



BULLETIN OF THE ROSSICA SOCIETY OF RUSSIAN PHILATELY

Bulletin 53 Summer 2014

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As I am writing this, summer is underway and the 4th of July holiday is at the end of the week. May and June were busy months for me stamp-wise. WESTPEX was a big success, as I will discuss below. Following this event, your President was chair for our local show here in Huntsville as well as supporting our quarterly Rossica officer's Telecon. Lots to report there too.

WESTPEX 2014 was a great show for Rossica. The show committee went out of their way to treat us right. We had a free hospitality suite, our booth was right in front, so we had lots of foot traffic. Some of the other Societies' booths were downstairs, away from most foot traffic. The booth was set up by Mike Gutter, who brought all of the supplies and publications, despite her bad knee. We signed up four new members and three returning members. We had revenues of \$600 that included memberships and publication sales. The booth was manned by several of the Officers. We still need to work on manning our booth in the future, as we discovered that most of the local members were on the WESTPEX show committee. Special thanks to Mike Gutter, Dave Skipton, and Greg Mirsky for giving their time. We had a steady stream of members come by on Friday and Saturday.

Our exhibits were well received. There were 90 frames of Russian material, most of them from our members. The majority of our exhibits were awarded either Gold or Vermeil medals. I personally received two different complements from non-members who admired our showings. Ed Laveroni won the Grand awards for his exhibit *Imperial Postmarks of the Tran-Siberian Railroad, Chelyabinsk to Manchzhyriya*.

The new Rossica Journal was well received. It had just been issued a week or so earlier and so many of our members who attended the show had already received their copies. I received numerous compliments about the new format and

the quality of the articles. A job well done by Nik Sorokin and Alex Kolchinsky for putting it together.

On Saturday, we had a great turnout at the membership meeting – 21 members attended, almost as many as the 30 members who had signed in at the booth. The business meeting lasted 50 minutes and membership participation was strong. The proposed update of By-laws generated some useful discussion. Most centered on back issues of journal for returning members. Two member awards were given out at the meeting. The Service Award went to Dave Skipton for his over twenty years of service to the Society. The Journal Article Award for the best article in the Rossica Journal was given to Vladimir Berdichevsky for his article in the Fall 2013 Journal '*I Am Sending My Friend These Nine Postcards...*'.

The Membership meeting was followed by a presentation by George Shalimoff. George gave a wonderful presentation on *America on Soviet Stamps*. In this presentation he discussed stamps issued by the Soviet Union that either addressed the relationship between the two countries or commemorated Americans that fit the Soviet Ideal. It was well received.

An informal officer's dinner was used to discuss the budget for this year and report on last year financials. The Society is doing OK financially and the zemstvos book did not hurt us in the long run.

WESTPEX provided Rossica with a free hospitality room. Ed Laveroni stocked it with snacks and refreshments. It was used both Friday and Saturday nights by several members. We had great discussions on Russian Federation stamp issuing procedures, research on proofs of the Soviet Issues in the Russian archive, and a new book proposal. If we have a room in the future we will have to advertise it better than we did so our members can make better use of it as it was unused most of the time, but then most everyone there was at a show event.

On the 31 of May, the officers had their Quarterly TELECON meeting. While we discussed many things, a few are worthy to note:

- a. The proposed changes to By-laws were approved by the Officers and will be published in the next Journal. They will be voted on by the membership, by ballot, after they have been published.
- b. The 2015 membership meeting will be at NAPEX the beginning of June. Rossica will be a convening society, so start getting your exhibits ready now.
- c. A significant opportunity has come up for another book to be published. Our own Dave Skipton has nearly finished his book on Censorship. Much to his surprise (and everyone else's), the Collector's Club of Chicago has offered to publish the book. Your Society will only be responsible for helping to promote the book and arranging advanced sales. This means little risk to our Society, but instead a potential for a little profit. The important thing is that a major piece of research will be published. Keep a look out for future announcements on this effort.
- d. There has been a lot of discussion regarding our Society sending out the Kelleher Flyer for their Zemstvo

Shown below is a group photo of those attending ROSSICA's national meeting during WESTPEX 2014. From left to right are Valery Zagorsky, Greg Mirsky, Hyman Lovitz, Alexander Kolchinsky, Ray Pietruszka, George Shalimoff, Randy Woodward, Mike Gutter, Dave Waterman, Dave Skipton, Viktor Ivashin, Wallace Craig, Ed Laveroni, Paul Ortega, Norm Banfield.



¹ The report was presented and approved during the meeting on May 31, 2014.

