

# BULLETIN OF THE ROSSICA SOCIETY OF RUSSIAN PHILATELY



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## Way Back of the Book

To the collector, back of the book means the stamps issued for special purposes, for special times, for special places. Quite often they are drab, uninteresting, especially if they are common. But they can also be quite rare and uncommon, reflecting some particular period of an area's history.

The post revolution period in Russian history spawned a civil war that in time raged across all of Russia. This period saw the emergence of many places of the former Imperial Empire that asserted their independence for brief periods before being gobbled up by the communist red onslaught. The attempts at self rule included limited postal operations. Many of these areas used overprinted Russian stamps or made their own attempts at printing stamps.

Soviet stamp catalogs as well as Gibbons, Michel, and to a lesser degree Scott's catalogs introduce us to these little known and less frequently found issues, but the western catalogs omit one obscure issue, that of the Bukhara Peoples Soviet Republic. An article in *Filateliya*, January 1992 by V. Ustinovskii sheds a little light about the stamps of this obscure republic that was proclaimed in September 1920 and lasted until the beginning of 1925.

Part of the problem was the issues of this republic were fiscal in appearance and nature. The stamps were bilingual, in Uzbek and Russian. The Russian text indicates they were

"gerbovaya" or fiscal stamps. But the Uzbek text translates into "state" stamp, that is, a stamp for multipurpose designations, not only for fiscal uses, but for other state usages, even postal needs. The discovery of these stamps on pieces of periodicals confirmed their postal usage from 1922.

By 1924, the available multipurpose stamps had essentially been used up and economic conditions saw the need for new postage stamps. Three stamps were issued using modified designs of the original multipurpose stamps.

The first issue of multipurpose stamps were issued in 1922, lithographed on watermarked paper ("carpet" or greek border and rosettes as given in Scott), line perforated 11 1/2. Five values are known, 5 kop. gray yellow, 15 kop. black, 75 kop., green, 1 rub. 50 kop. brown, 3 rub. brownish red. Examples are shown in (fig. 1).



fig. 1

In 1923, two values, the 5 kop. and 15 kop., were reprinted on thin unwatermarked paper, lithographed, perfed 11 1/2 and imperforate, called the second issue.

A third issue reprinted the 5 kop. and 15 kop. values again on ordinary unwatermarked paper perforated 11 1/2. The first, second and third issues were all "multipurpose" stamps of the type shown in figure 1.

The first strictly postage stamp issue appeared in 1924. Eight values were proposed, a 1, 3, 5, 10, 15, 25, 50, and 75 rub. But with inflation curbed, only three values were issued, the 1 rub. grayish yellow, 3 rub. gray green, and 5 rub. gray blue, shown below.



The modifications to the multipurpose stamps to produce the postage stamps principally replaced the Russian text for "fiscal stamp" with the text "postage stamp" and cutting off the lower field, and new values. On the 3 ruble stamp, the new text did not quite fit the available field and all stamps of this value lack the last letter "A" in the word "MARKA."

A crude and obviously hurried printing of a fourth issue of the multipurpose 5 kop. stamp, lithographed on crinkly gray unwatermarked paper, appeared in early 1925 after the decision to abolish the Bukhara Peoples Republic and become part of the Soviet Union.

Ustinovskii's analysis of the modified designs used for the three strictly postage stamps from the analogous multipurpose stamps leads him to speculate the existence of two additional first issue values of multipurpose stamps, a 50 kop. value and a 1 rub. value. He speculates there should be a 50 kop. value multipurpose stamp which would have been modified for the proposed but unissued 50 ruble postage stamp, and there should be a 1 rub. multipurpose stamp with a design similar to the issued 1 rub. postage stamp.

The Filateliya journal editor asked readers if they could confirm the existence and color of a 1 rub. stamp, suggested in the figure below.



Can any bulletin reader shed some light on this question?

