

SCANDINAVIAN COLLECTORS CLUB COLORADO CHAPTER 27 NEWSLETTER

NOTIFICATION OF THE SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2024 MEETING AT 10:00 AM AT THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN PHILATELIC LIBRARY (RMPL)

Our regular monthly meeting will take place this Saturday at 10:00 AM at RMPL. Members are reminded to submit scans of your "Show-and-Tell" items to Even Brande (evenbrande@gmail.com) who will prepare them for presentation on RMPL's large screen. Even will present the main program on "Norway Occupation During WWII." Breakfast sweets and bagels will be provided.

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SCC Chapter 27 January 6, 2023 Meeting Summary

President Harry Pedersen called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM with ten members in attendance. Gary Withrow, RMPL's Webmaster, set up a live ZOOM presentation for our meeting and attended as a guest. Roger Cichorz gave the Treasurer's report (\$1389.77 then-current treasury balance with \$546.59 cash-on-hand). It was suggested that future Chapter 27 ZOOM meetings be advertised to and open for all SCC members as many reside in areas that do not have near-by chapters. ZOOM would require a license fee of \$10 per month and Roger suggested that SCC could fund this endeavor as Chapter 27 meetings would become a benefit to the entire membership. Roger also indicated if SCC would not fund this endeavor, SCC Library would pay the licensing fee from its account. **New Business:** Roger announced that SCCL Auction #71 with 100 lots will take place this month and he intends to get the text and pix distributed about January 10th. Even mentioned that SCCL had just purchased the new 2024 *Norgeskatalogen* to its run and is available for loan. Even indicated he's completed the SCCL Country Books indexing (in word-searchable Excel tabular format and it will soon be available on-line on SCC's website. Tonny van Loij indicated RMPL received an extraordinary high-award level Denmark exhibit and collection from the Don Brant Estate that will go into RMPL's special collections holdings for at least three years. Chapter members offered to help with assessing the value of the collection and suggestions for its eventual disposition. **Program/Show-and-Tell:** Our program was an extended "Show-and-Tell" session with Even presenting scans of three members' submitted items on RMPL's large screen while they discussed them. Items presented were: • Jim Kilbane showed three Norwegian imperforate 1800s used revenue stamps with manuscript initials and dates. • Even discussed the wayward journey of the Ville d'Orléans mail balloon on its November 24, 1870 flight from the siege of Paris during the Franco-Prussian War. • Roger showed a selection of "Scandinavian puffins" that included stamps, covers, and cinderella items from Denmark, the Faroes, Greenland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden. [Note: If you missed this meeting and are interested in viewing the presentations, contact me as I have the January Show-and-Tell file on hand and can e-mail it to you as an attachment. –RSC] The meeting adjourned at 11:10 AM.

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SCC Chapter 27 Meeting Schedule for Calendar Year 2024

March 2: Semi-annual members' auction (please e-mail Roger your lot descriptions ASAP)
April 6: Roger Cichorz on a subject to be determined
May 4: open
June 1: Jim Kilbane on a subject to be determined
September 7: open
October 5: Semi-annual members' auction
November 2: open
December: Annual holiday party to be determined, or, alternatively, December 7: open

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Two Biographical Articles by Even Brande on Notable Philatelists

Cheryl Ganz, SCC member #4277 and current President of the American Philatelic Society, is a well-known and respected philatelist, collector, and exhibitor. Even Brande's illustrated profile article on Cheryl appeared in a recent issue of *Norsk Filatelistisk Tidsskrift* and Even now provides an English translation of this article titled "Cheryl Ganz: An American Philatelist with Norwegian Heritage" that can be accessed on-line at <https://gelleinstamps.com/cheryl-ganz-an-american-philatelist-with-norwegian-heritage/>.

Even Brande's paternal granduncle was the late Per Gellen, a major Norwegian philatelist in the last century, whose 125th Anniversary of his birth will be this April. Even wrote an illustrated biographical profile article on Per Gellen that can be accessed on-line at <https://gelleinstamps.com/per-gellein-125/>.

