



# ROSSICA SOCIETY

Bulletin 56

Winter 2016

## President's Message

Happy New Year to one and all!

Let me bring you up to speed on all the changes that have occurred with Rossica over the last few months.

**Election:** We would like to welcome Steve Volis as our new Treasurer. He will be filling Michael Ann Gutter's position. Michael has been elected to fill the position of Auditor, previously held by Richard Clever, who resigned last year.

Many officers realized that too many responsibilities were placed on individual positions and a more even-ly distribution of duties was required. Right now, Michael Gutter is the only officer that knows how to do the tax paperwork. She was also keeping the membership database up to date. By electing a new treasurer and having Michael serve as auditor, we will still be able to utilize her valuable expertise. The current Secretary, Alex Kolchinsky, will now maintain the membership database.

**Method of Accounting:** In addition to officer changes, it was discovered that the Society's fiscal year and dues collection policy were out of sync with each other. Our fiscal year ends on December 31 but we collect dues from September thru April. This meant that half of the annual dues were not getting credited until the end of the year. This resulted in a Final Balance Sheet that was in the red most the year. A new accrual method of accounting will be implemented. This means that if you pay your dues for 2016 in 2015, it is credited to 2016 and NOT to 2015. This will be reflected with 2015 income being very low but 2016 will show our true income for the year and should be a substantially higher balance.

### New Applications to the Society

*We welcome the following new applicants with Tentative Membership into the Rossica Society. If there are no objections from the membership, they will become full members in the Society:*

2094 Mr. Tommy A. Thomas, SC

2095 Sir Jian Jiang, People's Republic of China

We welcome the applicant below as a full member

2096 Mr. Steve Roth, NE

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There will also be new changes to the dues payment schedule. Dues for 2016 are payable from September 1, 2015 through January 31, 2016. A \$5.00 late fee will be assessed if payment is not received by February 28, 2016 and future issues of the journal will not be mailed to you. Please make sure to get your payment in on time to avoid a delay in receiving your copy of the journal.

After careful review of the membership roster it was discovered that we have less than 200 paid members. We thought we had 300 members. The Treasurer and Secretary are working to establish an accurate membership list. Please help us to remain an effective organization by paying your dues on time and submitting any address changes.

As a reminder, the 2016 membership meeting will be held at the National Show in New York on 28 May 2016. Plan to be there. If you can't make it to the meeting then please stop by the Society Table and

say Hi. If you want to help man the table for a few hours let the Secretary or myself know. We will have our publications and collectables at the table. We will have a new book for sale that you should be able to get signed by the authors. In addition we will be using our leader labels as stamps for the Show Passport.

Flash! Dave Skipton and Steve Volis's new book on Soviet Clandestine Mail Surveillance has been published by the Collector's Club of Chicago. It is now available through the Society at a discount. See elsewhere in the Bulletin for pricing.

Well that's about it. Hope you have a wonderful 2016 and I hope to see many of you in New York in May and June.

Raymond J. Pietruszka  
Rossica President

*Every current member must be an ambassador for the Society and recruit people interested in Russian philately in the Society.—Ray Pietruszka*

## Minutes of the Board Meeting

September 20, 2015

The meeting was called to order at 2:04 PM EST. In attendance: Michael Gutter, Hyman Lovitz, Alexander Kolchinsky, Ray Pietruszka, Jeff Radcliffe, Charles Rehwinkel, Davis Skipton, Nik Sorokin.

### 1. Elections:

Ray Pietruszka: John Myke has been appointed the election commissioner. We need to prepare and send out ballots and statements of candidates. Current candidates running for the same positions will combine their reports with new platforms. The only change will be MG, who withdrew her candidacy for the position of Treasurer and will run for Auditor. Steve Volis will run for Treasurer, and I am asking all of you to support him.

Another important matter is to compile a list of eligible members, i. e. members who paid their dues for 2015. All this should be done by October 1. Let us set the deadline for returning ballots November 15.

### 2. Finances:

Ray Pietruszka: We still don't have any financial statements from MG. They should be prepared by the end of the year for smooth transition to Steve Volos as the new Treasurer. In addition, full reconciliation between financial and membership databases must be completed. MG and JR should take care of this.

Ray Pietruszka: Do we need to add late fees for tardy members?

During the ensuing discussion it was decided to charge \$5.00. The question remained, however, of our deadlines for payments.

Hyman Lovitz: Our fiscal year should be the same as "membership year." It will make accounting easier.

Nik Sorokin: We need a firm deadline for dues in the beginning of the year to determine the necessary print run of the Journal by the end of March.

