

# WILKINSBURG STAMP CLUB NEWSLETTER

Meets 2nd and 4th Sundays

August 1990

Box 8711, Wilkinsburg, PA 15221

A. P. S Chapter 1214

We are sad to report that WSC member George Roup died. George was a regular at the Sunday meetings. He designed his own comical cachets on transportation. They were real collector's items. We will really miss having old George around.

Harold Cline has filed a Statement of Income and Expenses for fiscal year ending June 30, 1990. This detailed two page report is available at any Sunday meeting.

We are still looking for a place to hold WILKPEX '91. Nothing definite has been decided. We are hoping to return to the Bloomfield Moose, but ...

Last month's \$5.00 winners were Justin Caputo and Mary Louise Turano.

We would like to welcome Teresa Beck to the WSC.

Last month I received my poster from the USPS for October's promotion of National Stamp Collecting Month for my Ben Franklin Club in school. The four stamp se-tenant block depicts mammals common to the U.S. and the Soviet Union and will be released on Oct. 3rd. The year date on the stamps was a USPS concession to the Soviets, not to Lou.

A commemorative booklet of 20 stamps, depicting 5 different American Indian Head-dresses will be released in Cody, Wyoming on Aug. 17th.

A 5¢ transportation coil featuring a circus wagon will be released Aug. 31st in Syracuse, New York. This will be the third different 5¢ coil in the series.

Quite a few members were interested in my comments about Amsterdam in last month's newsletter. I always thought that most stamp collectors were NEAT, ORGANIZED, and VERY KNOWLEDGEABLE IN WORLDLY EVENTS. Now I must add TRAVELER to that list.

I found out that Charlie Schwab was in London in May for STAMP WORLD '90. And when he was in Amsterdam a few years ago, he stayed at the same hotel we stayed, the Hotel Pulitzer. Harold Cline and his wife stayed at the Pulitzer when they were in Amsterdam, too. Harold also climbed to the top of the Westerkerk, the church next to the Ann Frank House. Small world.

I got a nice two page letter from WSC member Richard Melnick. He also uses the Stamp Collector's Guide to Europe in his travels. While in Switzerland, he visited the postal museum in Berne. To quote Richard, "I was able to get a free souvenir card with a block of 30 centime stamps, dated June 30, 1990, the opening date of the new PTT Museum at 16 Helvetiastrasse in Berne. The postal collection is housed on two floors. The upper two floors are devoted to the history of the telephone and telegraph. The first floor is devoted to postal vehicles and the basement level houses the stamp collection in slide-out glass showcases. I was even able to photograph the Zurich cantonal reconstructed sheet of 6 rappen of 1843. This was featured in Linn's June 18th, p.28, "Philatelic Gems."

"I was able to take a train and bus to Vaduz, Liechtenstein, and buy stamps at the p.o. on a Saturday before they closed at noon. The postal museum was open across the street. I had a chance to view their collection, also in glass sliding cases and I paid 1 Swiss franc to get my passport stamped. Along the way in Switzerland I got yo use the Frama meter machines at many Swiss p.o. Once in Lausanne, I took the ferry to France at



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September 1990

Box 8711, Wilkinsburg, PA 15221

A. P. S Chapter 1214

The new stamp season is upon us. The USPS is ready to go into their annual promotion of October as National Stamp Collecting Month. Local clubs are getting ready to entice new collectors into the hobby. Please do your best to try to get new members for the club. Give stamps to kids. Show them your collection. Tell them how to get started.

Paul McCaffery is willing to try to move the Annual Dinner back to November. This idea was discussed at a meeting but no decisions have been made regarding a date or location. Please inform Paul of your willingness to attend or help him plan this event.

We have received a Prospectus from the Philatelic Society of Pittsburgh for PITTPEX, Nov. 3-4. Their show will again be at the Robert Morris College Campus in Moon Township on Narrows Run Road in Coraopolis. If you would like to be an exhibitor at PITTPEX '90, please see the Prospectus at the sign-in table this Sunday.