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

\$1389.77 Previous Treasury Balance (12/4/23)

+ \$30.00 three 2024 membership dues (payments at 1/6/24 meeting)
- \$9.36 breakfast sweets for January 6 meeting
- \$4.30 printing costs for January 2024 Newsletters

\$1406.11 Current Treasury Balance (1/7/24)

\$562.93 Cash on Hand (1/7/24)

\$843.18 12-month Certificate of Deposit at Elevations Credit Union, Boulder, CO (ECUBC)
CD was reinvested at @ 1.50% per annum interest and has a projected value of
~\$856.30 on its maturity date of 2/9/24. (Value of \$854.61 on 12/31/23)

Prepared by Roger Cichorz, 1/7/24

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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 Roger at rcichorz@comcast.net. Also, take a look at the listing of Chapter members' collecting interests on the next page as you may have unwanted items others may be interested in!

For Sale: My entire holdings of worldwide stamps and postal history (countries include Åland, Danish West Indies, Denmark with emphasis on star cancels & postmarks, Faroes, Finland with emphasis on village cancels, Greenland, Iceland, Sweden with emphasis on postmarks – also many non-Nordic countries) – worldwide postal history of various specialties and topics (including advertising, airmail & zeppelins, auxiliary markings, censored, consular, DOX, maps, military, perfins, pneumatic, postage dues, propaganda, RPOs/TPOs, ship mail) – U.S. postal history (including advertising, Colorado towns and RPOs, Doane cancels, expositions, foreign destinations, machine cancels with emphasis on flags, overrun nations, postal stationery, registered/insured, RFD, special deliveries and town cancels by State) – miscellaneous (used and unused postcards, trade cards, "Dear Doctor" cards). I probably have some of the items you are looking for! Contact me to arrange for an appointment at my home. Steve Nadler, 9730 East 32nd Avenue, Denver, CO 80238, 303-638-3755 (cell phone), or schlomoX@msn.com.

For Sale: Roger Cichorz conducts regular quarterly auctions for the SCC Library, and all Chapter 27 members are on his auction distribution list. Roger will gladly accept literature and stamp donations to SCCL – SCCL is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit entity that will formally acknowledge donations, which may be to your tax advantage. SCCL Auction #71, which closed January 31, 2024, offered 100 lots at cumulative starting bids of \$1224. The #71 After-Sale list of unsold lots still available was distributed February 1.

Free Offer: Jay Smith sends via e-mail distribution a weekly Philatelic E-News that is chock full of stamp, cover, and literature offers available from his extensive stock. Also included in each issue is a "Behind the Scenes" Commentary, several of which have been reprinted in our SCC Chapter 27 Newsletters. Jay reminds members that these are available to you free upon request, so contact Jay at js@jaysmith.com and give him your name and e-mail address to start receiving issues of these weekly Philatelic E-News.

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. Contact Eugene Brink, 1920 2nd Ave. SE, Waterton, SD 57201-3983 (new address), 1-417-559-2496, or geno4huskers@suddenlink.net.

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This space is available. Why not consider submitting something for next time?

Wanted: Contributions for future *Scandinavian Collectors Club Chapter 27 Newsletters* so that your Editor can continue to incorporate additional pages of items of interest each issue. Anything is welcome: brief articles, collection and exhibit pages, scans or color photocopies of your favorite stamps or covers (preferably with explanatory captions), Scandinavian humor, items for a "Questions and Answers" feature, etc. Submissions to rcichorz@comcast.net.

