

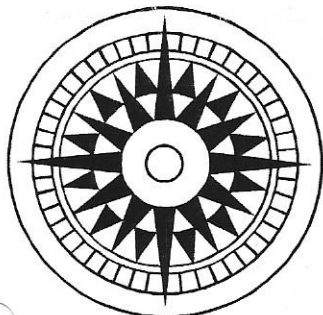
SOS Signal

July 2001

Whole Number 16

Important News

- ◆ Information on new issues seems to be slow in coming, so please be patient.
- ◆ We have a new advertiser from Scotland; please see the top of page 7.
- ◆ Why not send me a favorite cover I can reproduce in the Signal with your byline? It will be scanned and returned promptly.



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A FAVORITE SOS COVER

By Joyce Storms

Have you ever had a cover "talk" to you? The cover with this article "shouted" at me for several reasons when I first saw it. Like many of us, I suppose, we started collecting stamps of our native land, than as both my parents came from Sweden its stamps also appealed to me. As time went on other topics came on the scene. There were "joint issues" and, of course, SOS. (If I may put a plug in here, this cover came from one of our *SOS Signal* advertisers, Les Rosen).

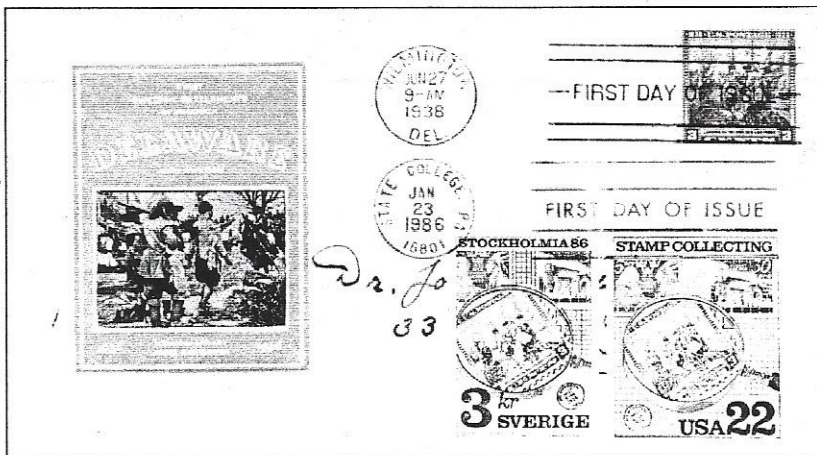
There are five stamps involved: US #836 and #2200, then Sweden #1587 on the cover. On both US #2200 and Sweden #1587 are shown US #836 and Sweden #268 and #271.

The three stamps on the joint issue were all released in 1938, the US on June 27 and the Swedish on April 8. They were issued for the 300th anniversary of the landing of the Swedish and Finnish settlers in Delaware, near what is now Wilmington. Long a favorite of mine (probably the Swedish American connection) the 27th of June was also my mother's birthday.

The stamps was designed by Victor McCloskey, based on an oil painting by Stanley M. Arthurs. The painting is entitled "The Landing of the Swedes" and

measures 76½ by 71 inches; it was acquired by the University of Delaware in 1967. It depicts Peter Minuit greeting the Indians and in the background the ship "Kalmar Nyckel" which brought the settlers to America.

Peter Minuit is a name we think of in connection with the purchase of what is now Manhattan. During the 30 years



war, he had fled his native Germany to Holland to escape death, as he was a Protestant. In Amsterdam he was employed by a trading company and made several voyages to the East Indies and South America, very successful ones. The Dutch West India Company made him a director-general of their colony, New Netherland. He arrived in the new world in May 1626. Minuit remained at this post until 1631, and shortly after became the founder and first director of New Sweden, a Swedish colony at the lower end of the Delaware River. In 1638 while on a voyage to the West Indies try-

(Continued on page 5)

The Ecstasy of Self-Importing

By Martin Hirschbühl

Once upon a time, when I started collecting, I bought all the SOS I could find at my local stamp dealer. He had his prices and I paid them, sometimes with a tear-stained face. Occasionally I had to spend \$5 or \$10 for a set just to get one 50¢ SOS out of it.

What could I do? Only complete sets were available, but I only needed single stamps. I widened my horizon by placing mail orders here and there, but the difficult situation of obtaining only the single value type A SOS contained in a set didn't seem to improve.