After further discussion, the deadline for payment of dues was established January 31; after that date we could not guarantee the delivery of bound Journal,

and dues plus late fee will be accepted till March 31; on April 1, members in arrears will be suspended.

Ray Pietruszka: We need to establish the deadline for joining the Society for the current year with full privileges, including both bound journals (if still available). The proposed deadline of September 15 was discussed, but no final decision adopted.

Ray Pietruszka: I propose to switch in 2016 from cash accounting that we have been using so far to accrual accounting. The proposal was tabled for further discussion.

3. It was proposed to abolish the Auditor as an elected position and have two Board members serve as an auditor committee. This will require a change in the Constitution and, if adopted by the majority of voters, will come into effect for the next election cycle.

4. Certain changes and additions for the “new” Rossica Journal have been proposed and discussed.

- The Journal should be advertised on our web site with the display of the cover and table of contents.

- Regular columns on topical issues, on sales at major auctions, on philatelic periodicals, and on the issue of forgeries flooding the market were proposed.

Although no objections were raised, we do need volunteers to write these columns.

5. Alexander Kolchinsky: Valentin Levandovsky proposed to publish his catalog of Soviet railroad cancels with Rossica. He wanted a full color paper edition that we cannot sponsor because of financial constraints.

It was decided to offer him help in translation and distribution of a digital version of the catalog. Further discussion was tabled.

6. Ray Pietruszka: we need to organize our presence at New York 2016 show and our meeting there. This includes:

- Constant manning of the booth and a

schedule of attending members.

- Increased print run of the Spring issue of the Journal at 300 copies.

- Performing an inventory of remaining merchandise and do the ordering of new stuff with our logo.

Michael Gutter: coffee cups and wine glasses do not sell well. I will find a manufacturer to have coasters, which appear to be more popular.

Jeff Radcliffe: We need to carry out full inventory and aggressive discounted sale of accumulated and outdated literature. For instance, the cheapest Kaestlin on eBay is offered for \$35 with free shipping.

Ray Pietruszka: We need a new Society brochure. It can be done in Huntsville; a run of 500 will cost \$250-500. I will work up a new version.

We need to schedule our meetings in NY. Alexander Kolchinsky will contact the organizing committee. For a program presentation, it was proposed to ask Davis Skipton to give a talk on his censorship research.

7. Ray Pietruszka: We need to increase our exhibiting activity and engage more members in it. We are left with very few exhibitors, and not all of them even exhibit Russian material. Please submit your suggestions.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:40 PM EST.

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Rossica member Norman Banfield and his wife Jenny have been to SINGAPORE 2015 (FIP), QATAR 2015 (Gulf countries – both Jenny and Norman judging) and to HONG KONG 2015 (NZ Commissioner + a couple of seminars). Then in October had their own 500+ frame NZ National, again with both as judges.

## Rossica Election 2015

Candidate's election platforms and ballots were sent by e-mail to those members with an Internet address or by regular mail to those without. These were mailed by Oct. 15, 2015 asking for a return of the ballot by Nov. 15. Thirty-seven ballots were received by the deadline. Two ballots were returned blank with thirty-five being valid for election tabulation. There was only one candidate standing for election in each office of the society. The following are the results.

	<b>For</b>	<b>Against</b>
<b>President: Raymond Pietruszka</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Vice-President: Charles Rehwinkel</b>	<b>35</b>	
<b>Secretary: Alexander Kolchinsky</b>	<b>35</b>	
<b>Treasurer: Steve Volis</b>	<b>35</b>	
<b>Journal Editor: Nikolai Sorokin</b>	<b>35</b>	
<b>Librarian: Dr. Greg Mirsky</b>	<b>35</b>	
<b>Auditor: Michael Ann Gutter</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Member at Large: David Skipton</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Member at Large: Jeff Radcliffe</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Member at large: Hyman Lovitz</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>1</b>

According to our President's message in the latest journal we have, for the sake of argument "around 300 members." With thirty-five votes cast this represents a dismal participation rate of approximately 11.67%, hardly a stellar result. I wonder if Stephen Harper's (Canada's intensely disliked former Prime Minister) name had been on the ballot whether that would have brought a substantially higher voter turnout. Either the membership is highly satisfied with the present executive council or they really do not care about the running of the Rossica Society.