### Beware of Pickpockets

Abkhazia, a former province of Georgia and now at war with Georgia, is obviously seeking hard currency with the issuance of a souvenir sheet honoring Groucho Mark and late Beatle John Lennon. It's a clear cut parody on Karl Marx and V.I. Lenin. Ostensibly for its own regional post, the sheet was printed in the USA and marketed here as the "Give Peace a Chance" issue.



Will another sheet follow shortly featuring Sylvester Stallone (read Stalin) and Wallace Berry (read Beria) as other notables of Abkhazia's illustrious past?

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 Send your comments, questions, and news items to Bulletin editor: George V. Shalimoff  
 5820 Ross Branch Road, Sebastopol, CA 95472. ++ HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL! ++

## Coals to Newcastle

We have all heard the expression of shipping coals to Newcastle to describe the action of sending something back to a place that has a surplus of whatever is shipped. This same metaphor can apply to a comprehensive catalog of Russian and Soviet stamps being compiled and published in the journal *Filateliya* in Russia today.

The compilers of the new catalog in *Filateliya* are including more information than has ever appeared in catalog form before. They give detailed information about perforation sizes, fantails, printing screen varieties, and constant printing flaws, many of which were announced in separate articles through the years in that journal. Small sections of this new catalog appear periodically as a pullout section of the journal which can be folded over into a small booklet.

After the publication of any catalog, collectors are quick to point out that certain items have been omitted, items that are not simply one-of-a-kind, but well known varieties. In spite of their efforts to be thorough, the new Russian editors have omitted many varieties that are known in the West and even included in catalogs such as Gibbons, Scott, Minkus.

Long time Rossica member Alex Sadovnikov, who has an intense interest in varieties as well as a sizeable collection of this material, has become a frequent contributor to *Filateliya*, with additions and corrections. Fluent in Russian, Alex sends his comments and color photocopies of the varieties to *Filateliya*, informing them of things well known to specialists in the West. His efforts are illustrated and acknowledged in the journal.

Among the "coals" shipped by Alex are:  
Scott 187 with perforated word  
"OBRAZETS" (specimen);  
Scott 201 (blue ovpt, type I), 201a (type II),

201b (type I), 201 (black horizontal ovpt) with inverted overprints, where type I has overprint 23-23.5 mm, type II, 24-24.5 mm.;  
Scott 201a (type II), 201b (type I) with double overprint;  
Scott 721 fantail top;  
Scott 564 wavy line before CCCP at top left;  
Scott 714 with white spot in second C of CCCP, nearly closing the letter;  
Scott 635, pair with gutter in between.

## Inflation Rates

Many collectors of Soviet postal history have been more than perplexed with the changes in rates and valuations of stamps, especially in the period 1920-1923. For a long time, the only published attempt to shed light on this problem was the article by V. Karlinski, originally published in *Soviet Collector*, 1971. Collectors immediately found many discrepancies, particularly with the time periods. A. Epstein offered some clarification in the journal *POCHTA*, as did Bob Taylor in *Post Rider*. Mike Carson's excellent exhibit on this question also illustrates the problem.

Member Mike Ercolini became intrigued with these discrepancies and has compiled an "amended" list of rates and periods from these various sources. He would be happy to share this with anyone interested. Send a SASE to Mike Ercolini, P.O. Box 778, Daly City, CA 94017 for a photocopy of his tables.

## Mail Auction

The Ukrainian Philatelic and Numismatic Society will conduct a 600 lot sale in January 1995 of Ukrainian trident overprints, 1920 Courier Fieldpost, DP Camp stamps, and Rimini Prisoner of War Camp stamps. Included are picture postcards and coins. For an illustrated catalog, send \$0.50 in stamps or coin to Mr. Val Zabijaka, PO Box 3711, Silver Spring, MD 20918.

## Be Prepared

The Scouting movement which once flourished in Imperial Russia has returned to today's Russia and the founder of the movement in Imperial Russia is honored on a Russian cacheted envelope, commemorating the 85th anniversary of Russian Boy and Girl Scouts. The movement was founded in Pavlovsk in 1909 by Oleg Pantuhoff, an Imperial Guard captain at the time, and spread throughout Russia. The movement was abolished by the Soviets and replaced with the Red Pioneers. Pantuhoff who by 1915 was a colonel fled in 1920. He came to the USA in 1922 and became an American citizen in 1929. He died in 1973 at the age of 93.

