

First Issues

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The Official Journal of the First Issues Collectors Club APS Affiliate #232

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The First Issues Collectors Club promotes the collection of the first postage stamps issued by any nation, province, city or other entity that has, at any time, issued postage stamps, and facilitates the exchange of information about these issues among stamp collectors.

First Issues (ISSN: 1547-2299), the official newsletter of the First Issues Collectors Club, is published quarterly. Submissions are welcome from members and others interested in the collection of first issues.

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President's Message

I read with great interest the article by Tim Balm in V27N2 regarding selling a stamp collection. I like to think that I still have many years of collecting in front of me, but it never hurts to plan ahead. Like death and taxes, it is also a certainty of life that every collection will eventually be sold. Despite my attempts to interest my children in the hobby, none of them showed any lasting interest – so passing on the collection is not an option for me.

As mentioned by Mr. Balm, the fastest and easiest (if not most profitable) way to dispose of an average collection is by direct sale to a dealer. The *American Philatelist* regularly contains letters to the editor on this subject by collectors (or relatives who inherit the stamps) who were disappointed or offended when offered a small percentage of catalogue value – or received no offer at all. I recently read the point of view of a dealer on this subject.

What a dealer is willing to pay is dependent on many factors – but most important are his current financial situation and the status of his stock. Knowing this, it is obvious that it would be preferable to offer your collection to more than one dealer. He went on to give a few more useful tips.

Of most interest to a dealer are stamps in high demand that he can quickly resell to his client base. But most collections are heavily comprised of common or damaged stamps that have little demand, which is the most common reason why a dealer gives a low offer. It is important to have realistic expectations.

Time is precious for everybody, so make it easy for the dealer to go through your collection. Remove stamps from their protective mounts and arrange them in an orderly fashion in stock books. A separate section for your better stamps is also a good idea. If you can't agree on those, there is no need to see the rest. An accompanying list with catalogue numbers, value and comments on condition will also make the collection more attractive. In his own words: "An organized presentation will most likely result in a satisfactory price."

Now, if you own truly rare or valuable items, there is no doubt in my mind that an auction is a better way to go. But this is not for common stamps. An auction will not turn lead into gold.

Louis Laflamme, President

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Bits & Pieces

Miscellaneous

Article Accuracy: *First Issues*, the editor, and other officers of the FICC cannot be responsible for accuracy or originality of any information printed herein. Opinions expressed in the articles are those of the writers and are not necessarily endorsed by *First Issues*, the FICC or its officers.

Articles Wanted: Articles, letters, comments, suggestions, album pages or anything else connected with collecting first issues are always needed. Send your copy to the editor (e-mail address on front page, postal address shown in the return address on outer cover). To be included in V28N1, articles must be received prior to Dec 15, 2019.

Membership Directory: Members may obtain a free FICC Membership Directory by sending a SASE (No 10 envelope with 1 ounce US postage) to our Secretary. You can also request the Directory via e-mail as an Excel spreadsheet (contact information is on pages 1 and 9).

Back Issues: Back issues of the newsletter are available from the Secretary for \$7.00 per volume or \$2.00 for single issues. Electronic copies are available on a USB Drive or CD-ROM for \$10.00. Refer to the web site (www.firstissues.org) or

contact the Secretary for more information (contact information is on pages 1 and 9).

Article Index: An index to the articles in *First Issues* from 1990 (V1, N1) to date is available on the web site (www.firstissues.org).

Bylaws: A copy of the FICC bylaws is available on the web site (www.firstissues.org). These were last printed in *First Issues* V26, N1.

Mail Bag

No letters to the editor were received after V27N3 was published.

Secretary's Report

Membership News: Two new members joined FICC since the last Newsletter went to press.

- David Barewald, FICC #269, California, USA
- James Kirsten, FICC #270, Sao Paulo, Brazil

Welcome to the club David and James!

FICC S

Additional Comment Regarding President's Message

In addition to Louis Laflamme's column regarding selling a collection – from the dealer's perspective... the September 2019 issue of American Stamp Dealer & Collector had an article by John Hotchner entitled "Downsizing and Exit Preparation. Well worth reading.

FICC S

Message about Future FICC Auctions

The FICC auctions are in a waning condition. The last few Newsletters contained relatively small auctions. [My desire is 75 lots.] The reason is simple: not much material is being submitted by members – and I (as auction manager) do not have ready access to more material. I fear that future auctions may have even fewer lots to offer.

