

Third Reich Study Group Bulletin  
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#### Editorial

Our regular editor, of long and faithful standing, has run into some temporary problems with both time availability and equipment maintenance which have resulted in the delay of publication of Bulletin No. 38 - the 1st quarter issue of 1976.

Being in receipt of numerous inquiries from members regarding the lack of any output from the TRSG, your Secretary/Treasurer has improvised this issue of the Bulletin in order to advise the membership of the delay and to assure you not only that the TRSG is alive, but that you will receive four Bulletins (Nos. 38-41) for your dues year in any event. This issue will be numbered 39 and will actually be the 1976 2nd quarter issue, with #38 to be subsequently published.

To all our members that heeded the request to renew for 1976, we extend our sincere thanks and apologies for the delay of the first 1976 Bulletin. Along these lines, it is noted that a relatively small number of members neglected to renew for '76 (hopefully by oversight). These members only will find a renewal form attached at the end of this Bulletin issue. It would be greatly appreciated if members finding this form attached would return same with dues as soon as possible.

The TRSG made considerable progress and improvements in the past year. Bulletin production was on schedule and contained a nice variety of valuable information. The TRSG auction proved to be highly successful. Special thanks should be extended to the following members who joined the regular "crew" and contributed greatly to our recent progress:

George Lewis, who took on the task of collating and mailing the bulletins;

Fred Stengel, who took on the function of auction manager;

Jim Lewis, who has recently been enlisted to assist in the reproduction of special information. Due to Jim's efforts, a new supply of the "Feldpost Cancellation Guide" (by H. Petersen) has been

Editorial, continued.

produced and is again available @ \$1 each from your Sec./Treasurer.

Naturally our continuing appreciation goes to those "regular" writers such as John Painter, Myron Fox, Dick Imus, etc., without whom there could be no Bulletin. It has also been encouraging to note the emergence of "new" writers such as Norm Gruenzner & Norbert Kannapin.

We are a Study Group and a successful group endeavor requires that there be participation by more than just a few. All members are encouraged to write articles on their particular specialties and/or offer whatever forms of assistance they might be able to provide. Remember: A preponderance of Feldpost articles in our Bulletin will naturally result if the Feldpost specialists are the only ones willing to write articles !  
R.J.H.

#### PUBLICATION REVIEW

"The Red Cross Mail Service For Channel Island Civilians 1940-45"  
by Donald McKenzie:

The most detailed and comprehensive work ever published on this subject was recently completed by Mr. McKenzie for the Channel Islands Specialists' Society and released coincident with that Society's annual convention at St. Helier, Jersey in March 1975.

Consisting of 82 pages, clearly and profusely illustrated, this book systematically describes all aspects of the Red Cross Message Service, including the results of a world-wide survey by the C.I.S.S. of holdings of this material for the purpose of establishing a relative degree of scarcity of the various forms, markings, etc..

This excellent publication is available from:

Picton Publishing  
Citadel Works  
Bath Road  
Chippenham, Wiltshire  
England

at the nominal cost of five pounds (roughly \$9.00 at time of this writing) and is highly recommended.

Mr. McKenzie has recently become a member of our own Third Reich Study Group and we are pleased to welcome such a distinguished philatelist to our number.

R.J. Houston

## FIELDPOST CENSORSHIP

by Norbert Kannapin

(translated by Dick Major)

Among the many specialty fields in philately we also include the censorship of mail. This is one of the most interesting fields and demands a profound knowledge of the specialist.

Although censorship was practiced even in ancient times without the permission or the knowledge of the sender - that is to say, since the beginnings of written communication and information - the field of censorship is only of philatelic interest since the censorship of mail was assumed by organs of the state.

During the war from 1939 to 1945, all belligerent powers practiced censorship of mail for reasons of national security. The examination of mail was also ordered for this reason in Germany by a specific law to that effect. This regulation applied in the first place to mail going to and coming from neutral countries, secondly to mail to and from allied countries and thirdly to the fieldpost between front and homeland, in both directions. Naturally commercial correspondence and prisoner of war mail was also subjected to these regulations. Of these various groups, I would like to single out the fieldpost and discuss this in more detail.

