

SCANDINAVIAN COLLECTORS CLUB □ COLORADO CHAPTER 27
NOTIFICATION OF THE SATURDAY, APRIL 7, 2018 MEETING AT 10:00 AM
AT THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN PHILATELIC LIBRARY (RMPL)

Randy Nilson will give the feature presentation on “Wartime Censor Covers.” There will be the usual “**Show-and-Tell**” session, and members are urged to bring at least one item to the meeting to share! Jerry Eggleston will bring a selection of SCC Mart Books. As customary, coffee, bagels, and cream cheese spread will be provided.

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Summary of the Saturday, March 3, 2018 Meeting

President Eric Carlson called the meeting to order at 10:05 AM with 13 members in attendance. This meeting was our Chapter’s semi-annual members’ auction, so there was no “Show-and-Tell” session or Mart Books. Donuts and baked goods were available. **Announcements:** Eric mentioned that he and his wife Marge will be selling their home and moving into an assisted living facility soon. Roger Cichorz indicated that the Chapter Treasury had a large expenditure as we needed to reimburse Jerry Eggleston \$94.10 for his 2017 expenses in administering the SCC Mart Books. George Newland resigned from the Chapter, so we have 21 active members at present. John Sinski stopped by to announce RMPL will be closed next Saturday (March 10) afternoon in memory of RMPL volunteer and Board Member Bill Crabbs, who passed away earlier in the week, and so RMPL members could attend his funeral services that afternoon. John added that RMPL’s bulk lot auction scheduled for March 10 will be postponed until the following Saturday (March 17). **Auction:** Eric and Roger took turns as auctioneers and Jim Kilbane ably served as the lot recorder, keeping track of the lots sales both for buyers and sellers. The auction was a success with 46 of the 55 lots offered selling for \$497.25, earning \$47.13 for the Chapter Treasury via commissions and donations. The slight discrepancy of the earnings versus 10% commissions was due to the fact that no commissions were charged for one lot belonging to the SCC Library and the \$18 realization for Peter Bergh’s lot as he “donated” that money to the Chapter to cover future dues payments □ shown as a credit in the latest Treasurer’s Report that appears elsewhere in this Announcement. There were seven consignors and twelve successful buyers for this sale, in which some nice material changed hands. As usual, attendees seemed to have fun at and enjoyed the auction.

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Upcoming SCC Chapter 27 Meeting Topics for 2018

2018 meetings: Help fill up the three remaining month’s TBDs by volunteering to give a presentation so topics for the entire year appear in our future meeting notification/newsletters! As soon as possible, please contact Steve Nadler (**303-322-3624** or **schlomoX@msn.com**) or Eric Carlson (**303-694-4252** or **margeric@comcast.net**). Presentations can be talks on any subjects that interest you □ for example, why you chose a particular Scandinavian country’s stamps to collect, details on a particular stamp issue or aspect of postal history, narration for one of the SCC Library’s Audio-Visual programs, or just about any subject you want to share with your fellow members!

May 5: To be determined (TBD)

June 2: TBD

July-August: no meetings these two months □ annual potluck picnic instead (date and place TBD)

September 1: Roger Cichorz on “Research at the SCC Library”

October 6: semi-annual members’ auction

November 3: TBD

December: no meeting this month □ annual holiday potluck dinner instead (date and place TBD)

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Wanted: Contributions for publication in future Chapter 27 Newsletters. Anything: brief articles, collection and exhibit pages, color scans or photocopies of your favorite covers (preferably with brief explanatory captions), your questions for a “Questions and Answers” feature, Scandinavian humor, etc. Roger Cichorz, 3925 Longwood Ave., Boulder, CO 80305-

7233, **303-494-8361**, or **rcichorz@comcast.net**. Two nonphilatelic contributions from Paul Albright appear in this Announcement/Newsletter on Pages 2 and 4.