Auction. Many thought that it appeared that the Society was endorsing the Kelleher firm and it is not the Society's policy to endorse any dealer, though we will accept their advertising. As a whole, the officers felt that we did not endorse the firm but realized how easily this could happen. Future dealings will be done with a bit more care. Now the plus side of this effort. As part of this mailing, the Treasurer sent out a due renewal to lapsed members. The response was overwhelming. I hope to hear the final number at the next officer's meeting.

That's about it for now. I hope everyone enjoys their summer and their families. We'll take up our tongs again later in the year. For most folks, Stamp Collecting is a winter activity except down here in the South where it is too darn hot and humid to do anything outside after 7AM in the morning.

Raymond J. Pietruszka
President, Rossica

MINUTES OF THE TELECONFERENCE OF THE ROSSICA SOCIETY BOARD OF DIRECTORS

February 22, 2014

In attendance: Ray Pietruszka, presiding; Michael Gutter; Alexander Kolchinsky; Greg Mirsky; Jeff Radcliff; Charles Rehwinkel; David Skipton; Nik Sorokin.

1. Treasure's report.

The report was not ready for full discussion and its approval was postponed till the next Board meeting.¹

¹ RP and MG confirmed that we have sufficient funds to use an outside printer for the Journal.

2. Switching the printing of the journal to professional printer.

After considering several bids, AK arranged printing at about \$8 per journal with tangible savings on shipping. It was emphasized that some other societies currently produce journals of much higher quality than we do. One problem is that several members receive unbound journal with punched holes. It was decided that the cause for it is the inconvenience of coil binding, and we plan to discontinue issuing unbound journal. It has been approved by consensus to professionally print the next issue with Premier Print Group (Champaign, IL) and then return to the discussion of financial outcome and further actions.

3. Voting rights of appointed officers (as opposed to elected officers).

These rights are not clearly defined in

our regulations, and we need to amend the By-laws accordingly. This will be discussed during the general Rossica meeting at WESTPEX.

4. **Identification service.** The board decided to offer identification services based on high resolution scans. GM volunteered to manage this service, while Jeff will set up the submission and payment through our web site and Paypal. As soon as the payment is received, GM will either provide a quick answer himself, or select a member from a list of volunteers who could answer specific questions. The cost of such a service will be advertised on our web site for \$3. Every Rossica member receives two IDs per year free of charge.
5. **Mass mailing of Kelleher flyer.** On the one hand, the mailing turned out to be a good way to remind members to pay their dues. On the other hand, we did not check the content of the flyer prior to mailing and advertised mostly general sales outside our area of interests, which might create a conflict with our mission and non-profit status. RP will further clarify the issue with Hyman Lovitz and it will be reconsidered.
6. **WESTPEX-2014.** Besides our general preparation, the discussion revolved around the disastrous performance of USPS in handling exhibits. It was agreed that both UPS and Fedex are safer than USPS.
7. **Changes of general procedures.** Currently, all decisions regarding the Constitution and By-laws can only be adopted by the general meetings, and these meetings are attended by a handful of members. As a result, this small group makes decisions affecting all 300 or so members of the Society. Thus, at WESTPEX, three major changes in our regulations will be proposed: the ability of appointed officers to vote; voting for major decisions by electronic and / or mail votes instead of at general meetings; and procedures for re-admitting former members.
8. **Schedule of our publications.** The journal is supposed to appear in April and October, and the Bulletin in July and January.

PROPOSED NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the following people to Tentative Membership in Rossica. If there are no objections they will become full members:

2063 Richard Ogar, CA
2064 Mike Hodas, CA
2065 Kevin Andres, CA
2066 Hovhannes Koshkarian, CA
2067 Victor Ivashin, CA

2068 Ivo Steijn, CA
2069 Alain LeVasseur, New Caledonia
2070 Frank Schorr, GA
2071 Robert Herlinger, Australia

EXHIBIT AWARDS

Below is a list of members receiving Exhibit Awards since January 2014. The show in which they won the award and the title of their exhibit is also given.

Rossica Journal – Nik Sorokin, Editor

Large Silver at LITFIL 2014, a major international competitive philatelic literature exhibit held in Perm, Russia.

Norman Banfield

Gold at WESTPEX 2014
Russia – Censorship of Mail 1878 – 1920 (multi-frame)

Igor Grigorian

Four awards at the NTSS (National Topical Stamp Show) 2014:

- NTSS Silver 2014,
- Religion on Stamps Society Award,
- Old World and Archeology on Stamps Society Award, and
- Ephemera Society Award.