The requirement for censorship existed at higher headquarters for clearly understandable reasons. This examination of mail applied to all members of the German armed forces for both incoming and outgoing mail. Mail was examined for information affecting military secrecy, which included exact locations in operations areas, indications of losses, descriptions of units and their strengths, defeatist remarks, and so forth. Later on, when persons of foreign nationalities served in the German armed forces in increasing numbers, fieldpost censorship was even further intensified. Four special elements provided for this examination: The Army, Navy, Air Force and Waffen SS. In the Army postal service examination was carried out for the most part by the headquarters of individual commands. In spite of this, it can be stated that censorship was exercised in a much smaller measure than in the First World War. Of course considerably more mail was examined by the Army as compared to the other elements of the armed forces. In this regard, it should be noted that the total number of mail items transmitted by the Fieldpost system is estimated at approximately 33 billion pieces.

Censor's marks on naval letters are quite scarce, while up to now no censored letter of the air force had been known. By chance I obtained, in a recent exchange, a letter which had been censored by an air force censorship station. This may be the only letter of this sort now in collectors' hands. The location of this censorship station is still unknown. Waffen SS censorship of mail to and from foreign volunteers was practiced to a great degree and, for understandable reasons, there are few examples of such mail still in existence.

## FIELDPOST CENSORSHIP, continued.

Mail in transit was sorted at the Fieldpost censorship stations and mail was extracted from the flow for examination by the censor. Letters and cards which seemed innocent to the censor received the normal transit marking. This was executed in circular format and had the letters "AS", "Af", "Ag", etc. in a circle. The letter "A" stood for the word "Abwehr" (counterintelligence), while the following letter was an encoding of the particular censorship station. For example, "AS" was the code for the counterintelligence of the Waffen SS. Letters which seemed suspicious to the examiner and other letters selected at random were slit open on the back. The contents were extracted through this slit and were examined very carefully by various examiners, with some being examined by as many as six examiners. Each examiner had his specialty - such as languages, ciphers, codes, secret inks, etc..

After the completion of the examination and deletion of any objectionable text, the letter went back through the slit into the envelope again. Finally the slit was pasted shut with a sealing tape and this tape was then stamped with the examiner's stamp. The sealing tape bore the markings of the censorship station: Imprinted circles, 24 mm in diameter, in which was the Nazi eagle and the word "Feldpost-prufstelle" (Fieldpost censorship station). In the case of the Waffen SS, the text read "SS Feldpostprufstelle". Between the circles, the word "Geoffnet" (opened) was printed. Many cards and letters were chemically tested to detect secret inks and bear a diagonally applied, bluish stripe.

After the events of July 20, 1944, the performance of all postal censorship was withdrawn from the OKW (Armed Forces High Command) and was assigned to the National Security Office of the SS. At this time the individual censorship stations received the official designation "Zensurstelle". As a result, all the sealing tapes and censors' stamps were changed and from that time on, only the designation "Zensurstelle" appeared on them. Because of the relatively short time in use of the new "Zensurstelle" (August 1944 - May 1945), specimens with censors' marks from these stations are appreciably scarcer and for this reason, are to be valued considerably higher.

For the connoisseur, censored Fieldpost covers which went through censorship station "e" are especially interesting. The Wiesbaden and Koblenz Navy postoffices were served by this censorship station and all of the mail from the Atlantic fortresses, such as St. Nazaire, La Rochelle, Lorient, Royan, Dunkirque and the Channel Islands went through these postoffices. These items are among the rarities of censored Fieldpost.

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ATTENTION !

IF YOU FIND A 1976 RENEWAL FORM ATTACHED, PLEASE FILL OUT & RETURN  
WITH DUES ASAP !

## PANZER POST

by R.J. Houston

While "Feldpost" is itself a "specialty" within the area of 3rd Reich philately, it is still such a large and varied field that many sub-specialties have necessarily evolved.

The collecting of REGISTERED Feldpost covers from the various PANZER DIVISIONS of the German Army is one of these sub-specialties which has drawn my particular interest in recent years, since it was an area which not only needed some original research (to completely establish the Panzer Division Postoffice Kenn numbers and their dates of use), but could be reasonably contained and managed since it involved only some 30 divisions.