Joe Bayuk will again assume the role of a college prof. The Boyce Campus of the Community College of Allegheny County is offering "Stamp Collecting" as an Adult Education Leisure Learning class. The class will begin on Sept. 19th and run for 12 Wed. evenings from 7-9 PM at Dickson School on Schoyer Ave in Swissvale. Tuition is \$25. You can register by calling 733-4226 or 733-4227 and have your social security and either your Visa, Mastercard, or Discovery Card numbers ready. Course description: "For beginning or advanced collector. Learn more about Philately from a member of the Wilkinsburg Stamp Club who has been a collector for more than 40 years. Every week a different topic will be discussed in detail and you will see examples of a fantastic collection. Just about everything you ever wondered about stamps." The course number is XBE-102, Section 34.

Yes, Lou Yagle started this class a few years ago. And, he may be a guest lecturer.

16 membership cards and 34 second dues notices went out with this Newsletter.

The Athletic Department of Fordham University bought a large supply of our cachets from WILKPEX '89. They probably will give them away to visitors at their Homecoming this Fall.

The USPS wonders why they get such a bad reputation. How could a lettercarrier (s), continue to let mail pile up for six months on a porch like they did with the two elderly women in Morningside? Everyone will be investigating this mess.

World-wide collectors: did you see in the news that the countries of Libya and the Sudan have merged into one country?

Thanks to modern technology, and greed, color photocopies of stamps are now being used to defraud the USPS. Although a color photocopier cannot duplicate the phosphorescent tagging that appears on genuine stamps, the bright white paper glows readily under longwave ultraviolet light. This glow is bright enough to trip the facer-cancelers that





# WILKINSBURG STAMP CLUB NEWSLETTER

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October 1990

Box 8711, Wilkinsburg, PA 15221

A. P. S Chapter 1214

We are moving our Annual Dinner back to the month of November. And, since we already had one Dinner this past April, then I guess we should say that this year we are going to have our Semi-Annual Dinner this November 10th at the SUBALPINE ITALIAN CLUB located at 108 Ninth Street in Turtle Creek, Pa.

Cocktails at 6:00. Sit-down dinner at 7:00. \$5.00 for WSC members and \$10.00 for guests. We will be in the banquet room in the basement. The DEADLINE to notify Paul McCaffery will be Nov. 3rd. ALL ADVANCED RESERVATIONS WILL BE GREATLY APPRECIATED. The awards for WILKPEX '90 have already been presented, so we will have more time for socializing. Paul will again be the Master-of-Ceremonies. We hope to have about 50 at this Dinner. Please use the form at the bottom of this page to order your dinners and send it to Paul ASAP.

Twelve local stamp dealers are boycotting the annual Pittsburgh Show this year. They are having their own show at the YMCA Downtown on Blvd. of the Allies at the end of this month. Some of those dealers are members of our club, hence the ad on the back of this page.

A decision has been made for the location of WILKPEX '91: We will move into the new OLYMPIA HALL located at 1575 Electric Ave. in East Pittsburgh, Pa. It is a seven year old white one story building across the street from the Greek Catholic Church. A large free parking lot is to the left of the building. We can load/unload 3 or 4 dealers at one time in the front of the building off the street. The floor is carpeted and a lot cleaner than the Moose. The size of the main room is smaller than that of the Moose, but we will try to put the Post office and the Ben Franklin Table in the little room off to the right, which serves as a 'bar area' if you have been there at a wedding reception. It's right off Ardmore Blvd. and the Parkway East. (Actually, it's about 5 minutes away from the SubAlpine Italian Club in beautiful downtown Turtle Creek by the sea.) APRIL 6th and 7th are the dates for WILKPEX '91.

Lou Yagle bought 23 folding chairs for the club. They should be in the room for us to use this Sunday. Thanks, Lou.

October is National Stamp Collecting Month. Give stamps to kids. Promote the hobby.  
Cut Here

Make your check payable to "Wilkinsburg Stamp Club" and mail it to Paul McCaffery, 1214 East End Ave., Pittsburgh, Pa. 15218 before Nov. 3, 1990.

Paul: Enclosed please find a check for \$ \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_ Dinner(s) at the SubAlpine Italian Club in Turtle Creek on Nov. 10th at 7:00. Cash bar opens at 6:00.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to order the  $\frac{1}{2}$  Roasted Chicken \_\_\_\_; Ham \_\_\_\_; Fish Dinner (Cod) \_\_\_\_.  
WSC members: \$5.00. Guests: \$10.00. All dinners include tossed salad with Italian dressing, vegetable, potato, bread, butter, dessert, coffee, or tea.

