



BULLETIN OF THE ROSSICA SOCIETY OF RUSSIAN PHILATELY

NUMBER 46

Fall/Winter Edition 2009/2010

Society News

New Officers for Rossica

As happens every three years, the Rossica members voted for their new slate of officers in October 2009. Although a number of positions were unopposed, we have a completely new set of Board of Directors and three different officers in new positions. The results are as follows:



President – Dave Skipton



Vice President – Ray Pietruszka



Secretary – Ed Laveroni



Treasurer – Michael Ann Gutter



Librarian – Greg Mirsky



Auditor – Richard Clever

Board of Directors



Jeff Radcliffe



Nik Sorokin



George Werbizky

President's Message

With this issue we bid farewell to Gary Combs, who served for four terms at Rossica's helm. There were many worthwhile initiatives he pushed to bring the Society into the computer age, many of which we will continue to pursue. We wish him the best in his retirement.

My congratulations to the following officers on their recent election, and on their behalf I would like to thank the membership for their vote of confidence in the current slate:

Vice President – Ray Pietruszka

Secretary – Ed Laveroni

Treasurer – Michael Ann Gutter

Librarian – Greg Mirsky

Auditor – Richard Clever

Board of Directors – Jeff Radcliffe, Nik Sorokin, George Werbizky.

There are several new faces in the officer corps, and we're delighted to have them: Nik Sorokin, a top-level State Depart-

ment Russian interpreter with many years of experience in the international arena, and Richard Clever, who is currently serving as the Treasurer for Filatelic Fiesta. Richard has run a retail stamp company since 1972 and brings more business savvy and accounting skills with him to our table.

Ian Sellick has graciously accepted the post of Membership Chairman once again, and we are all looking forward to working with him. Ian has a lot of marketing expertise and some new, intriguing ideas to offer.

George Werbizky is not exactly a new face (he's served as a Rossica officer before), but he's back once again, and provides us with a ton of knowledge, especially in two of the currently booming fields in our area, Zemstvo and Civil War stamps.

Gentlemen, welcome aboard!

We have a lot of work to do. The following laundry list is by no means complete, but it will give you an idea of what's either coming or up for discussion. It's a work in constant progress, so if anyone has any suggestions as to what else might be done to advance the Society, please let us know.

- 1) **Rossica's Annual General Meeting (AGM)** will be held at the Rocky Mountain Stamp Show (RMSS) in Denver from May 14th to 16th, 2010. The RMSS is a first-class, APS-sponsored World Series of Philately show that routinely fields 270-320 frames of exhibits and around 50 dealers. We are most grateful to the officers of the RMSS for their generous offer of host-society status, especially since our request wasn't made until early October of last year, extremely short notice for such things. Considering that the RMSS already had WE and three exhibiting clubs lined up for this show, squeezing Rossica in at the last moment is very much appreciated. We will have a room for our AGM and presentations, a booth to flog our wares, meet and greet folks and hoist the Rossica banner, a few dozen frames for our members who wish to exhibit, and we hope to unveil Rossica's fourth vignette in the current series honoring the Society's greats, this one commemorating A.A. Chebotkevich, who co-founded the Society twice, first in Yugoslavia in 1929 with A.M. Arkhangelsky and the second in 1952, this time in the United States.

Contact information: Rocky Mountain Stamp Show (ROMPEX), Rocky Mountain Phil. Exhibition, Inc., Crowne Plaza (formerly Holiday Inn) - Denver International Airport, John Q. Hammonds Trade Center, Chambers Rd & I-70, Denver. Contact Ronald Hill, rmss@rockymountainstampshow.com; www.rockymountainstampshow.com; 303-241-5409.

We've never met as a society in Denver, so this is a great opportunity for us and we look forward to seeing you there.

