



"The Postage Stamp is Our World"

The

Volunteer State

Philatelic Gazette



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CHAPTER 0431

Great Britain - The Penny Black

By Tom Tribke

The post office of Great Britain as a state monopoly dates from the time of Queen Elizabeth I, though we are told that it was not fully established until 1609. It was in the reign of another of England's great queens, Victoria, that a further postal innovation was established, namely, postage was prepaid by the use of what was then described as a "label"—now known as a postage stamp.

On November 9, 1837, the young queen visited London for the first time since her accession to the throne. It was Lord Mayor's day and for this occasion a special medal was struck bearing on the obverse a striking portrait of the eighteen-year-old queen. This portrait and medal was the work of William Wyon, the chief engraver of the mint. Less than three years later this portrait was used as a model for the world's first postage stamp, the one penny black of 1840.

It was possibly due to a pamphlet published by sir Roland hill in 1837 that the penny postage act was passed and received royal assent on august 17, 1839. In the London times for September 6, 1839, an invitation was extended the general public by the lords of the treasury to offer suggestions or proposals as to the manner in which the stamp could be best brought into use. Such proposals had to be sent on or before October 15th and the points which the lords considered of greatest importance were:

1. The convenience as regards public use.
2. The security from forgery.
3. The facility of being checked and distinguished in the examination at the post office which of necessity had to be rapid.
4. The expense of the production and circulation of the stamps.

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THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Summer is already over and we're a month into Fall. It seems like 2009 has just flown by. I hope everyone has done OK so far this year. Only a few more months and we'll be looking forward to 2010.

Things to look forward to:

- 1) Higher postal rates (they'll never go down again)
- 2) a new Congress (please)
- 3) more stamp shows (hey!)
- 4) a new year (hopefully a better one)
- 5) gas prices (up, down, right, left - who knows)
- 6) the economy (your guesses are as good as mine)
- 7) 23 stamp club meetings!!! :>)

Matt Benward, President NPS

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* STAMP CLUB NEWS *

Nashville Stamp Show 2009

Our annual stamp show was held this year at The Music Valley Event Center located at 2416 Music Valley Drive, Suite #144 near Opryland Hotel. This is the same location as last it was last year. I must thank everyone who helped make this year's show a success. You have did a great job! Second, I must thank the staff of the Valley Expo for working so hard to get the venue ready. Lastly, to all the collectors attending our show - we hope you had lots of fun!!!

Tommy Burnett passes away

Tommy Burnett passed away at age 67 on September 16. He was a club member for many years. He attended club meeting when he could and usually came to our annual stamp show. Usually he helped Tom with the publicity for our show. He collected general US and revenue stamps. He was elected to the Tennessee State House of Representatives at age 28 in 1970. Mr. Burnett served as House Majority Leader under then Speaker Ned McWherter for six years. A condolence card was sent in September by club.

Marie Farmer out of the hospital

Marie Farmer got out of the hospital last week and is doing well. She is staying with her son and hopefully will be back at club meetings soon!

New Members

Bill Edwards
Frank Yost
Marge Janiak
Harriet Cates

Articles for the newsletter

I could use articles of any length. Please contact me at mbenward@aol.com. Thanks!

The Volunteer State
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Mark Block First Vice-President
David Bodkin Second Vice-President
Wesley Lepter Jr. Vice-President
Tom Tribke Secretary
Bob Picirilli Treasurer
Marie Farmer Delegate-at-Large

Meetings: Second and Fourth Mondays of each month. Buy and swap at 5:30 p.m., Business meeting a 6:30.m., and Program at 6:45 p.m.

Meetings are held at the Madison Branch Library, 610 South Gallatin Road, Nashville, Tennessee 37216.

Kids under 17 get a FREE stamp packet at their first attendance. Ages 6 and up are WELCOME!

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The Nashville Philatelic Society is a non-profit organization.