In 1978, the famous Mauritius stamp "Ball & Invitation of Lady Gomm" was issued together with another SOS, both part of a multi-valued definitive set. My dealer wanted around \$30 for that set. This time I disagreed and decided to wait. But it was Mauritius and I was red-hot for that stamp! And so, for the first time, I tried to purchase something direct from the country. My *World Almanac* said their capital is called Port Louis; I had never heard of this place before. Well, I dropped a few lines, enclosed \$3 and addressed the letter to: *Philatelic Bureau, GPO, Port Louis, Mauritius, Indian Ocean*. Funny enough, this guess turned out to be their correct address. A few weeks later an exotic-looking letter arrived with several of the requested stamps enclosed and affixed; afterward I regaled different SOS collectors with it, and all that for a few bucks plus postage! Mauritius re-issued the 1.25R value in 1983, the 5 Rupees in 1985, both with the year printed below. Once again, it was easy to get them from the island.

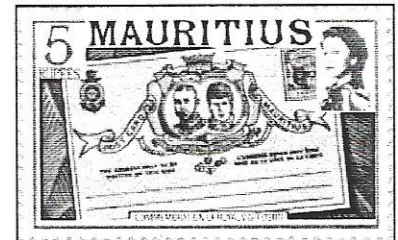
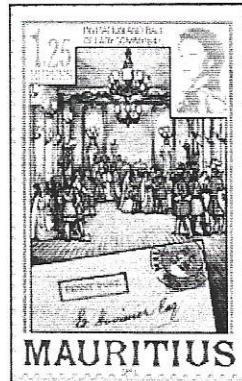
Back in the late seventies, Belize (the former British Honduras) issued two small values as SOS out of their Coronation issue and a Rowland Hill sheet with a British Concorde stamp. After my good experience, I tried it again only to find out that their capital's name had changed from Belmopan to Belize City. Nevertheless, my order reached them and was fulfilled with colonial accurateness.

And so did Guyana, the former British Guiana. Beginning in 1981, they began to overprint their SOS by the dozens. Our Michel-Rundschau reported most of them with great delay, but the Philatelic Bureau supplied me with all. It's true that Guyana became a philatelic pirate, but they served me very well indeed.

Around 1982, the African country Benin (formerly Dahomey) issued several hard-to-get overprints on some SOS. A registered letter with a

French banknote did the job: they supplied all together, using one of each as postage! Unfortunately, I gave away that gorgeous letter long ago.

In 1983, I first contacted the former Portuguese colony Guinea-Bissau because of their Rowland Hill



Mauritius stamps from the definitive set issued March 12, 1978 showing Mauritius Scott #1 and 94.

