

EDMONTON STAMP CLUB

# BULLETIN

Volume 106, Number 8 October 2017 ISSN: 0046-1318

Mailing address: P.O. Box 399, Edmonton AB T5J 2J6

Website: <http://www.edmontonstampclub.com>

## Halloween



2016 Haunted Canada Souvenir Sheetlet



2015 Haunted Canada Souvenir Sheetlet



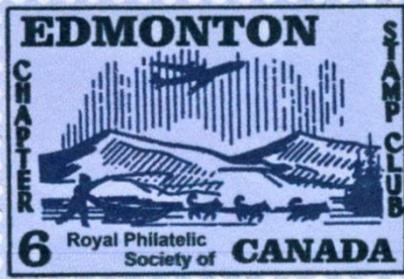
2014 Haunted Canada Souvenir Sheetlet

Regular meetings

St. Joseph High School Cafeteria, 10830 - 109 Street, 6:00 pm

October 16<sup>th</sup> & 30<sup>th</sup>

November 13<sup>th</sup> & 27<sup>th</sup>



The Edmonton Stamp Club dates back to 1912. The Club is Life Chapter #6 of the Royal Philatelic Society of Canada and Chapter #680 of the American Philatelic Society. **The editor welcomes communications of all kinds—letters, comments and articles. Deadline, 7 days before first**

**monthly meeting.** These may be forwarded to Fred Tauber, Edmonton Stamp Club, Box 399, Edmonton, Alberta, T5J 2J6, click “contact” on our website or email to [fxtauber@shaw.ca](mailto:fxtauber@shaw.ca)

## 2017 - 2018 Board of Directors

Area code 780-

Barnes, Richard	President	488-5288	<a href="mailto:rtbarnes@shaw.ca">rtbarnes@shaw.ca</a>
Schutte, Robert	Past President	989-1260	<a href="mailto:rschutte@telusplanet.net">rschutte@telusplanet.net</a>
Dykstra, Ed	Vice President (Chair, Spring Show Committee)	587-341-0804	<a href="mailto:eddykstra@shaw.ca">eddykstra@shaw.ca</a>
Lockau, Jim	Vice President		
	Treasurer	467-4825	<a href="mailto:jimlockau@gmail.com">jimlockau@gmail.com</a>
Stein, Warren	Secretary (Archivist)	463-9881	<a href="mailto:warren.stein@worleyparsons.com">warren.stein@worleyparsons.com</a>
Tauber, Fred	Membership (Webmaster-edmontonstampclub.com & Editor-Bulletin)	469-3034	<a href="mailto:fxtauber@shaw.ca">fxtauber@shaw.ca</a>
Kuester, Peter	Director (Circuits Manager)	451-0520	<a href="mailto:peju@shaw.ca">peju@shaw.ca</a>
Ellis, David	Director	457-7491	<a href="mailto:dwellis@shaw.ca">dwellis@shaw.ca</a>
Pacey, Jeff	Director	989-3491	<a href="mailto:jpacey@telus.net">jpacey@telus.net</a>
Spencer, Keith	Director (NWFS, RPSC liaison)	437-1787	<a href="mailto:keithrspencer41@gmail.com">keithrspencer41@gmail.com</a>
Hetke, Dave	Director	909-3974	<a href="mailto:davehetke@yahoo.com">davehetke@yahoo.com</a>
Wissink, Barend	Director	922-5019	<a href="mailto:wissink@mcsnet.ca">wissink@mcsnet.ca</a>
Fast, Malcom	Director	966-2812	<a href="mailto:mfast@beyondnumbers.ca">mfast@beyondnumbers.ca</a>
Piercey, David	BNAPS liaison	437-2771	<a href="mailto:dpiercey@telus.net">dpiercey@telus.net</a>

Advertising rate schedule: Full page \$30, half page \$18, quarter page \$10 per issue. Nonmembers, \$1.00 per line up to 5 lines. Ten issue discount 20%. Five issue discount 10%. Members, Free, up to 5 lines. Contact Fred Tauber at [fxtauber@shaw.ca](mailto:fxtauber@shaw.ca) or Edmonton Stamp Club by mail.

