

The PhilateliKid

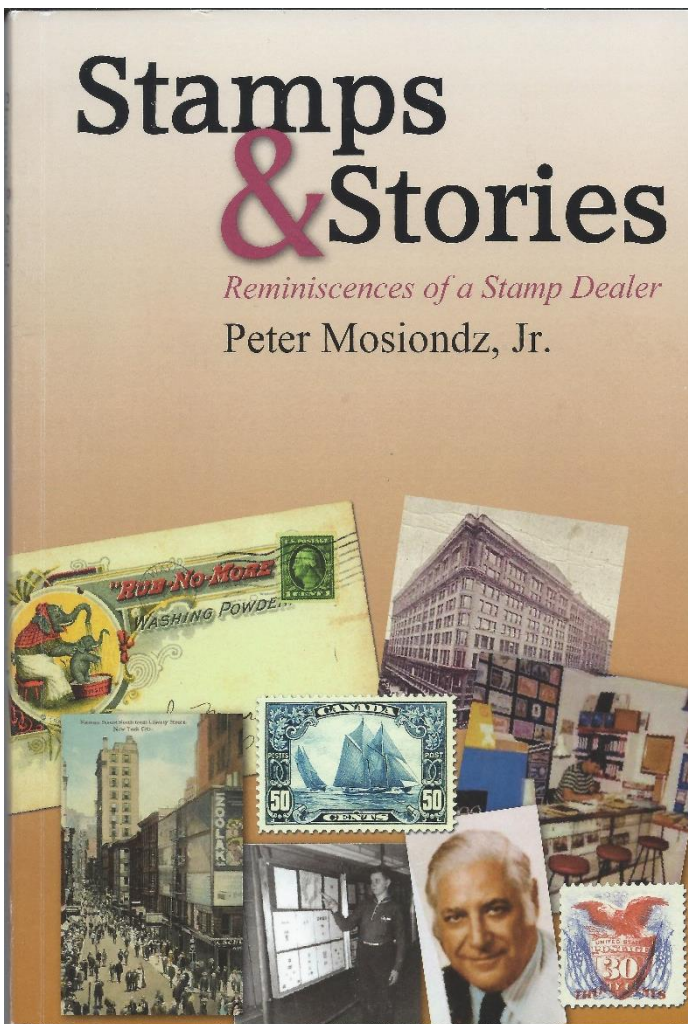
The newsletter for Stamp Collecting Clubs for Kids (SCCFK)

Collect Stamps (The Most Educational Hobby)

www.stampcollectingclubsforkids.org

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Book of the Month



If you are a subscriber of *American Stamp Dealer and Collector* you will be familiar with the writings of long-time stamp dealer Peter Mosiondz, Jr. (You probably do not know how to pronounce his last name. I didn't, so I phoned him and asked. It is pronounced like the word "motions.") He wrote "Stamps & Stories: Reminiscences of a Stamp Dealer" which is still available for purchase from the author for only \$23 including shipping.

If you have read any of the works of Herman "Pat" Herst, Jr. you will really like this book. It is just over a hundred pages long, and filled with 20 entertaining short stories about our hobby. You can purchase it from: Peter Mosiondz, Jr., 26 Cameron Circle, Laurel Springs, NJ 08021-4861.

This book makes a lovely gift for anybody you know who loves stamp collecting. It is written in a style that is easily understandable, for experts and beginners alike.

The only negative thing about this book is that when you finish it, you will wish it was longer! Get this book. You will not be disappointed. The author will even sign it for you (upon request.)

My Dog Had a Limp

In the mid 1950's I got a stray dog (or rather she got me) that was black with a white face and four white paws. I named it (what else?) Whitesocks. She followed me everywhere, even when I was riding my bicycle. She loved everybody, and was as gentle as they come. She was an "outside" dog and never spend an hour inside our home. Weighing all of 20 pounds, Whitesocks felt it was her job to chase "stranger" cars that happened to stray too close to our home, barking furiously until the car went away. One day, she screwed up, and her right front leg was injured. She survived the accident, but from that time on, she walked with a limp. Actually, she walked entirely on 3 legs for the rest of

her life, and she lived about 10 more years. Although never good enough to be in a dog show, we loved Whitesocks immensely, and she presented us with three litters of puppies, eighteen of which survived and were carefully placed with dog-loving people. I am sure her spirit lives on today in many happy homes.

I also collected stamps, and I was not at all concerned about a stamp that had a thin, or was off center, or had a straight edge, pulled perf, small tear, crease, or even a stain. I know this for a fact because I still have my first album, and I am sure that no serious stamp dealer would offer me \$20 for the 5,000 or so stamps it contains. The stamps that have catalog values of more than the minimum usually have some imperfection. But just like my dog with a limp, I enjoyed those stamps perhaps more than any other stamps have acquired over the next 60 years.