- 2) **Rewrite the Constitution and establish By-Laws.** As it now stands, the President has far too much power, and the situation is only exacerbated when, as was the case some years ago, the power of the purse also resides in the President's hands. Some of the things currently in the Constitution need to be altered due to changing circumstances, but require a Constitutional amendment in order to do so, a very cumbersome process. We hope to present a new Constitution and By-Laws to the membership for its approval this year.
- 3) **Identify and if necessary train at least one individual as a backup** for every position in Rossica, but most especially for the truly critical jobs (none of which have any replacements mandated by the current Constitution) – those of Treasurer, Journal Editor, Webmaster and Librarian. For years, we've been skating on extremely thin ice; the Society's future literally rests on the shoulders of a handful of individuals. Take any one of them away, and it kicks off a frantic scramble to find a replacement, failing which we are badly diminished or we collapse. We'd like to be proactive, before something happens.
- 4) **Get our money into a bank where it can earn some interest on CDs.** This has already been done, and thanks to Mike Gutter's hard work, we now have a 22-month CD earning 1.4%, a savings account pulling in .15%, and a checking account. For over a decade, Rossica's treasury resided in the Millersville M&T bank in an account that drew no interest. In just the first quarter, we will have earned the equivalent in interest to one new member, and that, of course, will grow faster. This shift (to Wells Fargo Bank) is a part of a larger strategy to improve Rossica's chances of survival in the event of worldwide economic disaster and postal disruptions of the sort that drove the Society into ruin immediately before and after WWII. Also, our financial records are now backed up in case of fire, flood or theft.
- 5) **Make a concerted effort to recruit new members and re-enlist former members.** Rossica has slowly declined over the years from a post-WWII high of ~400 to its present ~280. There are several trends working against us and practically every other philatelic organization in this country, chief among them the upward creep in the average age of our membership and the paucity of new, younger members coming in. The long-range outlook is less than rosy, but Rossica also has certain advantages that other societies may not.
 - First off, even though we are incorporated in the United States, we remain in many respects an international organization, so we have the whole world to draw on for membership.
 - Second, we have a considerable pool of potential members right here in the U.S. I refer to the large numbers of Russian immigrants who moved here in the 1990s as the Russian econ-

omy collapsed. Many of them are now on their financial feet and rediscovering their philatelic heritage. We hope to make a concerted push to get them to join (or re-join) Rossica.

- Third is the sheer vastness of our fields of interest. Rossica is not just about Russia, but includes all those areas whose histories have overlapped with that of Russia in some way: Allied Intervention, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Carpatho-Ukraine, Central Lithuania, Estonia, Georgia, Latvia, Lithuania, Mongolia, Offices Abroad, Tannu Tuva and Ukraine. Now, with the breakup of the USSR come even more in Central Asia, Moldova, and Russian military involvement in the Balkans, and on and on. We can appeal to far more potential members than just those interested strictly in Russian philately, and we should.

This is going to be one of Ian Sellick's most important undertakings, but we can all help out with the membership drive.

- 6) **Push to get more Library information posted on the Rossica website.** We'd like to post the Rossica Library Subject Index (SI) as a start. Greg and Jeff have been working on this for some time, and we hope to have something up there on our website in 2010. The SI was published back in the early 1990s in hard copy form, but so much has been added to the Library since then that the Index does not contain. However, it still provides a lot of information on where to start digging for one's research. For those of you who don't visit it (one of the best and most informative interactive philatelic websites out there!), you're missing out on a huge and valuable resource.
- 7) Under "Publish, publish, publish," we'd like to **try to incorporate the Rosselevich journals and the old RAPS issues into our Rossica/Post Rider DVD.** (There do not appear to be any copyright problems here.) This will require some volunteers to do the scanning.
- 8) **Re-establish the Rossica Expertization Service.** This is still in its formative stages, with all of the experts yet to be signed on and the procedures ironed out, but it looks like we are closer now to restoring this service. Stay tuned...
- 9) **Continue building up the Rossica Virtual Gallery.** The exhibits shown at ROSSICAPEX and the presentations given there are already being added; they will give the RVG one heckuva push, and we're going to keep right on pushing. The RVG is already a tremendous research tool in its own right.
- 10) **Institute a Rossica Exhibitor's Mentoring Service** for those of our members interested in this aspect of phi-

lately, and work closely with the American Association of Philatelic Exhibitors.