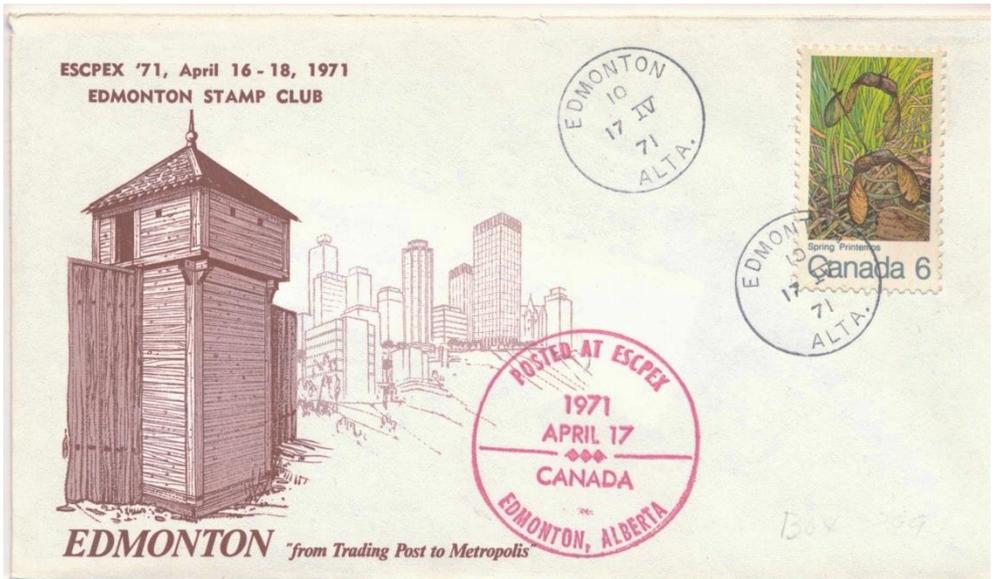
## New President's Message

I just returned from a happy but exhausting "Vacation" for ten days looking after three grandsons while my #1 son and his wife had their first vacation in eleven years sans children.

I thank you for your confidence in allowing me to be your president in 2017-2018. We are starting this year in a good financial position. The Spring Show Committee has been meeting and is preparing for the 2018 Spring Show. If you are interested in participating in the Spring Show please contact Ed Dykstra or any Board member. In addition, if there is anything that you would like to see added to the Spring Show such as seminars or changes to existing events please bring it to the attention of a Board member.

In a similar vein if you have a suggestion to improve the general meetings programming please let us know about it. The Board is interested in receiving outreach suggestions for the Edmonton Stamp Club with emphasis on creating interest in our hobby and increasing our membership. Remember the success of the Edmonton Stamp Club is built upon the participation of its members.

Richard Barnes



Edmonton Stamp Club Show Cover 1971

# FINAL NOTICE

Membership \$Dues\$

July 1<sup>st</sup> 2017 / 2017-2018 Club year

**Don't lose your privileges**

\$30 per year for individual, \$40 for family

## Trading Post

200 WW STAMPS (75% large \$4), Canada packet 200 stamps (75 % large \$5), mint Mexico 100 (large \$4), foreign mint stamps \$8, plus SAE (self-addressed envelope) for each order. ESC members, postage free. Harold Towlson, 60 Ivanhoe Road, Buffalo, NY, 14215, USA.

Want a stamp exchange particularly with GB Machins and commemoratives of Royalty, also ships, trains, planes and such. Keith Thompson, 1109 Larch Place, Canmore, AB, T1W 1S8 or [bikethom@telusplanet.net](mailto:bikethom@telusplanet.net)

Frank von Hausen, [fvhstamps.com](http://fvhstamps.com), 1-866-684-8408, Email: [fvhstamps@aol.com](mailto:fvhstamps@aol.com). **We buy & sell stamps of Canada, European, foreign and topicals. Postcards, postal history covers, Catalogues, Albums & accessories. Many discount prices. Weekly auctions.**

Stamp Exchange Wanted; Europe + Russia, Canada and USA by Serbian Stamp Collectors. English correspondence, Brainislav (Brane) Popov at [popasremac@gmail.com](mailto:popasremac@gmail.com). Serbian correspondence at [miroslavpopov85@gmail.com](mailto:miroslavpopov85@gmail.com). Miro Popov, President of the Stamp Club, Novi Sad.

## Thank you to Weeda Stamps

A big thanks to Beverly (member #2483) and Andrew from Weeda Stamps, a Victoria based British Columbia Stamp Resource. A generous supply of stamps (large box), was sent to the Edmonton Stamp Club. Dave Ellis will add this selection to our popular kiloware table.