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Roger Cichorz

3925 Longwood Ave., Boulder, CO 80305-7233

Telephone: (303) 494-8361, e-mail: rcichorz@comcast.net

Chapter 27 Members' Philatelic-Related Collecting Interests

List your collecting interests (all, not just Scandinavian) here for members to be aware of what you collect and possibly help with or bring attention to items of interest! **Contact Roger at rcichorz@comcast.net 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
- **Even Brande:** Norway 1855 to the present cancelled & mint stamps, airmail covers to the U.S., FDCs, and U.S.A. 1847 to the present canceled & mint stamps, airmail covers, first-flight covers, FDCs, and Wyoming & Colorado covers
- **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 and revenue stamps, Iceland stamps and revenues, Denmark and Danish West Indies stamps, 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 = Austria, Canada, Estonia, Finland, Great Britain, Greece, Hong Kong, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, and Sweden; postal history interests = Jo Daviess County, Illinois, and Summit County, Colorado
- **Jim Fredlund:** early Finland used stamps & 1980 to the present, and used Scandinavian & worldwide stamps 1985 to the present
- **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
- **Sergio Lugo:** Danish West Indies, Iceland, Greenland, and many other non-Scandinavian topics and subjects beginning with South America, Puerto Rico, Cuba, and continuing throughout the world, including stampless Papal State covers, Lombardy Venezia, and extending to military postal history
- **Clark Lyda:** Norway, United States, Canada, and Europa
- **Steve McGill:** Great Britain Machins and GB postal mechanization (specialist level) and Antarctic, Austria, China (Republic and PCR), Faroes, Germany, Greenland, Hungary, Iceland, Israel, Monaco, Sweden, 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, U.S.A. States (streetcar postmarks and covers, flag machine cancels, and advertising covers), worldwide (airmails, perfins on and off cover, pneumatic mail, overrun nations covers, and military mail), Afghanistan, France, Israel, Monaco, and Palestine
- **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
- **Jay Smith:** France Merson issue – bicolored high-denomination stamps used in the 1900-1930 era and North Carolina postal history and postmarks from the beginning until the day after tomorrow.
- **Tonny van Loij:** Colorado, Colorado Territory, and Kansas Territory postal history, classical music (Bach, Beethoven, Mozart), opera buildings (stamps and postcards), European Union, NATO, European Security Council (KSZE), Thurn & Taxis European postal service from 1499 to 1864 (specializing in foreign destinations), and Scandinavian destinations handled by Thurn & Taxis during 1854-1867

150th Anniversary Edition of the Icelandic Stamp

Iceland discontinued issuance of postage stamps in 2020, but on August 23, 2023 issued a new series

Posturinn (Iceland Post) announced in 2020 that it would no longer issue postage stamps as postal officials reported that there were sufficient stamps available and would reprint older issues if necessary. It was the first country in the world to decide to do so. However, Posturinn announced that new postage stamps would be produced and issued August 23, 2023 to celebrate the 150th Anniversary of the first postage stamps of Iceland (1873; Scott #s 1-7). The new issue is a set of four stamps on a souvenir sheet. Posturinn has a website <https://stamps.postur.is/frettastofan/frettir/frett/2023/08/23/150-ara-afmaelisutgafa-islenska-frimerkisins> to assist in purchasing postage stamps and related materials.

Source: Posturinn, August 23, 2023 press-release posting on its website.

On the occasion of the 150th Anniversary of the Icelandic stamp, the Post Office is issuing four new stamps this year. The first Icelandic stamps were issued in 1873, the so-called shilling stamps. The issue date is today, August 23, 2023. The Post Office commemorates this milestone with the release of a small sheet containing four self-adhesive stamps, two denominated 50g and two denominated 100g, for correspondence within and outside Europe, respectively. It will be possible to purchase the sheetlet from today for ISK1950 (~\$1.07).

It was decided that the stamps should be illustrative of Iceland and nature. “We brought with us a former employee of the Post Office's stamp sales, Vilhjálmm Sigurðsson, and to help him, the only current employee of the stamp sales, Sigríði Ástmundsdóttir. They got Örn Smára Gíslason to design the small sheetlet,” says Þórhildur Ólöf Helgadóttir, director of the Post Office. The photos on the stamps were taken with a drone.

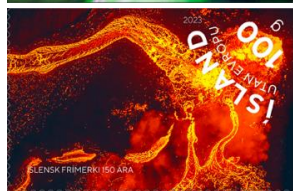
Helgadóttir stated, “Ragnar Th. Sigurðsson, a photographer, captured the diversity of Icelandic nature, which is enjoyed on the new stamps. The diversity of Icelandic nature plays a central role, the interaction of fire and ice on the one hand, incomparable contrasts in the landscape, and on the other hand the earth's atmosphere, the flashing northern lights.”



A stamp with the inscription 50g to Europe shows wetlands or streams at Holtsós under Eyjafjöllur in Rangárþing eystra. Only a narrow ridge separates Holtsós from the turbulent Atlantic Ocean.



