

HUNTSVILLE PHILATELIC CLUB NEWSLETTER

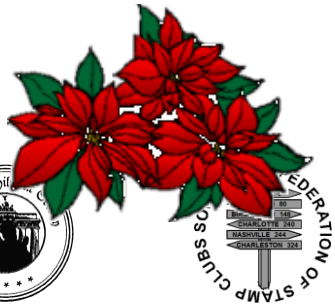
December 2010



American Philatelic
Society Chapter 597
www.stamps.org



Germany Philatelic
Society Chapter 15
www.gps.nu



Southeast Federation
of Stamp Clubs
www.stampclubs.com



www.stampclubs.com/huntsville/index.htm

This newsletter is published monthly by the Huntsville Philatelic Club. Meetings are held on the First and Third Tuesdays of every month at 7:00 p.m. at the Fern Bell Recreation Center, 107 Sanders Road SW. Visitors are always welcome.

MEETING CALENDAR

Dec. 7 Wade Saadi's 1847 Issue Exhibit – Second half

Dec. 21 Philatelic Auction Night

All regular club meetings begin at 7:00 pm unless otherwise noted. Auction sellers are asked to arrive 15 minutes early to allow for viewing of auction lots.

CLUB OFFICERS

President: Heinrich Hahn hhahn256@comcast.net
Vice Pres: Ray Pietruszka pietrj@mindspring.com
Treasurer: Mike O'Reilly mcoreilly@yahoo.com
Secretary: Arthur Cole hpc-stamps@att.net
Directors: Dave Nicolas (past president),
Kathy Campbell, Bob Adams, Don Hill, and Fred Muhl

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Huntsville Philatelic Club - P O Box 4384
Huntsville, AL 35815-4384

Annual dues are \$12.00 per individual and \$3.00 per additional family member. Dues are prorated for new members and renewals are payable in January.

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SOUTHEAST FEDERATION OF STAMP CLUBS

The Southeast Federation of Stamp Clubs is an alliance of eighteen stamp clubs and three philatelic societies in eight states. The Federation's web site is a great source for information about stamp collecting activities in the Southeast region. Please visit www.stampclubs.com

STAMP CLUB NEWS

- At November's meeting **Fred Muhl** was winner of the one page exhibit with his Turkish Trains exhibit.
- Also featured at November's meeting was a presentation by **Ray Pietruszka** on Plate Number Coil (PNC) collecting.
- The second half of Wade Saadi's 1847 issue exhibit CD presentation will be viewed on Dec. 7th.
- Our next one page exhibit will be February 1, 2011. The topic will be Valentine. As usual, any definition of that topic is welcome to be entered.

HUNTSPEX 2011 NEWS

44TH ANNUAL HUNTSVILLE PHILATELIC EXHIBITION AND BOURSE

- Dates: June 4-5 at the Bevill Center & Hotel
- Theme: 50th Anniversary of America's First Manned Space Flight (May 5, 1961, Mercury-Redstone 3, Freedom 7, 15m-28s, Alan B. Shepard, Jr.)
- Events: 11 Dealer Stamp Bourse
60 frame Philatelic Exhibition
Awards Dinner at the Soldatenstube

SOUTHEAST REGION STAMP SHOWS

November 20-21 **FALL STAMP SHOW 2010**
Stamp Dealers Association of Georgia, The Mansour Center, 995 Roswell Street, Marietta. Contact Kim Conti, cc1999@bellsouth.net; 770-426-6504.

February 12-13 **ALAPEX 2011**
Birmingham Philatelic Society, Bessemer Civic Center, 1130 Ninth Ave., SW, Bessemer. Contact Robert Hamill at 205-823-7364, or Chuck Donaldson at 204-410-8383, mcbayerbob@bellsouth.net

CANADIAN POW MAIL FROM JAPAN IN WWII

John Burnett

In October 1941, as war clouds gathered in the Pacific, Canada sent the Winnipeg Grenadiers and the Royal Rifles of Canada to reinforce the British garrison at Hong Kong. This group was known as "Force C". On December 25, 1941, 1683 members of Force C were taken prisoner of war when Hong Kong fell to the Japanese. Mail to and from these prisoners is very scarce.

In the European theater of operations during WWII, the Red Cross had set up lines of communications with the axis powers and was following up on monitoring POW care and treatment. Both Germany and Italy had signed the Geneva Convention of 1929 on the proper and ethical treatment of POW's.