Weeda Stamps Ltd. P.O. Box 31054, #RPO University Heights  
Victoria, BC Canada, V8N 6J1

Phone: (250)-385-1826, Toll free 1-888-685-1826

[e-mail: beverly@weeda.com](mailto:beverly@weeda.com) website: <https://www.weeda.com>



**Ray Ireson.** (member #2468)

Died April 13<sup>th</sup> 2017.

Philately was Ray's passion and during his long association with the Lakeshore Stamp Club (1973-2017), he made a major impact on the Lakeshore club and to philately in general. His prowess as an award winning exhibitor at all levels and his utter dedication as editor to the Lakeshore club newsletter "Shoebox".

We send our condolences to Ray's family and The Lakeshore Stamp Club.

**KATHERINE (KAY) WYNN** (member #1609). On July 12, 2017, Mrs. Katherine (Kay) Wynn of Maple Ridge, B.C., formally of Edmonton, passed away peacefully at the age of 97. She was predeceased by her husband Alec in 2002 and is survived by her son Terry of Maple Ridge, her daughter Joan of Kelowna, grandchildren and great grandchildren as well as her special niece Margaret Adamson (Robert) of Sherwood Park and their family. The Club sends condolences to Kay's family.

**Donald Hulme** (member #2367), From Spruce Grove. Passed away.

Recent eBay (Canadian dollars)



USA-1\_U, (15 bids) \$178 / #2\_U, blue can, (64 bids) \$474 /

#6\_U, type 1A, blue can, (27 bids) \$1006

## **2016-2017 Annual Reports**

### **Edmonton Stamp Club**

#### **Circuit Book Report for 2016-2017**

The Edmonton Stamp Club's Circuit Book program offers club members the opportunity to buy and sell stamps, covers, blocks, postcards, even postal stationery. Each booklet offers either 10 or 20 pages of items for club members to peruse and consider purchasing. The prices are quite reasonable, at 30% to 50% of the Scott's values. The program is designed to serve philatelists looking to dispose of surplus material as well as those looking to fill the holes in their albums with just such material. One could call it a win-win situation.

At the beginning of June 2017, 14 club members had books in the program – an increase of one over the 2016 year – and close to \$29 000 of material on offer – at less than 50% of Scott's, please to note. Sales for the year, at \$4630.90, showed a 34% increase over last year and they contributed \$235 to our club's insurance expenses. I received \$463 for my efforts over the year, but I also signed 14 cheques for \$3032.75 to club members for material they had sold through the circuit book program.

As in previous years, these results would not have been possible without the help of my Circuit Book managers in Kaslo (Graeme Gilbert), Lethbridge (Walter Kerber), Lloydminster (Jeanette Plaami), and Saskatoon (Don Waters). Their efforts – and dollars – brought in 62% of the Circuit Book revenues. This program could not exist without their services. THANK YOU!

I would venture a guess that the „outside-of-club“ sales are larger than club sales because the collectors there take the time to take a closer look at what is on offer and pick up on the gems before our club members notice them. In order to correct this anomaly, I hope to encourage more noses in the circuit books at the back table in the coming months. New books are always offered at the club for a meeting or two before they are sent out of town. The prizes are there. You just need to find them. I wish you an enjoyable journey as you hunt through the circuit book pages. As of now, the beginning of September, 2017, there are more than 300 books to choose from. Happy hunting!

Respectfully submitted,  
Peter Kuester  
ESC Circuit Book Manager

## “BULLETIN” NEWSLETTER REPORT

The 2016-2017 club year managed to publish ten issues. Mention must be made to the article contributors, without which the Bulletin would be difficult if not impossible to publish. Special thanks to contributors, club members: Keith Spencer (2), Richard Barnes (10), Robert Schutte (2), Bill Vanderstelt (4), Barend Wissink (2), Jeff Pacey (3), Ed Dykstra (1) and Ray Ireson (1). Various stamp clubs and numerous philatelic websites. Also, the messages that keeps us updated; Richard Barnes, and President Robert Schutte. Many, many thanks to all.

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### WEBSITE ([edmontonstampclub.com](http://edmontonstampclub.com))

The club year from July 2016 to June 2017, showed the number of visitors to the website was 3533 compared to last year of 2657. The Club received income from Bulletin advertising (\$414). The advertisers are: Saskatoon Stamp Centre, Deveney Stamps and The Stamp Gallery. Payed adlets in the “Trading Post” section with six lines or less totaled \$30. I want to thank all of you for your support and involvement in the club activities.