Comments:



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November 1990

Box 8711, Wilkinsburg, PA 15221

A. P. S Chapter 1214

About thirty people were to have attended the Annual Dinner at the SubAlpine Italian Club in Turtle Creek, Pa. on Saturday evening. Paul McCaffery was the organizer and Master-of-Ceremonies. I am sure he did a good job, as he usually does.

As noted in last month's newsletter, due to the fact that the Bloomfield Moose was no longer available for rent by anyone because it was sold to the West Penn Hospital, we were forced to move our show to a different location. After a summer of searching, and with not too many places or dates available, we just about HAD TO settle on the dates of April 6 & 7, and the location of the OLYMPIA HALL at 1575 Electric Ave. in East Pittsburgh, Pa. We really did not have many places or dates to pick from. It was almost IMPOSSIBLE to have our show the third week-end in April, no matter what it says in the by-laws. These by-laws will have to be changed. Yes, we are going to lose some dealers because the Columbus, Ohio show is the same week-end, but that's the way it is, and we have to make the most of this situation. It was in the best interest of the WILKINSBURG STAMP CLUB that this date and location were decided upon, so, as a group, we better get our act together, quit moaning, and move on.

At this time, the cachet committee is thinking of honoring the 20th anniversary of "The First Night World Series Baseball Game" once we get it cleared from the Pirates. Any ideas for the cachet using that idea? Or, does anyone have a better suggestion? Last chance. Time is running out soon.

Since Christmas is less than 8 weeks away, it is probably a good time to remind members that we have ten copies of the Keystone Federation's "Pa. ON STAMPS" albums for sale at \$8.00 each. These are great for any age beginner or advanced collector. Out of state members can write to our PO Box if interested.

Lou Yagle has a dozen copies of a new U.S. album published by the Fulton Publishing Co. Retail price is \$35. WSC members' price: \$23.30. Loose leaf, heavy duty dark blue binder, up to date, free supplement for new issues. See Lou.

The following article is from member George Gatnarek:

"Many years ago an uncle of mine who lived in Czechoslovakia and I would exchange stamps since we were stamp collectors. Eight years ago my uncle died. All correspondence ceased. Years went by. Early this year I received a letter from my uncle's grandson who is learning English and asked if I would correspond with him, that it may help him learn to write English better. So I did. I have learned that my cousin has taken over his father's stamp collection and we are now exchanging stamps. I feel blessed when I look through my Czech collection." (Thanks, George.)

The 1991 stamp program, which now contains more than 112 new designs, most of them commemoratives, will grow even larger, due to the rate increase due to go into effect Feb. 3, 1991. Then, a stamp for every rate in every classification would take at least 147 new denominations. The popular transportation coils will be expanded, not discontinued.



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December 1990

Box 8711, Wilkinsburg, PA 15221

A. P. S Chapter 1214

Harold Cline, our Treasurer, was given the "MAN OF THE YEAR" award at the Annual Dinner last month. And quite deservedly, I might add. In addition to his regular duties as the club's Treasurer, Harold and his wife Helen have done a great job on the club's annual Show Booklet for the past six years. Congratulations, and thanks Harold. And Helen.

Charlie Schwab will have some stamps of interest to those of you looking to fill spaces in your U.S. album for the years 1928-48, including plate blocks, at his AUCTION TABLE this Sunday. See Charlie and place a bid, or three.

Lou Yagle will have the 1991 Harris and Scott pocket check list catalogues at his table this Sunday. They retail for \$5.95 each but are available to WSC members for \$3.97. Lou also will have many old mint U.S. stamps that you can buy at 10% off face. He will also have the Federation's "Pa. on Stamps" album for sale at \$8.00.

The club Treasurer reports that his records indicate the following 14 members have not paid their dues for the 7-1-90 to 6-30-91 year: #46 Edwin C. Clemm, #106 Milton Stein, #150 Mary Lou McHenry, #163 Edward R. Kooser Sr., #181 Michael DeBlasio, #183 Bill Kust, #193 Earl S. Wilson, #200 Adam Krouskop, #205 Daniel Hirschfield, #210 Ian MacLellan, #211 Greg MacLellan, #219 George S. Gavula, #225 Matt Andrew Reimaley, and #228 Erin R. Remaley.

We sincerely hope you will renew your membership in one of Pa.'s largest stamp clubs but we have no alternative except to remove your name from our roster unless we receive your payment within 30 days. If you have any questions, please call Harold E. Cline at 371-3976.

