



BULLETIN
OF
THE ROSSICA SOCIETY
OF RUSSIAN PHILATELY



Number 27

THE SOCIETY THAT SLAYS DRAGONS

Summer 1998

Annual National Meeting Held At NAPEX

Over 20 members of the Rossica Society attended this year's annual meeting which was held at NAPEX in McLean, Va. the weekend of June 5-7th. Rossica President Gary Combs stressed the importance of open communications within the Society and to the general stamp-collecting public. At present, Rossica has nearly 400 members world-wide. Gary urged members to share their expertise with their fellow members by contributing articles and information to the Journal and the Bulletin. In addition, ways of making the Rossica Library a more valuable resource and easier accessibility were discussed. The Rossica-sponsored expertising service was discussed, including ways to disseminate information about the many high-quality forgeries currently finding their way onto the open market.

Many new programs were suggested, including the feasibility of a Rossica "mentoring" program pairing experienced philatelists to novices. A suggestion concerning specialized study groups on the various facets of Russian collecting was discussed [see elsewhere notice of the formation of one Ed.] as was the expanded use of the Internet for society news and information. (91 members are on the net, nearly 1/3 of the membership.)

Gary stressed the importance of reviving local chapters, including the possibility of re-establishing a Northeast Chapter to serve the many members living in that area.

Other topics of interest included the information that Jed Seiflow's first volume on Russian Stamps covering the 1918 Chain Breakers issues has been completed and waiting publication. This series

will, hopefully, will be offered to members of the society for around \$20 to \$30 a volume and promises to become a major information source about the stamps of Russia. A draft of another new book, this one on the Moscow Post by Gary Combs and N.C. Warr was reviewed by the members present, and is also nearing publication.

In addition to the Annual Meeting, the Society offered two excellent lectures at NAPEX. Rossica member John Briggs presented an interesting and humorous reminiscence of his exhibiting experience entitled "Why So Grim and Serious?" John's exhibiting history started in 1959 and has continued to the present with just a few years absence. Not content with simply showing his collection, John's exhibiting philosophy is to tell the individual history of each particular stamp or cover rather than its place in the series. As examples, John presented several pages from his exhibit, including a 1924 Air Mail cover that traveled by rail and the three tombs of Lenin only two of which have been pictured on stamps. Last year that exhibit was retired with several gold medals from various national shows.

National Meeting---Continued on page 6

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Membership News

Member Joe Taylor was the feature speaker at the March 1998 meeting of the Collectors Club of New York. Joe's topic was "New Discoveries of the American Expeditionary Forces In Russia". Joe has been very successful with his exhibit of material on this subject both nationally and internationally.

Farewell and Thanks...
by George Shalimoff

In the previous Bulletin, I asked if any member was interested in continuing this Bulletin. Ray Pietruszka in Alabama raised his hand and asked for the job. President Gary Combs and I agree Ray should have a chance at it. He is a fine student of Russian philately, an exhibitor, and will, I'm sure, give us a fine Bulletin. Let's give him our support.

Although I will not be doing the Bulletin, I will continue to help the society as much as I can, and will fill in when the president calls. My duties as chairman of the WESTPEX Stamp Show in San Francisco and participation in two local stamp clubs along with now a large family consumes much of my time these days.

Of the 26 previous issues of the Rossica Bulletin, I had a hand in 17 of them in two tenures as editor. It has been fun, especially when I received comments and encouragement from members. The whole purpose of the Bulletin was to maintain contact with the membership between journals. I've tried to include achievements of the exhibiting members, short stories about obscure topics of Russian philately, a little bit about stamps, covers, news items. But for a society to function best, there needs to be involvement by more members. The Journal and Bulletin should not be the sounding board of one or two. New ideas and new approaches to maintaining contact with the members with new people should be a refreshing change.

I deeply appreciate the kind words from many of you these past few years. Since the last Bulletin I have received wonderful letters from members Mike Renfro, Dave Waterman, Jean Walton, J. Guberman, Quin Shea, E.J. Rasmussen, S. Warren in Canada, our old friend and delightful publishing colleague Andy Cronin in Canada, Chris Ceremuga in Australia, Paolo Bianchi in Italy, Bjorn E. Saarinen in Finland, and from the venerable gentleman in Chile, Derek

Palmer, with membership number 636. Their notes and comments were my reward because I knew they had read the Bulletin and felt compelled to write, even if only to tell me their address has changed. Many thanks.