Similarly, the number of bidders in each auction has also steadily declined. An easy hypothesis to understand this is... Long-time members have mature collections, and the "holes" they need to fill are scarce / high-value items. Needs for lower value items, are easily filled via internet sites. If this hypothesis is true, so be it.

The Bylaws indicate that there shall be a quarterly Newsletter/Journal and a quarterly auction. If members have possible solutions regarding obtaining additional lots to offer, please pass them on to myself or any of the other officers listed in the left column of the front page.

If members want me to continue to manage auctions with few lots, that is totally acceptable to me. If the auctions no longer serve the members' needs, that too is fine. At this point, I am looking for feedback from the membership on whether to amend the by-laws to, (1) run auctions less frequently – perhaps dictated by when there are 30 lots or more to offer (or whatever number is felt to be minimum), (2) just do away with the auctions altogether (which I would hate to do), or (3) proceed with quarterly auctions regardless of how few the number of lots.

Your opinions matter and will dictate the decision that the FICC officers adopt.

FICC 🖎

Mountainous Republic of Karabakh Revisited

By Kurt Streepy, FICC #18

I made a connection with a collector in Estonia in the 1990s who kept me well supplied with the first issues and covers of the former Soviet Republics – Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, etc. He also provided several overprints of USSR stamps that he said were used locally, such as the trident overprints used in Ukraine. In *FIRST ISSUES* V6N6, I reported on one such overprint from the Mountainous Republic of Karabakh. There was a set of eight printed on Russia B149-151 plus the label. The top of each stamp was overprinted "H. KAPAbAX APM. – 1993" with a value of 50.00 or 25.00 added at the bottom. The overprint was in Russian translated as "N.Karabakh Arm[enia] – 1993".



They have been in my stockbook since that time, but as I move forward creating album pages, I ran across them again. Now with the help of eBay, Wikipedia, and dealer websites, I was able to track down more information on the Mountainous Republic of Karabakh.

The Nagorno-Karabakh Republic or Mountainous Republic of Karabakh, is a breakaway state in the South Caucasus that is internationally recognized as part of Azerbaijan. The area is home to an Armenian majority. During the fall of the Russian Empire, conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan developed. This ended when both were taken over by the Bolsheviks. Stalin created the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast (NKAO) to allow autonomy to the area within the Azerbaijan SSR. During the fall of the Soviet Union, the area declared independence in 1991 by referendum. This led to the Nagorno-Karabakh War (1991-94) that ended in a cease fire. Nagorno-Karabakh currently controls the former NKAO along with some unrelated area that provides it a border with Armenia and Iran.

The state is only recognized by Transnistria, Abkhazia and South Ossetia, which are all unrecognized breakaway states in the Caucasus region. Armenia and Azerbaijan have been in discussion regarding the status of Artsakh since the 1990s. Armenia does not officially recognize the status of Artsakh to avoid confrontation with Azerbaijan. Armenia does, however, supply military personnel and economic support.

In 2017, a referendum was passed for a new constitution and to change the official name from Nagorno-Karabakh Republic to Artsakh Republic to better reflect the addition of lands outside the prior NKAO.

Once I began digging into the postal issues, I found no sight or mention of the stamps I had in my collection. I conferred with one dealer in Armenia and two dealers in Artsakh who all said they had not seen these issues. All three agreed any overprints on stamps of the USSR are bogus stamps produced to sell to collectors.

Continued on p.4

Karabakh Revisited (continued from page 3)

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On two dealer websites (as well as eBay), I found what is listed in Michel as #1-3 along with a set of souvenir sheets listed as #4 with some sub-lettering for perf vs. imperf and with control number (for international stamp market) and without control number (for local distribution). They are listed with an issue date of November 6, 1993.



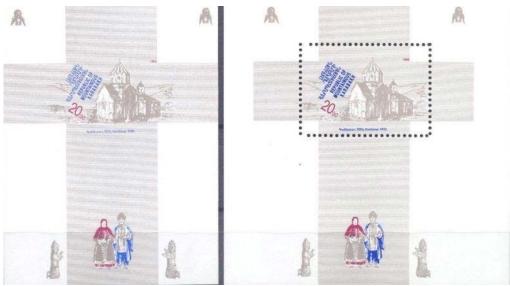
#1: the flag of Nagorno-Karabakh



#2: Arthur Mkrtchyan the first Chairman of the Supreme Council elected Jan 1, 1992, but assassinated April 14,1992



#3: Monument "We are Mountains"



#4 Church and traditional dress.