A stamp with the inscription 100g to Europe shows an aurora crown, but coronas are traditionally considered the most impressive aurora borealis. In the corona, the aurora borealis appears to originate at a single point with rays in all directions, and they are always fluctuating and colorful. The picture was taken in Kolgrafafjörður on the northern side of Snæfellsnes.



A stamp with the inscription 100g from outside Europe shows directly into the crater and the lava river from the Merardalagos near Fagradalsfjall in Reykjanes, but the volcanic upheaval in Reykjanes began on March 19, 2021 with an eruption in Fagradalsfjall.



A stamp with the inscription 50g from outside Europe is of the Svínafellsjökull, battered and torn above Freysnes in Öraf (Hótel Skaftafell). The glacier is a sliding glacier that falls west-southwest from Örafajökull. It is named after the town of Svínafell in Öraf.

According to Helgadóttir, the images have not appeared before in a collection of Icelandic stamps. “We think they will be popular at tourist spots as a souvenir of a visit to Iceland, and stamp collectors are happy that the Post will celebrate this turning point with the issue of stamps.”

Postal Changes in Denmark Make Stamps Issued Before January 1, 2024 nonvalid on Domestic Mail

Source: Article by Christer Brunström, *Linn's Stamp News*, January 15, 2024, page 8.

The Danish Parliament recently passed new postal legislation that will have serious repercussions for stamp collectors, the general letter-writing public, and businesses who use the postal service to deliver their letters or products. Beginning January 1, 2024, only stamps inscribed "INDLAND" (domestic) are valid on mail to addresses in Denmark because the face value of such stamps now also includes a 25% value-added tax (VAT).

Because VAT is not included in the price of stamps issued prior to January 1, those stamps can no longer be used on inland (domestic) letters. Beginning in 2024, new Danish stamps for foreign destinations will have the word "UDLAND" (abroad) in the design. On January 2, PostNord Denmark issued its first stamps inscribed "INDLAND" (denominated 25 kroner) and "UDLAND" (denominated 50 kroner) (*shown below*).



PostNord Denmark's January 2, 2024 issue of its first stamps inscribed "INDLAND" (denominated 25 kroner) and "UDLAND" (denominated 50 kroner)

PostNord Denmark introduced new postage rates for domestic and international mail on January 1. Domestic rates for letters and postcards are 25kr up to 100 grams, 50kr up to 250 grams, and 75kr up to 2,000 grams. The rates for mail to foreign destinations are similar: 50kr, 100kr and 150kr for items weighing 100 grams, 250 grams, and 2,000 grams, respectively.

Under the new rates, it would cost the equivalent of ~US\$7.32 to mail a 100-gram postcard to Sweden from Copenhagen. Danish mail items sent to international destinations must be inscribed "PRIORITAIRE" (Priority) or have such a label added. All Danish stamps issued before the end of 2023 remain valid on mail to foreign countries during 2024 because they do not include a VAT that the customer would have paid at the time of purchase. However, according to PostNord, all Danish stamps issued before January 1, 2024 will no longer be valid for postage on letters to foreign destinations after December 31, 2024.

PostNord indicated letters to addressees abroad, the Faroes, and Greenland should be marked PRIORITAIRE. Stamps to foreign destinations are inscribed "UDLAND." Stamps issued before January 1, 2024 can be used until the end of 2024. Stamps inscribed "INDLAND" cannot be used on mail to foreign destinations, and "UNDLAND" stamps can't be used on mail to domestic addresses.

In addition, PostNord Denmark's universal postal service obligation in Denmark ended on January 1, 2024. Notice of that substantial change was announced in a November 30, 2023 PostNord press release. PostNord indicated also that exceptions apply to mail for small islands, impaired people, and international mail, for which procurement processes will be carried out. These are drastic changes that undoubtedly will reduce mail volumes even further.

PostNord Denmark pledges to deliver a letter within five working days. This probably means that it only offers one weekly delivery of mail to Danish households unless one pays a much higher fee for quicker delivery. In Denmark, digitization has been extremely rapid and has affected all segments of society, including postal services. Email and mobile phones are extremely useful means of communication, and it now seems that traditional postal services are unable to match those digital competitors. Diminishing mail volumes will result in even higher rates and slower delivery times. Denmark and the other Nordic nations are examples of those developments.