- 11) **Improve relations with societies on the European continent,** like the Arbeitsgemeinschaft Russland/UdSSR, and strengthen our ties with the British Society of Russian Philately. We've already suffered the loss of two English-language journals – *Pochta* and *Yamshchik* – and the disappearance of the WSRP, all of which represents a great loss for our field. Whatever we can do to slow or reverse that trend is something worth pursuing.
- 12) **Get ready for our AGM at BALPEX 2011, where we hope to have a big Baltic States and Russia show,** and start laying the groundwork for Rossica participation at the next big international in the U.S., New York 2016.
- 13) **Establish closer ties with the Smithsonian's National Postal Museum** and its foreign stamps section, a great resource that we have neglected in the past.

David M. Skipton
Greenbelt, MD
david.skipton@rossica.org

New Members

Welcome to Rossica! We hope you will enjoy the benefits the society has to offer, including the Journal, the Bulletin, the Library and the Website. Of course, if you have access to the Internet, the Samovar is a great source of information and I encourage you to visit it and post your questions as well any news and discoveries you may have made. We also encourage you to share your collecting interests with others. Help us grow and bring new members into Rossica.

1962 Richard Miggins, Los Angeles, CA
1963 Mike Hert, Bankstown, NSW, Australia
1964 Erich von Hungen, Menlo Park, CA
1965 Ian Sellick, Brooklyn, NY
1966 Carl R. Anderson, Longmont, CO
1967 Edith Eggen, Sunnyvale, CA
1968 Richard Lohman, Madras, OR
1969 Keith M. Moore, Denver, CO
1970 Tom Siddens, San Jose, CA
1971 Alexander Voigt, Berlin, Germany
1972 Johannes Piendl, Neu Isenburg, Germany
1973 Bob Summerell, Bloomington, IL
1974 Paolo Candini, Lazzaro Di Savena, Italy
1975 Fran Adams, San Diego, CA

The following are our tentative members who will become full members within 90 days unless our regular members provide Rossica reasonable cause why they should not become full members.

1976 Alan Li, Albertson, NY
 1977 Leszek S. Osrodka, Lodz, Poland
 1978 Mike Malovance, East Chicago, IL
 1979 Maxime Citerne, Lyon, France
 1980 Christopher Meyer, Versailles, IN
 1981 Philip Rubenstein, Rutland, VT
 1982 Robert Spence, Ontario, CA
 1983 George Corcoran, Avon Park, FL
 1984 Carl Barna, Arvada, CO
 1985 Tobias Huylmans, Freiburg, Germany

Mentor's Column

by Mike Gutter

More and more these days, as members start to use computers to work with their collections, I find that I am asked different kinds of questions about how to use the computer as a tool to accomplish more than sending emails, writing documents or getting to the internet to visit websites. Practically all the questions are based in the desire to simplify a difficult or time-consuming task. But the answers are not easy to give. A response is dependent on the member's basic knowledge of computers. Therefore, I will have to make one assumption. Anyone who asks me these questions has a basic knowledge of a computer and knows that the computer itself is only an electronic machine that needs software and other hardware to be a functional unit to do what you need for it to do. For example, to print a document, it needs a document processor and a printer.

First, let me describe what I believe I need as a basic computer hardware setup without any specific software packages. I need a color laser or inkjet printer that can print both paper and photos. I need a connection to the internet. I need the ability to back-up my computer so that I don't lose my data or software. The data can be backed up online, on CD, or on a USB drive inexpensively these days. And I need a good scanner.

The scanner has become an essential tool for me in collecting stamps. It allows me to scan stamps or covers, enlarge them and look at the smallest detail when a magnifying glass isn't strong enough. It also allows me to place pictures of my own stamps into my database to track exactly what I have in my collection. Thus I have a picture of exactly what I have in my collection. I have scanned stamps numerous times and uploaded them to the Samovar for members to view.