Respectfully submitted,  
Fred Tauber  
September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2017

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### Annual Report – 2017 Spring Show

Greetings fellow club members! This year’s Stamp Show was a big success with many people attending it. The dealers were all pleased with the results as far as we know. Many people helped make this happen. Fred Tauber manned the Club Table as faithfully as ever. Selling BNAPS Breakfast tickets, Wine & Cheese Reception tickets was part of the action as you all entered the Show. Thanks Fred! Together with managing the web site and being our membership secretary and publishing our Bulletin, he so deserves being selected to receive the Philatelist of the Year Award. Congratulations Fred! We can appreciate you for all you do for us.

We scored 2 more Bridge Banners, thanks to hard working Dave Hetke, who made them himself. This brings our total to 4 banners. Dave and his sons have been very helpful here and is especially appreciated for bringing our Exhibit Frames.

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Speaking of Exhibits, we are indebted to Kelly Luisz–Moser for coordinating the Exhibits. This is a job few of us could just walk into. Thanks again Kelly, for doing this key and important job. And thanks to your family for sharing you with us!

We had 12 Dealers attend our show and we look forward to having more of them attending next year. Thanks to Ken Kluchky for looking after the dealers bourse.

We had record attendance at the Junior table. Jeff Pacey and Bill Vanderstelt were quite busy. Good to see!

After putting up a lot of signs at the show, Peter Kuester also had a lot of customers at the Club Circuit table. This is encouraging to see.

The Free Table was also frequented a lot. There were a lot items that were useful to many people. Thanks to Arif for your work distributing our handbills to antique & coin shows and coffee shops. Many Starbucks and 2<sup>nd</sup> Cup coffee shops have bulletin boards that allow our show to be advertised. Thanks to Arif and any others who tried this.

Probably the most effective advertising is sending invitations to people who attended over the years, and filled out a door prize ticket. This list is being maintained by Tom Savage for many years. Thanks Tom!

Another feature of our show are free evaluations. Keith Spencer spent the whole day doing this for us over by the exhibits. People were waiting in line to have Keith go over their collections. Thanks to you Keith, and also for steadfastly being our MC at the Wine and Cheese Reception.

Rod Verrier has done a wonderful job of getting us a great Wine and Cheese Reception. A lot of TLC goes in to that, Thanks Rod!

We are also blessed to have Canada's premier Royal Philatelic Society of Canada judge in our club: David Piercey, we are grateful. Your presentation at the BNAPS Breakfast was very informative and entertaining. Also, if more people could attend the seminar on the new rules for judging exhibits, more of us might feel more like exhibiting. Thanks David, Ed Croft and Jim Taylor of Calgary (and St Pierre & Miquelon exhibiting) fame!

We had a fabulous display about Canada becoming a country. 3 frames of stamps, covers and post cards, all showing confederation related material. It was seen and appreciated by many. Thanks for your support for our theme and our club John Bucci!!

Respectfully submitted,  
Ed Dykstra  
September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2017

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## 2016-2017 Financial Annual Report

### EDMONTON STAMP CLUB

#### STATEMENT OF INCOME and EXPENSES

Income from Members' Activities (schedule 1)	\$61941
Cost of Members Activities (schedule 2)	\$56533
<b>Gross Profit</b>	<b>\$5,408</b>
Other Income (schedule 3)	\$5609
<b>Income before Operating Expenses</b>	<b>\$11,017</b>
Operating Expenses (schedule 4)	\$7759
<b>Income for the year</b>	<b>\$3,258</b>

#### BALANCE SHEET

ASSETS		2017
<b>Current Assets</b>	<b>Cash</b>	
	Chequing TD bank	\$24225
	Trust Account	\$199
	Petty Cash	0
	Catalogue Inventory	\$939
	<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>\$25,363</b>
<b>Other Assets</b>	<b>GICs</b>	
	Term Deposit (Dec 2017)	\$9459
	Term Deposit (FEB 2020)	\$10800
	<b>Total Cash held in GICs</b>	<b>\$20,259</b>
<b>Assets Held in Trust</b>		
	Trust Assets - Estates (Est)	\$20000
	Trust Assets - Circuit Books	\$20513
	<b>Total Assets Held in Trust</b>	<b>\$40,513</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>		<b>\$86,135</b>

