

WILLAMETTE STAMP & TONGS

THE NEWSLETTER OF SALEM STAMP SOCIETY



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CELEBRATING 90 YEARS 1933-2023

September 2023

WEBSITE www.salemstampsociety.org

August Meeting.

Despite being a very hot night about 25 members attended the meeting in person and on Zoom. We were treated to a very interesting presentation on "Buffalo Soldiers" by Steve Staton. He is a retired army sergeant and has made an extensive study of this subject. Steve brought along a wealth of supporting material for his program including philatelic exhibits. The nickname "Buffalo Soldiers" was given to regiments formed during the 19th century to serve on the western frontier that primarily comprised of African American troops.

For this program he focused on the dramatic and eventful life of Sgt. Emanuel Stance who was the first in his regiment to be awarded the Medal of Honor. This was made in recognition of his brave and reckless conduct in skirmishes with native Americans.

Bob Reynolds reports that 38 out of the 60 lots on the Bid Board were sold for a total of \$366 along with \$48 collected from raffle ticket sales.

September Meeting.

The main event for our meeting on Wednesday 20th September will be a Members' Swap Night. This is a great chance to bring your surplus items to sell or swap and learn about the collections of fellow members. Bob Reynolds will also be holding what he calls a "Flea Market" with deeply discounted stamps and country collections from material acquired over the past few years. It looks like there will be some real bargains on offer so please come prepared!

During the September meeting George Struble will give a short Frame of the Month talk on "Making Mailing Fun".

DUES!

There are still a number of people that have not yet paid there dues for 2023. We have reviewed membership status for non-payment and contacting those who have not paid. If you wish to remain a member please see Alan at the next meeting or send a check to Salem Stamp Society, PO Box 202, Salem, OR 97308.

New Members.

We welcome Craig Stowers from Corvallis to the society. His collecting interests are US pre 1940 (mint & used), Washington/Franklins singles and coils, vending, affixing and perforation machines. We also welcome Richard Reid from Salem to the club, he is new to stamp collecting and would I'm sure find your friendly help and advice useful.

Salem Stamp Society

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From the President.

STAMPEX is upon us. It will take place on Sunday September 17th at the Scottish Rite Hall before our next meeting. Be sure to stop by and bring a friend, check out the dealers' new stock. Spend some time at the club booth and volunteer to help set up or tear down. It will all be fun!

I have been thinking of ways to increase individual participation at our meetings. There is an interesting "Letter to the Editor" in the recent issue of the "American Philatelist" (page 696). The subject of the letter is "Spicing up club meetings". I'd like to incorporate some of the ideas presented in the letter. If you get a chance, read it and let me know what you think.

Save the date!!! Wednesday December 6th is our club's annual Christmas dinner and party. There will be an extra and very special surprise Raffle Prize—more details soon!

A big welcome to Craig Stowers and Richard, our newest members.

Mike Braet

Club & Show News.

Salem Stamp Society Fall STAMPEX.

Our show is on **Sunday 17th September** at the Scottish Rite Center on Commercial St in S. Salem. Doors open at 10am, entrance is free and there will be door prizes. Gary Tiffin says that there will be a full complement of dealers so please mark your calendars and help make the show another great success.

SEAPEX.

SEAPEX is being held this year as a dealer bourse only event. It takes place on September 8-9 at the Tukwila Community Center, 12424 42nd Ave. S. in Tukwila, WA 98168.

Salem Coin & Stamp Show.

This annual show is being held on December 2-3 at the Salem Fairgrounds, Columbia Hall venue. As in previous years this promises to be a lively event with many coin and stamp dealers present. Salem Stamp Society will have a table at the show. More details will be published later in the year and Danny Bisgaard can provide further information.

THE CATHY BIKERDIKE "BLINDIANA" COLLECTION

Cathy Bickerdike passed away in 2020 and was a long time active member of the Salem Stamp Society. She inherited her passion for stamp collection from her father and then spent the rest of her life



enjoying the hobby, but with a purpose beyond collecting. Her 14 volume collection is the result of Cathy's many years of collecting materials, particularly stamps from around the world, all relating to challenges to vision, hearing, ambulation, and other factors that limit people in their daily living routines.