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S.C.C. Chapter 27 Treasurer's Report

\$1053.11 Previous Treasury Balance (2/20/18)*

+\$30.00 three membership dues payments
+\$47.13 commissions from the 3/3/18 members' auction
-\$94.10 reimbursement to Jerry Eggleston for Stamp Mart Expenses for Chapter 27
-10.81 baked goods for 3/3/18 meeting
-8.60 printing costs for 3/3/18 meeting notices, auction lot pages, and membership lists

\$1017.73 Current Treasury Balance (3/4/18)*

\$401.97 Cash on Hand (3/4/18)

* **\$615.76** was renewed in a 24-month Certificate of Deposit at the Elevations Credit Union, Boulder, CO (CD = 0.60% per annum interest of ~\$8.13 due 2/9/19)

Prepared by Roger Cichorz, 3/4/18

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Chapter 27 Members' Classified Advertisements

As a no-cost service to all Chapter 27 members, your "buy, sell, or trade" classified ads can appear in future Meeting Notifications. Submit your copy to or contact Roger at 303-494-8361 or rcichorz@comcast.net.

Wanted: Socked-on-the-nose Ålborg (Aalborg) and Denmark numeral "4" cancellations on stamps and stamps on piece, incoming and outgoing Ålborg covers/postal history, and other Ålborg-related items. Eugene Brink, 390 Quail Road, Branson, MO 65616, 417-336-1296, or geno4huskers@suddenlink.net.

Wanted: Iceland stamps with "Tollur" (revenue) cancellations: Scott #99, 115, 118, 130, 131, 134, 139, Parliament issues (#156-159 and #161-166), C1-2, C16, C17a, O44, O47, O48, and O52. Also multiples and on documents. I will pay premium prices over Scott and Facit valuations. Let me know what you have and your asking prices. Roger Cichorz, 303-494-8361, or rcichorz@comcast.net.

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Nordics Still Second Best in English

This article was originally published November 15, 2017 in *The Local*.

Scandinavians are among the world's best non-native English speakers, but the Dutch are better. The English Proficiency Index (EPI) from global language training company Education First (EF) again put Scandinavians behind the Netherlands for the best non-native English skills. The Swedes were handed back the bragging rights over their Nordic rivals, snagging second place with Denmark following in third spot, down one place on last year. Sweden last came top in 2015 and Denmark in 2014. Norway came in fourth and Finland in sixth place. Iceland was not included in the study.

Eight countries in total earned the "very high" proficiency distinction, with six of them found in Europe: Netherlands, Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Singapore, Finland, Luxembourg, and South Africa. "High levels of English proficiency go hand in hand with Europe's multiculturalism, economic integration, tourism, and mobility—even at a time when some Europeans are questioning their common project and the value of globalization itself," said the EPI report.

The report added that very-high-proficiency countries tend to share three characteristics: they teach English as a required foreign language from primary school, focus on communication in the classroom rather than rigid grammatical rules, and have well-traveled citizens who are also exposed to English on television. "The Scandinavian countries have been in the top five since the index started seven years ago," Malin Ankarberg, Country Manager for EF Sweden, told *The Local*.

"With our small languages combined with a history of openness and strong international relations, English skills have become very important for Scandinavians. When applying for jobs, whether it is a seasonal job in the service industry or a manager position, you are expected to have a high English level," she added. According to Ankarberg, areas where Scandinavians could improve further are "presenting and negotiating in English on a professional level."

The ranking was based on more than one million people being quizzed on their English skills in 2016. The participants were not randomly selected but were people who volunteered to take the tests, which means that the results are slightly biased towards people who are interested in language learning. However, EF EPI said that the sample was "balanced between male and female respondents and represents adult language learners from a broad range of ages." Only countries with a minimum of 400 test takers were included in the index.

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Chapter 27 Members' Collecting Interests

List your stamp-collecting interests (all, not just Scandinavian) here for other members to be aware of what you collect and possibly help with or bring attention to items of interest! Contact Roger to amend your listing.