The proper presentation of such covers involves:

1. Identification of Kenn number;
2. " " Feldpost number;
3. Division "Order of Battle";
4. Division histories;

The results of research on the three-digit Kenn numbers assigned to Panzer Division postoffices at various points in time are presented in the chart of figure 2. Five-digit Feldpost numbers are identified by use of the "Suchdienst Vermisstenbildliste" and microfilm copies of the German "Feldpostuebersicht".

The Division "Order of Battle" chart presented in figure 1 indicates major elements of each Panzer Division and an "auxiliary" number used to designate the many smaller auxiliary elements of less than battalion size which were integral parts of a Panzer Division. In review of this listing, it can be observed that the Panzer Divisions were sequentially numbered from 1 through 27 and then followed by three more divisions which "broke" the pattern:

The 116th Panzer Division was organized in the spring of 1944 from remnants of the 16th Panzer Grenadier Division, retaining the tactical/auxiliary number (66) as well as the Kenn number (167) of that disbanded division.

The "Panzer Lehr" Division was formed late in 1943 from training (thereby the name "Lehr", meaning teach or train) units and fought in the west in 1944, including the Ardennes counteroffensive. This unit was assigned tactical number 130 and was often referred to as the 130th Panzer Division.

Last listed is the Panzer Division "Grossdeutschland" - unusual in that the various elements of the division were each designated "Grossdeutschland" rather than with a numerical designation. This was not a new division, but had only been upgraded to full Panzer Division status in late 1943, having originally been the Motorized Infantry Regiment "G.D." (1941) around which the Panzer Grenadier Division "G.D." was formed in 1942.

PANZER POST, continued.

A study of the tactical numbers (Auxil. Units column) reveals some attempt at a logical sequence which never could be carried through. Note that only three divisions (13th, 16th and 19th) actually had a tactical number identical to the designated division number.

To illustrate detailed composition and numbering of a typical Panzer Division, figure 3 presents a listing of the 23rd Panzer Division (as of 1943), compiled from the "Feldpostuebersicht" Part III, Issue 7, Volumes 1-7.

While an ordinary Feldpost cover can be recognized as being of PANZER origin by the process of decoding the five-digit Fp # and relating the result to the order of battle, there is no assurance that the letter was actually handled by the Panzer Division postoffice. Thus it can be seen that registered covers would be more desirable from the collector's standpoint, since the Kenn number displayed on such covers not only serves as a convenient "short cut" in locating and recognizing PANZER POST, but also provides the desirable "tie-in" of processing by a PANZER POSTOFFICE. The ideal PANZER POST cover would therefore be registered, bear the Kenn number of the division's postoffice and the Feldpost number of a division element as verified by the division's order of battle. Should such cover be cancelled on a date on which the division is known to have been engaged in some historic action, its interest and value to the collector are accordingly increased.

In addition to properly identifying a PANZER cover, it is naturally desirable to establish the geographical location from whence it came and thus additional research involving division history is required. National Archives microfilm Roll #60-15 provides an excellent series of brief and reasonably accurate unit histories from which two sample Panzer Division histories have been reproduced below. A file containing a master card for each division has proved to be of great assistance to this collector since scores of additional references to specific units on specific dates can be systematically logged onto these and frequently allow the pinpointing of a unit location exactly to the day.

#### 1st Panzer Division

Commander: Oberst Thunert;

Home station: Weimar, Wehrkreis IX;

1935-36: Formed at Weimar. Contained Pz Rgts 1 & 2 and Pz Gren Rgt 1;

Sept. 1939: Campaign in Poland;

May, 1940: Campaign in the West;

Late 1940: Supplied Pz Rgt 2 and cadres for forming 16th Pz Div.

Added Pz Gren Rgt 113;

June, 1941: Eastern front, northern sector. Subsequently transferred to the central sector;

Jan.-Feb. 1943: Transferred to France;

Late spring 1943: Transferred to Greece;

Aug. 1943: Returned to the eastern front, southern sector;

Nov.-Dec. 1943: Took part in German counteroffensive west of Kiev;

Oct. 1944: Transferred from the Vistula area to Hungary. Cited for distinguished action during German counterattack at Debrecen.

PANZER POST, continued.

