

SECRETARY-TREASURER'S CORNER

NEW MEMBERS

The Biology topic is immensely popular. It is likely that someone in your local club is a collector of something related to zoology or botany. Sign them up. The Biology Unit welcomes the following new members:

1887 Drew L. Kershen, Norman, Oklahoma plant breeding, DNA/RNA, biologists
 1888 Vera Radnell, Labrador, QLD Australia raptors, fish eagles, falconry

The following member has been reinstated:

1664 Richard Rosche, Orchard Park, New York birds, butterflies

HAPPY MEMORIES

Alan Hanks, President Emeritus, BU698

After I emigrated from England to Canada, got married, and started a family, I was looking for something to occupy my spare time. I remembered that my mother had collected stamps and decided to “give it a try.” I started with Australia, as there was a dealer in Toronto who was Australian and had a pretty good stock. I very quickly discovered that there was more to collecting than just accumulating a “bunch of stamps.”

Also, I quickly discovered that a quite large financial outlay would become necessary in order to have a semblance of “completeness.” So, I got rid of Australia and thought I would try Switzerland, as they had stamps that were very well printed and were quite colorful. Needless to say, the Australian experiment looked as though it would be repeated with Switzerland.

But by this time I was subscribing to *Linn's Stamp News* and saw a short article on the “Biology Unit” of the American Topical Association (ATA). This sounded interesting, so I sent in my membership fee and quickly found out that this was a completely different idea about “what to collect.” When the first copy of the unit journal arrived, I found out there was a collector right here in Toronto, Bruce Cruickshank by name, whose interest was in birds. Contact was made and he quickly pointed out the advantage of having a journal that included new issue listings and articles on a large number of biological subjects.

I chose butterflies and moths (later all insects) as my collecting subject and started accumulating material, with Bruce advising me to avoid the Arab countries as not being suitable for a “serious” collection. Bruce phoned me one day in 1976, and asked if I would be interested in driving with him down to Philadelphia for an International Show, since the ATA would be holding their annual show in conjunction with the larger show.

Needless to say, I was amazed at the many frames of material displayed in a large hall, covering many subjects and including those with a “topical” connection, which at the time were the most interesting to me. I also was persuaded to join the ATA and attended their annual meeting. This visit to a major stamp show gave me lots of things to think about, including whether I could even contemplate doing an exhibit myself (in the future of course).

Coincidentally, my wife and I had already made plans for our holiday in 1978, to consist in taking our tent trailer down the U.S. eastern seaboard, especially since both our children loved the sea and swimming. As luck (?) would have it, the last few days would be near Atlantic City, where the ATA was holding their annual convention, with my first Biology Unit meeting included.

This turned out to be good fun, as I met Sally & Jerry Husak of the ATA and several Biology Unit members. During the Unit meeting, it turned out that a new treasurer was required and I volunteered for the position. Later there were some mumbles about the exchange rate, but at that particular time, the exchange rate was in favor of the U.S. and the mumbles disappeared. I had inspected all the exhibits at the show, so I was beginning to get an inkling of what “topical” or as it later became known as “thematic” exhibiting was all about and set out to accumulate material with that aim on “the back burner.” (to be continued)