The old postman, my logo, say thanks, too.
Respectfully yours, George V. Shalimoff

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Missing Link, An Apology...

In Bulletin No. 26, the lead article about Dr. Ortwin Greis' 4 Kopek No. 3 Imperial Russian postal card gave the impression that there was the possibility the card was another card manipulated to appear as the long sought 4 kopeck No. 3. This is incorrect and the outgoing Bulletin editor apologizes profusely for the misunderstanding.

Member Chris Ceremuga in Australia and postal stationary experts here correctly point out the spacing of the footnote test on Dr. Greis' 4 kopeck card matches the spacing of the 5 kopeck postal card No. 2, with only two words on the second line of the first footnote. If the added three words in the second line of the first footnote on a 4 kopek card No. 4 were removed in some fashion to correspond to the correct test for a No. 3, the spacing of the rest of the footnote text would still be incorrect and easily detected.

Dr. Greis has made a remarkable find of this obviously extremely elusive postal card. We invite him to share his story first published in Germany in our Rossica Journal where the circulation extends far beyond the members.

In addition, the outgoing editor forgot to clean his bifocals and misspelled the Russian word "empire". The last Cyrillic letter of the Russian word should be "и" and not "а". Thanks to Alex Sadovnikov for the correction.

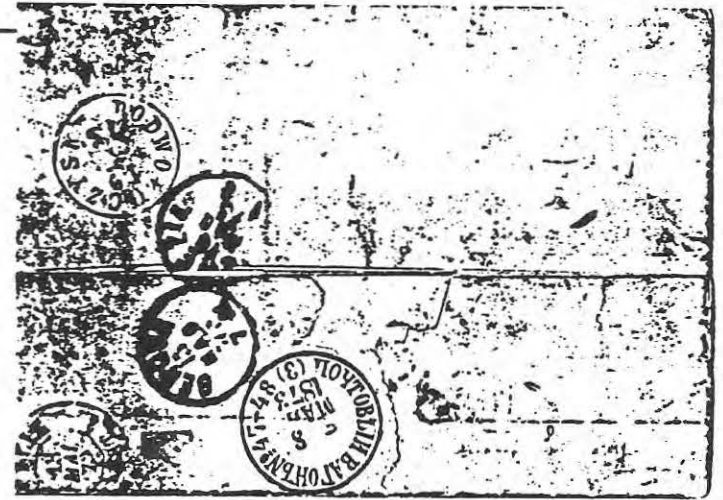
A Question of Rate
by Michael M. Ercolini

Here we have a folded letter from ANVERS, Belgium. It is franked with a 40-c. bright rose 1870 issue of Belgium, Scott #35. It is addressed in care of an office in Genoa, Italy. The black boxed "P.D." (1) is the marking indicating that the proper postage had been paid to the original destination. The oval marking, applied in green, is the senders' address handstamp. On the back there is a French(?) transit CDS. There is also a Genoa receiving CDS. Both are dated May 13, 1873.

Upon receipt in Genoa, the original address was crossed out and a two line "Odessa - Marianopli" forwarding instruction was handwritten at the top left (2). The various CDSs on the back show that the cover transited Venice on the 16th of May and the border town of Prdowol-Oczyska, Austrian Poland on the 19th. Two days later it passed thru the Russian border town of Volochinsk where it was placed on Postal Wagon 47-48. This train ran to Zhmerinka. The 8 May of the TPO CDC corresponds with 21 May of the Gregorian calendar used in the West. The cover finally reached Marianopol on the 12th(?).

This accounts for all but 3 of the markings on the cover. There is a unboxed P.D.(?) in red (3). Red normally indicated the amount due, so if the second letter is indeed a "D", this could mean postage NOT paid to the destination? If the second letter is something else what does this

handstamp mean? The boxed Russian language handstamp (4) means "insufficiently paid". There were many such handstamps used in Russia, mostly in the 1860s on mail to and from foreign destinations. I have not see this particular mark before. Is there a reference book that catalogs



and gives dates of usage for these markings?