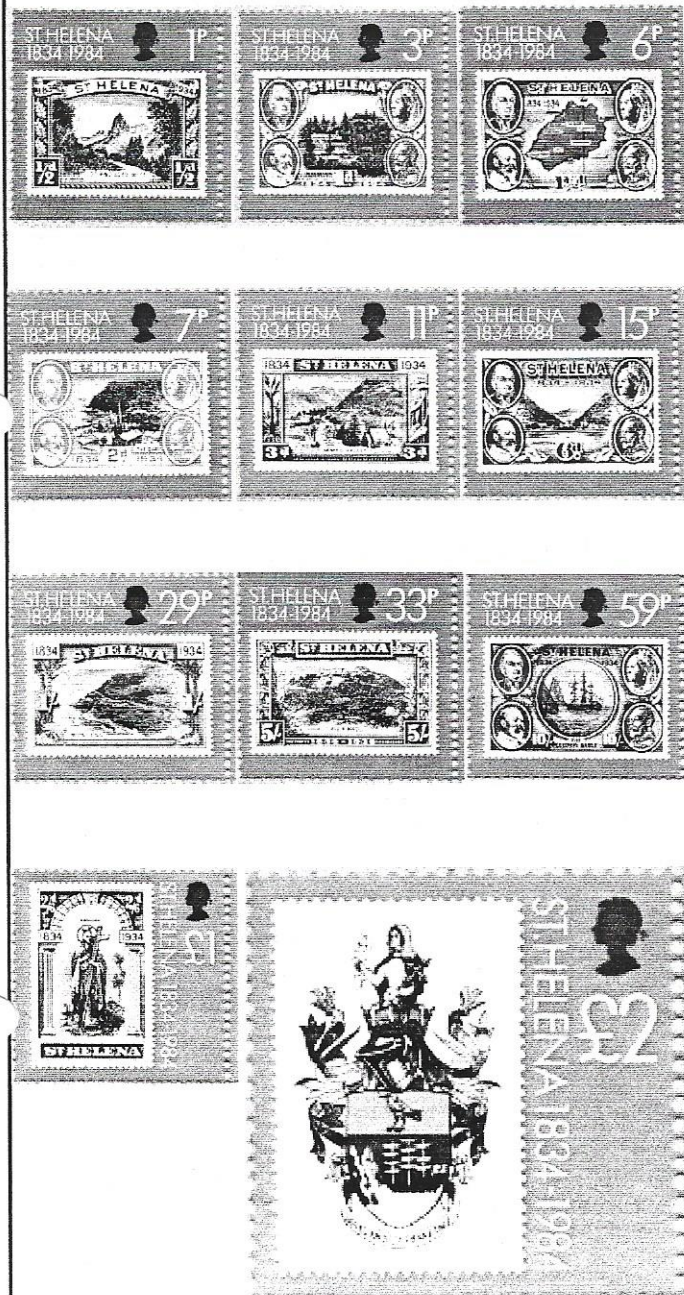
stamp. I only enclosed one dollar and did not expect to get any answer. But to my surprise, a registered letter arrived from there containing a long handwritten but commercial-looking invoice. It declared the \$1 equivalent to some inflationary thousands of their currency. That why they were able to supply me with some full sets of "Persons" including the requested Rowland Hill stamp. My credit allowed them to supply me with some Rowland Hill issues of 1979, both perforated and imperforate, including sets of souvenir sheets previously unknown to me. The whole thing had a catalog 'value' of around \$100, received for one lousy dollar! I guess this is my biggest bargain so far.

In 1984 the African country Togo celebrated their Centenary of relations with Germany. The friendship was so deep they had to issue 36 values, four of them being SOS. I was successful with the single values, but the similar sheets (36 stamps with three SOS) were only available as a full set: a big bundle of useless and heavy paper for my duplicates album.

The same year, Napoleon's place of last exile, the island of St. Helena, sold me their "150th Anniversary of the Colony" set without the £2 high value, which is not a type A SOS. (*Editor's note: the £2 is a type SY with a pseudo stamp; see the illustration at right*). They could supply me as well with the same issue from Ascension and Tristan da Cunha. They informed me about the reason for the long delay of the shipment; St. Helena is not linked to airmail services; the only physical contact with the outside world is a ship that arrives from Durban every six

The Ecstasy of Self-Importing

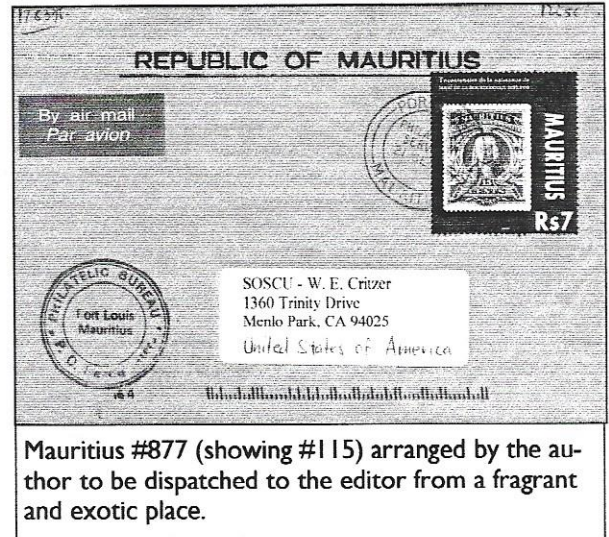
By Martin Hirschbühl



St. Helena "150th Anniversary of the Colony" set with the £2 high value enlarged. This set was issued January 3, 1984 and is Scott #399-409. The stamps shown are the Centenary issue of the Colony, Scott #101-110 which were issued April 23, 1934. The £2 value the author successfully avoided is actually quite a handsome stamp; colored blue and gold with small red accents. it shows the new coat of arms.

(Continued from page 2)

weeks. A happy quiet island! I could go on with such stories all day long!