Sorry to report the death of WSC member Eula Ortman. She died the first week of November.

The Keystone Federation of Stamp Clubs, of which we are a member, will be holding their FIRST ANNUAL STAMP SHOW on May 24th and 25th, 1991 at the ZEMBO MOSQUE TEMPLE in Harrisburg. WSC member Dave Pearlman is the Vice-President of the Keystone Federation. The Prospectus for the Show is now available. See the ad on the back page for more info.

Three major stories in Linn's the past month included the following:

1. The U.S.P.S. made a profit of about \$20 million on Stamp Expo '89. They now plan to have another major Stamp show in 1994. The profit to be made here will help pay for a major stamp museum. This museum will be known officially as the National Postal History and Philatelic Museum, and will be located on Capital Hill, Wash. D.C., in a 1914 building now known as the City Post Office. The renovation is already under way. Present plans call for opening of the museum in Dec. 1992 and full operation in March 1993. It will become part of the Smithsonian Museum system.

2. Scott made major changes in its 1991 Specialized Catalogue. It features new sections for Autoposts, special printings, and many new listings for both classical and modern U.S. varieties previously unrepresented.

3. Block tagging is now dead on U.S. stamps. All future stamps produced by the BEP will have full coverage tagging. This means that all printings of new and existing



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January 1991

Box 8711, Wilkinsburg, PA 15221

A. P. S Chapter 1214

At this time we are still working on several problems relating to our April 6 - 7, 1991 WILKPEX show: Due to the fact that we had to find a new location for the show because the Bloomfield Moose had been sold, we were forced to change the date of our show. Therefore, we lost a good many of our "regular" dealers because they had already signed contracts for those days. Joe Brasch reports that he still needs about 8 more dealers to fill the bourse.

We are having trouble with the cachet: The new owners of the Pittsburgh Pirates and Major League Baseball Properties have not yet given us the OK to go ahead with our proposed '91 cachet. If we do not hear from them real soon, we either need another idea (baseball related) or we do not have a cachet for this year.

The third concern has been the lack of us being listed in "The American Philatelist" monthly "Show Time" column. This listing seems to be the only official show listing in America. If we are not in the January issue ...

Everything always works out in the end. We will end up with a lot of new items and Joe will get in touch with more dealers.

We hope people are working on getting an exhibit together for this show.

These, and other items of equal importance will be discussed at the meeting this Sun.

Starting with the John Marshall stamp and continuing on many subsequent 1990 issues, marginal inscriptions describing the stamp's subject and significance have been in existence. Collectors so far seem not to have noticed. But, if in the future the USPS places the inscriptions consistently without impinging on the plate block, it may emerge that 1990 launched another type of collectible.

Six years ago the cents symbol was dropped from U.S. stamps. Minimalism was the watchword among the artists who control our stamp designs. This eliminated design clutter, they said. Some postal clerks however thought the stamps ambiguously labeled "2" as representing \$2, rather than 2¢. By adding a zero before single digit denominated stamps, the USPS tried to resolve denomination confusion. This was introduced on the 5¢ Luis Munoz Martin definitive which was also the first Great American stamp to describe its stamp in the margin.

Maybe in 1991 we will again see the cents symbol and even "United States Postage" returned to our stamps. (Original ideas above from Michael Laurence, Linn's Editor)

The first stamp to be issued in 1991 will be the so-called F-stamp. It is to be released around Jan. 14th. Accompanying this stamp will be a non-denominated make-up rate stamp which will represent the difference between the present 25¢ rate and the new rate. This stamp, the first of its kind, will make up the difference to equal the new first class postage rate, when used with a 25¢ stamp. This stamp will have no graphics, only text. It will not have phosphorescent tagging. (The closest U.S. stamps to this non-graphic concept are the 1960 American Credo stamps, each of which had other design elements added.)