A good scanner can be bought for less than \$100 and it comes with the appropriate software. Most all of them allow you to scan an 8.5x11" page and up to 1200 dpi (dots per inch). They are generally connected to your USB ports.

There are other things you can do with scanners as well. But I highly recommend that you add the scanner to your computer as a very useful tool.

A Few Comments on Leonard Tann's 1916-17 Surcharged Postal Stationery

by John D. Myke

The late Leonard Tann had an article in Bulletin #43 concerning these items. Leonard & I never met, but for almost 25 years (up to Aug 3, 2008 to be exact) we conducted a correspondence concerning our mutual interest – Romanov material. The surcharged postal stationery he discusses in the article is indeed uncommon. In fact, I might even suggest it is scarce in unused condition. Other than the items shown in the article the only others I have ever seen are the set I purchased in the 2001 BSRP auction. I paid £130 each for these, which at that time was significantly more than he quoted as a current market price, about double. I would suggest that these are easily now 3-4 times the value he suggested.



Figure 1

As for the same material used, I think he is way off. I purchased a possibly used cover with the dreaded Revolutionary Overprint/crossed swords & cap on a 20/14 kop. large-format envelope with an added block of four 10/7 kop. on the front. See Figure 1. Four poorly struck circular date stamps (17-2-78) (probably 18) are on the front of the cover addressed locally in Ekaterinodar. By all appearances, the cover went through the mail, but there are many suspect covers & favor cancels on material from this period, such that anything can be legitimately questioned. And that's not even considering the fact that the Revolutionary Overprints themselves were never officially sanctioned. At least that is the general thinking on this subject. The Samovar forum on the Rossica website had an interesting item posted to it on Dec 15, 2008 by one of our members. This article or comment gives a short history of the origins of these overprints stating that "there are some evidence that a permission to overprint the stamps as well as some postal stationery was obtained from the Petrograd Soviet which was the second (and main!) power in Petrograd in these days." It goes on to say that two periods of postal use should be recognized. I would assume the author is saying or means that these two periods are of sanctioned or legitimate periods of use. They are identified as March & April 1917 in Petrograd & a "private new printing" by the same people used in "the first quarter of 1918 in Ekaterinodar." This cover falls within the second timeframe. Still, the uncertainty of the

times & lack of a definitive Government endorsement leaves much room for questioning these overprints. My personal opinion is that they never had official permission. Anyway, to make a long story short, I acquired this cover for \$135 US ten years ago just to have a "used" 20/14 kop. example. So if I & at least one other bidder were willing to take a chance on this item, I would suggest that the real thing has to be rare & at least 4 -5 times the price Leonard quotes. And as we all know, once two people at an auction make a decision that they want a certain item, things can get stupid in a real hurry.

Reminder to Pay Your 2010 Dues

Although many of you have paid your dues for 2010, there are some who still have not. Rossica has not changed its dues in the past year nor has the method by which you can pay your dues changed.

You can pay via PayPal by going to our website and simply and simply click on "Pay Annual Dues" on the left hand side of the screen. OR you can send you check made out to Rossica to:

Rossica
%Michael Ann Gutter
PO Box 20305
Carson City, NV 89721
USA

Send \$25.00 for a paper copy of the Journal, \$22.50 for a CD or \$20.00 for a download version of the Journal. Please remember to send the correct amount. You don't want your Treasurer to get after you about sending in the wrong amount. Please remember they are due by April 1st or your name will be dropped from our membership rolls and you will not receive our next Journal.

From The Membership Chairman By Ian Sellick

As the new face in the Membership Chairman position, a few words of introduction are in order. I joined Rossica quite recently, liked what I saw and, especially after attending ROSSICA-PEX in Santa Clara last year, felt that this was an organization that I wanted to become involved in. My collecting interests are quite broad, but I am by no means a specialist, and Rossica has provided me the opportunity to understand a great deal more about what I have, both through its publications and interactions with other members.