The collection features stamps and other materials all of which are related to many disabilities beyond blindness, beyond the work of Helen Keller, Louis Braille, and others who led the way in creating pathways toward normal living.

While these 14 volumes are organized by topic, they are also organized by stamps from countries honoring and recognizing not only those who are well known, including historical figures who suffered from various maladies that they overcame as they became famous from their contributions to medicine, government, the military, education, and other walks of life.

Denise Foltz of Turner, Oregon who is the heir to the estate of Cathy Bickerdike asked Salem Stamp Society for their advice on what best to do with Cathy's collection. After much research and discussion the collection was donated to the Helen Keller Institute for the Deaf and Blind in Talladega, Alabama. Denise and this Society are very pleased and grateful that the collection becomes part of likely most appropriate home in the United States for this very unique collection. Thanks is also due to Scott McCallum who leads the Washington State School for the Blind and was instrumental in assisting in locating the most appropriate home for this collection.

Gary Tiffin

[Marc Dochez wrote a very nice remembrance of Cathy Bickerdike in the July 2020 edition of the Willamette Stamp & Tongs]

A Personal View on the Stamps of Bophutatswana.

Sheila Case

It is my privilege to share thoughts on a short-lived territory listed in Scott as *South Africa Bophutatswana* (Bo-poo-tat-swana)..

Tswana is the root term relating to a group of peaceful people of Bantu origin. One such person is a Motswana, two or more are Batswana, the language they speak is Setswana and half of them live in Botswana, independent since 1966 and routinely touted as Africa's most successful democracy.

For 17 years (1977 to 1994) a portion of Botswana's long border with South Africa became a boundary between two territories harboring people who were one linguistically and culturally. Half of them were in Botswana (land of the Tswana people) and half in Bophutatswana (gathering of the Tswana), a Bantustan or native reserve created by the South African government to solve a problem.

In 1960 the Afrikaners (Dutch-speaking whites) seized power from the British and started, slowly but surely, re-creating the land to comply with their distinctive philosophy of Apartheid (separateness) in which the whites owned the farming land, the mines and other sources of wealth, and the blacks were, by decree of God, their labourers living separately. The trouble was that there were so many blacks (about 10 million) and jobs for only a portion of them. What to do with the remainder? "Homelands" were planned, each to accommodate a single tribal group where workers surplus to needs were forced to reside.



Fig.1 Bophutatswana, non-contiguous enclaves

Of the ten Homelands, Bophutatswana was the most controversial. The Afrikaners had to cede 6 separate areas to the Tswana, including one, Thaba 'Nchu, way down South near Lesotho, widely separated from the others. Figure 1 is a map showing how weird the geography of Bophutatswana was...in fact, given that the "independence" was a fiction, almost everything about Bophutatswana was whacky!

Of these Homelands, 4 reached a point of development at which postage stamps were issued in their name. These were: Bophutatswana, Transkei, Venda and Ciskei.



Figure 2: Independence Commemoratives of Bophuthatswana; Dove of Peace, National symbol (leopard), Coat of Arms (note leopards rampant) and National Flag. The other Homelands used the same topics on their Independence sets but replaced the Dove of Peace with a photo of the First President.

In Botswana we had our own Stamp Advisory Committee driving the philosophy of stamp issues, and reflecting the concerns of the citizens. In BOP the stamps were planned, designed, produced and marketed by INTERSAPA, the South African stamp-issuing authority, based in Pretoria. INTERSAPA had a stable of artists, designing stamps inscribed with the names of the 4 Homelands and destined for the international market.

I will introduce: the definitive sets, the commemoratives issues, some topics of special interest, and the range of products.

The First Definitive Set (1977) (see Figure 3) is, to me, of considerable interest. At first sight it looks like a set of animal stamps. However, the images are slightly cartoonised, and not by chance, because these are only secondarily animal stamps. Their designs represent the *totems* of the clans of Batswana. Every person, every individual, for the

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purposes related to tribal life, is a member of a totem clan. Each citizen of BOP could see his family represented on one of these stamps.