Billions of copies of the F-stamp, which depicts a red tulip with a single green leaf on a yellow background, have been printed and shipped to storage and distribution facilities. The postal service has been very sensitive about this stamp, referring to



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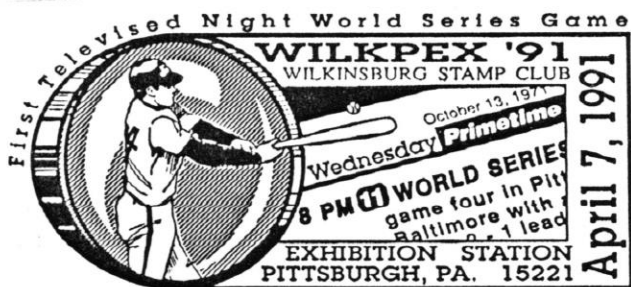
February 1991

Box 8711, Wilkinsburg, PA 15221

A. P. S. Chapter 1214

Lou Yagle will have the new plastic "F" stamp for sale at his table this Sunday. A sheet of 12 is \$3.49. Lou also has the Scott Specialized Catalogue #5, 1991 issue for those who ordered it, and he has an extra copy if someone wants to buy it. He also has the Scott Pocket U.S. Catalogue for sale at his table.

At the right is a copy of our show cancel for this year. We should have a picture of the cachet at the Feb. 24th meeting. We have made contact with Major League Baseball Properties on Park Ave. in NYC, but as of right now, we do not have their approval to go ahead and use the words "World Series" in our cachet. I hope to get this all straightened out soon. (Maybe they want us to put a picture of Barry Bonds on it and sell them for \$25 each.)



Last month I received a copy of the "Global Stamp News" in the mail. It's a new philatelic newspaper published in Sidney, Ohio. All the articles in it were of high interest to anyone who is a world-wide collector. It's FREE. The advertisers absorb the cost through their advertising fee. It was sent out to 20,000 collectors of foreign stamps. I highly recommend it to you if you collect foreign stamps. For your FREE copy (subscription) just write to: Global Stamp News, P.O. Box 97, 715 Johnston Drive, Sidney, Ohio 45365. (Jan Brandewie is the editor. Phone (513)-492-3183) You'll be glad you did. I was really impressed by the articles in it: they were not as technical as those in The American Philatelist.

WILKPEX '91 is only two months away. IT could be a disaster; it could be a very successful show. We are facing many questions about the show, even though we know what lies ahead. To make this show a success in this new location on this unusual date for our stamp show (we usually have it the third week-end in April) we will need more than luck and hard work. Areas of most concern include: exhibitors, volunteers to man the auction and "phlea market" and volunteers to work the reception table, and volunteers or as we called them last year-- Facility Engineers--- to help set up and tear down.

We have 17 dealers signed up, we hope to get 3 more. Tom Shaw suggests you get in touch with him (731-5026) or pick up a copy of the Prospectus if you are planning to have an exhibit this year. We will again have Bob Miller's "Keystone Auction" and the Philatelic Phlea Market. If you have any items for the Phlea Market you must get them to Charlie Schwab (421-8690) before March 25th. Cathy Blanchard has been busy doing the publicity for WILKPEX '91. Bill Uncapher and Jackie Abbott need stamps for packaging for free distribution to youngsters who visit the show. Please call the Show Chairmen: Joe Bayuk (462-1771) or Gene Bujdos (461- 0289) if you can serve on any committee. Harold Cline (371-3976) could use someone to help with the Booklet. This year will be the time for all to come to the aid of their stamp club. When you move to a new location you always wonder if the regulars will come to the show. Let's hope they do. I hope to have good news and a better newsletter next month.

Evian-les-Bains, the mineral water resort, to get some French stamps at a local p.o. It's about a 30 minute ride across Lake Geneva. The Swiss do a great job promoting stamps everywhere you look. The museum in Berne even had a small p.o. for kids where there were free post cards to be stamped "Kinder Post" by the tiny visitors themselves. WERE

Richard ended his letter with this information: "I had a chance in May to visit the Brier Hill, Pa. p.o. as part of Old Pike Days in Washington County. This p.o. is only open one day a year for this event. Poor quality cancel, but it was fun anyway. Clerk in costume and very helpful. New p.o. is a few hundred ft down the road. (route 40) They also had a pony express rider deliver the mail to Washington, Pa., but I missed it. I believe that same week-end, again too late for me, there was a special cancel for one of Pittsburgh's two inclines. Pity such news wasn't in the newsletter."

Thanks Richard for the letter. And, if anyone is ever aware of any special cancel in western Pa., or anywhere for that matter, please let me know about it so that it can be listed in this newsletter. Richard makes an excellent point. I have asked for help in filling these/this page(s), but....

Figure 1 below is a copy of the cinderella souvenir sheet I bought at the Van Gogh Museum last month. Actually, it was at the Rijksmuseum Kröller-Müller, at Otterlo.

