an attempt to see where we are as a Society, What we collect and where our expertise lies. Even if you have already filled one out please fill out another one. This will help us fill out our Expert Committee, keep in better touch with our members and in general see what you think. If you have any comments or questions feel free to include them on the back of the sheet.

### December

Our next Bulletin is due out in December. Since it is now August I will have to begin work on it almost immediately. To those of you who liked the "Chatty Format" of last year it will return then. The pressures of long hours of work, raising a family, running a business and trying to organize a meeting for Balpex plus putting out this Bulletin is taxing. I hope some of you will understand if it takes a few days to a few weeks to get this to you. Until December Keep those cards and letters coming.

