



# WILKINSBURG STAMP CLUB NEWSLETTER

Meets 2nd and 4th Sundays

APRIL 1992

Box 8711, Wilkinsburg, PA 15221

A. P. S Chapter 1214

Greetings from WILKPEX '92. This is the second year in a row we are able to send the monthly newsletter to club members so that they can get the fancy sports cancel on their regular mail. Did you notice that this cancel is slightly different from the ones published in Linn's, Stamp Collector, and Stamps Magazine? The copy that we forwarded to the philatelic press had a slight shadow on it, and therefore would not pick up the ink in the cancelling process. The Pittsburgh Office of the USPS advised us to change it for a better impression. Thanks to Guy Rizzo, who came to our March 8th meeting and pointed this out to us. (That's what happens when you try to get too fancy.)

Also at the March 8th meeting, Paul Dugita explained why some of you may have had real heavy killer-cancels on those new ten cent Eagle and Shield bulk rate coil stamps that he used to send out last month's newsletter: a clerk at the Swissvale post office did not know that they were valid for first class postage. The general consensus was that these envelopes SHOULD HAVE been mailed to you from that post office; they should not have been forwarded to the Northside facility. So this month, this problem should not occur.

Evidently this problem is occurring at other post offices around the country. In Wayne Youngblood's column in the March 23 issue of Linn's, he writes about the latest attempt by the USPS to clarify the use of non-denominated U.S. postage stamps.

Trying to get rid of some confusion, the USPS published in its Feb. 20th "Postal Bulletin" illustrations of most U.S. non-denominated stamps, except for Official Mail items, and outlined clarifications to its politics regarding the validity of these stamps. It listed the name of the non-denominated stamp and its intended value under each illustration, starting with the 1975 non-denominated 10¢ Christmas stamp and continuing up to the 1991 non-denominated 10¢ Eagle and Shield coil. The clarified and added portions of this information were included in the Domestic Mail Manual dated March 15, 1992.

According to current regulations, these non-denominated stamps are all valid on domestic mail.

All U.S. postage stamps issued since 1860, with a few exceptions, are valid for the payment of USPS postage and fees (DMM section 142.31). These exceptions include postage due, special delivery, special handling, and certified mail stamps, each of which are special service stamps. Postage due stamps are not even valid for postage due use.

All stamped envelopes, postal cards, and aerograms issued since 1873 are valid for postage (section 141.5).

Airmail stamps may be used to pay regular postage (142.312). Although not specifically mentioned, the same rule applies to Express

Mail and Priority Mail stamps.

All non-precanceled versions of bulk- and non-profit-rate stamps may be used to pay regular postage fees for special services if properly marked and full postage is paid (142.313). This means that there are no restrictions on the use of collector versions of fractional coils.

All precancelled bulk- and non-profit-rate stamps may be used to pay regular postage and fees for special services if a collector has the free permit to use precancelled stamps (form 3620). All non-bulk mail bearing pre-cancels must be properly marked and full postage must be paid.

"Precanceled stamps may be purchased for the purpose of paying postage for philatelic purposes" (142.32).

YOU DO NOT HAVED TO BE A BULK MAILER TO USE PRECANCELED, SERVICE-INSCRIBED OR BULK-RATE STAMPS. (Now you know what section in the DMM the clerk can check if he/she does not believe you.)

By the way, did you know that as of March 16th, there were at least 19 different cylinder combinations of the 10¢ Eagle and Shield bulk-rate coil stamp? If three more appear, this stamp will tie the 22¢ Flag Over Capital coil as having the most collectible numbers. So far there has been no official explanation why Guilford Gravure Co., the subcontractor that prints these stamps for American Bank Note Co. (the Postal Service's main contractor) has required so many printing cylinders.

If you now think of yourself as a stamp investor not a stamp collector, maybe you should spend \$9.95 for Steve Datz's book entitled Top Dollar Paid. There is a lot of information about buying and selling stamps in its 168 pages.

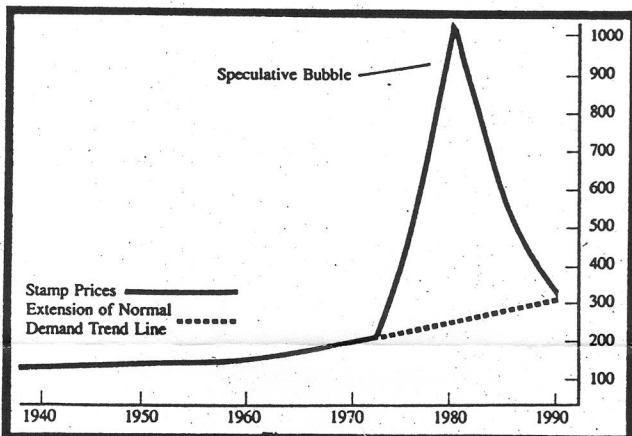


Figure 1. This graph, from Steve Datz's *Top Dollar Paid*, depicts stamp prices over the decades and illustrates how non-collecting investors have affected the stamp market.

A stamp collector's reward comes from completing a series, by acquiring the one high-denomination tough-to-get stamp, by finding an elusive cover, and by sharing this with fellow collectors. Stamp collecting has nothing to do with making a profit.

Stamp investing, however, has only one goal, profit.

The stamp collector who is constantly seeking a profit from his stamps should realize that he is an investor, not a collector.

It was ten years ago, from an investor's point of view, that the stamp market crashed.

Figure 1 above, depicts stamp prices over the decades. It shows

how non-collecting investors affected the stamp market. The instant climb occurred in the 1970s when the investors (non-collectors) wanted to buy out-of-date stamps for investment purposes, rather than collecting purposes.

If interested: \$9.95 postpaid from Stephen R. Datz, General Philatelic Corporation, Box 402, Loveland, CO 80539.