Submitted for the Election Committee

John D. Myke

# Exhibit Awards

Name	Title	Award	Show
<b>Ray Pietruszka</b>	<i>The Dis-Union of the Soviet Union</i>	Vermeil; American Philatelic Society Post-1980 Medal of Excellence	CHICAGOPEX
<b>Alexander Kolchinsky</b>	<i>Prisoners of the Great War Send Home Picture Postcards</i>	Gold; Military Postal History Society Award	CHICAGOPEX
<b>Nikolai Sorokin</b>	<i>Rossica, The Journal of the Rossica Society of Russian Philately 2014-2015</i>	Literature Gold	CHICAGOPEX
<b>Alexander Kolchinsky</b>	For the book: "Stalin on stamps and other philatelic materials: Design, propaganda, politics"	Literature Silver	CHICAGOPEX
<b>Paul B. Spiwak</b>	<i>Ukraine's Pictorial Issue of 1920</i>	Vermeil	FLOREX
<b>Jerry H. Miller</b>	<i>The Evolution of Via Siberia Mail 1899-1945</i>	Reserve Grand and Gold; American Association of Philatelic Exhibitors Award of Excellence: Plan and Headings; Rossica Society Award	MILCOPEX
<b>Alfred F. Kugel</b>	<i>The Allied Intervention in Russia 1918-1925</i>	Gold	MILCOPEX
<b>Alfred F. Kugel</b>	<i>A AEF Booklet Pane Stamps of 1917</i>	Gold; United States Stamp Society Statue of Freedom Award	MILCOPEX
<b>David M. Skipton</b>	<i>Soviet Clandestine Mail Surveillance, 1917-1941</i>	Gold; American Philatelic Society Research Medal; Rossica Society of Russian Philately Medal	NAPEX
<b>Alexander Kolchinsky</b>	<i>Prisoners of the Great War Send Home Picture Postcards</i>	Gold; Auxiliary Marking Club Award	NAPEX
<b>Nikolai Sorokin</b>	<i>Rossica, The Journal of the Rossica Society of Russian Philately 2014-2015</i>	Literature Gold	NAPEX
<b>Valery Zagorsky</b>	<i>Azerbaijan. Transcaucasian Federation; 1919-1923. Postage Stamp Catalog</i>	Literature Gold	NAPEX
<b>Valery Zagorsky</b>	<i>Postage Stamp Catalogue Russian 1857-1917, RSFSR 1918-1922, USSR 1923-1991</i>	Literature Vermeil	NAPEX
<b>Valery Zagorsky</b>	<i>USSR. Drafts of Stamps. 1923-1960</i>	Literature Silver	NAPEX
<b>Alfred F. Kugel</b>	<i>The Allied Intervention in Russia 1918-1925</i>	Gold; American Philatelic Society 1900-1940; Medal of Excellence Military Postal History; Theo Van Dam Grand Award	PIPEX
<b>Ross Marshall</b>	<i>Soviet Antarctica 1955-1959</i>	Vermeil	PIPEX
<b>Alfred F. Kugel</b>	<i>The British Main Line Military Railway Post Office in Europe in 1949</i>	Silver	PIPEX
<b>Richard E. Clever</b>	<i>Classic Mongolia 1886-1932</i>	Vermeil; Rossica President's Award for Best Non-Gold Russian Exhibit	SESCAL
<b>David You Lu</b>	<i>Poland Classic (1752-1881)</i>	Vermeil; Rossica Best Russian Exhibit Award	SESCAL
<b>Norman Banfield</b>	<i>Russia - Censorship of Mail 1878-1920</i>	Large Gold	Hong Kong

# COMING SOON

## SOVIET CLANDESTINE MAIL SURVEILLANCE 1917-1991

BY DAVID M. SKIPTON AND STEVE VOLIS

A PUBLICATION OF THE COLLECTORS CLUB OF CHICAGO.



The series that appeared in the *Rossica Journal* under this same title has now been greatly expanded and extended, with many new discoveries and hundreds of clandestine censor marks (and censorship-related date stamps) illustrated.

*Soviet Clandestine Mail Surveillance, 1917-1991* is an unusual hybrid of empirical philatelic research, argumentation and history presented chronologically. It examines the secret police's political control offices – the PKs – that secretly watched the correspondence of Soviet citizens and foreigners alike in the USSR and demonstrates that the PKs used censor marks masquerading as postmarks to convey information and instructions between themselves. Hundreds of these censor marks are recorded here; along with hundreds more that the authors argue were used to aid in the “classification campaigns” of the 1920s, the prelude to collectivization and the purges. The book will be useful to philatelists and historians alike.

The case-bound, all-color, 530-page book is expected to emerge from the printers late in January 2016, and should be ready for shipment by early February.

### Prices:

Rossica members – \$80 postpaid if in the U.S., \$80 plus postage for members abroad.  
Non-Rossica members - \$98 plus postage.