I only have easy access to Scott catalogs, so I generally stick to the Scott listing for my first issue collection. But this journey intrigued me, so I purchased the Mi #1-3 along with the set of #4 S/S variations. They arrived postmarked from Stepanakert, Artsakh on with stamps of Artsakh on the envelope. The cover was back-stamped from Yeghegnadzor, Armenia and delivered to me in the USA. It appears the Armenian transit cancels allowed the letters to move through the international mail.

I asked if any of the dealers could provide a #1 on cover, but they could not come up with anything. I offered to purchase another set if they could be used as postage on a cover addressed to me. Unfortunately, the first four issues were issued in Russian

rubles and were devalued when Nagorno-Karabakh moved to the Armenian dram in 1995. [Remainders of Mi #1-3 were overprinted in dram and listed as Mi #5-7.]

I'm not sure of all the factors used by Scott to qualify a country's stamps to be listed in their catalogue, but the fact that a cover from a "country" can make it to my mailbox seems acceptable for me. I can move the overprints to the stock pages of questionable overprints. I'll spend some effort later to determine if any of them are listed items.

[Ed Note: One criterion used by Scott is that the country is <u>officially</u> recognized by the UPU (Universal Postal Union).]

Continued on p.5

Karabakh Revisited (continued from page 4)

References

- 1. http://armenianstamps.org/Armenian-Stamps/907
- 2. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Republic of Artsakh
- 3. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nagorno-Karabakh

FICC >

AZAD HIND Stamps

By Tim Balm, FICC #91

In 1943, Nazi Germany produced a limited edition of stamps to support Subhas Chandra Bose's Indian National Army – called the Azad Hind. This "Army" was a militia force aimed at ridding India of British rule. It was formed in 1942 with support from Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan during WW II.

The stamps are not listed in the Scott Catalogue nor (I believe) in Gibbons. The only major catalogue that lists them is Michel, so much of my information comes from that catalogue and from Wikipedia (always to be taken as something that needs verification).

In total, there were 10 different denominations produced. Interestingly, Michel lists the semi-postal denominations first (Mi#1-7) – then the definitive denominations afterward (Mi#8-10). Nine of the denominations occur both perforated (A varieties) and imperforate (B varieties). The 10th variety (Mi#7) occurs only imperf. So, there are 19 different listings for the AZAD HIND "stamps".

To complete the description, every AZAD HIND stamp shows one of only six different designs (or vignettes). The six designs have the following denominations.

Design	Denomination	Color	Mi#
Sikh soldier firing a German machine gun	1 anna + 1 anna	Brown	Mi#1A and 1B
Farmer plowing a field	2 Anna + 2 Anna	Carmine	Mi#2A and 2B
	½ anna	Green	Mi.8A and 8B
	1 anna	Lilac Red	Mi 9A and 9B
Woman with a spinning wheel	$2\frac{1}{2}$ anna + $2\frac{1}{2}$ anna	Blue	Mi 3A and 3B
	2½ anna	Orange	Mi 10A and 10B
Nurse caring for a wounded patient	3 anna + 3 anna	Red	Mi 4A and 4B
Two swords and a chain over a map of India	8 anna + 12 anna	Purple	Mi 5A and 5B
	12 anna + 1 rupee	Lilac	Mi 6A and 6B
Three INA soldiers with a flag	1 rupee + 2 rupee	Black	Mi 7B

Shown at right are Mi#1A-6A (80%) – the complete set of perforated semi-postal issues.

It is unclear if there was any purpose for this small production of stamps other than getting revenue from collectors and dealers. Although the Michel catalogue provides CVs for used copies, I've found no references to a postal system that would use or accept these stamps. At this point, I am presuming they were cancelled to order for collectors, but I have nothing to indicate this is the case.



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Web Site News

By Nick Blackburn, FICC #181

This article is available online at tinyurl.com/ficcreport. Type the address into your browser and the online version has all the links already in place, so from there you can just click.