In my professional life, I am the Marketing Director of a Fortune 1000 company so hope to bring some of the promotional aspects of my work to increasing awareness of and membership in Rossica. To start with, we are in the process of producing a new flyer that can be put out at stamp shows and anywhere else where we might expect to find potential members. A snapshot of what the flyer might look like is attached.

We are also going to participate in a number of events this year. The first of these will be the ASDA MegaShow in New York, April 15th through 18th. As I live in the city, I will be running the booth with Laura, but if there other members who can assist by offering a few hours on any of the days of the show, it would be appreciated.

After that, the Rossica Annual Meeting is at the Rocky Mountain Stamp Show in Denver in May, so we'll have a booth there. We are expecting to be able to exhibit at Stamp Show in Richmond, VA in August. We'll see what the response is to these before committing to other shows.

If you are going to be attending any other stamp shows, please take along some of the flyers. Just send me an email – xian.sellick@rossica.org – and I'll mail a package to you, or write me at 3426 Guider Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11235.

I hope that by the time you read this you will have renewed your membership. Please consider making a donation as well. As a non-profit organization, Rossica is established for educational and research purposes. A great deal of our material is available on-line and is free to view by everyone as befits our charitable status, but as a member you get to see and receive more: not only the Journal and this Bulletin, but also access to the Library, and publications essential to every collector of Russian material - at significantly reduced rates. It is well worth being involved as I'm sure you know. However, please spread the word and encourage others to join. It is a very small cost for a significant return, all the much greater if you participate actively, as I have found.

Let's work together to increase our numbers, and thus our collective knowledge.

Wishing you all the best for 2010.

С НОВЫМ ГОДОМ!

Ian

Dossica Publications

Dossica publishes a number of essential texts and reports that are available in electronic and paper formats. These may be ordered on-line through the "Bookshop" tab on the website. Significant discounts are available to Dossica Members.

In addition, the Dossica web site contains an extensive Virtual Gallery of exhibits and presentations a tremendous research resource.

Books and Studies

Stamps of the Dossica Empire Based Abroad
The Dossica Postal in the XIX Century
The Dossica Post in the Empire, Turkey, China and the Post in the Kingdom of Poland
Imperial Dossica Postal Discontinue Lists
The Philatelist's Guide to Nepal, Ukraine and Georgia
of Dossica
Postal Statistics of Dossica and its Dependencies
A Study of the Postmarks of Moscow 1865-1917
The Main Cancellations of Dossica 1814-1917
Via the Dead Skies - the Dossica Air Network 1921-1941
covers his First stamps / blocks
A Short History of the Dossica Society 1899-1948

Journals

Dossica Journals 1-45 (in Dossica)
Dossica Journals #1 to date (in English)
The Post Index (CSDP) 1-60

What is the Dossica Society of Dossica Philately?

Dossica is a worldwide society devoted to all aspects of philately related to Dossica and other countries associated with it, from the pre-stamp days of Imperial Dossica to the present. The purpose of the society is to unite its publications throughout the world with an interest in Dossica philately and provide them a means of broadening their philatelic knowledge through inter-communication via the award-winning Dossica Journal and its associated web site, www.dossica.org.

Dossica was established in 1899 in Tugolevsk by I. Alimogly. In 1900, the first journal appeared which would later evolve into today's Dossica Journal of Dossica Philately. The first issues of the journal were printed in Dossica. In the 1900s the journal was published in both English and Dossica. Today, the journal is published exclusively in English, reflecting a need for a common language among our international membership. Journal #100 was published in the Winter of 2009.

The Dossica Journal is the recipient of several awards to include Gold Medal awarded at IAGPC 2005 and IAGPC 2009 and most recently a Vermeil at the 8th Dubrovnik 2007 international show.

Dossica members have won individual medals in many philatelic stamp shows throughout the world, and are often called upon for expert opinions in the world of Dossica Philately.