Mauritius #877 (showing #115) arranged by the author to be dispatched to the editor from a fragrant and exotic place.

But self-importing is not always successful: failures and defrauds sometimes happen. I've lost all the money (\$20) sent to Cuba, disregarding the registration. They just remained silent. But watch out Mr. Castro, you'll be sorry some day! Sometimes I get into revolutions or civil wars: my letters to Zaire in 1992 and Costa Rica and Sudan in 1997 were not answered.

Nowadays, I'm linked to many SOS sources and I'm somewhat well experienced. If I continue with such activities, my dealer will go broke, I guess? Some of you might think my way of operating is kind of ineffective and time wasting. Well, maybe you're right, but when I look back on my importer's career, the remaining impressions are mostly positive. In fact, it has become a major part of my SOS fun. Buying only at dealers would be disappointing to me. What I want is the fragrance of far-distant places and a touch of the exotic in my SOS album. That's why I carry on the hunt for the single SOS. I invite you to do the same; believe me, you'll find it's worthwhile!

Author Martin Hirschbühl is a resident of Benglen, Switzerland and an enthusiastic member of SOSCC. This is his second article for the SOS Signal

Philatelic Echoes of Empire: Cameos from The Gambia

By Richard Howard

The 'Cameo Heads' of The Gambia must rank as one of the most eye-catching of the British Empire's classic stamp issues, with its embossed, featureless profile of Queen Victoria, unique for the times, and with an interesting postal history background.

When the territory approached the Colonial Office with a request for their own stamp in 1868, quoting the limit of £100 set aside for the purpose, De la Rue printers were contacted, who replied that it would be impossible to supply at that figure, quoting £300 by return which The Gambia authority felt unable to pay. They then approached the government printing works in Berlin who had produced stamps for Heligoland on behalf of the British authority and who quoted only £36!

When De la Rue were again approached they pointed out that non-security paper had been used for the Heligoland stamps which had resulted in forgeries, and seeing their virtual monopoly for the production of colonial stamps being threatened without some compromise, finally offered to supply at the quoted figure imperforate stamps on unwatermarked paper, to which the British authority agreed with some misgivings, though it was decreed that all subsequent issues should be on official security paper.

The first imperforate two values appeared in 1869, followed by perforate issues in the same design which continued to be used throughout the rest of the Victorian period until replaced by the standard colonial 'key type' design thirty years later.

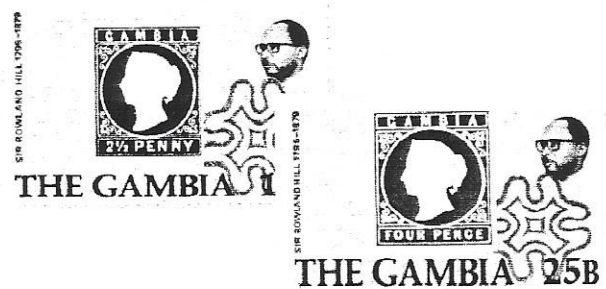
It is interesting to speculate that the designer of The Gambia 'Cameo Heads' was influenced by the Heligoland connection in view of the fact that the two issues were the only ones of the period to use the embossed sculpted Victorian profile.

Following the two value initial imperforate issue, longer perforate sets in the same design were issued in 1880 and 1886, many of which are still so modestly catalogued that any collector can afford to enhance his collection with these classic stamps.

Subsequently the centenary of the Cameos was commemorated in 1969 by a set of three commemoratives which reproduce the two original imperforate four penny and six penny stamps which are actually embossed like the original issue.



Then in 1979 for the Rowland Hill Death Centenary two values of a four value stamp on stamp issued featured Cameos; number 1, the four penny imperforate on the 25b value, together with a two and a half penny perforate value from 1883 on the 10b value.



A FAVORITE SOS COVER

By Joyce Storms

(Continued from page 1)

ing to open trade relations there, he lost his life in a hurricane.