2nd Panzer Division

Commander: Genmaj. Meinrad von Lauchert (age 40);  
 Home station: Wien, Wkr. XVII;  
 Known as "Dreizack" (trident) Division from its emblem. Personnel mainly Austrian and Volksdeutsche.  
 1936: Formed at Wurzburg, Wkr. XIII. Contained Pz Rgts 3 & 4 and Pz Gren Rgt 2;  
 1938: Transferred to Wien, Wkr. XVII after annexation of Austria;  
 Sept. 1939: Campaign in Poland;  
 May, 1940: Campaign in the West;  
 Late 1940: Supplied Pz Rgt 4 and cadres for forming 13th Pz Div. Added Pz Gren Rgt 304;  
 April 1941: Campaign in the Balkans;  
 Sept. 1941: Eastern front, central sector;  
 Summer 1943: Took part in the Kursk offensive;  
 Winter 1943-44: Engaged on the middle Dnepr. Suffered very heavy losses. Subsequently transferred to France, Somme area, for rest and refitting;  
 Spring 1944: Reformed at Wittlich in the Eifel area;  
 Dec. 1944: Spearheaded southern prong of Ardennes counteroffensive. Suffered heavy losses;

While the scope of this description has been purposely limited to the Panzer Divisions of the German Army, it can be (and currently is being) extended considerably further, with additional "fields" as follows:

1. Other Panzer Divisions:  
A number of other Panzer Divisions actually existed under the Waffen SS and the Luftwaffe;
2. Panzer Corps:  
Several of these command frameworks existed to control groups of Panzer Divisions and had certain identifiable support elements integrally assigned such as signals, supply, police and post-offices (400 series of tactical numbers).
3. Panzer Armies:  
Initially designated "Panzer Gruppen" (Groups) and subsequently upgraded to full "Panzer Armee" status, these consisted primarily of Panzer Corps with their Panzer Divisions, but also embraced command of a number of regular army corps with their corresponding infantry and other types of divisions. While essentially a command framework, each Army also had a number of miscellaneous and support units of Army level (Heerestruppe), including many postoffices (500-899 series of tactical numbers).

Additional pages containing Division histories and Unit/Fp # breakdowns for other Panzer Divisions will be published in future issues of the Bulletin should response of the membership indicate sufficient interest.

Panzer Divis.	Regiments				Battalions					Auxil Units
	Pz.	Pz. Gren.	Pz. Art.	Recon	Engr	Sigs	A.T.	Flak		
1	1	1	113	73	1	37	37	37	299	81
2	3	2	304	74	2	38	38	38	273	82
3	6	3	394	75	3	39	39	39	314	83
4	35	12	33	103	4	79	79	49	290	84
5	31	13	14	116	5	89	77	53	288	85
6	11	4	114	76	6	57	82	41	298	57
7	25	6	7	78	7	58	83	42	296	58
8	10	8	28	80	8	59	84	43	---	59
9	33	10	11	102	9	86	85	50	287	60
10	7	69	86	90	10	49	90	90	302	90
11	15	110	111	119	11	209	89	61	277	61
12	29	5	25	2	12	32	2	2	303	2
13	4	66	93	13	13	4	13	13	271	13
14	36	103	108	4	14	13	4	4	---	4
15	8	104	115	33	15	33	78	33	---	33
16	2	64	79	16	16	16	16	16	274	16
17	39	40	63	27	17	27	27	27	297	27
18	18	52	101	88	18	98	88	88	---	88
19	27	73	74	19	19	19	19	19	272	19
20	21	59	112	92	20	92	92	92	---	92
21	22	125	192	155	21	200	200	200	305	200
22	204	129	140	140	22	140	140	140	289	140
23	23	126	128	128	23	51	128	128	278	128
24	24	21	26	89	24	40	86	40	283	40
25	.9	146	147	91	25	87	87	87	284	87
26	26	9	67	93	26	93	93	93	304	93
27*	127	140	---	127	127	127	127	127	---	127
116	16	60	156	146	116	675	228	228	281	66
Lehr	130	901	902	130	130	130	130	130	311	130
"GD"	GD	GD	---	GD	GD	GD	GD	GD	---	GD

\* Below standard complement - only fractional elements from other divisions.

Note: Units with no Flak Btltn. indicated, had a 4th (Flak) Btltn. included in the Artillery Rgt.