Today, there are hundreds of active Dossica members from every corner of the globe. In addition, there are 3 Dossica Chapters, two in the United States and one in Europe. Chapter representatives may be contacted via the Contacts page on our web site, www.dossica.org. Prospective new members from about all of the locales associated with membership and can download an application form from our Membership page.

The Dossica Society is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization.

The Rossica Society of Russian Philately

Общество Русской Филателии "РОССИКА"

2010 Prospectus

Draft of the Proposed Flyer

Treasurer's Report

by Michael Ann Gutter

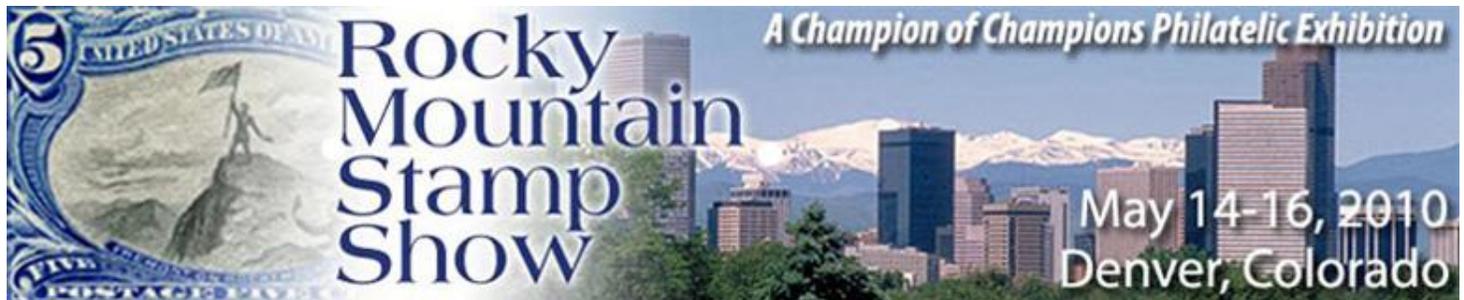
This report will not include the normal statements since the books are not yet closed. These reports will be ready and available in the next Bulletin and will be distributed at the Annual Meeting in Denver. However, with all of the events of last year, I thought that the membership should be aware of the status of Rossica's financial wellbeing.

Rossica started 2009 with \$17,424.27 in its non-interest-bearing bank account. This amount, along with written assurances from the American Stamp Dealers Association that they would assist in paying for ROSSICAPEX 2009 expenses, gave us the cushion we needed to afford an exhibition such as that. Much has been written about how we actually accomplished what we did, but we also could not have done it without the support of our members with their donations, the help of members who gave of their time without pay, of members and friends who paid for advertising and for the Reno Stamp Club, which loaned us their show frames free of charge.

In November, in preparation for the turnover to new officers, the bank account was moved to Wells Fargo Bank and the money was distributed into a checking and a savings account and invested in a Certificate of Deposit. The vast portion of the money is kept in the savings account, where it earns interest and is used as a backup for the checking account. At the end of the year, we have \$15,019.18 and have already made \$6.90 in the 45 days since we opened the accounts.

I realize that it appears that we have a decline in our money. This is due to the increased expenses in the composition, printing and shipping of the Journal. Postage rates are beginning to have a major impact on the budget. Additionally, the Library costs have been increasing. We have added insurance to the Library to protect us from any major loss.

You will be able to see a breakdown of the areas in the next Bulletin.



Note: RMSS is now closed to new application for exhibits.

The show will be held at the Crowne Plaza at 15500 E 40th Ave, Denver, CO. There are special rates available for \$94.00 per night if you call and use booking code "RMS". Reservations can be made by calling 1-303-371-9494 or 1-800-423-0908. Check-in time is 4:00 PM and check-out time is 11:00 AM.

There is free shuttle to and from the Denver International Airport.

The show itself will be open on Friday and Saturday from 10:00 AM to 6:00 PM and on Sunday from 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM.