NEW MEMBER

This month we welcome our 3rd overseas member, but our 1st from the U.S.A. – making a total of 12 members altogether:

MRS HARRIET M. EPSTEIN.
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INTERESTS:- COLLECTS SPECIFIC WORLDWIDE JUDAICA TOPICS – AND DOES INCLUDE ISRAEL WHEN IT FITS INTO TOPICS.

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NOT SURPRISED!!

Did you know, that this year marks the 350th anniversary of the return of the Jewish community to Britain after its expulsion in 1290. It would have been an ideal opportunity for the Jewish community to have been represented on a stamp in Royal Mail’s Europa/Cultural Integration issue that is due to be released in October. Personally, I am not surprised that the Jewish faith has not been considered, by Great Britain – Are you?.
(I will keep my personal comments to myself!)
Although I would be interested in other peoples comments.

We will have to wait and see, how many of the Europa issues, actually have a Judaica connection. But Gibraltar’s Europa issue is a very colourful set of 4 stamps, that represent “The integration of immigrants as seen by young people” – this is a special theme for Gibraltar as all Gibraltarians descend from immigrants.
The stamps depict children from all races, including a Jewish boy, playing football, wearing a “yamulka/cappul”. – This is the little cap that all Jewish men wear.

Vatican City, issued for their Europa/Cultural Integration issue a stamp that depicted a Synagogue, Church and a Mosque. Although, I am a little confused as to which building is the Synagogue, and which is the Mosque.!
I wonder if we will see a Synagogue depicted on any other of the Europa/Cultural Integration issues, that are issued by other participating countries.

Although there won’t be a stamp issued by Britain – However, someone has produced a First Day Cover for the Queen’s 80th birthday issue, and produced a special cover and cancellation. – Marking this 350th anniversary. – The cover does look eye-catching with a colourful, red, white and blue, Star of David.
I don’t know if the person producing this cover is a collector or dealer,
But I find these type of covers, with a so-called Special Handstamp, a “money making racket”.
These days everybody seems to be producing covers with “Special Handstamps” – It makes you wonder, how collectable in value, they really are, or will become.
Despite being a keen Judaica collector, I won’t be including this cover in my collection.
Will you?

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COLLECTING IN SETS

Whenever possible, I always try to collect Judaica stamps in sets. That is, of course, if that particular issue was issued in a set.
For example, if a set of four stamps is issued, but only one of the stamps has a Judaica connection, I would still try and obtain the full set of stamps.
However, I see that the United Nations are launching a series of stamps, which will be issued over a period of eight years, starting this October 2006.
The stamps will depict a flag and a coin, from each of its 191 member nations.
Eight nations will appear on a miniature-sheet, and three miniature sheets will appear each year. (i.e. 24 nations per year).
Israel is to appear on one of these miniature sheets, (I believe they will be one of the first to appear on this issue starting in October).
The Israeli flag will be depicted, with an Israeli coin below the flag. The coin clearly depicts a “Menorah”. (A seven-branched candelabra).
The question is, do I collect just the Israel miniature sheet? – or do I collect the complete series?.

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Then the question is, will the United Nations just be issuing this series from the New York Headquarters, in cents only? – or will we see the same issue, being issued in Geneva and Vienna, at the same time, like we have seen in the past, on many of their issues.
This set could become costly!!!.

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JUDAICA ISSUE FROM GREAT BRITAIN – THAT I NEARLY MISSED!!!!

As well as collecting Judaica, I also collect Great Britain – I don’t know why I collect G.B. as they are quite mundane, but once you start, you seem to have to keep going to complete “the set or collection”.
The reason for mentioning G.B. is that the other month – June 2006 to be exact, Great Britain issued a set of stamps featuring Modern Architecture.
Like with all G.B. as soon as I obtained them from the Philatelic Bureau, I put them straight into the cupboard. (Crazy! – but I am sure others do the same!)
However, it was just the other day, that I was reading an article, about a building that has appeared on the 42p value. It depicts Maggie’s Centre in Dundee.
The designer of this building, is an American Architect named Frank Gehry.
He was born Ephraim Goldberg in 1929 in Toronto, Canada, - and moved to Los Angeles in the 1950’s. He studied architecture at the University of Southern California.
So now I will have to place this set, in my Judaica collection albums.

Incidentally, another building that he designed was the Walt Disney Concert Hall in Los Angeles – which features on a 37 Cent United States stamp in the Modern Architecture issue of 2005.

