

K-W Stamp News

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Issue 7, Winter 2012



President's Message



It is hard to believe that summer is almost over and fall is just around the corner. September is a time of change and I would like to remind everyone that our meetings start the second Thursday of every month. October is Stamp Month and we will have our call auction on Thursday, October, 11, 2012. Our sincere Thanks go to Peggy Coe for her dedication and contributions to our stamp club. Our members will miss her presence. We would also like to thank Gus Knierim for his many years of service as our Secretary. On behalf of our members, we would like to welcome Nancy White as our new Secretary and Robert Hadley as our new Membership Director. The stamp store has changed ownership and has moved to the Frederick Street Mall near the barbershop. We welcome the new owners, Rakesh Sud & Bill. As our activities begin this season, we will be welcoming new members and we are open to any ideas from any of our members on how to improve our club. If anyone is interested in volunteering his or her time, please contact me as we can always use an extra hand.

~Oscar Cormier,
Director

FOUNDED 1935

Kitchener-Waterloo Philatelic Society

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Some Highlights of the 2011-2012 KWPS Financial Year

Stampfest this year showed a small increase in costs, mainly because of an increase in rent for the church hall.

Dealer revenues rose slightly because of the addition of three more dealers, although for several years table fees have been frozen.

The net surplus for Stampfest has been steady for several years.

The overall year has been a typical one, even though the

membership dues have been left frozen for many years now as a result of our surpluses, except for our 75th anniversary year.

The McCormick community meeting room rent will be rising, although we haven't yet been told by how much.

The 50/50 draws have increased our draw revenues helpfully.

Our steady financial condition is due in large part to the efforts of all directors and members who help bring in revenues at

meetings and at our show, and who donate prizes and auction items.

Our sincere thanks go to all who, in a volunteering spirit, help our club in this way.

Details of the financial statements are available from me, by request.

~ George Pepall,

Treasurer

2012 - 2013 Auction & Sale Schedule

Normally we have a table auction or other sale at each of our meetings. Here is the schedule for the upcoming season:

Nov. 8 – table auction

Dec. 13 – “Secret Santa”

Jan. 10 – Table Auction

Feb. 14 – “RPSC”

Circuit Books

Mar. 14 – Table Auction

Apr. 11 – Table Auction

May 9 – “Penny” Sale



June 13 – “Scramble”

~ Scott Traquair.

Table Auctions Director

A Step into the Unknown

In organized philately, as in many volunteer positions, formal instructions, if any, are not the norm. It is trial by fire.

One of the first things that I learned as a newly minted editor was that editing, although an important

part of the job, would not be my primary concern. Where would I get the articles to fill a 64-page, bi-monthly publication? Fortunately, I had a coterie of stamp collecting friends and acquaintances and I wasted little time contacting them. Several declined outright, but the majority promised to have something in the mail for me. The question was when. Deadlines do not wait and I quickly learned that an editor needed to do much more than cross t's and dot i's.

What did I do when promised articles did not arrive on time? Hounding writers usually has the opposite of the desired result. Not following up with them also bore little fruit. A balanced, tactful approach was best, I found. Well-timed reminders need to become an essential part of an editor's toolkit. Gentle nudges seemed to work. Only after establishing reliable sources of publishable material can an editor concentrate on attempting to generate some standardization in the very different writing styles of the various authors. Each writer's style is unique to some extent and uniformity in style is desirable. Editors call it "house style."

The word "till," for example, is a perfectly good preposition. So is "until." One writer used them

interchangeably. Which term is preferable? Is it worth an editor's time to change every "till" to "until" or vice versa, at the risk of missing a looming deadline? How about US? Should it be written as U.S., or USA, or perhaps U.S.A.?

What do the house style rules say? No manual exists, so the only way to find out is to look at back issues of the magazine. But how much time does it take to find a relevant precedent? And even if I do find "till" in an earlier publication, in what context did the previous editor decide to use "till" instead of "until"? I will leave it to you, the reader, to decide which sounds better to your ear.

So, what does an editor do besides getting the magazine out on time and as error-free as possible? My step into the unknown has encouraged me to pay attention to syntax, learn or relearn long-forgotten rules of grammar and composition. Equally important, I have had to sharpen my skills dealing with people. That step had its own rewards.

Overall, editing *The Canadian Philatelist* has proven to be a positive and rewarding experience: It has allowed me to make new friends in the philatelic community. That alone is worth the requisite four or five readings of every manuscript before the magazine goes to print.

~ Tony Shaman

Chair Co-ordinator



When I was asked to become editor of *The Canadian Philatelist* some time ago I was surprised, if not shocked. But, when the president of The Royal Philatelic Society of Canada asks a 40-plus-year member of the Society to take on an assignment, how could I refuse? To say that I accepted the position with some trepidation would be an understatement. But, perhaps it was time to give something back to a hobby that had given me so much pleasure and enjoyment for much of my adult life.

I had no background in journalism, much less any expertise as an editor. My major at university was Economics, a discipline where strength in literacy was not a prerequisite. In fact, I had heard on more than one occasion that economists, in general, were atrocious writers. As most of my professors were from that discipline, any lack of competence in English composition or grammar on my part was not something that I dwelled on at the time. As I recall, none of my economics instructors expressed any displeasure with my writing assignments that I turned in to them for marking.

eBay – Pet Peeves as a Buyer

In an earlier article I wrote about “sniping” on-line auction lots and the benefits of doing so. Has anyone tried sniping and did it work out for you?

In this article I will share with you some of my pet peeves about eBay and specifically with regards to buying stamps. I am sure that many of these issues will be common to all buyers on eBay.

Condition not described. It is very frustrating to see a nice looking stamp only described as used or mint. Some sellers feel that a low-resolution scan or photo will allow the potential buyer to determine its condition but some input would be really helpful. Usually it’s too late for me to contact the seller before the auction ends. I usually resist the temptation to bid.

Faults not described. It seems to be a growing trend for sellers to describe stamps as fault free when in fact they have thins, or tears, or other defects. Maybe they hope that the buyer won’t notice the defects or take the time to return the lot. For the most part I have successfully returned many lots and received

a refund but it is frustrating.

No scan or poor quality scan. As the saying goes “a picture tells a thousand words”. Most sellers now scan or photograph their stamp lots but many forget to use a dark background to highlight the perforations, and many scans are of such poor resolution that they are useless.

Inflated shipping costs. One of the beauties about buying stamps or covers on eBay is that they are normally very lightweight and easily shipped from all around the world. Shame on those sellers who feel it necessary to charge \$2 or more for a single lot that maybe only realizes a few dollars and could be shipped for under a dollar.

Poorly packaged lots. Many sellers go above and beyond the call of duty when packaging their lots. I am often impressed with how



well some lots are packaged. On the other hand there are those sellers who will literally place a stamp in a Hawid mount, or in a small glassine envelope loosely in a #10 envelope with no cardboard to prevent the item from being bent or even damaged from the application of a cancellation. Protection from getting damp is also a good idea and some sellers ensure the item is encased in plastic as well.

Well that is probably enough ranting for now. Do you buy stamps on eBay? How has your experience been?

~ Scott Traquair,

Table Auction Director