

Dumb & Dumber

Michael Rogers

Before I sold my company, Michael Rogers Inc which specialized in Chinese & Asian Philately, we probably fielded more research requests than the American Philatelic Society Library, and happy to do so. Doing so fulfilled our "Knowledge, Integrity & Service" motto.

Valuation followed identification. Often the collector or dealer would have a choice item extraneous to his holdings and consign it to a MRI public auction. One hand washes the other, so to speak.

Some years ago, I received a phone call from another dealer who described a China 1923 Bandit Post cover. He knew he had something beyond the norm because it had a distinctive red 50 cents label tied to the cover front. In response to his asking price of \$500, I opined that he ought to consign it to my public auction where the cover would probably realize \$5000. I had two aggressive buyers for Chinese postal history who would go mad over this cover!

Though I had known Phil as a bourse dealer with more than a passing interest in Chinese philately, the often times I had seen him at shows, I could not remember seeing postal history there, vs FDCs and the like.

I had been friends with him for well over twenty years. Nice guy.

Months passed by. That Phil's Bandit Post cover didn't come my way was no more than a whisper of a thought the first week. Then in the mail, there on the front cover of another auction house was a China Bandit Post cover. Only reason that I thought it was Phil's was the junk stamp on cover front was placed upside down.

So, I call Phil and asked whatever happened to the Bandit Post cover he offered me for \$500. "Oh, I gave it to a Hong Kong auction. They'll realize more money." I reminded him the only reason he knew it was valuable was through me. "So?" I asked him if he knew the word Chutzpah?

I told Phil I was taking him off my auction and mail sale catalogue mailing list. They cost my company \$200 yearly in printing and postage. Since he wasn't going to consign, and he was insulting me, he could get the knowledge from my website.

That made him mad! Told me I should continue sending the MRI catalogues, but I didn't see the point.

So much drama.

A few years back, I was taking a break at FLOREX, pouring through random dealers' one and two-dollar boxes. Low and behold, I found FIVE Bandit Post cards priced at two dollars a pop. I told the dealer to lay the cards aside and I would be right back. I returned with an auction contract and wrote them up in his name. These weren't as choice as what Phil had, yet still quite good. I believe they brought \$3,500.00.

A much better return to him than \$2 a pop!

[Provided by MR to ASDA magazine, March 2018]

Recent True-Life Experience

(A Multiple Choice **CONTEST**)

[Editor's note: This short interaction actually happened to a member of the CFSC recently. Submit your guess to the Editor by 8:15pm on May 3rd. Ties will be broken with a random draw for the \$10 door prize. An additional \$10 door prize will be awarded for correctly guessing the person who submitted this tale – again ties will be broken with a random draw.]

Which is correct?

This was a question asked of me recently at a friend's birthday party. It was a very special affair held at one of Mount Dora's best restaurants. About 60 people attended. There were four tables of guests and one for family in the middle of it all.



You said what?

My table was primarily made up of authors. Some were local and members of a local writers' group. Others were from afar, but also wrote.

One other person at our table did not write. He, like I, was married to a writer. He looked like he'd rather be having some terrible medical procedure -- than having to interact with the *writers*.

About half of the table did not know the other half. Much small talk and pleasantries occupied our time while waiting for lunch. The very nice woman across from me at the table started chatting with me. What's your name? Do you write? What do you do in your spare time?

I responded: "I collect stamps."

- A) She then went on about how she'd just finished reading books on the 1 penny British Guiana Magenta. How interesting it was. She is also planning to read a book on the Blue Mauritius 2 pence.
- B) Well, that answer dropped a ten-ton weight on the conversation. She asked if there was another "name" for stamp collecting. "Yes, philately". She then turned to speak with another guest at the table.
- C) She told me her husband collected stamps and she helped him soak and sort stamps he collected. A wonderful family diversion!
- D) Actually, she collected coins and was consumed to the point of asking, what was in my pocket.