

# Circuits a Hit at STAMPSHOW

For the first time in recent memory (forty years or so), the Sales Division prepared circuits for members who visited our annual STAMPSHOW, held this year in Hartford, Connecticut. There were fifty-nine circuits containing twenty sales books each and representing more than seventy-five collecting categories. The total value of these circuits exceeded \$250,000.

Most of the more than 100 members who sat down to browse through circuits had not experienced them previously, including some who have been members of APS for twenty years or more and including some stamp dealers!

The major comments were that the type of material contained in the circuits is difficult to find anywhere else, except in large lots where the items are not individually identified, and that they welcomed this additional avenue for finding stamps to add to their collections. Sales were about \$3,200 and the exposure to the membership was a success. We will be taking circuits to STAMPSHOW 2009 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. See you there!

## Stop and Visit

As you are traveling through Central Pennsylvania checking our great Fall tree colors, stop by to browse through sales books that are in transition between circuit mailings. As those members who visited our booth in Hartford found out, you can stumble across difficult-to-find items that will not break your bank account. There are bargains to be found in the sales books and spaces to fill in your collection. The buying process here is simple, relaxing and, yes, exciting, all at the same time.

## Mounting Items in the Sales Books

We receive sales books that have been mounted with a fair amount of overlapping of stamps on the pages. Because we send these books to members, they are able to lift the stamps in order to view prices and identifications. However, the pages look crowded and messy. Sell-



Bill Dixon, Circuit Manager, explains the how-tos of buying and selling through the APS circuit books to members who are new to the service.

ers should avoid overlapping stamps that are individually priced to avoid confusion for the buyers.

The ideal presentation should avoid covering the descriptive information and the item's net price. This procedure may involve skipping individual spaces, but the page will look neater. In addition, the information will show in the digital photo we shoot of the page when the book is submitted to us. Mounting items to make a pleasing presentation can increase your sales. The easier it is for the buyer to make a purchase decision, the greater your sales will be.

If using hinges to mount stamps, place the hinge near the perforations. Buyers will want to lift stamps to look at the backs before buying. If you are using mounts, be sure the buyer will have easy access to the stamp for inspection. Be careful when using tape to attach mounts, as we have seen stamps slide out and stick to the tape. Do not use photo corners for mounting *any* philatelic items. They can cause damage to the items they are supposed to secure. Make it easy for buyers to inspect your stamps without damaging them.

And Buyers — remember that the items you are inspecting belong to the seller until you buy them, so please use



care when handling the stamps in the sales books.

## StampStore Notes

Speaking of mounting, StampStore wants to remind sellers that items should **not** be mounted in glassine envelopes or other “cloudy” containers. Scans of these cloudy envelopes produce images that do not allow the buyer to see the stamps contained in them clearly and there will be no sales of the items. Please use clear mounts for securing the stamps you want to sell.

Also, remember that placement of the item on the sales sheet is important. If it is larger than the black block on the page, mount it on the *back* of the sales sheet and place the sheet and item together in a three-hole page protector. **Note:** The item *should not* be placed near the side of the page where the hole-punch marks are printed. We store the sheets in three-ring binders and punch stacks of sheets before placing them into the binders. If your item is larger than the sales sheet, contact StampStore for instructions on how to submit it.

Care should be taken to identify the items properly. Faults that affect the value of the item must be noted. Correct catalogue numbers and values should be entered. Items that are not identified correctly will be returned to the sellers. In addition, buyers have the option of sending an item to the APS Expertizing Service for certification after buying it. If the item is returned from APEX with the opinion that it is *not* as described, the seller is responsible for paying the expertizing fee, and the stamp is returned to the seller with a statement of appropriate charges.

## How I Got into Stamp Collecting

This month's story is from Jim Measures of Ontario, Canada. He enjoyed reading Harold Walton's story in the June issue of the *AP*, and it inspired him to relate his own beginnings:

I grew up in Toronto, and at age 7 joined Cubs (the youngest branch of Boy Scouts). I learned that there was a "Collectors Badge" and several of my friends were going for it so I decided to try also. A neighbor, father of a friend, showed me his collection so I started to accumulate and trade stamps with various friends.