Behind the Scenes: Big News: Denmark's Demonetization of Stamps

Source: Jay Smith, January 4, 2024 Philatelic E-News.

In a shocking announcement for the philatelic world, Denmark has INVALIDATED previously issued postage stamps for domestic use and a year from now they will do the same for international use. *Linn's Stamp News* has published the most detailed article I have yet seen on the subject. [Refer to Christer Brunström's *Linn's* article that precedes this section. –RSC] This story is complicated, as is always true when politics and large organizations are involved. There are also some additional unstated potential, but obvious, interpretations of motivations behind this move.

The key points are:

- This fall, Danish lawmakers required that Danish postage on domestic mail bear Value Added Tax (VAT) and that the postage stamps being sold and used after 1/1/2024 already include the tax amount. [It is unclear to me whether, now or eventually, the VAT will also apply to foreign postal rates or whether the "Udland" stamp just issued for foreign mail includes VAT.]
- As of 1/1/2024, new Danish stamps will bear the legends "INDLAND" (domestic) or "UDLAND" (foreign). The first stamps being issued also include numerical denominations, but those denominations include VAT.
- At the same time, PostNord Denmark (the Danish Post Office), is NO LONGER required to provide universal postal service, though there are some limited exceptions provided in the law.
- The first stamps issued are denominated 25 and 50 kroner, respectively, for the basic domestic and foreign letter rates. Those are eye-popping sums, equivalent to about US\$3.75 to mail a domestic letter and US\$7.50 to mail a foreign letter, even to nearby Sweden.
- As of 1/1/2024, ALL PREVIOUSLY ISSUED Danish stamps are DEMONETIZED (invalidated) for use on DOMESTIC MAIL.
- Previously issued stamps WILL CONTINUE TO BE VALID on FOREIGN MAIL, but only through 12/31/2024. As of 1/1/2025 *ALL* Danish stamps issued before 1/1/24 will be demonetized for ANY purpose!
- It is UNKNOWN TO ME if there is now, or if there will be in the future, any ability to exchange earlier-issued stamps toward the value of the new types of stamps. [Such exchanges have been possible in at least one case of British stamp demonetization in the recent past.]

Please let me know if you are aware of an exchange program for Danish postage.

Jay's Mild Editorializing:

In my opinion, there were other ways that the stated goal could have been accomplished. Other countries have found other ways to do these things, both in regard to taxation and in regard to changing currencies (for example, French dual acceptance of old postage and new Euro postage). Given that, it is easy to conclude that the reason for taking the draconian decision of total demonetization is that the now-mostly-commercial operation of the Danish (and related Swedish) Post Office, through the PostNord organization, is that it was deemed unprofitable to provide postal service for stamps that were sold to the public years ago.

I don't know if previous postal law included any promise of, or limitation on, validity of Danish postage stamps. However, the public, including stamp collectors, reasonably expected that if they paid 1 kroner for a stamp that they would receive 1 kroner of postal service (adjusted for inflation, of course) in the future. Reneging on that implied (?) or inferred promise breaks the trust upon which governments in general, and postal services in particular, rely.

We can only hope that public outcry will cause a change in this new policy. However, since most of the public no longer regularly mails letters, and since the number of stamp collectors (who live in Denmark) likely to complain loudly is not as great as it once was, I am not going to "hold my breath" for a change. This news will surely have far-reaching consequences to our hobby. It is far too early to know what all those consequences will be. We will have to see how things develop. However, this will surely cause some collectors to rethink their purchasing of new Danish stamps (but, before you do anything rash, that may eventually mean that the future value of the new stamps may end up being even greater!).

Jay's "Behind the Scenes" commentary concludes on the following page.

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My stock holds tens of thousands of dollars of face value of Danish stamps issued prior to 2015 (the point at which I discontinued our Scandinavian New Issue Service). Hearing this news was a “really bad day” for me.

While I don't have a crystal ball, I do NOT particularly expect the market prices of pre-2024 Danish stamps to fall significantly, if at all, because a lot of the stamps issued from 2000 to 2023 are actually in short supply in the market. (And prior to 2000, face values were a lot lower anyway.) However, it is a “kick in the pants” to discover that the intrinsic value of pre-2024 Danish postage stamps is being eliminated (even if previously they could be sold as “discount postage” as a percentage of face value).