FIG. 1 - ORDER OF BATTLE

FIG. 2 - POSTOFFICES OF THE PANZER DIVISIONS

Panzer Divis.	Tact. No.	Feldpost No.	Kenn Numbers					
			1940	1941	1942	1943	1944	1945
1	81	22979	909	909	909	909	909	909
2	82	35046	135	135	135	135	x	330
3	83	17222	650	650	650	650		660
4	84	37311	130	130	130	130	130	762
5	85	30521	778	778	778	778	778	778
6	57	19831	294	294	294	294	294	294
7	58	15035	355	355	355	355	355	355
8	59	27559	548	548	548	548	548	548
9	60	09132	608	608	608	608	608	608
10	90	21630	985	985	985		x	
11	61	07865	x	433	433	433	433	433
12	2	16277	x	806	806	806	806	806
13	13	08874	x	729	729	729	729	729
14	4	10262	x	828	828		455	455
15	33	05254	x	697	697		x	
16	16	25537*	x	445	445	x	326	326
17	27	22764	x	263	263	263	263	263
18	88	47400	x	287	287		x	
19	19	11324	x	104	104	104	104	104
20	92	47680	x	508	508	508	508	508
21	200	21589	x		615		793	793
22	140	46216		x	796		x	
23	128	42550		x	788	788	788	788
24	40	12654		x	128	x	184	184
25	87	09209		x		166	166	x
26	93	48884		x		278	278	278
27	127	48484		x		326		x
116	66	13858			x			167
Lehr	130	40076			x		730	730
"GD"	400	42200			x		602	602
			1940	1941	1942	1943	1944	1945

\* Later 48484  
(ex-P.O. 127)

x

= Did not exist as Pz. Divis.

## Fig. 3 - The 23rd Panzer Division

	<u>Feldpost No.</u>		<u>Feldpost No.</u>
Divis. Hdqtrs.....	37641	Supply Troop 128:	
Pz. Rgt. 23:		Hdqtrs.....	34886
Rgt. Hdqtrs.....	11206	Column 1.....	44795
Btln. I.....	08403(A-E)	2.....	45252
Btln. II.....	40345(A-E)	3.....	16615
Btln. III.....	01650(A-E)	4.....	17264
Pz. Gren. Rgt. 126:		5.....	07944
Rgt. Hdqtrs.....	00352	6.....	19542
Hdqtrs. Co.....	45323	7.....	20177
Btln. I.....	32377(A-E)	8.....	33046
Btln. II.....	32811(A-E)	9.....	36986
Co. 9.....	44045	10.....	23048
Co. 10.....	27491	11.....	21790
Co. 11.....	35690	12.....	22407
Pz. Gren. Rgt. 128:		13.....	46815
Rgt. Hdqtrs.....	40446	14.....	35246
Hdqtrs. Co.....	47155	Vehicle Repair:	
Btln. I.....	33878(A-E)	Co. 1-128.....	40356
Btln. II.....	34262(A-E)	Co. 2-128.....	27737
Co. 9.....	46806	Co. 3-128.....	28856
Co. 10.....	32301	Medical:	
Co. 11.....	56451	Co. 1-128.....	46429
Pz. Artil. Rgt. 128:		Co. 2-128.....	47693
Rgt. Hdqtrs.....	17831	Ambulance:	
Btln. I.....	23535(A-D)	Platoon 1-128.....	42248
Btln. II.....	28834(A-D)	Platoon 2-128.....	24313
Btln. III.....	32747(A-D)	Platoon 3-128.....	26964
Observ. Battery.....	14640	Pz. Recon. Btln. 23...	20150(A-G)
Anti-Tank Btln. 128:		Pz. Signals Btln. 128.	43353(A-D)
Hdqtrs.....	45426	Flak Btln. 278.....	44211(A-D)
Co. 1.....	46737	Field Res. Btln. 128..	34820(A-D)
Co. 2.....	47413	Provis. Depot 128.....	41684
Pz. Engr. Btln. 51:		Bakery Co. 128.....	29141
Hdqtrs.....	04743	Butchery Co. 128.....	41376
Co. 1.....	07732	Postoffice 128.....	42550
Co. 2.....	28276	Police Detach. 128....	43035
Co. 3.....	21920	Weapons Rep. Co. 128..	57479

## LUFTFELDPOST SERVICE IN SCANDANAVIA ??

While the Luftfeldpost service to the Eastern front (4.42 - 7.44) has been well covered in publications such as the outstanding book "Die deutsche Feldpost im Osten und der Luftfeldpostdienst Osten im Zweiten Weltkrieg" by Schmitt and Gericke, the question of a similar service to Scandanavia (using the blue air-permit stamps) still remains.