#### LIABILITIES & EQUITY

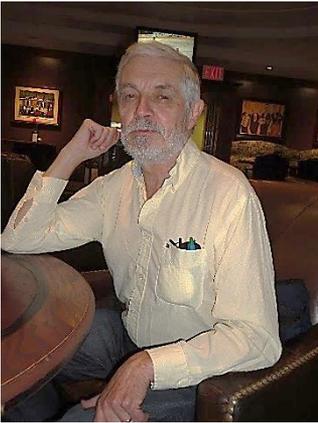
Current Liabilities		
	Trust Liability - Estates	\$20000
	Trust Liability - Circuits	\$20513
	<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>\$40,513</b>
<b>Equity</b>		
	Opening Club Equity	\$42364
	Income (Loss) for the year	\$3258
	<b>Total Club Equity</b>	<b>\$45,622</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; MEMBERS' EQUITY</b>		<b>\$86,135</b>

Submitted by Rod Verrier, Jim Lockau, Fred Tauber

#### Western Australia on eBay



WA-1\_U, (13 bids) \$70 / WA-3\_U, (16 bids) \$52 / WA-5\_U, (13 bids) \$87



A visitor from Ireland, **Mike Burrington** (member #1144). A group of old Friends met at the Louis. Mike is now President. of the Irish Philatelic and Drinking Society. It was interesting to hear how stamping is going in Ireland at the Club and Society levels.

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### SUMMER AUCTION 2017

A successful evening it was, refreshments, stamps and meeting friends during the summer break.

# Meeting Dates

The Edmonton Stamp Club meets Mondays at 6:00 p.m. in the cafeteria of St. Joseph High School, 10830 - 109 Street. Park to the north of the school and use the main entrance at the south-east corner of the school. For information about the club call 780-451-0420 or 780-437-1787.

## 2017

October 16<sup>th</sup> & 30<sup>th</sup>  
 November 13<sup>th</sup> & 27<sup>th</sup>  
 December 4<sup>th</sup> & (18<sup>th</sup> xmas celebration)

**March 24<sup>th</sup> & 25<sup>th</sup> 2018 Spring Show**  
**July 30<sup>th</sup> 2018 Summer Auction**

## 2018

January 8<sup>th</sup> & 22<sup>nd</sup>  
 February 5<sup>th</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup>  
 March 12<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup>  
 April 9<sup>th</sup> & 23<sup>rd</sup>  
 May 7<sup>th</sup> & 28<sup>th</sup>  
 June 4<sup>th</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup>

*Edmonton BNAPS* (British North America Philatelic Society) meets from time to time. All BNAPSers welcome. For information contact David Piercey at 780-437-2771 or Steven Friedenthal at 780-721-3669.

Oct. 19th Thursday

Nov. 15th Wednesday

Dec. 20th Wednesday dinner meeting, location of restaurant to be decided by Oct. meeting.

location: Temple Beth Ora, 12313-105 Avenue (entrance from south parking lot door)