Pre-Christian Armenia – from the Origins to the Temple of Garni

Vesma Grinfelds

Gold at WESTPEX 2014
Latvia: The Rising Sun Stamp of 1919 (single frame)

Alexander Kolchinsky

Vermeil, American Philatelic Society Award of Excellence: 1940 – 1980, and Military Postal History Society - Best Military Postal History Exhibit
The Mail of the Leningrad Blockade (multi-frame)

Kirill Levandovskiy (son of member Valentin Levandovskiy)

Gold - Youth multi-frame exhibits, AAPE Youth Grand Award, WESTPEX Award of Merit – Best Youth Exhibit at WESTPEX 2014
The War in 1941-1945 as viewed by children

Dr. Ed Laveroni,

1. Gold, WESTPEX Grand, Rossica Best Russian Exhibit, and Postal History Society Medal - Best Postal History at WESTPEX 2014
Imperial Postmarks of the Trans-Siberian Railroad, Chelyabinsk to Manchzhyriya (8 frames)
2. Gold at WESTPEX 2014
St. Petersburg-Moscow Railway (Nikolaevskaya Railway) (single frame)

3. Gold at APS AmeriStamp Expo, Feb 2014
St. Petersburg-Moscow Railway (Nikolaevskaya Railway) (single frame)

Arnold Levin

Vermeil and American Association of Philatelic Exhibitors: Award of Honor at WESTPEX 2014
Russian Mute Cancels and Registration in WWI (multi-frame)

Hyman Lovitz

Vermeil and American Association of Philatelic Exhibitors: Award of Honor at WESTPEX 2014
Imperial Russia Postal Stamps 1857-1900 (multi-frame)

Dr. Ross Marshall

Gold at WESTPEX
The Two-Numbered Code on Russian Mail to the West to 1843 (single frame)

Jerry Miller

1. Gold, Germany Philatelic Society Gold, and Show Grand Award at Saint Louis Stamp Expo 2014; Gold at WESTPEX 2014
German New Guinea 1888-1914 (multi-frame)
2. Gold and Michael Rogers Best Asia Exhibit at WESTPEX 2014
The Evolution of 'Via Siberia' Mail 1899- 1945 (multi-frame)

Raymond J. Pietruszka

Vermeil at WESTPEX 2014
Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic Nov. 1917 - June 1923 (multi-frame)

George Shalimoff

Gold at WESTPEX 2014
Usage of the Romanov Tercentenary Issue of Russia 1913-1918 (multi-frame)

Marcus Sherwood-Jenkins

1. The Woodruffe Cup at Maidstone and Mid Kent Philatelic Society, May 2014
The Belgian Armoured Car Battalion in Russia, 1915-22
2. First Place, Open Philately Class at Kent Federation of Philatelic Societies Annual Competitions
The Russian Postal worker and his work, 1750-2000
3. First Place, Cinderella Class at Kent Federation of Philatelic Societies Annual Competitions
The cancellations of the 1907 Imperial Russian General Revenue Stamps.
4. Second Place, Postal History Class at Kent Federation of Philatelic Societies Annual Competition
Russia used abroad; The Khanates of Bukhara & Khiva.
5. Second Place, Cinderella Class at Kent Federation of Philatelic Societies Annual Competitions
Russian Postal Telegraph Seals

David Skipton

Gold and American Philatelic Society Award of

Excellence, 1900 – 1940, at WESTPEX 2014
Soviet Clandestine Mail Surveillance 1917-1941 (multi-frame)

Nancy and Richard Weinberg

Vermeil and Rossica President's Award for Best Non-Gold Russian Exhibit at WESTPEX 2014
The Small Heads of the First Definitive Set of the U.S.S.R 1923-1928 (multi-frame)

Randy Woodward

Gold at WESTPEX 2014
The Nikolayev Provisionals (single frame)

Below is a picture of Dr. Laveroni (on left) receiving the WESTPEX 2014 Grand Award for his exhibit *Imperial Postmarks of the Trans-Siberian Railroad, Chelyabinsk to Manchzhuriya*. Handing the award to Dr. Laveroni is Stephen Reinhard, president of the American Philatelic Society.



MEMBER NOTES

- Rossica member **Vladimir Berdichevsky's** article *I'm sending my friend these nine postcards...* was selected as the best article of the year for the Rossica Journal. The American Philatelic Society selected his article as an "Article of Distinction". The article is displayed on the APS website <http://stamps.org/Articles-of-Distinction>.
- Members Greg Mirsky and Alexander Kolchinsky point out three websites that act as philatelic auction hubs:
 - stampcircuit.com
 - www.stampauctionnetwork.com
 - www.philasearch.com

CHANGES OF EMAIL ADDRESSES

Please don't forget to send any changes in your email address to Rossica Secretary Alexander Kolchinsky at alexander.kolchinsky@rossica.org.