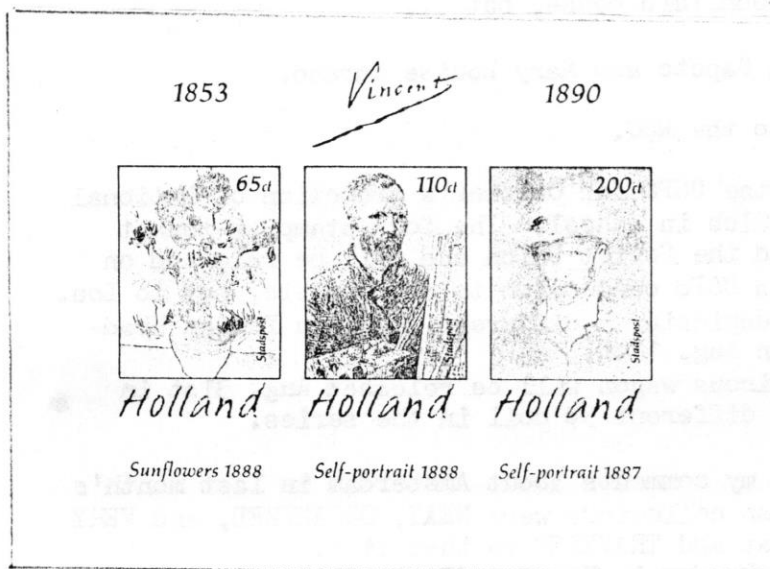


Figure 1



Figure 2



The plate blocks in figure 2 are difficult to locate. The original floating plate number strip of 20 has a face value of \$7.80. Retail prices of this strip currently range between \$14-\$20. See Linn's August 13th issue, p. 16 for complete details.

Finally, John Ross in the July 23rd issue of Linn's, p. 28 suggests that you buy the plate block of Scott # 902: 3¢ issue of Oct., 1940 showing Abe Lincoln freeing a slave. The stamp was issued to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the 13th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, the amendment that abolished slavery. Chances are there are less than 50,000 of these plate blocks in collections today.



reject most fake or untagged stamps. The biggest tip-offs to these fakes is the perforations. The technology exists to allow a counterfeiter to do a convincing job. Color copiers are here to stay. Maybe the USPS should build new types of security into postage stamp production.

U.S. collectors: for the past four years fake Kansas-Nebraska overprints have been circulating the marketplace. See the chart and photos on the right. They are from the Aug. 20th issue of Linn's.

According to Les Winick in the Aug. 13th issue of Linn's, the front cover of the 1991 Scott Standard Postage Stamp Catalogue, Vol 1 is breaking the law.

The cover shows the Classic Mail Transportation block of four in normal size, in the issued colors, and without a diagonal line that would prevent misuse.

According to USPS regulations, full-color illustrations on uncanceled U.S. postage stamps must be 150% larger than the size of the issued product, or less than 75% of the size, but not the normal size.

NNNN

# Kansas-Nebraska overprint fakes

## Overall traits

1. Fake lettering appears thick and swollen; genuine usually looks proportional, even when badly printed.
2. Fakes have large periods; genuine periods are proportional to letters.
3. Fakes are less distinct at edges; genuine letters are better defined, even when broken.
4. Fake letters appear outlined; genuine letters appear solid.

### Kansas

1. Genuine measures 9.0 to 9.3mm across; fake measures 9.5mm across.
2. The a and n on fake are joined, forming a slightly slanted image.
3. Base of K is longer on fake than on genuine.
4. Top of n is a gentle wave on fake; genuine n has a notch separating top serif from top loop.
5. Fake has rounded serif on s; genuine s has sharp serifs, particularly at left.
6. The loop of the a is smaller and more rounded.

**Kans. Kans.**

Fake

Genuine

### Nebraska

1. Genuine measures 8.9 to 9.1mm across; fake measures 9.2 to 9.3mm across.
2. Fake has rounded N; genuine N is angular. Final leg of N has small bump.
3. The bottom curve of the e is much fatter on the fake.
4. Fake has fat, round r; genuine r is usually (not always) more sharply outlined.

**Nebr.**

Fake

**Nebr.**

Genuine

A chart showing various characteristics of the newest fake Kansas-Nebraska overprints.