The Russian scouting movement continued wherever there were Russians in exile, in Turkey, France, China, Germany, Balkans, Australia, and the USA where it is called the St. George Pathfinders, not to infringe on the name of Boy Scouts of America. They are entirely self-supporting.

The commemorative envelope pictures a drawing of Pantuhoff, made by his wife in 1920 along with the Scouting and Pathfinders emblems. The cachet is on a printed envelope with a letter A indicium in blue.



This Russian printed envelope is doubly interesting because it features a Russian national who became a US citizen and commemorates a Russian youth movement that was active throughout these past 85 years

in countries other than Russia.

Our thanks to member John Bates for this information and illustration.

## Recycled Medals

Member John Bates also informs us that an announcement from the Russian Embassy in Washington indicates US World War II veterans are eligible for a Russian medal commemorating "The 40th Anniversary of the Victory in the Great Patriotic War." Veterans of the US Merchant Marine, US Navy, US Corp of Engineers, and other US Armed Forces that participated in operations bringing war supplies to the Soviet Union by way of the Barents Sea, the Persian Gulf, the Black Sea, or the Sea of Okhotsk are eligible. Veterans of these operations would be 70 years or older today.

The medal was instituted in 1985, and shows a star with a group of three persons, a peasant woman, worker, and soldier, with fireworks above the Spassky Tower of the Kremlin in the background. The medal design is NOT like the Medal of Victory shown on the postage stamp issued that year (Scott 5365.)

The medal comes with a certificate signed by Boris Yeltsin. Although the certificate is titled "Russian Federation", the emblem on the cover of the certificate as well as a marking within appear to show the coat of arms with hammer and sickle and letters RSFSR.

One must assume it is simply a goodwill gesture since only a \$3.00 shipping and handling fee is requested with application and documentation for the medal. If the Russians are cleaning out their warehouses of old medals, will a similar housecleaning of old Soviet postage stamps follow, much as they did in the 1920's and 1930's in disposing of old imperial postal material?

## Forwarded Twice

We are all familiar with covers on which the original address is crossed out and a new one is penciled in somewhere across the face of the cover. If the second address is invalid, too, the cover can get to be quite messy with the written notations of forwarding. All this was done much more neatly in 1891 in St. Petersburg.



The postcard shown here was sent from Natal in southern Africa to St. Petersburg. It was originally addressed to a Mr. Rozhevich at 16 Malaya Morskaya St. in St. Petersburg. After attempted delivery the card was sent to the Address Table where a label was attached that indicated the Mr. Rozhevich of 16 Malaya Morskaya now resided at No. 1 Nevskii St. Apt. 17.

Delivery was attempted at this new address but Mr. Rozhevich was no longer there either and the card returned to the Address Table again. A second label was attached which indicated Mr. Rozhevich of 1 Nevskii St. now resided in Staro Derevna, House 95, Row 1. Apparently, the third delivery attempt was successful.

These two interesting labels on this postal card

suggest a bit how the Address Table works. It appears a record is kept according to house number which indicates the name of the past occupant along with the location to which this immediate past occupant had moved.

It would seem that if an inquiry was made to the Address Table directly about the possible location of a resident, then another record according to name should exist as well. Are we correct with this interpretation?

Thanks to member Don West for this example.

## Last Call FINLANDIA 95

The World Exhibition for Postal History and Postal Stationery and The Finnish Society for Russian Philately have the pleasure to invite YOU to Helsinki to their World Symposium for Collectors of Russian Philately on May 12, 1995. This symposium will be held in conjunction with the FINLANDIA 95 World Exhibition on May 10-15, 1995.

If anyone has plans to attend this show which promises to be exciting as most international shows and would be willing to represent Rossica, please contact Rossica president Dave Skipton.