Figure 3 The first definitive issue of Bophutatswana

Totems are ranked in order of precedence; the Leopard totem outranks all others, therefore the first president of BOP was the chief of the highest ranked totem group, the Leopard, which then became the national animal. In Botswana, the highest totem represented was the *phuti*, a kind of duiker. Sir Seretse Khama, the first president, and his successors, were its chiefs.

The second definitive series (October 1985) was originally planned as a set of 16 stamps, *Bophutatswana Industries*. BOP had a large population, relocated (forcibly in some instances) to arid land unsuitable for intensive farming; part of the deal was the development of factory sites and establishment of industries. It is not clear how many of these industries became reality, or if they have survived after the re-incorporation of BOP into South Africa (1994), but the stamps, and accompanying blurb presented an optimistic view.

Black workers are shown in textile production, car parts manufacture, men's clothing, printing and other industries serving the development of South Africa as well as that of Bophutatswana. (See Figure 4)

The complete set is difficult to collect, having been released on 7 different dates. It is in the nature of postal tariffs that prices rise...this set had been prepared early in 1984 and due for release in 1985, but the new internal mail rate of 11c was not available from stamps already in circulation, so an 11c value for the 1985 series was produced, and this 'added value' actually precedes the issue of the full set. Soon a 12c stamp was needed, again, the added stamp is premature, dated April 1985.



Figure 4: The second Definitive series of BOP

The planned set of 16 came out in October 1985. Additions were needed as that pesky rate kept climbing, 14c in April '86, 16c in April '87, 18c in January '89 and finally in August '90 a strip of 5 stamps each of face value 21c, these being theoretically part of the same set, having a similar industrial picture, but with noticeable difference in overall stamp design (see Figure 5).

The commemorative stamps fall into three categories: 1 those introducing the 'nation' of Bophutatswana, as viewed from the whites-only headquarters INTERSAPA; 2 those designated mainly for the international philatelic market and finally 3 those in which the Tswana people celebrate their rich cultural heritage.



Figure 5: Strip of 5 x 21c, Bus Assembly, added Aug 1990. Note different handling of country name.

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1. The nation of Bophutatswana is celebrated by its Independence stamps, consisting of the series of totem definitives and the set of 4 commemoratives as already described followed by Independence anniversaries after one, five and ten years. Industries, agriculture and medical services also feature. Noteworthy is the 1979 set on platinum mining, not for the impact of the designs, but for the political significance. (See Figure 6) When guidelines for defining Homelands territories were issued, there was no escaping the fact that, despite the Afrikaners success in retaining for themselves the gold and diamond mines, they were forced to cede the world's most productive platinum mine to the Tswana people.



Figure 6: The 4c, value from the 1979 set showing a Tswana miner and molten platinum being poured, the other 3 values show uses of platinum in modern industry

2. The international market was well-served with regular issues on popular themes. Some international anniversaries were depicted, including the 75th anniversary of Powered Flight (19778) of which I illustrate the two stamps in Figure 7.



Figure 7: Wright Brothers issue, both stamps

Birds, animals, plants of the region are well-represented; I have selected for illustration the (1983) *Pilanesberg Game Reserve* set, 4 very eye-catching animal designs (Fig 8); for Birds I offer the 10c Kori Bustard from the 1983 *Veld Birds*, (Fig 9) and from the plants sets, the *Acacias* of 1992, to be illustrated later. under the heading Range of Products. The programme was filled out with two series: *Easter stamps*, 10 issues in all,

and *History of the Telephone*, 4 issues. This policy, series not really relate to the 'nation' was repeated in other Homelands; Transkei did several sets on *Fishing Flies* and *Pioneers of Medicine*, and Venda had 4 sets on *The History of Writing*.