This forgery would be the most valuable stamp of the 1929 Kansas-Nebraska overprinted set, with a Scott catalog value of \$45, if it were genuine. An expert would instantly have recognized this olive bister example as a fake, because the color of the stamp is wrong. A genuine 8c Kansas exists only in the olive green color variety. An unwitting novice, however, might be tempted to pay several dollars for this stamp, which sports a bogus overprint added to a common stamp with a catalog value of 5c.



Here the bogus Kansas overprint is shown above a genuine example. The counterfeit is too big, measuring 9.5mm across as against 9.0mm on the genuine stamp. The "a" and the "n" are connected, forming a slightly downward angle. Also, the period is too big on the fake, and the top of the "n" is missing the characteristic V-shaped notch separating the top loop from the serif that shows clearly on the genuine stamp. The boxed magenta Cayuga, N.Y., handstamp cancel could conceivably exist on a genuine Kansas overprint, but it isn't likely.

TRI-STATE STAMP DEALERS ASSN.  
PRESENTS: PITTSBURGH'S  
LARGEST & FINEST  
DOWNTOWN STAMP SHOW  
OCTOBER 27-28, 1990

AT THE NEW PITTSBURGH Y.M.C.A.  
330 BLVD. OF THE ALLIES  
SATURDAY - 10:00 AM THRU 5:00 PM  
SUNDAY - 1:00 PM THRU 5:00 PM  
**FREE** - DOOR PRIZES, ADMISSION &  
APPRAISALS, FOR MORE INFORMATION  
& AUCTION LISTING CALL:(412) 391-0744

Richard Melnick sends along the following information for fellow club members:  
The OIL CREEK AND TITUSVILLE RAILROAD, in nearby Oil City, Pa., is the Only Operating Railway Post Office left in the U.S. Others exist, but they are "parked" at stations. This car is used on tours not only as a post office, but also has a snack bar and souvenirs for sale to the tourists. High school students work on the train and in the post office. They have no facilities for weighing the mail, so exact postage is necessary.

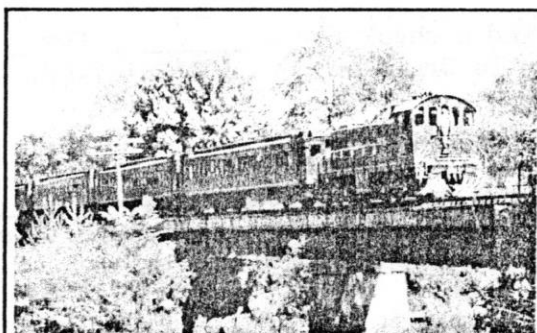
You can send items already stamped and they will cancel them. This can be done until late October, when the operation shuts down for the season. To send mail to them for special canceling on this railway car write to: OC&T RR., P.O.Box 68, Oil City, Pa. 16301.

A copy of their brochure is on the next page.

Don't forget PITTPEX: Nov3-4. Robert Morris College, Moon Township Campus, at the Charles L. Sewall Center, 1.5 miles northwest of Greater Pittsburgh Airport, Coraopolis.

## OIL CREEK & TITUSVILLE RAILROAD

P.O. Box 68, Oil City, PA 16301



"through the valley that changed the world"

As with last year's contemporary Christmas stamp, this year's contemporary Christmas stamp will probably get two different Scott numbers.

The sheet stamps were printed by the American Bank Note Company and are perf 11 and are printed on soft paper that leaves visible paper fibers when the stamps are separated.

The booklet version was printed by the Bureau of Engraving and Printing. It measures perf 11½ and is printed on hard brittle paper that separates cleanly.

These stamps also differ in color somewhat: The background red color on the ABNC sheet stamp is brighter and appears more evenly applied than that of the BEP. The green color used for the word "Greetings" and the trim on the tree is more of a blue-green on the ABNC produced stamps. The violet ornaments are light colored on the ABNC stamps. The lettering appears thicker on the BEP version.

In Fig. 1 on the right, the sheet version, made by the ABNC is on the left, and the booklet version, made by the BEP, is on the right.



Differences between the sheet and booklet versions of the contemporary Christmas stamp includes perf measurements, paper types and color. The sheet stamps were produced by the American Bank Note Co., and the booklet stamps were printed by the Bureau of Engraving and Printing. Fig. 1.