INFORMATION SHARING LIST

The Rossica Society has implemented a procedure by which members with common interests can find each other. Currently, our By-laws do not allow sharing personal information of the members without their explicit consent. Please contact our Secretary Alexander Kolchinsky (alexander.kolchinsky@rossica.org) if you need more details and wish to join in exchange of the list of other like-minded members.

POSTAL SITUATION IN CRIMEA

By Genady Berman

POLITICAL BACKGROUND

The Crimea is populated by an ethnic Russian majority and a minority of ethnic Ukrainians and Crimean Tatars. Prior to the current crisis, Crimea comprised Ukraine's Autonomous Republic of Crimea (ARC) and the administratively separate municipality of Sevastopol. The crisis unfolded in the aftermath of the Ukrainian Revolution. On 21 February 2014 Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich fled Kiev. The next day the Ukrainian parliament deposed him and the next week appointed an interim President and formed an interim government. Beginning on February 23, pro-Russian forces began to gradually take control of the Crimean peninsula. While the gunmen occupied Crimea's parliament building, the Crimean parliament voted to dismiss the Crimean government, replace its Prime Minister, and to call a referendum on Crimea's autonomy. A referendum on whether to join Russia had an official turnout of 83% and resulted in a 96.77% (Crimea) and 95.6% (Sevastopol) affirmative vote. On March 17, the Crimean Parliament declared independence from Ukraine and asked to join the Russian Federation. On March 18 Russia and Crimea signed a treaty of accession of the Republic of Crimea and Sevastopol into the Russian Federation. On March 27, the UN General Assembly passed a non-binding Resolution 68/262 that declared the Crimean referendum invalid and the incorporation of Crimea into Russia illegal. On April 15, the Ukrainian parliament declared Crimea as a territory temporarily occupied by Russia.

POSTAL SERVICES

Ukrainian post "UKRPOSHTA" had two separate administrations in ARC & Sevastopol. All the post offices continued to operate as usually throughout the crisis period. On March 21, all the property of Ukrposhta was nationalized and two separate postal enterprises were formed in Crimea (Krympochta) & and in Sevastopol (Sevastopolpochta). On March 24 the Russian ruble was introduced as legal payment alongside the Ukrainian hryvnia. From March 27, the new postal authorities stopped receiving mail directly from

Ukraine and all mail including international mail was routed through Russia. It should be noticed that the first mail shipment through Russia was made on April 21. On April 1, in accordance with the order No. 66 of Russian ministry of communications, Ukrainian stamps were withdrawn from sale, and Russian stamps began to be sold. Ukrainian stamps purchased before April 1 could be used till January 1, 2015, for sending mail within Crimea. Since the postal software was not able to deal with two currencies and possibly due to other technical problems, post offices had to return to manual processing as they did 15 years earlier. Since it was no longer possible to use the mail registration software, many post offices began using handwritten numbers and other provisional markings instead of Ukrainian barcodes.



Registered letter with acknowledgment of receipt sent April 16 within the town of Djankoi and franked with Ukrainian stamps. Old type rubber registration marking was used instead of barcode registration label.



Ukrainian stamped envelope with Russian stamps added to meet the new rate and sent April 22 from Sevastopol to Djankoi. Russian barcode label used for registration.

Approximately in the middle of April, new Russian type registration barcode labels began to be used in most of the post offices, but not all of them. For example, in Massandra the post office has not received the new barcodes till early June. Ukrainian postal rates continued to be used till April 31, and Russian rates went into effect on May 1. In addition, special rates for sending mail inside Crimea were introduced, and new 6-digit zip codes replaced the old ones by adding "2" in front of Ukrainian zip codes. All

international mail sent to Crimea as a part of Ukraine in the address is now returned to sender with special labels, so if you want to send mail to Crimea you should indicate that it is going to Russia and use a new zip code.