### BNA on eBay



CAN\_BC-9\_U, (32 bids) \$95

CAN\_NB-8p\_PROOF, pair, (14 bids) \$46

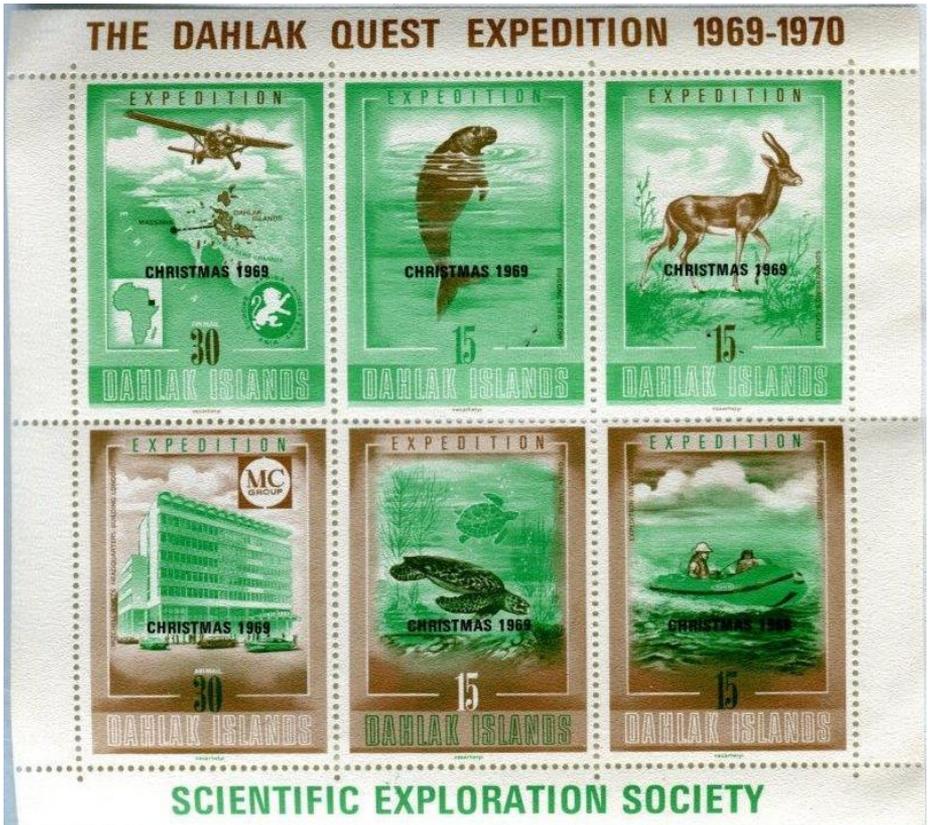
CAN\_NB-9\_MH, (5 bids) \$14

CAN\_NS-3\_U, (19 bids) \$57

# Some Things Do Not Change

I finally had time to open an auction lot I picked up back in March 2016. This Horn of Africa lot was mainly Ethiopian items. This included miniature sheets issued for “The Dahlak Quest Expedition” and miniature sheets produced by the “Pro Foundation Economica Ethiopia”.

The Dahlak Quest Expedition was the first scientific expedition, 1969-1970, mounted by the now internationally recognized Science Exploration Society. They prepared the way for UNESCO Heritage Site designation for the Dahlak Islands of Eritrea. The Science Exploration Society continued the long standing philatelic practice of issuing Cinderella stamps to help defer expenses of the expedition. They created a mini sheet that was overprinted three (fig 1) times between 1969 and 1971. I found one website that stated the original not overprinted stamps were used locally for postal use. Can any member confirm or deny this report?



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Why are these stamps enclosed in an Ethiopian collection? Ethiopia today is a land locked country. Historically Ethiopia has suffered not having unhindered access to maritime trade. Emperor Haile Selassie in 1952 “incorporated” Eritrea into Ethiopia. It was Emperor Selassie who invited the British scientific exploration to the Dahlak Islands. It was not until 1993 after a UN Referendum the Eritrea officially returned to being sovereign state.

Eight Pro Foundation Economia Ethiopia Cinderella mini sheets were created between 1978 and 1983. I was not able to find any direct information about who was responsible for producing these stamps. These mini sheets appeared to be sold as a fund-raising effort for charitable work with Ethiopians (Fig 2). One philatelic site was selling these mini sheets as scam Cinderellas and another site states that the issuers of these mini sheets were charged with fraudulently raising funds and the Dutch Government closed it down. Has any member more information on the Foundation Economia Ethiopia? This is another historical use of philatelic material.

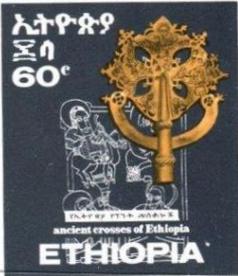
**Pro  
Foundation Economia  
Ethiopia**

Sheet No.4



ETHIOPIA  
60c

**Help  
Postgraduate  
Eritrean  
Students**



ETHIOPIA  
60c  
ancient crosses of Ethiopia  
ETHIOPIA

Price: 10 Birr  
US \$ 5  
DM 10

Minus 20%.

1980  
Debre Zeit, ~~1977~~

# What to do when you inherit stamps (part 2)

By **Bob Ingraham**  
**British Columbia Philatelic Society**

Continued from September 2017

## Choice # 3 — Sell your collection

If you have decided to sell your stamps, you need to understand some basics of the philatelic marketplace before entering it.

### What are stamps worth?

Most stamps have little cash value. The values that are assigned to stamps by catalogues such as the *Scott Standard Postage Stamp Catalogue* are wildly optimistic. In the real world, most stamp dealers discount their prices heavily from *Scott* values. Modern mint stamps are not even worth face value in the marketplace when sold at wholesale prices. The same is true of most used stamps, although attractively cancelled modern stamps are showing signs of having greater value than mint copies of the same stamps. That's because the automated cancellation machines in use by many countries produce really ugly used stamps.