Orders may be placed via the Rossica Bookshop using our PayPal account, or by check drawn on a U.S. bank or credit union. Please mail to: Rossica Treasurer, Steve Volis, 9 Hickory Court, Manalapan, NJ 07726.

**Plate Varieties of the 1923 Soldier, Peasant, Worker Issue (Scott 238-241C, Lyapin 104-108, Zagorsky 100-104)**

by John Iacovino

Rossica Journal #118, April 1992 and the Samovar, Specialty Discussion Groups, Fly Specker (posted September 9, 2009) discussed printing varieties of the 1923 small head issue.

The Rossica article presented information on the “missing ear” variety of the 4 Ruble stamp. This variety is described in detail by Ceresa in *The Postage Stamps of Russia, 1917-1923, Volume V, The R.S.F.S.R., Section E3/4, Parts 32-40, Late 1923 Issues*. Since Ceresa did not supply scans of the disappearing ear they are provided here in Figures 1a through 1f.



Figures 1a – 1f: 6 stamps showing the progression of the disappearing ear.

Ceresa also discussed the broken 4 (left numeral 4), shown in Figure 2 below.



Figure 2: 4R with broken 4

In the Samovar thread, member *CEC 71* noted several print varieties on the 3, 5 and 20 ruble stamps. Since scans of these varieties were not shown I have included them in Figures 3 through 13.

Figure 3: 3R, with white spot under nose, damaged right frame (not shown)

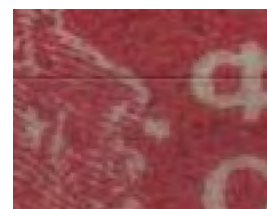
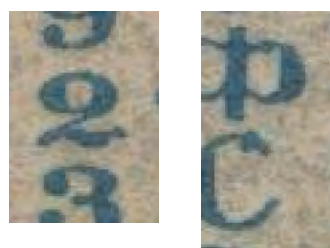


Figure 4: 3R, with white spots to the right of C. This is an unreported printing variety. I have two copies in my collection.

Figure 5: 3R with missing '19' in '1923'. This is an unreported variety.



Figures 6A and 6B: 5R with blue dot at the end of the tail of the 2 in '1923' accompanied by a small dot on the top right loop of Φ and the second C.

Figure 7: 5R with small blue dot at the top of second C and at the left inside of right loop of  $\Phi$ .

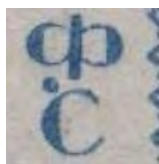


Figure 8: 5R with a blue dot at 11 o'clock on the second C. Dot occurs on stamp in position 95 of sheet with Plate # 2.

Figure 9: 5R with blue dot between  $\Phi$  and second C, abutting the frame.

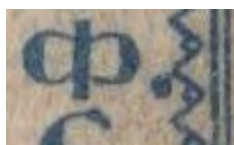


Figure 10: 5R with small blue dot in top right loop of  $\Phi$ .

Figure 11: 5R with a short tail on the left loop of the  $\Phi$ .

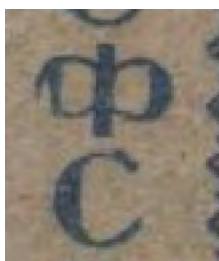


Figure 12: 20 R with narrow '9' and '2' in '1923'. This variety occurred in position # 51 on the sheet with the inscription *amep No. 9*.

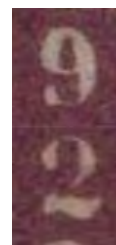


Figure 13: 20R with dot at the top of the 2 in the '20'. I have two copies of this variety in my collection.

Subsequently member *RSFSR* followed the Samovar thread with information that the 3R variety shown in Figure 3 occurred on position 39 of the sheet having *PN 2* in the top right corner.

*RSFSR* also noted that the 5R variety shown in Figure 7 occurred in position # 66 of the sheet with *PN 2* at bottom left. However the stamp showing the variety in Figure 7 came from position # 95 of the same sheet. Is it present in both positions?

I have not identified any of the above printing varieties on the imperforate stamps of this series. Likely, this is due to the scarcity of these values compared to the perforated stamp.

Submitted by Randy Woodward, Ph.D.  
Editor, Rossica Bulletin

## Contact Us

Questions? Comments? If you are interested in the content of this Bulletin and would like to provide feedback, or respond to a volunteer opportunity, please contact us! You can find our elected officers on our website at <http://www.rossica.org/contacts.php> or simply send an E-mail to

[info@rossica.org](mailto:info@rossica.org).

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