Finally, there is a manuscript marking in blue crayon "10 k" plus something indecipherable [something plus a "6"? Ed.] which may indicate that the amount was paid by the recipient. Foreign mail during the pre-UPU (before 19 June 1875) period was, I believe, assessed only the amount due. I know the postage charge was 10k to near by Austrian and German areas and increased to 14k to areas further out. I have seen mail franked with 16k to England during this period. So what was the rate? Was it just the 10k or more?

I would appreciate any answers to these questions. I would welcome any information on reference material for pre-UPU rates and the various handstamps used in Russia at the time.

[Anyone with answers to these question can either contact Mr. Ercolini direct or the editor. If you send it to me, I print it. Ed.]



The Rossica On The Internet

The purpose of this column is to provide two services to members. The first will be to list e-mail addresses of members on the Net. This will start with the next issue of the Bulletin, for now refer to the last issue of the Journal for a current listing. The second service of this column is to provide information of possible interest to members concerning sites on the net. For this issue, I've just listed a few of the basic sites. If someone finds an interesting site let me know!

Yes, Rossica is on the internet. In fact there are three different sites devoted to Russian Philately related to the Rossica.

Rossica Home Page supported by Peter Michalove is located at

<http://hercules.geology.uiuc.edu/~peterm/rossica.html> ump5.

This is the societies homepage. It describes the society, services, books for sale, and the index of the latest Journal.

From there you can reach two additional sites:

1) The Zemstvos Site at

<http://fushs-online.com/zemstvos>

2) Russian Philately Question and Answers Site at

<http://fuchs-online.com/zemstvos/russia/russia frm.htm>.

The Rossica e-mail list maintained at

Rossica@popd.ix.netcom.com

In addition to the names of members the list also includes the areas of interest of these members.

This service is provide by Alexander Safonoff AKA The Tsar@ix.netcom.com.

Contact Alexander if you want to get added to the list.

Ian Billings of the BSRP has established a website

devoted to the New Republics. The purpose of his site is to post details of the postal history and stamps of the 15 countries which emerged following the break up of the USSR in 1991. To date only information on BELARUS has been posted. His site can be found at

www.geocities.com/Heartland/Estates/3337

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA CHAPTER MEETINGS

The Northern Chapter attempts to meet as often as possible, usually four to six times a year. These meetings are open to all; both Rossica and non-Rossica members are encouraged to attend. The meetings generally consist of a Presentation/ Speaker, National and Regional Updates, and general good fellowship with show and tell.

Please join us if you can.

Upcoming meetings are:

Philatelic Fiesta

Masonic Lodge, 2500 Masonic Dr., San Jose

June 27, 1998

12 Noon - 2 PM

STAMPSHOW 98

Santa Clara Convention Center

5001 Great American Parkway

Santa Clara

August 27- 30, 1998

Exact Location, date and time to be announced.

[How about a report on WESTPEX? How was Ivo's presentation? Ed.]

Reissue of 1932 Souvenir Card for MOSCOW 97

by Andrew Cronin

[Mr. Cronin was kind enough to provide the following information on the details of this issue for which he is responsible for. The complete story is to be found in issue No. 42 of "The Post-Rider" Ed.]

Details of the reissued Souvenir Card:

We originally printed only 25 cards with the inscription "Лучшему Ударнику" and then found two spelling errors in the text dedicated to "MOSCOW 97" (our guarantee stamp is on the backs)

A further 25 cards were printed with the spelling corrected. These were presented to the Organizing Committee plus another 24 as printer's overrun, which we kept [49 total Ed.]. Our guarantee stamps is on the backs.

A trial printing of 1000 cards with the "Лучшему Ударнику" inscription removed and with a

WIDE margin at the bottom were cancelled in sets of 10 with all 11 exhibition cancels. Only 75 complete sets could be assembled, due to spoilage and post-mark duplication.