The *Kalmar Nyckel* was owned by the Swedes and built by the Dutch, a three-masted armed warship known as a pinnace. She sailed from Gothenburg, Sweden in November 1637 with 24 permanent settlers. The settlers came from the four countries of Sweden, Finland, Holland and Germany, arriving here in March 1638. Bringing the total up to 25 was "The Black Swede", a freedman from the Caribbean. They founded Fort Christina and built Finnish style log cabins. Two years later the *Kalmar Nyckel* returned with women and children and found all 25 alive and well. The ship made at least four round trip crossings of the Atlantic, more than any other 'settlers' ship. She was lost in the late 1600's. As a post script to this story a new *Kalmar Nyckel* sails. In 1986 the *Kalmar Nyckel* Foundation was established to design, build and launch a replica of the original ship at a shipyard next to its original landing site. The ship was launched in September 1997 and commissioned in May of 1999.

The two stamps from 1986, US #2200 and Sweden #1587, are part of a set of four se-tenant stamps issued in booklet form by both nations. There were two reason behind their issuance; to promote stamp collecting and STOCKHOLMIA '86. Another reason the cover caught my eye is that January 23 is my daughter-in-laws birthday. This particular stamp was designed by Eva Jern. The same three stamps appear on both issues, US #836 and Sweden #268 and #271. As we have already covered the US stamp, let's go on.

The Swedish stamps were part of a set of five picturing different aspects of the 300th anniversary. #268 shows Johann Printz and an Indian chief. I have been unable to determine if the Indian chief shown is a specific person or a generic portrait. Johann Printz von Buchau was a German nobleman. He arrived in the New Sweden Colony on February 15, 1643 as its new governor and continued there until 1654. While Printz was on a trip to Europe the Dutch, who apparently became jealous of the colony's success, annexed it to New Netherland. In turn, in 1664, the English annexed both the Dutch and Swedish colonies.

The last stamp we want to look at is Sweden #271 showing us Holy Trinity Church, commonly called Old Swedes Church in Wilmington, Delaware. It was built a little more than 300 years ago and consecrated on Trinity Sunday 1699. It is the oldest church building standing as built and in use for its original purpose, the wor-

ship of God. When the settlers arrived one of their first concerns was the building of a fort. It was called Fort Christina after the Queen of Sweden and services were held there until 1655. With the Dutch and English raids, services were held in different locations and with scattered settlers and many of the Dutch colonists joining in, as they had no clergyman of their own.

In 1667 a small wooden church building was



The 1986 US-Sweden joint issue of four se-tenant stamps



erected near the mouth of the Christina River and across the stream from the old fort. The minister, a Reverend Lars Lock, became the last Swedish minister until his death in 1688. It wasn't until 1697 that three new ministers arrived from Sweden and in July of that year it was decided to build a new church. One of the church's wardens donated the land and in 1698 Holy Trinity was built.

References:

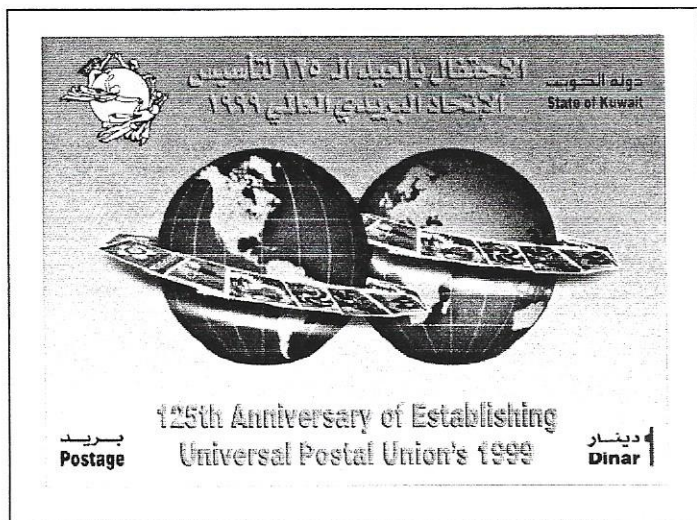
Scott Postage Stamp Catalogs
 Various Internet Sites:
 The Kalmar Nyckel Foundation
 Norbyhus
 University of Delaware
 German Heritage and Advent Lutheran Church

Joyce Storms is a former vice-president of the SOSCC. She resides in Branchville, New Jersey and this is her second article for the SOS Signal.