While I have not read anything on the subject, another unintended consequence of the elimination of the “universal postal service” requirement is that it suggests that private national or local postal services may again be possible. Local postal services have been possible (again) in Sweden since the 1990s. However, I have not been aware of any such operating in Denmark. Now, local postal services MAY (?) be possible in Denmark and potentially competing NATIONAL postal services MAY (?) be possible in Denmark. [Offhand, the only country that I have been aware of that has allowed, in modern times, competing NATIONAL postal services, is New Zealand (and I am not sure if that is still possible).]

Lastly, there seems to be a deeper and darker message implied by these changes. Here in the United States, when political conservatives want to hold up an example of a liberal, “socialistic” country, they often point to Denmark as an example of what they don't like. The change we are witnessing in the Danish postal laws and system is the complete opposite of a “socialistic” approach. It is the free-market system explicitly stripped bare, to its most raw, without support for the vast majority of “ordinary people”!

Remember that when the British “Penny Black” was issued in 1840, it was a 1-penny universal letter rate within the country. It was a tremendous simplification of the previously much higher postal rates that were based on weight, number of pages, and distance. The change led to an enormous explosion of communication in Great Britain, which in turn fueled intense economic development. The ordinary person or small business could communicate much more economically with others and engage more profitably in business. That further led to worldwide simplified and greatly lowered postal rates and the ensuing international economic development.

What is now happening in Denmark would seem to be the opposite of what Great Britain did in 1840. This is a drastic change in Denmark in regard to the percentage of a person's hourly income that they now have to pay if they need to mail a letter. In 2023, there was no minimum wage in Denmark that was mandated by law, but the reality is that there is an effective minimum wage of around DKK110 which is about US\$15.00 per hour. (Wages for skilled workers are much higher.) The actual meaning of this in Danish buying power is quite different than we would understand it in the U.S. because so many government services are provided to Danish people that are in addition to the wages that they receive. However, now Danish people have to pay TWENTY FIVE PERCENT (25%) of Danish (effective) minimum wage to mail a domestic letter. [While the U.S. national minimum wage is much lower, the effective minimum wage if an employer wants to get and keep employees is also around \$15 per hour. However, with today's 66-cent domestic letter rate, Americans only pay 4.4% of the effective minimum wage!] I know that my analysis here is limited and generalized, but to my way of thinking what Denmark has done can only stifle economic activity and force more and more people and businesses away from using the mail.

Before I am bombarded with comments such as “people are already using texting and email anyway; they are not sending letters,” please keep in mind that a STAMP DEALER OR COLLECTOR in Denmark CANNOT text or email STAMPS to another person. The only practical option to send stamps, or other small or lightweight objects, is through the mail, now with a minimum postage cost of US\$3.75! That hurts!

My wish for the New Year is now: “I wish that other countries will NOT do what Denmark has done.”

Editor's Note: If you are not already on Jay's e-mail distribution list for this weekly Philatelic E-News that usually contains an interesting “Behind the Scenes” commentary (occasionally reprinted in our Chapter 27 Newsletters), please take advantage of his offer immediately below:

Free Offer: Jay Smith sends via e-mail distribution a weekly Philatelic E-News that is chock full of stamp, cover, and literature offers available from his extensive stock. Also included in each issue is a “Behind the Scenes” Commentary, several of which have been reprinted in our SCC Chapter 27 Newsletters. Jay reminds members that these are available to you free upon request, so contact Jay at js@jaysmith.com and give him your name and e-mail address to start receiving issues of these weekly Philatelic E-News.

Source: January 1, 2024 Edition of *The Denver Post*, page A8

In brief



KELD NAVNTOFT — RITZAU SCANPIX VIA AP

Queen Margrethe II gives a New Year's speech and announces her abdication from Christian IX's Palace, Amalienborg Castle, in Copenhagen on Sunday.

DENMARK

Queen Margrethe II to step down from the throne on Jan. 14

STOCKHOLM, SWEDEN» Denmark's Queen Margrethe II announced Sunday that she plans to abdicate after 52 years and hand over the throne to her son, Crown Prince Frederik.