It was well known in our family that my mom had an Uncle Ben who lived on an island near Australia. When I showed her a map to ask what island was home to Uncle Ben, she truly didn't know, Mom pointed to an island and asked 'What's this?' I told her it was New Zealand and she instantly replied that must be where Uncle Ben lived. I became a 'nut about New Zealand.' In school when we drew pictures of birds, I drew a kiwi; when we did projects

on natives, I did mine on the Maori. As you would guess, my stamp collection focused on New Zealand. On Yonge Street within walking distance there were two dealers. Empire Stamps Co. put out a free magazine, *Philatopic Monthly*. One issue had a price list of New Zealand stamps. The other dealer, Mr. Alden Johnston, had a good stock of New Zealand stamps and would always beat Empire's prices. I was in stamp heaven!

In 1962, as an adult, I wrote relatives in England to get Uncle Ben's address in New Zealand and was shocked to learn that it was in Launceston, Tasmania. Yes, it was an island near Australia, but *not* New Zealand. I wrote to Uncle Ben and got a reply from his son Harold who told me that his dad was in the hospital. Two weeks later we received notice of his death. In 1972, I met some New Zealand visitors who encouraged me to write to their neighbor, Ran Dacre, who was a stamp collector. I did and learned that Ran was not just a philatelist, but president of RPSNZ. He sponsored me to be the first Canadian member of RPSNZ. With the new member's information I saw the name George Measures, a life member of RPSNZ. I wrote to him and learned that he is a relative of my dad that we didn't know about and he had the family Bible that records my grandfather's birth. Eventually I met Harold, his wife Joan, and all the family in Australia when I went to the Boy Scout World Jamboree in Australia, 1987/88. Since then, my wife Rita and I have exchanged visits with the family in both Australia and New Zealand.

At age 10 in 1947, we had a Scout Hobby Show. I entered my New Zealand Health stamps and got First Prize for stamps. What impressed me most was that Second Place went to my friend Allan Haggart's older brother Gord who I had always looked up to as the "Perfect Scout." I had such a swelled head that I needed a new hat! I continue to exhibit my Health stamps even though when Janet Klug judged them at an RPSC national show she said that I needed two stamps that list for \$33,000 in the C/P catalogue

if I want to get Gold. I just continue to try to improve within my limited budget (the price of a pack of cigarettes per day as I don't smoke)."

## '5 For 10' Categories (Needs)

We need U.S. items, **except** U.S. First Day Covers, U.S. Mint post-1950, U.S. Used post-1950 and U.S. Plate Blocks post-1950. You can earn coupons for free blank books and mounts for every 10 completed books containing material from a set list of categories. (*Each group of 10 or more qualifying books must be received at the same time and at least \$50 per book. The coupons are issued when the qualifying books are reviewed soon after arriving.*) Each book must be designed to fit one of the categories, exclusively. Details are sent with blank sales book orders. You also may visit [www.stamps.org](http://www.stamps.org) and click on Sales Division and How to Sell. [NOTE: Single-country books usually have better sales.] Below are categories that are in very short supply at this time:

- U.S. 19th Century Covers
- U.S. Mint pre-1950
- U.S. Plate Blocks pre-1950
- U.S. Postal Stationery
- Australian States
- British Empire Victorian Era (mixed books)
- German Covers (postally used)
- India and States
- Japan pre-1950
- Latin America (single-country books)
- Luxembourg
- Vatican City

## Collectible Postage

With increased postage costs, it is important that circuit members use collectible postage when forwarding circuits. The member receiving a circuit likes to have some used postage to add to his/her collection as some payback, however minimal, for the cost of forwarding each circuit. We still want you to ask the postal clerk for a meter stamp, even if it is for \$0, to indicate that the package was mailed through a clerk, giving it quicker passage through the postal system. Postage stamps and meter stamps are officially recognized as indicators that postage on a package has been prepaid. The proper mailing method must be used to forward circuits. Our main concern is for the circuit content of each package.