## New Scott Album Pages

Scott Specialty Series album pages for Russia (Soviet Union included) are back in print after 18 long years, now published in five parts. Part I covers 1857-1917 (92 pages), Part II covers 1918-58 (150 pages), Part III covers 1958-69 (121 pages), Part IV covers 1969-80 (150 pages), and Part V covers 1980-91 (139 pages). The Scott advertised prices are about \$0.55 per page. Paper is given as chemically neutral but nothing on paper weight or thickness. Scott's blank pages of past years were no heavier than ordinary typing paper. Albums are separate. Check with your supply dealer for more information.

## Rossica Medalists

We try to list here the Rossica members who are actively exhibiting. This information is gathered from the philatelic newspapers whenever we see an award for a Russian or Russian-related exhibit by a Rossica member. Unfortunately, some awards lists only include the name of the winner and not the exhibit, consequently some award winners may not be recognized here. Our sincere apologies. Similarly, some Rossica members have award winning exhibits other than Russian material. Space considerations preclude mention of them here but our congratulations to them, too.

### BALPEX '94 in Hunt Valley, Maryland

G.A. Ackerman "Via the Red Skies: The Development of the Soviet Air Service 1922-1945"  
Gold, Grand Award, Amer. Air. Mail Soc. Gold, and Grand Award,  
American Philatelic Soc. Research medal, Postal History Soc. Medal  
(Eligible for the Champions of Champions in 1995!)

### OKPEX 94 in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma & TEXPEX '94 in Dallas, Texas

John L. Briggs "What's Going Here?: An Historian Examines the Soviet Union"  
Silver (OKPEX), Vermeil (TEXPEX)

### CHICAGOPEX in Chicago, Illinois & VAPEX 94 in Virginia Beach, VA

John L. Briggs "Stalin's Russia" Silver and American Association of Philatelic Exhibitors  
Creativity Award (at CHICAGOPEX)  
Vermeil & Rossica Award (at VAPEX)

### Filatelic Fiesta in San Jose, CA and FRESPEX '94 in Fresno, CA

M. R. Renfro "Russia Used Abroad: Manchuria and the Eastern Railway" Vermeil, Gold

### STaMpsHOW 94 in Pittsburgh, PA

Alfred F. Kugel "The American Intervention In Russia" Prix D'Honneur in World Series  
of Philately.

Roger P. Quinby "Russian Finns Quest for Reunion" Silver in open competition

### Ameristamp Expo 94 in Indianapolis, Indiana

Alfred F. Kugel "The Russo-Japanese War: Off the Beaten Track" Vermeil

T. E. Chastang "USSR Third Standard Issue" Silver

George V. Keller "Japanese Military Post in Siberia 1917-1923" Silver-Bronze

**Humboldt Stamp Show in Eureka, CA and SUNPEX 94 in Sunnyvale, CA**

- M. R. Renfro "Russia Used Abroad: The Far East" Gold in both shows
- G. V. Shalimoff "The Romanov Tercentenary Issue of Russia" Gold in both shows

**SUNPEX 94 at Sunnyvale, CA & Redwood Empire Stamp Show in Novato, CA**

- G. V. Shalimoff "St. Petersburg Geometric Numeral Cancels" Vermeil, 2nd Place

**INDYPEX 94 in Indianapolis, Indiana**

- T. E. Chastang "The Third Standard Issue of the USSR: A Postal History View" Vermeil and Rossica Midwest Chapter Award, ISC Kramer Adult Second

**Mega-Event in New York, NY**

- Roger P. Quinby "Finland's 1918 Vaasa/Wasa Temporary Wartime Issue" Gold

**HoupeX 94 in Houston, Texas**

- John L. Briggs "What's Going On Here: History and Philatelic Practice in the Soviet Union" Gold and American Philatelic Society Certificate (Yeah, John!)

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**New Member Seeks Help**

**Start Saving for 1997**

Member Floyd J. Dressel writes he is a new Rossica devotee with an interest in covers, especially in finding a cover from Novgorod which he states was a member of the Hanseatic League.