### Stamp condition

The value of stamps depends in large part on condition. *Any* damage lowers the value of *any* stamp. Mint stamps that have been mounted in albums with hinges automatically lose as much as 50% of their value or even more. If the gum has been soaked off or is badly damaged, the value falls almost to nothing except for older, classic issues. For all stamps, short or damaged perforation teeth, thins, bad centering of images, creases, smudges of dirt, surface scuffs, or generally worn, ratty appearance will seriously compromise value. If a used stamp has an ugly, messy cancellation, its value approaches zero, although its catalogue value may be high. Some inexperienced collectors have been known to stick stamps into stamp albums simply by licking the gum, just like sticking the stamp on a letter. Such a collection is virtually worthless except perhaps as a family heirloom. At the other end of the scale, "perfect" stamps may demand premium prices, and may in fact sell at auction for more than catalogue value. What is a perfect stamp? The design will be centered with nearly mathematical precision. The borders may be broad, depending on the particular issue. The perforation teeth will be crisp. The colors will look as fresh as the moment the stamps were printed. The gum, on mint stamps, will be flawless and unhinged. If the "perfect" stamp is used,

*continued next page*

the cancellation will not seriously deface the design of the stamp. Circular Date Stamp (CDS) cancellations are prized on stamps; such cancellations struck in the center of the stamp are known as Sock On the Nose (SON), and can command premium prices, especially if the cancellation itself is scarce. Speaking generally, if a collector sought attractive, undamaged stamps and took good care of them, the collection will be worth much more than one built by a collector whose standards were low and who handled and stored his collection carelessly. One reason for this is that the meticulous collector with high standards is apt to have been a knowledgeable collector who made good investments. Which reminds me of...

### **Bags and bags of stamps**

If your inherited collection consists of bags, boxes, and envelopes stuffed with miscellaneous stamps, it is not likely to have any great commercial value. In fact, it is not even a collection, but an *accumulation*. A *collection* of stamps is one that has been sorted, identified, catalogued, organized, and studied, and usually mounted in albums or carefully inserted into stock pages or stock books. When a dealer sells a *collection* as opposed to an *accumulation*, it's going to be easier to get a good price for it because little effort will be required to incorporate it into the buyer's own collection. Many collectors do enjoy buying accumulations, because of their recreational potential and the possibility of finding a treasure. But they aren't going to spend a lot of money on any given accumulation because they know that the great bulk of the material is going to be common, and any valuable stamps are going to come to light only as a result of a lot of effort.

### **A note about covers**

Covers, which non-collectors know as used envelopes, or collectively as "postal history," are often included in stamp collections, and may form the larger portion of the collection. Unless you happen to be very knowledgeable about cover collecting, do *NOT*, under *ANY* circumstances, cut or soak the stamps off covers. Complete covers can sometimes be worth hundreds or even thousands of times the value of the stamps alone. There is an apocryphal story about a widow who called a dealer to tell him about her husband's collection of old envelopes with black stamps on them. In questioning her, he realized that the stamps were the Penny Black, the first stamp ever issued. The collection was potentially worth a fortune; he told her he would be right over. She greeted him with a smile, and proudly showed him her stamps — all of which she had clipped from the envelopes!

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Penny Blacks aren't worthless by any means; used copies regularly sell for a hundred dollars and more. But a Penny Black on its original envelope — “on cover” as collectors say — may be worth several hundreds or even thousands of dollars.

### **About the condition of covers**

While condition has a bearing on the value of a cover, as with stamps, a “dirty old cover” that looks like it's been run over by a truck may actually have more value than it would if it were neat and tidy. That's because its poor condition is evidence of its history. Examples are found in the category of “crash mail,” sometimes known as “interrupted” or “adversity” mail; crash covers often show signs of water and fire damage, and the more badly damaged the cover is the more it is worth. Covers often have additional postmarks and hand-written notations that provide a great deal of information about their history. Think of covers as postal artifacts. Covers that have carried personal or business communications through the mails are for the most part unique; catalogues do not provide meaningful evaluations of them, and even experienced dealers may be only to give a rough estimate of what a given cover might bring at auction.