10,000 copies with NARROW margin at bottom were presented free of charge to the Organizing Committee who sold them at the show for 60,000 rubles each (USD 10.00). We understand that the remainders will be marketed through a consortium in Germany for the benefit of the Organizing Committee.

I paid for the entire printing out of pocket. We gave a set of proofs to the Directress of the A.S. POPOV Museum of Communications (Russian Postal Museum). Our reissue is already a collector's item and we have a few remnants left which are for sale. [Contact Mr. Cronin for details. Ed.]



National Meeting--Continued from Page 1

John's current exhibit is "How to Earn a Gold Medal," a totally fun presentation combining both the best way AND the worst possible way to show a collection. Using a "ladybug" icon to show what was good and an ant icon to show the bad, the collection is a subtle combination of the best way to show and the worst possible set of misinformation, bad history and rather unlikely dates, including a cover traveling on the Siberian Rail Road in 1869...over 20 years before the establishment of the line. At the end of the lecture, John gave a test to see if we were all paying attention.

"Postal Stationary of Russia" was the topic of member Norman Lurch and covered the history of postal stationary collecting from the cut square to the need for a Rossica study group today. Prior to 1912, Russian postal stationary was collected as cut squares, with early collector's albums providing space for the imprints. When Scott and other album publishers deleted stationary from their product line, the specialty all but died, with the exception of German Collectors who remained faithful till the start of WWI. Because of the hyperinflation after the war, few returned to their hobby, hence the scarcity of stationary from the beginning of WWI to the early twenties.

With the publication of Aschers' book on postal stationary in 1926, interest in stationary was revived. Germany, once again, became the center of a small but dedicated group of collectors, leading to the Beckhaus catalog in 1939. Postal stationary collecting continued in relative obscurity until 1970, when the publication of the Higgins and Gage catalog was published, providing the spark for its current popularity.

Russian and Soviet stationary collecting has followed the same path as postal stationary in general. The Imperial period is fairly well documented while the early Soviet period has very little information. Modern Soviet material is

just beginning to be properly catalogued. Issues, such as the Kerenski cards, the early propaganda issues and the five-year plan series still need to be studied.

Norman ended his presentation with a call for the formation of a Rossica study group for stationary to provide greater awareness and information to Rossica members.

On Saturday evening, Gary hosted a society social with members enjoying a night of reviewing upcoming publications, swapping treasures and telling stories of the society, past and present. Yes, some members fell asleep, but most enjoyed a good time with friends and fellow collectors.

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STUDY CIRCLE FORMED

A new group is being formed to focus on Soviet stamps on cover. Led by George Shaw and John Briggs, this group will record which stamps (1923-1991) are known on cover and understand why certain stamps are frequent seen on Mail and others are scarce. Thus, it is a blending of stamp collecting and postal history. Articles will be published periodically in the Rossica Journal and inputs will be made to Jed Seiflow's Russia Catalog. The initial effort will be to focus on the 1949-1954 period. If you are interested in helping-out or want to be informed, Please contact George Shaw by mail at 7596-J Lakeside Village Dr., Falls Church, VA 22042 or call him at (703) 849-0014.

Rossica Medalists

MOSCOW 97 in Moscow, Russia

- Bjorn-Reic Saarinen "Finnish Revenues 1865-1995" Large Vermeil
 Paolo Bianchi "Imperial Russia" Gold, Candidate for Grand Prix National

Many thanks to both above for informing the Bulletin of their awards. Mr. Bianchi continues his success with his exhibit which garnered a Large Gold at PACIFIC 97

ARIPEX 98 in Mesa, AZ

- G. Adolph Ackerman "Via the Red Skies - The Development of Soviet Air Mail Service 1922-1941"
 Gold & American Philatelic Society 1900-1940 Medal

AMERISTAMP EXPO in Houston, TX

- Roger G. Quinby "Russian Postal Cards Used in Finland" Platinum, One Frame

MARCH PARTY 98 in Cleveland, OH

- Alfred Kugel "The Rising Sun--Japanese Expansion, 1894-1941" Gold and Goertz Award