Richard L. Lazorow had an interesting article on plate blocks on page 16 of the Oct. 8, 1990 issue of Linn's. In summation, he stated that plate blocks have been divided into three distinct groups with widely divergent values. The first group includes early plate blocks up through the 1930s. The second group included those issued between 1940-1980. The third group includes those printed since 1980.

Current prices of many in the first group do not reflect the difficulty of finding them in acceptable condition. These stamps are now more than 60 years old and are starting to show wear and tear from being in and out of many albums and auction houses.

Most plate blocks in the second group are selling close to face value that they can not go any lower. Because of the large supply of stamps in the second group, their value will not go up for a long time. Exceptions seem to be Scott numbers 834, 1053, C31, and a few of the 1940 Famous Americans.

The third group is the emerging group. No huge holdings of any from this period seem to exist, thus dealers are already paying premium prices. Nearly all floating plate number strips of 20 stamps are appreciating. C109-12, C117, 1861, 1863a, and 1867 plus many commemoratives are heading higher. The chart in Fig. 2, below, shows a few of the top performers.

The top performers since 1981		
Scott No.	Face value	Retail price
1622c 13c Flag .....	\$2.60	\$70-80
1927 18c Alcoholism .....	\$3.60	\$45-50
O138 14c D Official .....	.56	\$30-40
J104 17c Postage Due .....	.68	\$15-20
2111 22c D series .....	\$4.40	\$15-20

This table shows some of the scarcest of modern plate blocks. Their prices indicate their relative scarcity. Fig. 2

NNNN

Stamps will have overall tagging or will be printed on prephosphored or phosphor-coated paper. This change in policy has already affected several stamps, including the \$1 Johns Hopkins stamp of the Great American series. These Hopkins stamps, printed on the BEP's A press, now exist with both block and overall tagging. Those with overall tagging appear slightly brighter to the naked eye than those with block tagging.

**INQUIRING MINDS BEWARE:** A souvenir sheet from Sierra Leone is being widely promoted by direct mail investment tipster Alan Feinstein. The stamp on the sheet shows a so called "Face on Mars," a mile wide configuration of rocks and shadows that is thought by New Age pseudoscientists to be the relic of an ancient civilization. See below.

The October issue of Feinstein's "Wealthmaker Quarterly Report" offers this space set for only \$135. One per customer, please. Soon, he says, this set will be worth over \$10,000 or more. Buyers beware. He is now promoting himself in a supermarket tabloid called Weekly World News. An article in it claims that an image similar to the Face on Mars has also been found beneath the Antarctic ice cap, and on Venus, Neptune, and the moon.

Season's Greetings. NNNN



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**Incredible discovery revealed — in Antarctica!**

**STONE FACE FOUND UNDER POLAR ICE CAP**

**— & it's IDENTICAL to the image photographed on Mars in 1976!**

German and American scientists have found a stone face under polar ice that's identical to the stone 'face' on Mars.

The mile-long monument also matches stone faces found on the moons, Venus and Neptune. And that suggests that the people or creatures who built them were capable of interplanetary travel over 500,000 years ago, when the images were made.

are believed to have been made by the same team of people who built the Stone Face on Mars, and who... (text continues with details of the discovery and scientific speculation)

**Sweden has best hobbies**

Women looking for a hobby? Sweden has the best hobbies in the world. They're called 'hobbies' and they're found in Sweden. A recent survey of 1,000 Swedes found that the most popular hobby was 'hobbies'.

it as the "Flower" stamp. They think that TV comedians like Johnny Carson, Jay Leno, and David Letterman who have many fans, will make fun of it and refer to it as the "F is for Failure" stamp.

The new rate increase, whatever it will be, will go into effect on Sunday, Feb. 3.

The design for a ten subject U.S. sheetlet commemorating World War II events of 1941 was unveiled at the White House late last month. Each sheetlet will contain 10 stamps, separated by a large gutter reproducing a large map. Two of these sheetlets will appear on a standardized post office pane, creating a se-tenant block of 10 where they meet. This will be the first of five such sheets to be released over the next five years, with a total of 50 stamp designs to commemorate the major events of WW II. (See copy from Linn's below.) Bear in mind that these sheetlets will not be issued in conjunction with a major national or international stamp show, as all previous U.S. souvenir sheets have been.

NNNN.



Shown here is the first of five scheduled U.S. sheetlets marking events in World War II. Two sheetlets make up a post office pane, creating a se-tenant block of 10 stamps where they meet. The essay stamps shown here bear a "00" denomination.