### **Philatelic covers**

Philatelic covers, created only as collectibles by individual collectors, stamp clubs, organizations, entrepreneurs, and postal administrations, rarely have notable value. There are several types of philatelic covers:

- First-day covers, issued by post offices around the world on the day that new stamps become available, are created by the hundreds of thousands.
- First-flight covers, celebrating the first airmail flight from one community to another.
- Commemorative covers and event covers, created to celebrate some past or current event, such as the centennial of statehood or a stamp exhibition, or simply the existence of a famous person or group of persons. Such covers are often sold by such companies as the Franklin Mint. Few collectors have any interest in such material, which therefore has little to no commercial value.

On a step up the ladder of desirability and value are first-day covers created by collectors for personal use or perhaps to send to a relative; these may look like ordinary mail, and only the postmark proves their provenance. Such covers can sometimes command premium prices. As well, some first-day, first-flight and event covers can be quite valuable because of their rarity. Some first-day covers, for example, provide the only known, authorized use of certain stamps and thus take their place in postal histories.

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## What to expect when you sell

Only rarely do stamps prove to be a good investment, and few collectors engage in their hobby in hopes of making a profit. However, one of the beauties of collecting, unlike many other hobbies, is that stamp collections can return some money to the collector or to his or her heirs. A collection built with care over the years can return a surprising amount of money.

In selling to, or through, a dealer, you should expect to receive **approximately 20% to 30% of the collection's catalogue value.**

Dealers almost always discount considerably from catalogue values when they sell stamps by retail, and prices realized at auction only rarely reach catalogue value. It is not unusual to see scarce or even rare stamps sell for as little as 10% to 20% of retail value in auctions. And stamps, like any other commodity, are subject to the laws of supply and demand: very rare stamps can be almost worthless if no one collects them. (At the same time, very common stamps will probably never be worth anything because they are so...common!)

**You can trust professional stamp dealers.** Many people are loathe to turn their stamps over to dealers, assuming, without a shred of evidence, that most dealers are dishonest. In fact, dishonest dealers are rare. The vast majority are **ethical** men and women who started as collectors, who understand that stamps have both cash and intrinsic value, and who work very hard to keep their businesses afloat. Most of them are supportive of the hobby of stamp collecting; many belong to stamp clubs themselves, and most of those who have full-time businesses are members of the various philatelic organizations, including the American Philatelic Society (APS), the Royal Philatelic Society of Canada (RPSC), the Canadian Stamp Dealers Association (CSDA), and the American Stamp Dealers Association (ASDA). These societies and associations demand that their members meet high standards of ethical behavior. In addition, any professional stamp dealer should be more than willing to provide you with references, and almost any experienced stamp collector can suggest the names of reputable dealers. A caveat: The fact that stamps and covers can be very valuable is both the strength and weakness of stamp collecting, marketing, and selling. Whenever any commodity has significant value, it will inevitably attract less-than-reputable sellers and dealers.

# The Stamp Gallery

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Avoid business relationships with any dealers who cannot provide solid references and who show no evidence of a decent track record. It is also a good idea, if possible, to approach two or three dealers before selling.

## **Sell direct to a stamp dealer**

The simplest and quickest way for you to turn your collection into cash is to sell it directly to a stamp dealer, ideally after getting offers from two or three dealers, whom you can probably find listed on the web sites of the ASDA and the CSDA. Stamp dealers often buy stamp collections from collectors or from people like yourself who have inherited stamp collections. Their business depends on having new stock available for their regular customers, and stamps are not generally something that can be ordered from a wholesale dealer. It can take months or even years to find some stamps, even if they aren't particularly scarce. Collectors searching for particular varieties of stamps or scarce stamps may search for years, and their dealers often help in that search, knowing that the next collection they examine may contain just what they've been looking for their customers. It's a rare dealer who will turn down the opportunity to look over a collection that he hasn't seen before.

*Continued next page*

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It's not too hard to know if a dealer's offer is reasonable. If he or she takes time to look at the collection, offers comments about what the collection contains, and seems genuinely interested at a personal level in what you are offering, and why, chances are that you will not be cheated. A professional dealer will also tell you if he doesn't believe your collection has any value, and he won't offer to buy it. However, if a dealer tells you that your collection isn't worth a thing, and complains that he'll have trouble selling it, and then offers to buy it for a small amount of money, it would probably be best to thank him and leave — with your stamps!

Continued next month

## Zeppelin Covers on eBay



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