WEB SITE TRAFFIC

This continued to be slow from the last quarter. Average daily visitor numbers now stand at 10, and average daily page views at 38.

We have had visits from Cyprus, El Salvador and Brunei – bringing the country total to 112 out of a possible 241.

FICC S

Don't Be Afraid to Contact A Major Catalogue with Your Comments

By Tim Balm, FICC #91

I know of at least three present and former FICC members who have worked with the editors of the Scott Catalogue to make changes in their listings. These efforts even included getting an entity its own separate listing. My own experiences are much less dramatic, but I still enjoy the interactions I've had with the editors.

A couple of my recent interactions that ended positively include...

Two years ago I acquired some 1980 Nicaragua material. Included were full sets of Sc#1101, 1102 and 1103 with overprints in red and/or silver. The Scott Catalogue at that time listed #1101 with both red and silver overprints and #1103 with silver overprints. There was a notation in the catalogue after the #1101 listing that numbers had been reserved for a set of Rowland Hill stamps similarly overprinted in red or silver. "The editors would like to examine a set." Furthermore, a notation following the #1103 stamps with silver overprints stated, "The editors would like to examine the set overprinted in red."

As I now had all sets in my possession that the editors wished to examine, I contacted the Scott editorial staff. With minimal redirection, I entered an e-mail dialog with the "New Issues Editor". He expressed great interest in examining my stamps and provided me an address of where to send them. They

want to see the actual stamps because part of their process is to obtain scans for their catalogue listings. It took several months before the sets were returned – I guess because (like everywhere) folks have more responsibilities than time and my submission had not percolated to the top of anyone's "to do" list.

• In a similar experience, I purchased some sheetlets of Thailand Sc#2323k a few months ago. The listing in the 2019 Scott Catalogue indicated there were two versions of the #2323k sheetlets of 5 stamps with different colored backgrounds, But, I had just purchased 3 different sheetlets – all with different background colors. I once more contacted the New Issues Editor describing my purchase and attaching a scan of all three sheetlets. This time, no inspection by the editors was needed and the scans were sufficient to receive a reply that the notation would be updated. [It was too late to amend the 2020 catalogues, but should occur in the 2021 edition.]

Not all my interactions with Scott have been successful – defined as leading to a change in the catalogue listing. But these folks are sincere in their efforts to put out error-free publications and will objectively listen to your comments. Just be polite in your suggestions and keep the support brief but adequate.

FICC S

Auction #101

Welcome to FICC Auction #101. The auction closes on Nov 30, 2019. Bids received that after will not be considered. Please read descriptions carefully; lots occasionally have very similar descriptions. If you have questions, please contact me. Also, I will email scans of any specific lots you wish to see. ... All catalogue values (CVs) are taken from the 2020 Scott Catalogues.

AUCTION RULES

- 1. Highest bid wins. In the event of tie bids, earliest postmark or email date stamp breaks the tie. Bid what you are willing to pay; winning bids are rarely reduced.
- 2. Auctioneer reserves the right to reject unreasonable bids. Bids received after the deadline will not be considered. Auctioneer's decisions are final.
- 3. All lots are sold "as is" without warranty by auctioneer or FICC. In case of a dispute, the auctioneer will contact the seller and provide the name of the buyer and nature of the dispute to allow direct settlement.
- 4. An expertizing policy exists for lots with a realized price of \$75 or more (contact auction manager for details).
- 5. The club receives a 10% fee from each lot sold. The fee will be split between the seller and the buyer.
- 6. Shipping charges are added to buyer's total. Lots will be mailed using normal USPS rates. Winning lots totaling more than \$200 will be insured, certified or registered.
- 7. Payment may be requested before shipment.
- 8. Bidding in this auction constitutes agreement to these rules

SUBMITTING BIDS

Submit bids by email (Auctions@firstissues.org) or postal mail (Tim Balm, 655 Goodpasture Island Rd - Apt 216, Eugene, OR, 97401-1534, USA). If you are submitting bids by postal mail, you can (1) enter your bids on the bid sheet on page 9 and mail that, or (2) you can place your bids on a separate sheet of paper giving lot number, description, and the amount you wish to bid. Please include your name, FICC#, and address. Phone bids are not accepted.