What's that you say? The Hanseatic League was the 13th century forerunner of the European Common Market in Northern Europe which stretched through England, France, Norway, Germany, Denmark, the Baltics, and into Novgorod, Russia. Novgorod was one of four main trading outposts, called Kontors. Naturally, its principal commodities were Russian furs and exotic materials from China.

For more details about this historical era, see The National Geographic magazine, October, 1994. And if you can help Floyd, write him at 652 Devonshire Dr., Belleville, IL 62223.

The next international show to be held in the US will be PACIFIC 97 in San Francisco, California at the Moscone Convention Center. This is an excellent huge show place, easily accommodating the expected 4000 frames of worldwide exhibits and a collector's dream bourse.



This coming international was delayed one year to coincide with the 150th anniversary of the first US postage stamps. Like most world tourist cities, San Francisco is an expensive place to visit, so start planning now for the show, bourse, and stay. We will try to keep you posted of worthwhile special events.

## New Forgeries

The proliferation of overprinted Soviet issues by the new republics of the former Soviet Union will challenge collectors for years to come as to their status. Are they genuine, are there legitimately used copies, or are they Cinderellas created to sell to collectors?

Michael Tereshko, a columnist for Linn's Stamp News in Russia, debunked the legitimacy of many of these issues. The St. Petersburg provisional surcharges on Soviet definitives were among the few legitimate issues of the times. The overprinted stamps were distributed for postal use by the public and Russian collectors bought up the rest. The supply dried up but the demand increased, especially among foreign collectors.

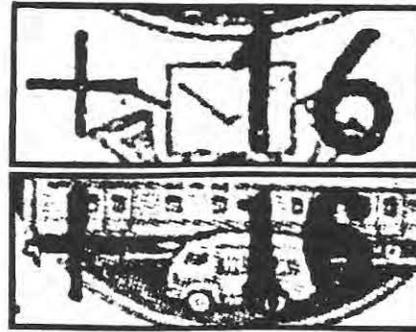
There were 8 surcharges. Sheets of kopek definitives were printed with setenent strips in the center of sheets. These strips were given to the authorized printer, St. Avto, in lieu of cash payment for the printing. St. Avto's director Leonid Katz distributed the setenent strips to philatelic stores for sale to collectors.

St. Avto also was allowed to keep a supply of 6 inverted surcharge setenent strips (only 200 inverts of each exist) and sold to selected collectors. The "+16" and "+18" setenent inverted strips were broken up and sold, but the others were supposed to go to the philatelic museum.

Collectors are warned not to buy a set of setenent center strips (80 in all) or inverts without a certificate of authenticity with seal issued and signed by L. Katz of St. Avto. The certificates are crude, vary with time of issue, and even contain an error, a "350" in place of "353" in the text describing the issue.

Mr. Tereshko warns us that "entrepreneurs" in Russia are now producing forgeries of these St. Petersburg provisional overprints,

particularly for export sale. Linn's Stamp News was able to illustrate one of the fake overprints, the "+16" value, shown here.



genuine

forgery

On the "+16" and "+18" forgeries, the numerals "1" have serifs at the top and bottom whereas the genuine only have serifs at the top of the numeral. The numeral 6 is a long smooth upward curve on the genuine whereas on the forgery the curve of the number turns down at the top to form a dot..

The original "8" has parts of equal width, but on the forgery, the upper right and lower left parts are narrower.

Any inverts with values "200" and "500" are fakes. These values were never printed with inverts, and the existence of any inverts on cover is practically nil, according to the Tereshko.

So beware. Everything that goes around comes around again, a phenomenon that collectors of Russian material are well acquainted, be it issues of 1922 or 1992.

## Pack Your Bags

The 1995 Rossica national meeting will be held at CHICAGOPEX in early November. Mark your calendars and plan your travel for the year to include this show and meeting. Efforts are underway to get a good field of exhibits to make the visit doubly worthwhile. There is the usual excellent show bourse, too. The Ukrainian Society also plans to meet there. More details early next year.