My friend from Crimea and I are now collecting information and official documents for a more detailed article that will include much more information on this issue. If you have any material similar to the covers shown or information regarding postal services in Crimea please contact me: bermangenady@gmail.com

A POSTCARD FROM THE VOLGA STATION

By Alexander Kolchinsky

The postcard in Fig. 1 shows a stylish building of the Volga Biological station in Saratov. It was founded in 1900 as a private institute to carry out comprehensive limnological (freshwater science) research of the Volga River and its tributaries. The station shared the ground floor with the museum of natural sciences, while employees lived on the second floor. The station regularly published the results of its research in serialized volumes. According to historians of old Saratov, the photograph was taken between 1903 and 1908, electric wires were for some reasons removed by retouching, and the image reprinted on the postcard in the 1920s.³ Another picture postcard issued by the Volga station showed its research boat “Naturalist.”



Figure 1.

In 1912, a 22-year old Doctor of Science Arvid Liborievich Behning was appointed the director of the Station. He was born to a family of Protestant pastor in German colony Galka near Kamyshov (Galka was also called Meierhöfer and later Nizhniaia Kulalinka) and received his doctoral degree at Leipzig University.

The postcard in my collection was sent by Dr. Behning in 1925 to a colleague in Frankfurt a few months before an upcoming international congress (Fig. 2). He wrote:

³ <http://oldsaratov.ru/photo/biostanciya>

Dear Colleague,

Thank you very much for your papers which were very valuable to me. During the Congress, you will have the opportunity first to visit sphagnum fields near Leningrad and then to have an excursion to Moscow biological station Kosino. Here the southernmost locations are Penza, Kuznetsk, and Syzran'. If you let me know how you would like the samples preserved, I could arrange to have them collected in Penza. Please write in this regard to B. V. Perfiliev, Leningrad, Zverinskaya ul. 40, No. 15, - he may be able to assist you.

*With kind regards,
Yours, A. Behning*

The Congress mentioned in the message was the Third International Congress of Limnologists held in Moscow in August of 1925. Interestingly, it was the very first international congress in the USSR after the Bolshevik revolution.

Moscow Biological station in Kosino mentioned in the message existed in 1921-1940 and was another important limnological institute because of its proximity to several lakes. Other locations are all situated on the rivers of the Volga basin. Behning’s colleague Professor Perfiliev was a well-known Soviet limnologist.

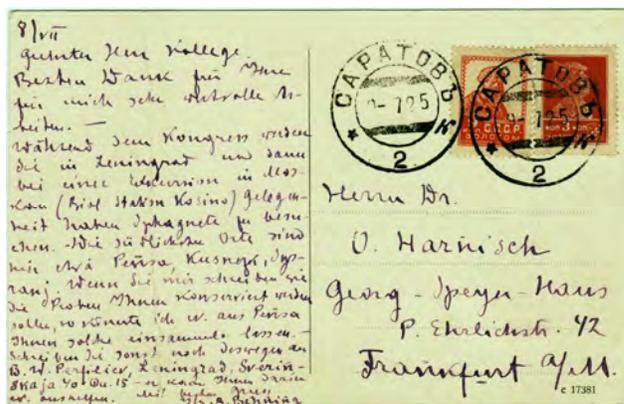


Figure 2.

During his relatively brief academic career, Dr. Behning reached prominence as a zoologist and hydrobiologist and published about 70 scientific papers. His career tragically ended in December 1930, when he was arrested by OGPU (former CheKa, future NKVD) on the false accusation of counter-revolutionary activity. The actual reason of his arrest was a broad campaign against “old specialists” (professionals who had begun their careers before the revolution and continued working under the Bolsheviks); in addition, Professor Behning was a victim of ethnic cleansing of Russian Germans by Soviet authorities. In April 1931, he

was sentenced to capital punishment that was commuted to 10 years in the GULAG. Immediately after his release in 1941, he was arrested again and died in prison hospital in 1943. After Professor Behning's arrest, the Volga biological station became a branch of the Leningrad Institute of Fisheries. The building of the station was demolished, and I did not find any records of its replacement with the current building.

APOLLO-SOYUZ TEST PROJECT

By John Macco

The Apollo-Soyuz Test Project (ASTP) was the first joint spaceflight of the United States and the Soviet Union. Many countries including Russia issued stamps commemorating the flight. Russia issued 4 stamps and a souvenir sheet to commemorate the flight. Shown below is a first day cover of Scott 4342, Gibbons MS4414, Zagorsky 4425. The sheet depicts the prime crews in the selvage and the Mission Control Center on the stamp.

The cover shown on the right was autographed by Russian Prime Crew, Alexi Leonov and Valery Kubasov; U.S. Prime Crew, Tom Stafford, Vance Brand and Deke Slayton; ASTP Program Director, Chester Lee and Deputy Program Manager, Bob Aller. This started me into the collecting of cosmonaut autographs.