#1s

Lot	Description	$\overline{\mathbf{CV}}$	Min Bid	Your Bid	Lot
1	Andorra (Fr) Sc#1-3 mh avg-f	\$3.80	\$1.00		1
2	Azad Hind Mi#1A (perf) mhr f/vf [paper adh, thins]		\$1.00		2
3	Azad Hind Mi#1B,4B,9B,10B (imperf) mlh 4 mrgn		\$4.00		3
4	Azerbaijan Sc#1-10 mhr 4-mrgn [#2 - white paper; others -	\$15.10	\$6.00		4
	grey paper]				
5	Barbuda Sc#1-11 mlh f/vf	\$178.00	\$75.00		5
6	Bermuda Sc#1 used(I-cxl) f/vf [wmk 1]	\$1.75	\$0.70		6 7
7	Bosn & Herz Sc#1a hr f/vf [perf tip foxing]	\$16.50	\$5.00		
8	Cuba Sc#1 used(I-cxI) 3+ mrgn	\$7.50	\$2.75		8
9	Eritrea Sc#1 mhr f/vf [paper adh]	\$10.00	\$4.00		9
10	Fr Oceania (Fr Polynesia) Sc#1 used(I-cxI) hr vf	\$1.60	\$0.70		10
11	Fr West Africa Sc#1 used(I-cxI) f/vf	\$0.90	\$0.40		11
12	Ghana Sc#1-4 mnh f/vf	\$1.00	\$0.50		12
13	Grenada Sc#1 used(I-cxl) avg [A15 St George cxl]	\$55.00	\$20.00		13
14	Haiti Sc#1 used(m-cxl) 4-mrgn	\$5.50	\$2.25		14
15	India - Intl Comm in Laos Sc#1-5 MNH f/vf	\$11.60	\$5.25		15
16	Iran Sc#1 used(m-cxl) 3-mrgn [remainder cto cxl]	\$325.00	\$100.00		16
17	Israel Sc#1 used(I-cxI) f/vf [perf 10]	\$0.25	\$0.10		17
18	Luxembourg Sc#1 used(m-cxl) 4-mrgn(1 close)	\$55.00	\$20.00		18
19	Malaya Sc#1//8 +10 [missing #5,7] used(m-cxl) f/vf	\$569.00	\$225.00		19
20	Norway Sc#1 used(m-cxl) 3-mrgn	\$165.00	\$50.00		20
21	Ruanda-Urundi Sc#6 mhr vf [1 missing perf]	\$0.25	\$0.10		21
22	Spain Sc#1a used(on piece) 3-mrgn [thick paper, TO joined]	\$25.00	\$10.00		22
23	Turkey Sc#1 mng 3+ mrgn	\$75.00	\$25.00		23
24	United Nations-Geneva Sc#1 mnh vf	\$0.25	\$0.12		24
25	USA Sc#1 used(m-cxl, red) 2+mrgns	\$350.00	\$100.00		25

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Email to: editor@firstissues.org http://www.firstissues.org Page 7

Mail Bid Auction 101 (continued from page 7)