The queen, who is Europe's longest-reigning living monarch, announced during her New Year's speech that she would step down on Jan. 14, which is the anniversary of her own accession to the throne at age 31 following the death of her father, King Frederik IX.

Margrethe, 83, said the back surgery she underwent in early 2023 led to "thoughts about the future" and when to pass on the responsibilities of the crown to her son. "I have decided that now is the right time," she said in her speech.

Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen paid tribute to her in a statement, offering a "heartfelt thank you to Her Majesty the Queen for her lifelong dedication and tireless efforts for the Kingdom."

Margrethe is the "epitome of Denmark," Frederiksen's statement read, and "throughout the years has put words and feelings into who we are as a people and as a nation."

The 6-foot-tall, chain-smoking Margrethe has been one of the most popular public figures in Denmark, where the monarch's role is largely ceremonial. She often walked the streets of Copenhagen virtually unescorted and won the admiration of Danes for her warm manners and talents as a linguist and designer.

A keen skier, she was a member of a Danish women's air force unit as a princess, taking part in judo courses and endurance tests in the snow. Margrethe remained tough even as she grew older. In 2011, at age 70, she visited Danish troops in southern Afghanistan wearing a military jumpsuit.

As monarch, she crisscrossed the country and regularly visited Greenland and the Faeroe Islands, the two semi-independent territories which are part of the Danish Realm, and was met everywhere by cheering crowds.

Denmark has Europe's oldest ruling monarchy, which traces its line back to the Viking king Gorm the Old, who died in 958.

— *The Associated Press*

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Scandinavian Miscellany

Word for the Day:

batten \ 'ba-tən \ *verb*: **1a**: to grow or make fat **b**: to feed gluttonously **2**: to grow prosperous especially at the expense of another – usually used with *on*

*He has always **battered** on the generosity of others.*

DID YOU KNOW? The origin of *batten* is believed to be the Old Norse verb *batna*, meaning "to improve." *Batna* is akin to Old Norse *betr* and Old English *betera*, from which we get the modern English word *better*. *Batten* entered the English language in the 1500s, with the meaning "to improve." It is not related to the verb *batten* found in expressions such as "batten down the hatches." This later *batten* comes from the noun *batten*, which denotes, among other things, an iron bar used to secure the covering of a hatchway on a ship. This *batten* has Latinate rather than Germanic origins and can be traced back through Anglo-French *batre* to the Latin verb *battuere* ("to beat").

Source: Merriam-Webster Page-A-Day® Calendar entry for Tuesday, August 29, 2023.

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Norwegian Archaeologists Say It's the Gold Find of the Century

Source: Associated Press September 7, 2023 on-line posting, submitted by Paul Albright.

COPENHAGEN, Denmark (AP) – At first, the Norwegian man thought his metal detector reacted to chocolate money buried in the soil. It turned out to be nine pendants, three rings, and ten gold pearls in what was described as the country's gold find of the century. The rare find was made this summer by 51-year-old Erlend Bore on the southern island of Rennesoey, near the city of Stavanger. Bore had bought his first metal detector earlier this year to have a hobby after his doctor ordered him to get outside instead of sitting on the couch.



Top left: *Erlend Bore poses with the gold treasure he discovered with a metal detector on the island of Rennesoey in Stavanger, Norway. Bore found nine pendants, three rings, and ten gold pearls on a southern island in what was described as the gold find of the century in Norway.*

Top right: *The gold treasure discovered by Erlend Bore.*

Ole Madsen, director at the Archaeological Museum at the University of Stavanger, said that to find “so much gold at the same time is extremely unusual. This is the gold find of the century in Norway,”

In August, Bore began walking around the mountainous island with his metal detector. A statement issued by the university said he first found some scrap, but later uncovered something that was “completely unreal” – the treasure weighing a little more than 100 grams (3.5 oz). Under Norwegian law, objects from before 1537, and coins older than 1650, are considered state property and must be handed in.

Associate professor Håkon Reiersen with the museum said the gold pendants – flat, thin, single-sided gold medals called bracteates – date from around 500 A.D., the so-called Migration Period in Norway, which runs between 400 and about 550 when there were widespread migrations in Europe.

