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Today's Collector  
New Opportunities

How to Talk Stamps to Non-Collectors



En40 #242 1ctv Wmk 152 used sideways Mint Original Gum est \$75-125 Scarce stamp.

These issues had watermarks going across the 10 stamps in a row.

But with this stamp, along with a few others, the paper was turned to place the overprint letter upside down.

It is the story that intrigues the listener, not just the stamp.

One of my sons-in-law, recently retired at 62, said he had not yet found anything to fill his time. No, I didn't say "Why don't you collect stamps?" The reason is that stamps or other hobbies have to bite you. Once bitten, the subject is compelled to collect. We, collectors of stamps or patrons of different hobbies, had to be captured to become enthusiastic about our hobbies. Once captured, the opportunity to mentor or support them in their new hobby arises. Unless the hobby has given them the desire to continue, it will not work; but if it has, they will be all-in. Now, the way to attract people to our hobby of philately is to be open to the interests that were important to us many years ago. A good story to tell might prompt them to collect, or may just have them tell their wife on the way home, "Bubba is such a bore." What we think is a good stamp story may be, to others, as fun as watching paint dry.



During the U.S. Civil War in 1861, efforts to raise Patriotism in the Northern states were supported.

Envelopes featuring symbols in support of the war became popular among letter senders.

The above cover is one of those sent during this period. It makes a great story to tell.

Okay, the way I actually have had people become interested in what I collect depends on something I might have lying around in my office. Everyone will always ask you a question: "What's the most expensive stamp you have?" Of course, we collectors will not have the 1918 upside-down Jenny airplane on the 24-cent stamp. But we might have a meaningful stamp on a cover that means more to us than the dollar value. I would pull out a USA album I have and turn to a patriotic cover used during the Civil War, featuring some neat cover art, and to one of the 1861 stamp issues. Alternatively, I might have a cover from Paris, France, sent in 1873 to New York, canceled with one of the Parisian Stars with the post office Number. You have many interesting stories that are the stamps and covers themselves.



This cover, sent in 1873 from Paris, has a star cancel with the number 26 for one of the post offices.

It was sent to New York via Liverpool, England, on a Steamship crossing the Atlantic.

The stamps used are of high value. Back postmarks show delivery.

What a great story this tells to someone who knows little about such a stamp.

The best advice is to let the stamps or covers do the talking for you. Think of what you say as only the small sentences you see under the pictures in the stories.

Enjoy!

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