Nashville Philatelic Society

Minutes Review for March 2009 – August 2009

The NPS held its 3/9/09 meeting at the Madison Branch Library with Matt Benward presiding. Eleven members and three guests were present. Minutes of the 2/9/09 and 2/23/09 meetings were read and approved. Dave Bodkin won the door prize. James Grimm's name was drawn for the Participation Award, but he wasn't present to win. Forthcoming new issues and stamp shows were reviewed. It was mentioned that a new postal rate would go into effect on May 12, 2009. Reports were presented from the Phone, Show and Stamp committees. Matt advised that he believed that Nancy Roberson had died – possibly in December 2008. Donations were received for the Stamps Committee from Matt Benward and Mark Block. Thank you! Matt mentioned that there were now 22 dealers committed for our Stamp Show. The business session was then adjourned for an APS slide show on "Errors, Freaks and Oddities".

The NPS had its 3/23/09 meeting at the Madison Library with Matt Benward presiding. Sixteen members and three guests were present. Minutes of the 3/9/09 meeting were read and approved with corrections. Marie Farmer won the door prize. Dave Bodkin won the Participation Award. Forthcoming stamps and stamp shows were discussed. It was announced that new Duck Stamp would be first presented at the Bass Pro Shop in Nashville. Reports were presented from the Phone, Show and Stamp committees. Matt thanked everyone who helped with setup and takedown of the Show. Tom Tribke mentioned that he had a supply of Stamp Show covers for sale. A preliminary treasurer's report indicated that the 2009 Stamp Show had a small loss of money. The business session was then adjourned for the monthly auction.

The NPS had its 4/13/09 meeting at the Madison Branch Library with Matt Benward presiding. Seven members and two guests were present. Minutes of the 3/23/09 meeting were read and approved. Nick Munn won the door prize. Mark Thompson's name was drawn for the Participation Award, but he wasn't present to win. Forthcoming new issues and stamp shows were reviewed. Reports were presented from the Phone and Stamp committees. Bob Picirilli distributed the Treasurer's report for the first quarter 2009 and the 2009 Show that was reviewed and approved. The business session was then adjourned for an APS slide program on "1861 – A Year of Change".

The NPS held its 4/27/09 meeting at the Madison Library with Matt Benward presiding. Seventeen members and two guests were present. Minutes of the 4/13/09 meeting were read and approved. Bob Picirilli won the door prize. Len Goodin's name was drawn for the Participation Award, but he wasn't present to win. Bill Edwards and Frank Yost's applications for NPS membership received first reading. Forthcoming new issues and stamp shows were reviewed. Reports were presented from the Phone and Stamp committees. Donations were received for the Stamps Committee from Mrs. Swift and Robert Hall. Thank you! Matt asked for 2010 Show theme suggestions. The business session was then adjourned for the monthly auction.

The NPS had its 5/11/09 meeting at the Madison Branch Library with Matt Benward presiding. Seven members and two guests were present. Minutes of the 4/27/09 meeting were read and approved. Mark Thompson won the door prize. Randal Coble's name was drawn for the Participation Award, but he wasn't present to win. Bill Edwards and Frank Yost's applications for NPS membership received second readings and they were approved and welcomed to NPS membership. The new postal rate change beginning tomorrow was discussed. Forthcoming new issues and stamp shows were reviewed. Reports were presented from the Phone and Stamp committees. The business session then adjourned for an APS Slide Program on "The Columbian Exposition".

The NPS held its 5/26/09 meeting (Held on Tuesday due to Memorial Day) at the Madison Branch Library with Matt Benward presiding. Fourteen members and two guests were present. Minutes of the 5/11/09 meeting were read and approved. Bill Vance won the door prize. Nick Munn won the Participation Award. Forthcoming new issues and stamp shows were reviewed. Reports were presented from the Phone, and Stamp committees. Randal Coble donated stamps to the Stamp Committee. Thank you! Matt again asked for 2010 Show theme suggestions. The business session then adjourned for the monthly auction.