	Change of Government	#1s		
26	Canada Sc#21 (Dominion) mnh f/vf [gum bend]	\$110.00	\$50.00	26
27	Hawaii Sc#74 (Republic) used(m-cxl) f/vf	\$1.50	\$0.60	 27
28	Neth Indies Sc#N38 (Nat Occ) mvlh f/vf	\$0.25	\$0.10	 28
29	Romania Sc#22 [Romania] used(m-cxl) 4-mrgn	\$70.00	\$28.00	 29
30	Syria Sc#300-305,C117-23 (Constitutional Govt) mnh/mlh f/vf [301,305,C118-9,C123 mlh]	\$26.60	\$10.50	 30
31	Tanganyika Sc#57-60 (Republic) mnh/mlh vf [57-9 mnh; 60 mlh] [also last issue]	\$1.25	\$0.50	 31
	#A1s/K1s/L1s/N1s/Z1s	S		
32	Saudi Arabia Sc#L1 used(??cto??) f	\$50.00	\$17.50	 32
	Misc Stamps from First Issu	ue Sets		
33	Australia - Victoria Sc#4 used(I-cxl) 4-mrgn(1 close)	\$100.00	\$35.00	 33
34	Canada-Nova Scotia Sc#3 used(I-cxI) 4-mrgn	\$300.00	\$125.00	 34
35	Fr Oceania (Fr Polynesia) Sc#2 mhr f	\$2.75	\$0.80	 35
36	France Sc#3 used(m-cxl) 4-mrgn	\$34.00	\$15.00	 36
37	German States - Bavaria Sc#2 used(m-cxl) 2+ mrgn	\$16.00	\$5.00	 37
38	Haiti Sc#2 mng 4-mrgn	\$12.00	\$4.00	 38
39	Haiti Sc#3 used(I-cxl) 4-mrgn	\$8.00	\$3.50	 39
40	India - Jhalawa Sc#2 mngai hr 4-mrgn	\$1.90	\$0.75	 40
41	India Sc#2 used(h-cxl) 3+ mrgns [SG Die 1]	\$35.00	\$12.00	 41
42	India Sc#2 used(m-cxl, blue) 3+ mrgns(2 wide) [SG Die 1]	\$35.00	\$14.00	 42
43	Labuan Sc#4 f/vf mhr	\$77.50	\$25.00	 43
44	Labuan Sc#4 f/vf mlh (with bottom selvage)	\$77.50	\$30.00	 44
45	Liechtenstein Sc#3b mvlh f/vf	\$350.00	\$100.00	 45
	Twins to #1s			
46	German States - Hanover Sc#2 used(m-cxl) 4-mrgn	\$9.00	\$4.00	 46
	Forgeries/Reprints			
47	Arg - Buenos Aires Sc#2-5 MNG [FORGERIES/REPRINTS]	\$11,800	\$4.00	 47
48	Heligoland Sc#1A mng hr 4-mrgn [REPRINT]	\$800.00	\$2.00	 48

End of Listing

Call for Mail Auction #102 Lots

DEADLINE FOR RECEIPT OF LOTS FOR MAIL AUCTION #102 is December 15, 2019. Please send singles, sets, FDCs and covers related to first issues -- basically anything you think other FICC members would be interested in owning. The full set of guidelines governing the auctions is published in each auction mailing.

- 1. Submit lots to: Tim Balm, 655 Goodpasture Island Rd Apt 216, Eugene, OR 97401-1534 USA.
- 2. Include an inventory with your name & address, 1-line descriptions of the lots including cat#, current cat value, and minimum accepted bid. [Note: Scott catalog is the default; first issues listed by other catalogs are welcome.]
- 3. The club receives a 10% fee from each lot sold -- split between the seller and the buyer.

FICC 🖎

First Issues Collectors Club

Membership Application or Renewal Form

Membership includes four issues of the FICC Newsletter, First Issues. Dues for members who receive the Newsletters electronically or who have United States mailing addressees are \$10.00 per year. Rates for members with non-U.S. addresses who receive the Newsletters via postal mail are US\$14.00 per year. Make checks payable to **Kurt Streepy** and send to the postal address below or use the online PayPal feature at our web site, www.firstissues.org. Thank you for your renewal or new membership!

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Send this form	with your dues to: Kurt St	reepy, 3128 E. M	attatha Dr., Bloomington, IN 47401, USA				
******	**********	******	**********************	脸			
	BID SHE	ET FOR	R AUCTION #101				
FF	•		November 30, 2019 Tons@firstissues.org)				
Name:			FICC#:				

Lot	Bid	Lot	Bid	Lot	Bid	Lot	<u>Bid</u>

IT'S RENEWAL TIME

Check your address label on this newsletter. If it has an expiration date of V27#4, that means your FICC membership expires with this issue. Please send in your dues renewal by December 15, 2019 to ensure that you do not miss an issue. Dues are \$10.00 per year for members who receive the Newsletters electronically or who have USA mailing addresses. Rates for members with non-U.S. addresses who receive the Newsletters via postal mail are \$14.00 per year. We believe this remains a bargain relative to most other stamp clubs with newsletters.

A membership renewal form can be found on page 9. If you have an email address, please include any changes. Make checks payable to **Kurt Streepy** (not FICC), and mail your dues to Kurt at the address on the renewal form. If you wish to pay electronically using PayPal or Skrill/MoneyBookers, please contact Kurt Streepy for instructions.

First Issues

Tim Balm, Editor 655 Goodpasture Island Rd Apt 216 Eugene, OR 97401-1534 USA

FIRST CLASS MAIL