New Issues edited by Lou Guadagno

(new on list = *)

Date	Country	Values	Stamp Reproduced	Reason for Issue	Scott #
04 06 01	Canada	* 47c	Canada #1	150th Anniversary, Canadian Post	To come
01 20 01	Czech Republic	* 5.40k	Czechoslovakia #474-detail	Traditions in Czech Stamp Production	To come
04 01 01	Denmark	* 4 - 10.25k	Denmark #2	150th Anniversary, First Stamp of Denmark	To come
01 22 01	Gibraltar	* 4 x 30p	GB #1, 2	Death Centenary, Queen Victoria	To come
12 18 00	Greece	* 200,650d	Crete #69, 71	Centenary, Stamp of the Cretan Government	1976
01 01 01	Indonesia	* 800-4000r	SY Stamps on Envelope	Promote Post Office (4v, 1 sos)	1923-6
01 22 01	Isle of Man	* 22-52p	GB #1	Death Centenary QV, (6v, 1 sos)	889-94
03 31 01	Italy	* 3 x 800l	#1, Venetia, Tuscany, Sardinia	150th Anniv., Stamps of Lombardy-Venetia	To come
00 00 00	Japan	* 80y	Japan #2598-9	The 20th Century (stamp six of ten in sheet)	2703i
00 00 00	Kuwait	* 25-150 fils	Stamps of Six Countries	The 6th GCC Countries Joint Stamps Exhibit	To come
00 00 00	Kuwait	* 1 Dinar	Stamps of Six Countries	The 6th GCC Countries Joint Stamps Exh. (S/S)	To come
03 05 01	Liechtenstein	* 2 x 70rp	SY Stamps on Envelope	Scratch off Greetings (2v, 1 sos)	1201-2
12 21 00	Mexico	* 3p	Nine Mexican Stamps	The 20th Century (stamp three of five in sheet)	2196c
00 00 00	Monaco	* 9f	Monaco #1433	Grand Prix 2000 Stamp Show	To come
12 02 00	Monaco	* 6.5f	Italy - Sardinia #1, 2, 3	150th Anniversary, Stamps of Sardinia	To come
00 00 00	Mongolia	* 2.50t	Mongolia #881, 1194	20th Anniv., Intellectual Property Org.	To come
01 31 01	Niue	* 70c-\$3.00	Niue #1, 34	Niue Stamp Centenary	To come
00 00 00	Poland	* 80gr	Poland #2501	60th Anniversary, Polish Workers' Party	To come
00 12 30	Viet Nam	* 400d	Viet Nam #621	Centenary FIP -FIAP	To come
00 00 00	Yugoslavia	* 10z	Stamps on Postcard	Zeppelin Flight to Buenos Aires Anniversary	To come



Clockwise:
Kuwait
Denmark
Niue
Isle of Man



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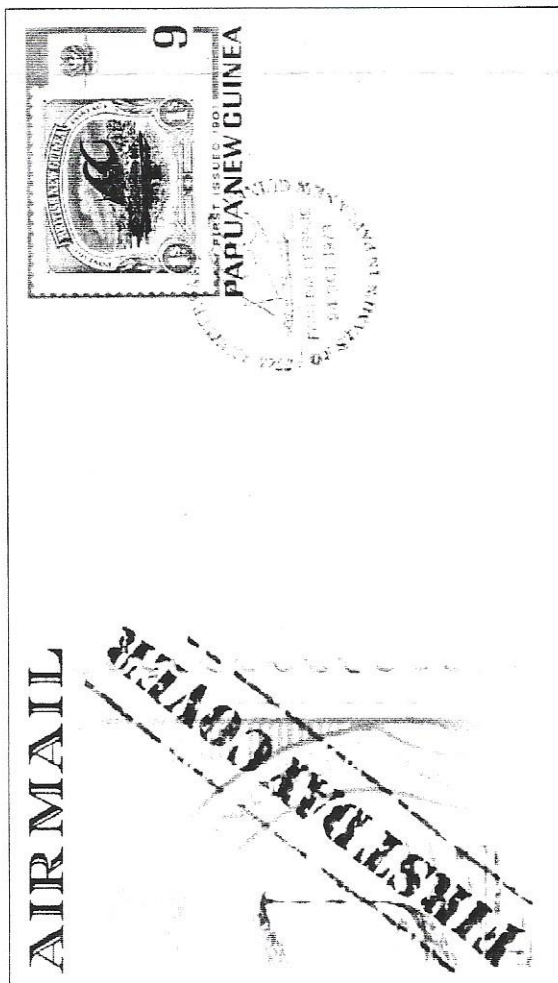
By Bill Critzer

Terry Canning of Marion, Iowa was one of the first to respond to the lifetime membership offer. My apologies to Terry for omitting him from the list of life members in April's issue.