The pendants and gold pearls were part of “a very showy necklace” that had been made by skilled jewelers and was worn by society’s most powerful, said Reiersen. He added that “in Norway, no similar discovery has been made since the 19th century, and it is also a very unusual discovery in a Scandinavian context.”

An expert on such pendants, Professor Sigmund Oehrl with the same museum, stated that about 1,000 golden bracteates have so far been found in Norway, Sweden, and Denmark. He said that symbols on the pendants usually show the Norse god Odin healing the sick horse of his son. On the Rennesoey ones, the horse’s tongue hangs out on the gold pendants, and “its slumped posture and twisted legs show that it is injured,” Oehrl said. “The horse symbol represented illness and distress, but at the same time hope for healing and new life,” he added.

The plan is to exhibit the find at the Archaeological Museum in Stavanger, about 300 kilometers (200 miles) southwest of Oslo.

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A Stunning Discovery Proves Vikings Reached the Americas Before Columbus

Source: *Finance.Yahoo.com* on-line article by Tim Newcombe, November 15, 2023, submitted by Ron Collin.

Researchers believe they have reliable evidence that shows Vikings beat Christopher Columbus to the Americas by about 500 years. Tree species native to Canada and imported to Greenland were key to the discovery. The Vikings were likely making regular trips to stock tree farms. Not only did the Vikings travel to the Americas hundreds of years before Christopher Columbus, but it appears that they were likely making routine trips to extract natural resources. Researchers believe they now have the proof of this behavior, thanks to a better understanding of trees found in Greenland.

A study published by researchers from the University of Iceland in the journal *Antiquity* earlier this year states that Norse colonists in Greenland (from 985-1450 AD) relied on imported timber for shipbuilding and large construction projects. It also claims that elite farms had access to timber imports from Northern Europe and North America. That access – and the timing of it all – backs up Viking legends that claimed there was a regular trading route between Greenland and North America about 500 years before Christopher Columbus led his famous voyage west.



Vikings were the first explorers to visit America

“These findings highlight the fact that Norse Greenlanders had the means, knowledge, and appropriate vessels to cross the Davis Strait to the east coast of North America, at least up until the 14th century,” the study authors wrote. “As such, journeys were being made from Greenland to North America throughout the entirety of the period of Norse settlement in Greenland, and resources were being acquired by the Norse from North America for far longer than previously thought.”

The timber in question includes hemlock and jack pine – tree species not native to either Greenland or Europe. Finding that these species were used in Greenland around 1000 AD supports the theory that they were imported from the Americas. The jack pine likely came from what is now New England and Nova Scotia. Hemlock may have taken even more travel to find, as it was most prominently located in and around Quebec, Ontario, and elsewhere in Canada.

To better understand the import practices, the researchers analyzed wood from multiple farms and construction projects known to be in use about 1000 AD, according to a statement. By scrutinizing the cellular structure of the wood, they were able to conclude that roughly a quarter of the timber used was either imported or arrived at the island as driftwood. “By demonstrating the range of timber sources used by the Greenland Norse,” the authors wrote, “the results illustrate connectivity across the medieval North Atlantic world.”

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Cooking Series Offered on Denver’s PBS-12 Includes Scandinavian Cuisine

Don't miss PBS-12's new Tuesday night international food lineup of seven programs that began airing in January. At 10:30 PM *New Scandinavian Cooking* is described as shot on location across Norway and Denmark, host Andreas Viestad offers a rich visual tour of Northern European cuisine, culture, and history. PBS-12's line-up (with host names in parentheses) for the other six shows in this series includes: *Tastemakers* (Cat Neville) at 7:30 PM, *Flavor of Poland* (Aleksandra August) at 8 PM, *My Greek Table* (Diane Kochilas) at 8:30 PM, *Pati's Mexican Table* (Pati Jinich) at 9 PM, *Maria's Portuguese Table* (Maria Lawton) at 9:30 PM, and *Taste of Malaysia* (Martin Yan) at 10 PM. These shows are not just about food as they include exploration of the countries' landscapes, their people, history, traditions, and culture. If you missed any and want to view them, PBS-12 offers an on-line archive of previously televised programs.

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