WESTPEX 98 in San Francisco, CA

- Valfred Kugel "Turmoil in the Balkans 1876 to 1918" Gold & Award of Merit

- G. Adolph Ackerman "The Russian Arctic" Gold & AAPE Creativity Award

NAPEX 98 in McLean, VA

- G. Adolph Ackerman "The Russian Arctic" Gold & Reserve Grand, Polar and Rossica Special Awards

- John Briggs AKA 'Alberich von Fafner' "How to Win a Gold Medal" Silver and AAFE Creativity Award

- Peter Michalove "The Soviet Republic of Georgia, 1924-1958" Vermeil and Rossica Presidents' Award

- George A. Hall "The Exploration of the Arctic" Vermeil

[Congratulations one and all! My apologies up front to anyone I've missed. Please let me know if you have exhibited and I missed you. Ed.]

New Literature

Japan's Fieldpost in Siberia, Manchuria & Sakhalin, 1918-25, by E. J. Rasmussen, published by the International Society for Japanese Philately, December 1997, 96 pages plus maps. Cost \$12 from the publisher, James E. Jacobson, 815 Springingsguth Road, Schaumburg, IL 60193. See Journal No. 130, April 1998 for review.

St. Petersburg, four 1.50 Ruble stamps, "Last Day of Pompeii" by K.P. Brullov; "Ninth Wave" by I.K. Aivazovsky; "Marine Grove" by I.I. Shishkin; "Tender Mother of God for Evil Hearts" by K.S. Petrov-Vodkin; souvenir sheet with a 3 Ruble stamp, the museum at the turn of the century.

Reprinted from Linn's Stamp News, May 18, 1998.

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New Russian Issues 1998

Jan. 1: Russian Life and Industry definitives (denominations reflecting the new ruble), 10 kopecks, agriculture; 15 kop, petroleum production; 25 kop, ecology; 30 kop. radio/television; 50 kop, post emblem; 1 Ruble coat of arms, flag; 1.50 Rub. electric energy; 2 Rub. transportation; 2.50 Rub. Moscow Kremlin; 3 Rub. space communications; 5 Rub. art. Multicolor Lithography, printer not reported.

Jan. 24: 150th Birth Anniversary of Painter Vasily Surikov, pair of 1.50 Ruble stamps with central label, "Menshikov in Berezov"; "Lady Morozova".

Jan. 24: 150th Birth Anniversary of Painter V. Vasnetsov, pair of 1.50 Ruble stamps with a central label, "Battle of the Slavs and the Nomads"; "Ivan Tsarvich on a Gray Wolf".

Jan. 27: Nagano Winter Olympics, 50 kopecks, cross-country skiing; 1 Ruble, pair figure skating; 1.50 Rub., biathlon. Printed in large sheets and in miniature sheets of six with two copies of each stamp.

Feb. 25: Aquarium Fish, two 50 kopeck stamps, *Epalzeorhynchus bicolor* variety; *hyphessobrycon callistus minor* variety; 1 Ruble, *Synodontis galinae*; two 1.5 Rub stamps, *botia kristinae*; *Cichlasoma labiatum* x *C. severum albino* variety.

March: 100th Anniversary of the Russian Museum in

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A Few Words from the New Editor...

Lord, these felt boots are big! George has left me quite an act to follow, but I'll try to give the members the best bulletin possible.

When I took on this duty, I began to think about what the Bulletin is for. I believe that it's to provide the members with information, first about the society, and then about Russian philately in general. In addition to national activities and member accomplishments, I would also like to publish news about the local chapters. We have three of them what are they up to? Please write and let me know, remember I'm in the Heart of Dixie; not many members down here!

The Bulletin will not compete with the Journal. I look to publish articles on events like auctions and shows, newsworthy items, and articles from members that are short. My guide for articles is less than one page with pictures. If it's bigger than that I'll send it along to the journal editor. I'm looking for two types of articles, new finds/research and questions/answers. If you have something you don't understand send it in. I'll publish it for you. This society is one of the greatest sources of information in the world on Russian Philately--let's share it!

That's enough from me, thank you for letting me serve as editor. Thanks to George for a job well done and setting a high standard to meet.

Raymond J. Pietruszka