Japan was not a signatory of the 1929 convention. With the outbreak of hostilities in the Pacific, the Japanese Government and the Japanese Red Cross blocked all attempts by the International Red Cross to oversee the treatment of prisoners, including delivery of their mail.

By 1942 the Japanese occupied a massive expanse of territory in the Pacific. Its camps held thousands of prisoners from many allied forces, many civilian internees and diplomatic personnel as well.

The Red Cross tried to initiate mail service to Japanese held prisoners in a similar manner to that established in Europe. The Japanese Minister of War would not agree citing "transportation difficulties," and the inability (or unwillingness) of the Japanese to assure the parties that the mail and parcels would get to their addressees. Figure 1 shows one of the very few POW postcards that did make it from Japan to Canada. Being held at camp 5, Niigata, near Tokyo this post card is addressed to Stratford Ontario and it has been heavily handled.

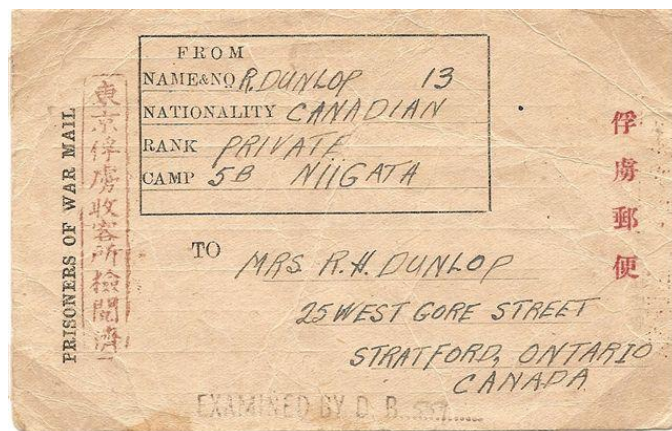
Looking at the card the column of printed red Japanese characters, on the right, reads "prisoner mail" and the characters in the boxed maroon letters reads "Tokyo Prisoner Accommodation Inspection"

Across the bottom you can also see the Canadian censor office mark, "EXAMINED BY DB 559". The card does not carry a date but it can be assumed to be early in the war as Japan lost its routes to the west quiet early. I asked a friend who is very knowledgeable of WWII postal history just how this card would have traveled to Canada? It's quite a story.

Mail from Japan went north across the Sea of Japan, through occupied Korea, and either through occupied China or north through Harbin to connect with the Trans Siberian Railway. There it traveled to the Caspian Sea, then south by ship to Teheran, Iran, overland to Cairo, Egypt, via sea to Great Britain and finally Trans Atlantic, through submarine infested waters to Canada.

With a postal route like that it is easy to see why very little mail actually made it to Canada.

My friend also said that a lot of mail was never put in the system by the Japanese and most POW's were handed their post cards and letters as they were liberated from the camps. Most just threw them away because they were going home and didn't need a reminder of being a POW; another reason these letters and post cards are so scarce.



YOUR PHILATELIC VOCABULARY

This is the first in an ongoing series of philatelic definitions that will appear in club newsletters. The source of information is a book entitled "The Stamp Collectors Encyclopedia" by R.J. Sutton published by Bonanza Books, 1959. All copyrighted material reproduced in this series is within the limitations of the doctrine of fair use, specifically for nonprofit scholarship, educational, and research purposes.

A on the stamps of:

- **Columbia:** The capital letter "A" has three distinct meanings. Inscribed on the early registration stamps it stands for "Anotación". As an overprint on the SCADTA semi-official airmails it is a control letter indicating the stamp is a consular overprint sold in Germany. Overprinted on the airmail issue of 1950 -51 it stands for AVIANCA, an airline
- **South Australia:** The "A" overprint indicates department use by the Government Architect.
- **Watermarks:** The capital "A" occurs as two watermarks; "A" surrounded by the Imperial Crown was a standard watermark of Australia from 1913 to 1926. An outline letter (initial of Amic, the papermaker) was the watermark in the one-lira issue of Modena, 1852.

A.E.F. - Afrique Equatoriale Francaise (French Equatorial Africa)

A.G. - Overprinted on stamps of South Australia for official use in the Attorney general's department.