Figure 8: Pilanesberg set, 1 of 4 stamps



Figure 9: Veld Birds set, 1 of 4 stamps

3. Finally, stamps related directly to the Tswana people...only 3 commemorative sets in 17 years. (For perspective, in the same 17 years Botswana issued 9 sets celebrating history and culture of their people.) In 1984, an attractive set on *Traditional Houses* included this aerial view (Fig. 10). It is well chosen, showing that the hut is only part of the home; the enclosed area, lolwapa, is where daily life is lived out. In 1979, shortly after Independence, came a set popular in Bophuthatswana, *The Production of Sorghum Beer* (Fig 11). Sorghum beer is an essential component of all major celebrations such as weddings. It is hand-brewed by the women, and arrives at the event with some ceremony, the assembled crowd chanting and ululating as a procession of women bearing large containers on their heads moves into the scene.



Figure 10: Traditional houses, set of 4



Figure 11: Production of Sorghum beer, 4 stamps

INTERSAPA's range of products for Bophuthatswana is matched exactly by its products for the other 3 Homelands. For each issue there were 4 routine offerings, mint set, cancelled set, FDC and Collector's sheet (a 'page' with the stamps attached and cancelled, with notes on the significance of the designs.)

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The Collector's Sheets did not sell well, and in 1983 this product was replaced by Maximum Cards, one for each stamp in the set. Maximum cards were produced for all commemorative sets until 1994, by which time just over 100 had been issued. A fifth product was added to the range; starting in 1986, with the set on *Historic Thaba 'Nchu*, occasional issues also included a Philatelic Foundation Miniature Sheet; These were issued not by INTERSAPA, but by the Philatelic Foundation of South Africa, their purpose, to raise funds contributing to the expenses of National Stamp Exhibitions.

I choose to illustrate the range of products firstly with the FDC and maximum cards of the *Acacias* set of 1992. (Figure 12) and secondly with the Historic Thaba 'Nchu issue from 1986.



Fig. 12(a): Range of Products - Acacias set FDC

The choice is both personal and philatelic. Firstly, the artist, Gillian Condy; I worked with her designs for a number of issues on Botswana plants. She is not a pretty-picture artist, but a professional illustrator, specializing in plants of Southern Africa.

Next, still on the personal choice, I searched through every stamp and philatelic product of Bophutatswana, and the most striking image I found was the supplementary image on this FDC...those devilish thorns tell the story of the Tswana habitat. They are perfectly engineered to cause maximum damage for minimum contact, and we all ran afoul of them sooner or later. Then, for the philatelic design, I note these things: first, the languages on the FDC are English and Afrikaans, where is the Setswana? Second, the artist has chosen to illustrate the plants in the seed-pod stage, rather than

the more expected flowering stage. Why? I think it is in order to show the thorns. Finally, the design chosen by the artist presents a less familiar view of acacias, which are known for their flowers. This is why, I suspect, INTERSAPA chose to use the floral images on the maximum cards; this turns out to be pleasing to the collector of plants on stamps, giving two views of the Acacia at the same time.



Fig. 12(b): Range of products - Acacia set Maximum Cards (1 of set of 4)

Thaba 'Nchu is one of the wierdnesses of Bophutatswana; refer again to the map showing non-contiguous enclaves, and right down near Lesotho you will see a small patch of BOP; this is Thaba 'Nchu. It is historic in foundation (1833, before the first Afrikaners penetrated into the region) and for its good relationships with incoming settlers. Thaba'Nchu had been granted, in 1913, special status a a native reserve within the Orange Free State

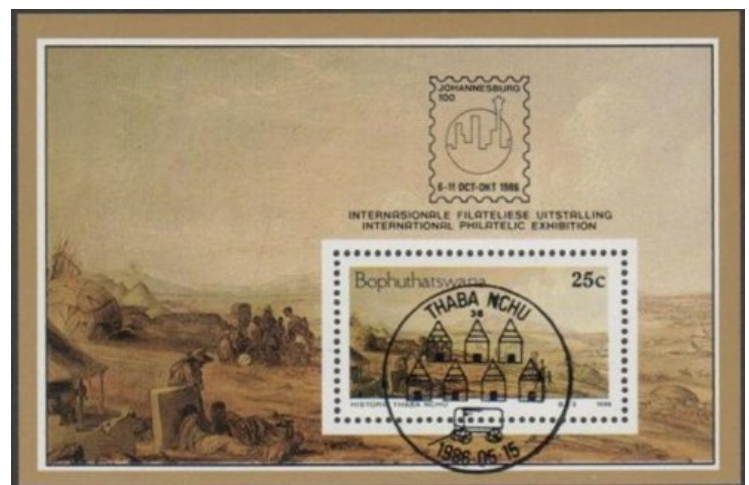


Figure 13: Range of products -1986 issue, Historic Thaba 'Nchu, Philatelic Foundation M/S