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SEARCHING FOR THE ELUSIVE PIMPERNEL
BY
RALPH LANESMAN (ISRAEL)

They seek him here, they seek him there, they seek Sir Percy Blakeney, everywhere.
I have had the same experience and never succeeded in locating the Judaica connection that I suspected, probably, foolishly, existed in a Canada Stamp (S.G. no
1022) issued on 8th September 1981 on the occasion of the birth centenary of Aaron Roland Mosher, founder of the Canadian Labour Congress. My first reaction was that his first name with its levitical connection and that the surname Mosher was well-known in pre-war Germany amongst the Jewish community, indicated a Jewish connection. I was also aware that it was common knowledge that some of the leading lights bearing that name had converted to Christianity in the first half of the 19th century, but that did not deter me. In my own mind, I also drew an invisible chain between him and Samuel Gompers (S.G. 985) who in 1950 was honoured by the USA on his birth centenary and who founded the American Federation of Labour in 1881 which he headed for 43 years until his death. Of Gompers there is adequate confirmation of his Jewish origins.

I now started on my detective work. I assiduously went through all my books, check-lists, articles and periodicals of Judaica, never locating any reference to my subject. I raised the issue with a number of leading lights of the Israeli Association of Judaica Collectors as to their knowledge of the stamp and not one head ever heard of the name.

I now began to cast my net even further. In Canada, where I visit frequently, I met several members of organized Jewish associations and academics who could not supply me with an answer to my perennial question. I telephoned the late Mr. Arieh Ben-David, a former president of the World Philatelic Congress of Israel, Holy Land and Judaica Societies, and a resident of Toronto, who informed me that he was unaware of any Judaica connection with the subject of my investigation. While in Toronto I checked up in the Library on books and references to Aaron Moser, as well in the Canadian Biographical dictionary and while I did find a lot of biographical material I did not find the answer to my question.

As a final resort, I decided to write to John Henry Richter, the doyen of Philatelic Judaica and author of Judaica in Postage Stamps, then of Ann Arbor, Michigan, USA and who lamentably passed away some years ago. In a lengthy reply he indicated that Moser’s name was not included in any of his supplemental lists and that would indicate that he did not find him to be Jewish in any way. This would have been obvious on the face of it for Jews of Canada of the 19th Century, did not organize labour unions and would hardly be the ones to found the Canada Congress of Labour and while one finds exceptions, he is not one. He concludes there is no reason to assume that anyone with a Jewish name is a Jew or that his parents might have been but he does the same as I have been doing: “I check Aaron Moser was not One of Us.” Richter admits that in his lists errors do occur so he always advises those who ask him to do their own checking.

He admits one “goof” of his own which I remember him of correcting at a later stage. It was to list General Sir Bernard Freyberg (S.G. 1552), Commander of New Zealand
forces in World War II as Jewish, possibly in thought transference of General Sir John Monash.

This however ended my saga, although I still dream of some magician pulling the rabbit out of his hat.
I might mention a number of other instances of the “Elusive Pimpernel”. I have a hazy memory of reading somewhere that George Dimitros, the Communist dictator of Bulgaria was of Jewish origin. I have found no positive proof of that and so will leave the matter to rest.

I also decided quite arbitrarily, that Max Euwe the Dutch Chess Grand-master was also Jewish. I am being gradually disabused of that suggestion but on the other hand Dr. B.J. Reuter, compiler of the Encyclopedia of Philatelic Judaica, lists another of my “pimpernels” Klara Zetkin, the German Revolutionary under the listing “Are They Jews.?” Under a similar heading Reuter lists Lev Dovator, a Major General and Cossack Cavalry commander “Are They Soviet Jews.?” But Henry John Richter does include Dovator in his listing, so where the experts fail to agree who am I to follow?.

One last example is the stamp honouring Terry Fox (Canada 1999) the one-legged runner, who raised many millions world-wide for children suffering from cancer. Reuter lists him in his book, but I have seen no other reference to this great human being in any of the publications of the period. I did search through his autobiography, but saw nothing to indicate that he was one of the tribe. One day, when Reuter’s Volume III of his Encyclopedia sees the light of day we may be able to garner some more information concerning Terry Fox’s inclusion in the Encyclopedia.

Should any of the readers of the news-letter have more information on any of the persons mentioned in this article, I would very much like to hear from you.

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