- ☐ **Paul Albright:** Greenland, and runs of worldwide correspondence to use as historical research material
- ☐ **Peter Bergh:** Denmark (in particular the bi-colors and 1882-1905 coat-of-arms series), Malmö and Lund locals, Ireland, and Great Britain QE2 predecimals and KGV Silver Jubilee
- ☐ **Geno Brink:** worldwide postally used up to 1970, Denmark used errors and varieties, and Aalborg (cancels on stamps, covers, by post, Christmas seals, and other items related to Aalborg)
- ☐ **Eric Carlson:** United States, certain Great Britain (Wildings, Machins, and earlier sets of British Royalty), Sweden, Finland mint Wasa/Vasa issue (*Scott* #111-18), various sets of Denmark, Finland, and Norway, and lighthouses, golf, and baseball as topicals/thematics
- ☐ **Roger Cichorz:** Åland and Faroes postal history, Iceland stamps (including revenues), Lundy and Herm Island (stamps, postal history, and postcards), Abbott Pentothal "Dear Doctor" ad postcards, *HMS Montagu* postcards, and bonsai and puffin items as topicals/thematics
- ☐ **Jerry Eggleston:** primary interests = used Denmark, Danish West Indies, Greenland, Iceland, and Norway; secondary interests = Sweden, Finland, Greece, Hong Kong, Japan, Canada, and Great Britain; and postal history interests = Jo Daviess County, Illinois, and Summit County, Colorado
- ☐ **Greg Frantz:** QSL postcards, Spitzbergen postal history, Scandinavian/Nordic locals and steamship mail, United States banknotes postal history, worldwide classic stamp issues, and cinderellas
- ☐ **Jim Fredlund:** early Finland used stamps and 1980 to present, 1985 to present used Scandinavian stamps, and worldwide stamps
- ☐ **Bill Gunderson:** Scandinavia
- ☐ **Jim Kilbane:** Iowa and Colorado postal history, registered package envelopes, United States Post Office Department envelopes, revenues, cinderellas, and other miscellaneous
- ☐ **Severt Kvamme:** post-2002 used stamps of Åland, Faroes, Greenland, Iceland, and Norway
- ☐ **Clark Lyda:** Norway and Europa
- ☐ **Steve McGill:** Great Britain Machins and GB postal mechanization (specialist level) and Canada, Antarctic, Iceland, Faroes, and United States (fun-to-collect level)
- ☐ **Jeff Modesitt:** Denmark (general, postal stationery, and booklets, primary), Åland, Danish West Indies, Faroes, Finland, Greenland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden (secondary), Great Britain (general, postal stationery), New Zealand (general, penny universals, QEII, 1960 and 1980 definitives), and United States postal stationery
- ☐ **Steve Nadler:** all Scandinavian postal history (covers and postmarks), Colorado postal history, United States (streetcar postmarks and covers, flag machine cancels, and advertising covers), worldwide (airmails, perfins on and off cover, pneumatic mail, and military mail), Afghanistan, France, Monaco, Israel, and Palestine
- ☐ **George Newland:** Denmark and Scandinavia
- ☐ **Randy Nilson:** WWII German SS and police mail, Finnish military mail, Colorado POW/internment camps, and WWII censored airmail/suspended service covers
- ☐ **Harry Pedersen:** United States (including revenues), U.S. Possessions, and 1840-1940 worldwide (including Scandinavia)
- ☐ **David Petersen:** Danish West Indies and Hawaii
- ☐ **Gary Rodgers:** rhinoceros (topical)
- ☐ **Gary Shaver:** worldwide with specialties in United States, Canada, Germany, Great Britain, Hong Kong, Netherlands, Norway, and Sweden
- ☐ **Tonny van Loij:** Colorado postal history, Kansas Territory and Colorado Territory postal history, classical music (Bach, Beethoven, Mozart), opera buildings (stamps and postcards), European Union, NATO, European Security Council (KSZE), Thurn and Taxis European postal service from 1499 to 1864 (specializing in foreign destinations), and Scandinavian destinations handled by Thurn and Taxis during 1854-1867

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Why Did Vikings Have 'Allah' Embroidered Into Funeral Clothes?

BBC October 12, 2017 report by Tharik Hussain, a London-based freelance journalist, travel writer, and broadcaster who specializes in Muslim heritage.