Nashville Philatelic Society

Minutes Review for June 2009 – September 2009

The NPS had its 6/8/09 meeting at the Piccadilly Cafeteria with Matt Benward presiding. Thirteen members and three guests were present. Minutes of the 5/26/09 meeting were read and approved. Greg Adkins won the door prize. Karl Schwabe won the Participation Award. Marge Janiak's application for NPS membership received first reading. Forthcoming new issues and stamp shows were reviewed. Reports were presented from the Phone and Stamp committees. Matt asked for additional recommendations for the 2010 NPS Stamp Show theme. The business session then adjourned for a talk on the "Life as a Stamp Dealer" by Frank Yost.

The NPS held its 6/22/09 meeting at the Madison Branch Library with Matt Benward presiding. Twelve members and two guests were present. Minutes of the 6/8/09 meeting were read and approved. Dave Bodkin won the door prize. Dave Grimes won the Participation Award. Marge Janiak's application for NPS membership received second reading and she was approved and welcomed to NPS membership. Forthcoming new issues and stamp shows were reviewed. It was announced that new Duck Stamp First Day Ceremony would be held at the Opry Mills Bass Pro Shop in Nashville at 10:00am on 6/26/2009. Reports were presented from the Phone and Stamp committees. Matt asked for additional recommendations for the 2010 NPS Stamp Show theme. The business session was then adjourned for the monthly auction.

The NPS had its 7/13/09 meeting at the Madison Branch Library with Matt Benward presiding. Seven members and one guest were present. Minutes of the 6/22/09 meeting were read and approved. Karl Schwabe won the door prize. Mark Thompson's name was drawn for the Participation Award, but he wasn't present to win. Forthcoming new issues and stamp shows were reviewed. Bill Vance reported on the recent Murfreesboro Coin and Stamp show. Reports were presented from the Phone, Show and Stamp committees. Frank Yost donated stamps to the Stamp Committee. Thank you! Matt asked for additional recommendations for the 2010 Stamp Show theme. The business session was then adjourned for a presentation by Matt on "Modern Postal Cards".

The NPS had its 7/27/09 meeting at the Madison Branch Library with Matt Benward presiding. Seventeen members and two guests were present. Minutes of the 7/13/09 meeting were read and approved. Dave Bodkin won the door prize. Tom Grimes won the Participation Award. Forthcoming new issues and stamp shows were reviewed. Reports were presented from the Phone and Stamp committees. Bob Picirilli provided the Treasurer's report for the second quarter 2009 that was reviewed and approved by the NPS membership. Matt asked for additional recommendations for the 2010 Stamp Show theme. Matt also advised that the first meeting in August 2009 would be an "Ice Cream Social" and that he was planning a "Stamp Collectors Cookout" at his home on the last Saturday in August (8/29). The business session was then adjourned for the monthly auction.

The NPS held its 8/10/09 meeting at the Madison Branch Library with Matt Benward presiding. Fifteen members and four guests were present. Minutes of the 7/27/09 meeting were read and approved. Nick Munn won the door prize. Matt Benward won the Participation Award. Forthcoming new issues and stamp shows were reviewed. Reports were presented from the Phone and Stamp committees. Matt asked again for theme recommendations for the 2009 Nashville Stamp Show. Matt distributed a handout on "Guam Guard Mail". The business session was then adjourned for the "Ice Cream Social".

The NPS had its 8/24/09 meeting at the Madison Branch Library with Matt Benward presiding. Seventeen members and three guests were present. Minutes of the 8/10/09 meeting were read and approved. Virginia Smith won the door prize. Doug Lepter's name was drawn for the Participation Award, but he wasn't present to win. Harriet Cates' application for NPS membership received first reading. Forthcoming new issues and stamp shows were reviewed. Bill Vance reviewed the recent New Orleans Stamp Show. Reports were presented from the Phone and Stamp committees. Matt asked again for theme recommendations for the 2010 Nashville Stamp Show. Matt reminded meeting members about the "Stamp Collectors Cookout" at his home on the last Saturday at 12:00 Noon on August (8/29). The business session was then adjourned for the monthly auction.

