

CFSC Member in APS Champion of Champions Show

Jim Pullin's exhibit, *American Sailing Packets 1818 – 1840*, qualified for the "World Series Champion of Champions" competition at the APS summer stamp show, in Sacramento, California, after receiving the Grand at OKPES, Oklahoma City October 2011. In addition the exhibit won the APS medal for "Pre 1900" exhibit and the APS Research Medal.



The "World Series Champion of Champions" competition includes grand award winners of the previous year's World Series of Philately shows. Gordon Eubanks' *First Federally Issued Postage Stamps* took the 2012 World Series Champion of Champions award. As a winner of this competition, he cannot show it competitively again in United States. However, Mr. Eubanks' other exhibit *The Imperf Issues of the U.S., 1851-1856*, also in the competition, will be a strong contender for next year's award.

Jim's exhibit displayed material included in his award winning book *North Atlantic Packets Departures and Arrivals 1818 – 1840*. In 2010 literature competitions, this book won four gold medals, a Grand and the APS Research medal. Also in 2010 The United States Philatelic Classics Society declared the book the best philatelic research and awarded Jim the 2011 Stanley B. Ashbrook Cup.

Stamp Show attendance overall was very good, although weak with collectors from the eastern United States. Dealers, many of them from west of the Mississippi River, offered collectors an opportunity to find good material not usually seen in this area. Anxious collectors kept them busy, and from all appearances, they returned home happy.

One of the most popular activities was "Stamps in the Attic." Families brought items that had been stashed away to learn if they possessed an unrecognized treasure. The line was long and stayed that way until the end of the show on Sunday.

APS shows reward philatelic collectors with opportunities to study superior exhibits, network with serious collectors and peruse quality dealers' stock. If you have not attended an APS show, put it on your calendar and into your budget. The APS winter show will be in Louisville, KY January 18-20, 2013 and the summer show will be in Milwaukee, WI August 9-11, 2013.

[Editor's Note: Jim has been an active member of the CFSC since September of 1990 (membership number 203), and has served on the BoD for 2 terms, plus holding the office of President from 2004 to 2005.]

Our First Postal Auction (Mail Sale)

I'd become a China dealer in one fell swoop in November of 1982, bidding in competition against two other dealers. Here I was, with a mammoth, specialized though heartily disorganized inventory of China from classics to new issues, mainland 1878-1949, PRC with liberation area (much non-Scott) and Taiwan -- Fully 29 cartons of stamps and postal history.

Right off the bat with my first price list, I learned the lesson not to rely upon Scott for specialized material. One guy crowed that because the "China C48 paste-up pair with the right stamp having an inverted surcharge" that I sold him for \$100 was one of only 10 known, he would have paid ten times as much. So many repeat orders for rare stamps made me wonder how to price them. And I had gobs of postal history which no catalogue identified or priced.

About this time I met an engaging fellow named Joe Cartafalsa who would drift in and out of my future. Joe's background was in postal history; he'd traveled extensively in Southeast Asia.

We released a postal auction dated August 31, 1984. "Postal" differs from "public" in that it's a clerical, not live person-to-person event. It's the same as a mail sale. This was before the Internet so bids were received by snail mail. Content was specialized China and also the Zeppelins + Airposts that I'd taken a professional interest in prior to becoming a China dealer. I had a swell stock of both.

Where we screwed up was in the presentation. The catalogue was a 5½" x 8½" size with 6 black and white photo plates. The printing company sized them 50% too small! The job was already paid for (we weren't given proofs ahead of delivery) and Linn's ads had announced the date so we went ahead and mailed them. Fortunately, most folks took the tiny photos in stride.

By the fifth postal auction in 1986, we adopted our 8½" x 11" format. China included a used block of six of the one cent Red Revenue which sold for \$57.50 and the 1949 UPU miniature sheet without overprint which sold for \$525.

James Kerr became my right hand man in 1986. Fluent in all the romance languages, plus Korean (!), Jim was one of the most knowledgeable philatelists I'd ever known. His contacts shepherded many collections our way.

Norman Townsend built a formidable China 1878-1949 collection. Because of his life long friendship with Jim, my company was chosen to offer the Townsend China collection in our first public auction. The "Dragon" Auction was held on January 9, 1988.

Jim and I flew up to Cleveland to meet with Norm and his charming wife, Marjory, to do the paperwork in person, and pick up the collection. Once we did the signing, the MRI insurance policy covered the material.

China at auction does not present well in collection or accumulation format because there's too much opportunity for good stuff to go unrecognized. What is overlooked by Scott may be of great interest to a specialist. When we describe a Chinese/Asian consignment, we'll usually disassemble it into as many lots as practical.

Star of that auction was the 1897 Small 2 cent double surcharge, both inverted, on a 3 cent red revenue. This sold for \$41,800. (Sc 79f /Chan 84f \$180,000) Norm and his wife had flown in for the auction. I hadn't told him of the strong bids received thus far or that there was a major collector on the floor. He was naturally tense. When the Small 2 cent double, both inverted Red Revenue was hammered down, Norm's first reaction was to embrace his wife. Then he looked my way with a striking thumb's up.

After the auction, all were invited to my home for kosher deli hors d'oeuvres. We knew renowned collectors would attend as did the Taiwanese Consul General, so the dilemma became what to serve that would delight the palette yet impress guests. The daughter of the Consul General proclaimed a knish "food of the gods." Mouth-watering pastrami and corned beef on Jewish rye bread with savory pickles, potato salad and chopped liver was a hit. What a great way to end a joyful day!

Julius Gerlach joined the company as an unparalleled writer of airpost material. Retiring as a Cleveland Heights, Ohio, pediatrician, Jake was driving south to the east coast of Florida, scouting for retirement property, when he stopped in for a visit. His ears perked up when I said I sure wish the company could continue with Airpost auctions but for the fact China/Asia was occupying all my time. Jake found an apartment nearby and befriended us all.

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