Wes Shellen's "Cinderellas of the Penny Black" article in the last issue brought from Boris Politziner a copy of a rather large list of these items prepared by Stan Garnet many years ago. Wes has updated this list with recently identified items and you can obtain the four page list postpaid from the Secretary-Treasurer for \$1 in US currency.

Shortly after I became editor in 1997, Hans Wright of Otley, England donated his archive of past *SOS Signal* issues to the club. Then Lou Guadagno filled in a few early issues missing from Hans's material. As a life member of the Western Philatelic Library, I brought to the librarian's attention the existence of this complete material. It has now been photocopied on acid free paper and will be permanently bound in hard cover volumes. It took three reams of paper to do this job for forty years of *SOS Signal* issues!

The Western Philatelic Library has a new philatelic reference operation which will provide answers to specific questions requiring research. To access this go to internet address www.fwpl.org. This is *the* place to go for your specific questions. They offer 48 hour maximum turnaround, but it depends on the availability of volunteers who do the research and respond. They prefer email contacts and responses. There is no charge for this service. The library is located in Sunnyvale, California and has over 20,000 philatelic books and periodicals.

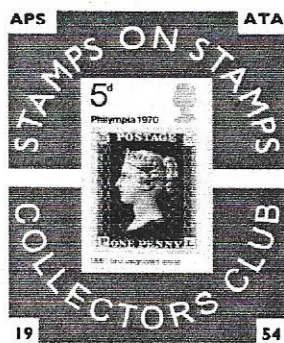


Try a Pacific Canoe for a different vacation.
#392 of October 24, 1973 showing Papua New Guinea #7 and issued for the
75th Anniversary of Stamps in Papua New Guinea.

STAMPS ON STAMPS COLLECTORS CLUB

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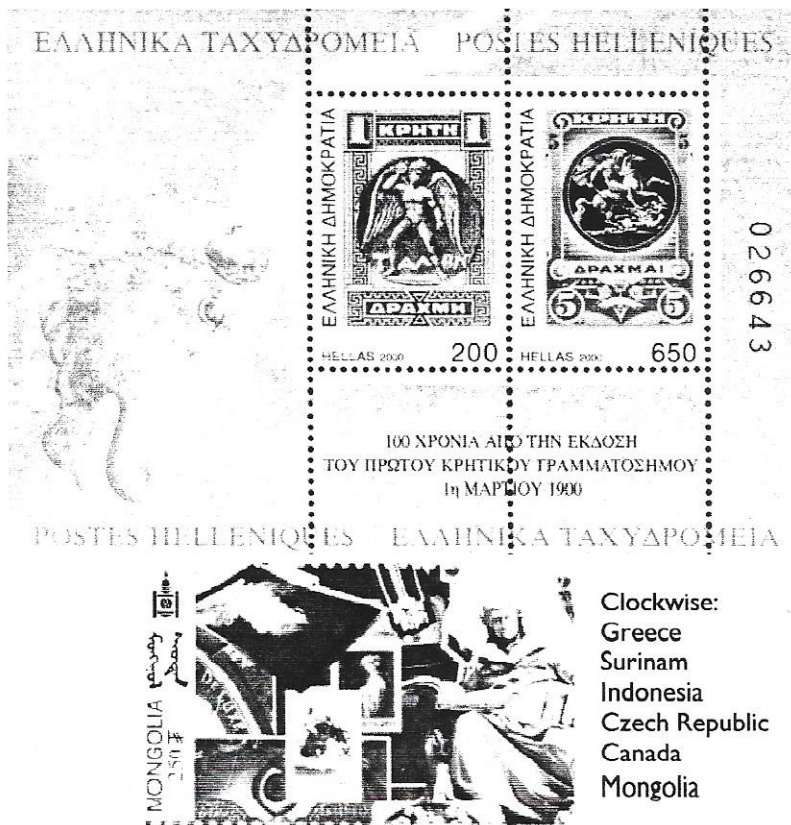
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More New Issues

By Lou Guadagno



Clockwise:
Greece
Surinam
Indonesia
Czech Republic
Canada
Mongolia