You see, none of those stamps (carefully hinged with Dennison hinges, even if mint) and lovingly placed into my album, was acquired with the idea that they would be sold. (*See **Note**.) Many of those stamps were acquired by trading my duplicates. Duplicates, of course, were the result of soaking stamps off envelopes we received in the mail, or by soaking stamps off envelopes received in a variety of ways. One way I was particularly adept at was by searching through the waste baskets of the local post office. I couldn't believe some of the wonderful stamps I got from people who had received mail and then just threw away the envelope, stamps and all !

***Note:** None of those stamps has been sold. I still have them.

At the local stamp club, some adult members would give me stamps for free. I became especially known as the kid who liked perfins. Apparently, in those days, many dealers simply threw a perfinned stamp into the trash, considering it a "damaged" stamp. Not me! I loved my dog with a limp, and I loved those perfinned stamps. (And still do.)

For children and beginners today, as in years past, stamp collecting is not done as an investment. It is a hobby enjoyed for the fun of it. Beginners are a lot more interested in the subject matter of a stamps than their rarity, condition, catalog value, or whether an auction house would be willing to dedicate a page in its catalog to showcase the item. Stamp collecting was fun. Some of us actually liked it more than playing baseball, which certainly could not be done once the sun set, or when it was raining.

I did not know anybody who actually sent a stamp away to have it authenticated, nor did I ever see a "certificate" for a stamp. The idea that a stamp might be a forgery – well, if it looked good, then, who cared? For a while I had a black and white forgery of the famous "penny magenta" in my collection. (I think I cut it out of a newspaper article, and then hinged it carefully into my album.) The item is no longer in my album, being removed somewhere along the line, not because it was a total forgery, but because it was totally ugly. You know, all four corners cut off, monochromatic, and an ugly, heavy, scribbled cancel. Not an attractive item I wanted taking up space in my album.

Few people I knew used a Scott Catalogue, much less owned one. The first Scott Catalogue I received was in 1960. It contained all the stamps ever issued in the world – in one big fat volume. If memory serves me correctly, the cover was orange. I do not remember if it came with a dust cover, but if it did, that either got thrown away immediately, or maybe remained until torn, and then was disposed. To me, dust covers were sort of the packaging that books came in.

Today, there is a lot being written in the philatelic press about condition. I see especially a lot written about the “superb, post office fresh, mint, never hinged” common stamps that seem to be commanding incredible prices. Here is an example, from an ad in the September 17, 2018 issue of Linn’s: U.S. Scott RW5. (This is a monochromatic “duck” revenue stamp issued in 1938 featuring two pintail ducks.) Unused with a flaw, such as a thin or short perforation: \$20. Unused with minor faults in reverse such as a gum skip: \$52.50. Mint, Lightly Hinged with fine-very fine centering: \$110. Mint, never hinged, with fine-very fine centering: \$275. Mint, never hinged with very fine centering: \$425. This stamp is available online with VF-Extremely Fine centering for \$620, and this stamp with Grade 95 centering retails for \$895, on sale for only \$750. Put another way, this stamp (not used) ranges in price from \$20 to almost 5,000 % more, and some of the differences can be discerned by only a very trained eye, or by expertising services with very expensive equipment. This is not an isolated instance.

I am happier with stamps that have “value added.” That could be a stamp on cover, with an interesting addressee, or sent from an interesting person or place. It could be a stamp with an interesting cancel. Ex.: “Pray for Peace.” It could have a pre-cancel, or a perfin. Interestingly enough, these stamps often sell for very little, normally less than a mint stamp would cost. Think about it!

EFO’s

Errors, Freaks, and Oddities



In the production process of stamps and postal stationery, things sometimes go wrong. The results of things going wrong are numerous, and include problems like missing ink, too much ink, wrong color ink, ink in the wrong places, things wrong on the gummed side of the stamp, perforation/separation errors, and problems with the paper upon which the stamp or stationery is printed. Here is an example of a problem with the paper being folded prior to the stamps being printed.

“Freaks” are a one-time anomaly and are unique. The stamps shown at left have a paper fold prior to production, and therefore this is classified as a “freak.” Looking for EFO’s is a lot of fun, and can result in some very interesting finds.

Stamp Collecting Clubs for Kids is a 501(c)(3) organization. Donations are greatly appreciated and if \$10 or more you will be sent a written receipt. You also can donate via PayPal on our website - www.stampcollectingclubsforkids.org