The Clement and Michel catalogs make brief, vague statements which would lead one to conclude that the air-permit stamps were used in both Africa and Scandanavia. While there was certainly at least one other Luftfeldpost service which used air-permit stamps ("Inselpost" in the Aegean Islands), the facts do not substantiate the use of such stamps in Africa at all.

Speculation arises, however, as to whether such an arrangement may have been established for forces in northern Norway. The speculation has been generated by a number of covers bearing 1 or 2 blue air-permit stamps, originating from units known to be in northern Norway (Narvik area) and cancelled in late 1944 and early 1945 (while none are known from the 4.42 - 7.44 period from this area).

The writer invites correspondence on this subject and would very much appreciate any further information which may be in the hands of our members. The assistance of all members is solicited herewith to participate in an effort to compile a listing of all known Luftfeldpost covers (other than "Inselpost") dated after July, 1944. Please forward information on such covers (include date, Feldpost number and whether 1 or 2 blue air-permit stamps) to the writer. Further developments and/or conclusions will be reported in future issues of the TRSG Bulletin.

R.J. Houston

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A sincere welcome to the following new members added effective Jan. 1, 1976:

Guy Lethiecq	Paul D. Reinert
David Maye	James T. Lee
Lemuel C. Johnson III	Frederick A. Willshaw
George H. Siehl	Herbert P. Reinhardt, M.D.
Andrew Metropolis	James E. Lewis
Robert Velten	John F. Matschinegg
Stephen Strausberg	Gaylord Yost
Robert Bolling	William E. Wentworth
Michael Rivkin	James E. Norling
Ray A. Carlson	Michael E. Somers
William E. Kahn	Pauline Graeber
Fred Nord	William Lesh
Elwood S. Poore	William G. Mattix
Rick Wagner	Thomas F. Clarke

## PRICES REALIZED - TRSG AUCTION NUMBER 3

<u>Lot No.</u>	<u>Price</u>	<u>Lot No.</u>	<u>Price</u>	<u>Lot No.</u>	<u>Price</u>
1	2.55	38	No bid	75	9.25
2	2.75	39	6.25	76	5.50
3	3.00	40	3.50	77	4.75
4	2.75	41	6.25	78	6.00
5	3.75	42	17.50	79	8.00
6	2.75	43	13.00	80	3.50
7	3.00	44	39.00	81	4.75
8	2.75	45	3.50	82	No bid
9	3.00	46	4.75	83	7.50
10	8.25	47	4.50	84	12.00
11	2.75	48	No bid	85	2.75
12	5.00	49	No bid	86	2.50
13	2.75	50	No bid	87	6.50
14	3.50	51	3.50	88	11.00
15	2.75	52	No bid	89	3.50
16	2.50	53	5.50	90	No bid
17	14.00	54	5.50	91	Withdrawn
18	5.50	55	3.50	92	"
19	No bid	56	6.00	93	"
20	9.00	57	4.75	94	5.00
21	No bid	58	8.25	95	15.25
22	7.50	59	25.50	96	13.75
23	18.00	60	3.50	97	10.25
24	4.75	61	4.50	98	Withdrawn
25	4.80	62	5.00	99	4.50
26	3.50	63	3.75	100	3.00
27	3.80	64	3.50	101	No bid
28	3.50	65	4.50	102	4.50
29	3.80	66	4.50	103	3.00
30	5.75	67	5.75	104	2.50
31	4.00	68	5.75	105	2.50
32	3.75	69	3.00	106	8.00
33	4.25	70	5.00	107	5.50
34	5.00	71	10.00	108	No bid
35	4.00	72	11.25	109	8.00
36	10.00	73	10.25	110	2.50
37	No bid	74	10.00		

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As you can see, the vast majority of the lots were sold. It is anticipated that the next Bulletin will contain Auction #4 and members are urged to dig out their duplicates and/or other material which they no longer need and forward to our Auction Manager, Fred Stengel. Please include a description of each lot just as you would want it listed and indicate bidding basis as OPEN, RESERVE (with price) or state a SUGGESTED BID.