Great Britain - The Penny Black

In reply to this invitation upward of 2,700 communications were received. Though valuable suggestions were offered by several, no single reply was deemed sufficient in itself. Four were selected from this number whose suggestions appeared to evince the greatest ingenuity. These were submitted by a Mr. Cheverton, Mr. Henry Cole, Mr. C. Whiting and Messrs. Perkins, Bacon & company.

Mr. Cole, who had been quite active in promoting the adoption of the penny postage, was now appointed to assist sir Roland hill at the treasury, in working out the details of this system. In his "fifty years Of public life", published in 1884, he writes: "but my principal work, in fact, became the superintendence of the production of the three forms of stamps which it had been resolved to adopt; namely, an adhesive stamp to be attached to any letters, envelopes and a stamp to be embossed upon paper of any kind sent to the stamp office."

It is the "adhesive stamp to be attached to any letter" in which we are interested. Mr. Cole approached Messrs. Perkins, Bacon & Petch (afterwards Perkins, bacon & co.) Bank note engravers of London and on December 3, 1839, received their quotation. They proposed to engrave steel dies, transfer them to the necessary plates and print them in the quantities wanted at eight pence per thousand stamps, exclusive of paper which was to be furnished by the treasury. As it was expected that the quantity ordered would be large, no charge was to be made for the dies and plates. The engravers stated that they could commence printing a month after receiving the contract and could print 41,600 "labels" per day from each press and could double the amount, if necessary, by working at night. In passing, it may be of interest to note that Jacob Perkins, the founder of this English firm, was a native of Massachusetts, where he had practiced his profession of engraver for some years.

This firm finally received the contract for the new stamps and the intaglio method of engraving was used. The design was taken from a water color drawing submitted by sir Roland Hill, showing a portrait of the queen facing the left as a center motif.
Key persons in the development of the penny black

Sir Roland Hill (knighted 1860)

Is acknowledged the perfecter, if not the creator, of the adhesive postage stamp.

Henry Corbould

Was the artist commissioned by Perkins, bacon and Petch to make the final drawings of the stamp. The basic design is credited to Roland Hill -- Corbould doing only the proportioning and laying out of the head, labels, and stars and engine turning.

William Wyon

Designed the medal from which the head was taken.

Charles and Frederick Heath

Hand engraved the head. Charles heath was the engraver to the king, but it is probable that the engraving was actually done by his son, Frederick, whose detail engraving excelled that of his father.

Jacob Perkins

Provided the method of reproduction - die, roller & plate - according to letters of patent granted Jacob Perkins. Produced by the firm of Perkins, Bacon and Petch.

Joshua Butters Bacon

Engine-turned the background from a stock roller suggested by Mr. Bacon of the engraving firm, the work being done on a "rose" engine used by engravers of the period.

The famous penny black remained in use from may 6, 1840 to February 10, 1841, just about nine months. Then the color was changed to red. It had been found that the black stamp could not be canceled satisfactorily.

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Great Britain - The Penny Black

The stamps were line engraved on white paper, watermarked with a small crown and issued imperforate in sheets of 240 stamps (12 horizontal by 20 vertical) which sold at exactly 1£ per sheet. Because each stamp is lettered, it is easy to locate any stamp in the sheet. The first row is lettered a-a, a-b, a-c, through a-l. Second row is lettered b-a, b-b, b-c, through b-l. Third row begins with c-a, fourth row d-a, etc. In the four sheet margins were to be found the notation: "place the labels above the address and towards the left hand side of the letter. In wetting the back be careful not to remove the cement".

Earlier stamps were canceled with a bright red cancelation, but this was later changed to black. The earliest known cover with black cancelation is dated August 31, 1840. The usual cancelation is the Maltese cross in red or black, but this is also known in blue, magenta, orange and yellow. Town cancelations in black and yellow exist, but the former is scarce and the latter is a rarity.

Single used copies of the penny black are fairly common, but those with four margins are not to be readily found. Horizontal pairs and strips are uncommon, while vertical pairs and multiples are much scarcer. Used blocks can almost be classed as rare, while unused blocks, though a little more plentiful, command larger prices.



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