For the complete text with photographs, go to <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-41567391>

Researchers in Sweden have found Arabic characters woven into burial costumes from Viking boat graves. The discovery raises new questions about the influence of Islam in Scandinavia, writes journalist Tharik Hussain. They were kept in storage for more than 100 years, dismissed as typical examples of Viking Age funeral clothes. But a new investigation into the garments — found in 9th and 10th Century graves — has thrown up groundbreaking insights into contact between the Viking and Muslim worlds. Patterns woven with silk and silver thread have been found to spell the words “Allah” and “Ali”.

The breakthrough was made by textile archaeologist Annika Larsson of Uppsala University while re-examining the remnants of burial costumes from male and female boat and chamber graves originally excavated in Birka and Gamla Uppsala in Sweden in the late 19th and mid-20th centuries. She became interested in the forgotten fragments after realizing the material had come from central Asia, Persia, and China.

Larsson says the tiny geometric designs — no more than 1.5 cm (0.6 in) high — resembled nothing she had come across in Scandinavia before. “I couldn’t quite make sense of them and then I remembered where I had seen similar designs — in Spain, on Moorish textiles.”

Unlocking a puzzle

Larsson then realized she was not looking at Viking patterns at all but ancient Arabic Kufic script. There were two words that kept recurring. One of them she identified with the help of an Iranian colleague. It was the name “Ali” - the fourth caliph of Islam. But the word next to Ali was more difficult to decipher. To unlock the puzzle, she enlarged the letters and examined them from all angles, including from behind. “I suddenly saw that the word 'Allah' [God] had been written in mirrored lettering,” she says.

Larsson has so far found the names on at least 10 of the nearly 100 pieces she is working through, and they always appear together. The new find now raises fascinating questions about the grave's occupants. “The possibility that some of those in the graves were Muslim cannot be completely ruled out,” she says. “We know from other Viking tomb excavations that DNA analysis has shown some of the people buried in them originated from places like Persia, where Islam was very dominant. “However, it is more likely these findings show that Viking age burial customs were influenced by Islamic ideas such as eternal life in paradise after death.” Her team is now working with the university's department for immunology, genetics and pathology to establish the geographic origins of the bodies dressed in the funeral clothes.

Historic first

Contact between the Viking and Muslim worlds has long been established by historic accounts and the discovery of Islamic coins across the northern hemisphere. Two years ago, researchers re-examined a silver ring from a female tomb at Birka and found the phrase “for Allah” inscribed on the stone. Again the text was Kufic, developed in the Iraqi town of Kufah in the 7th Century — one of the first Arabic scripts used to write down the Koran.

What makes Larsson's discovery so interesting is that it is the first time historic items mentioning Ali have ever been unearthed in Scandinavia. “The name Ali is repeated again and again beside Allah,” she says. “I know Ali is highly revered by the largest Muslim minority group, the Shia, and have wondered if there is a connection.”

Ali was the cousin and son-in-law of the Prophet Muhammad, having married his daughter Fatima. He also became the fourth leader of the Muslim community after Muhammad died. Although both Sunnis and Shia revere Ali as an important companion of Muhammad, he has elevated status amongst the Shia, who see him as the Prophet's spiritual heir. “The use of Ali does suggest a Shia connection,” says Amir De Martino, program leader of Islamic studies at the Islamic College in London.

“But without the phrase 'waly Allah' accompanying the name - meaning 'friend of Allah' - this would not be from mainstream Shia culture and might just have been copied wrongly from something that was,” adds De Martino, who is also the chief editor of *Islam Today*, a British Shia magazine. “The pattern suggests Ali is being equated with Allah, and therefore there is a slim possibility it has some connection to very early, extreme, mystical fringe movements who believed in this. But more likely it is a wrongly copied pattern.”

The names Allah and Ali are often represented in enigmatic patterns inside the tombs and books of mystical Shia sects such as the Alevis and Bektashis to this day, but always they are accompanied by the name Muhammad. These can sometimes include mirrored script. But unlike Larsson's find, these examples usually include both the name depicted the correct way around and the reflection.

For Larsson though, her discovery offers much promise for the future. “Now that I am looking at Viking patterns differently, I am convinced I will find more Islamic inscriptions in the remaining fragments from these excavations, and other Viking era textiles. Who knows? Maybe they appear in non-textile artefacts too.”