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Special Mentions. I conclude with three references of National and International interest. To return to the matter of language on the stamps; it is patronizing and humiliating to inscribe the philatelic products in two languages of conquerors (and oppressors). The Tswana nation should at least have its language added as a third option. For example, the *Anti-Smoking Campaign* of 1980 (Figure 14), one very striking stamp, was sold in a collectors' sheet, folded, with the message on the outside Smoking is Dangerous to your Health, in Afrikaans and English...this for a campaign directed towards the residents of the Homeland. Egregious!



Figure 14: Anti-Smoking campaign of 1980

Next, a mention must be made of the issue of 1982, 75th Anniversary of Boy Scouts. This is, of course, tied to a major event of South African history, the siege of Mafeking. The stamps honour

Lord Baden-Powell and various aspects of modern scouting.

Mafeking is, of course, in the territory ceded to the Tswana, but they prefer the spelling which reflects their own pronunciation of the name. The special cancellation is therefore inscribed Mafikeng. Mafikeng/Mafeking, though 65 miles south of the border with Bechuanaland, was the capital of the Bechuanaland Protectorate for 75 years, until the transition to Independence in 1966. (See Figure 15).

Finally, a quirk and a missed opportunity. The quirk: Homelands stamps were designed and issued for profit of INTERSAPA at a time when South Africa had strict foreign currency controls, money could not be readily moved across international borders. Stamp collectors, and others, soon found that they could buy Homelands stamps from INTERSAPA, sell them overseas at a substantial discount, and acquire dollars or GB pounds. This means that Homelands stamps are well represented in the international market, and complete collections are within reach, to an extent not matched by other small territories of fleeting existence.

And, for the missed opportunity, it should be noted that BOP incorporated in one of its enclaves the settlement of Taung. No stamp was issued for the Taung Child, but this child will be remembered in some circles long after even the most famous of

South African citizens...the child's skull, excavated from a cave in Taung, is the oldest recorded hominid, the earliest of our ancestors yet identified and described (Wikipedia) as *the most important anthropological find of the 20th Century*.

[Editor's note: We are very grateful to SSS member Sheila Case for this article. She worked in Botswana for a number of years before retiring to Oregon. Sheila was instrumental in setting up and administering the philatelic services for Botswana.]



Figure 15: 1982 Issue celebrating the 75th Anniversary of Boy Scouts

Salem Stamp Society

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Meetings

**All meetings held at the Scottish Rite Center, Commercial St., Salem at 7pm
Doors open at 6pm**

Wednesday 20th September.

Program: Members' Swap Night, come along to "Buy, Sell & Trade"

Wednesday 18th October

Program: "Confederate Mail" given by Worth Mathewson; Bid Board.

Wednesday 15th November.

Society AGM and election of Officers and Board Members for 2024.

Wednesday 6th December.

Annual Christmas Dinner & Party

Pacific NW Stamp Shows and Bourses 2023

Local Events

Salem Stamp Society Fall STAMPEX on Sunday 17th September at the Scottish Rite Center, Commercial St, S. Salem.

SEAPEX September 8—9, 2023, Tukwila Community Center, Tukwila, WA 98168

Salem Coin & Stamp Show, December 2-3 at Salem Fairgrounds, Columbia Hall

Repetitive Events:

**Oregon Stamp Society: Rose City Stamp Fair -
2nd Saturday of the month at OSS clubhouse
4828 NE 33rd Ave., Portland 9:00am-3:00 pm
Collectors Corner - 4th Saturday of the month
at OSS clubhouse 9:00 am.- 3:00 pm**

2023-4 Major Shows:

PIPEX 2024, May 3, 4 & 5 2024 at The Monarch Hotel and Conference Center, 12566 SE 93rd Ave.. Clackamas, OR 97015