



THE SOCIETY OF RUSSIAN PHILATELY

Bulletin 77, Summer 2026

Steve Volis, Nik Sorokin - Bulletin Editors

IN THIS ISSUE

- **President's Letter**
- **New Members**
- **Rossica's Participation in the Boston 2026 World Stamp Expo**
- **After Action Report on Rossica Meeting in Boston**
- **Awards Won by Rossica Members at the Boston World Stamp Expo**
- **Rossica Society photos from Boston**

President's Letter



Greetings, fellow Rossica members!

I hope everyone had a great summer and is looking forward to a cooler rest of the year. It has been very hot here in Alabama as I am writing this in mid-August. Hopefully, when you read this, the weather will be more enjoyable.

This year, 2026, has just flown by. PIPEX was in April, Boston was in May, and my trip to France ran to the end of July. It's good to be home and to get back into the cycle of shows, starting with judging INDYPEX in September.

As I mentioned in my Journal letter, PIPEX was a fantastic show: great exhibits, a well-attended meeting with a presentation, and some interesting material on the floor. Boston 2026 was also a huge success for Rossica. Through the hard work of our officers, the booth was constantly busy. We signed up at least ten new members, sold a bunch of books, and sold back issues of the Journal. Steve Volis was also successful in signing up several dealers for future ads in the Journal.

The exhibits were amazing, with a number of Rossica members winning medals. Dmitry Frenkel won three Large Golds; Rossica Vice President Semyon Brayman won a Large Gold and a Gold in the Literature class for the Disinfection of Correspondence book; Rossica Secretary Vesma Grinfelds won two Golds; Sam Melamed and Esa Karkas won Gold; Rossica Librarian Greg Mirsky won Gold in the Literature class for the Revenue Stamps Catalog; David Jay and Bernard Furnon won Large Vermeils; Steve Volis received Vermeil for the *Rossica* journal; Igor Ryss and Valentin Levandovskiy received Large Vermeils in the Literature class; Dzintars Grinfelds received LV-level points for his two one-frame exhibits. A great showing by Rossica!

The membership meeting was well attended, with nearly 20 members present, and the presentation by S. Brayman on his Zemstvo postal history was nothing short of amazing.

The dealers' floor was packed with dozens of booths featuring lots of great material, though Russian postal items were limited. However, at the poorly advertised postcard show located on the second floor near the presentation rooms, there was one dealer with an extensive stock of postcards—both Imperial and Soviet—plus ephemera. I was able to add 30 St. Eugenia cards to my collection.

I had to leave Boston early to judge my local show. Then a week later, I was off to France to visit my daughter. As luck would have it (okay, I did plan it), the Paris PLANETEXPO was being held the first weekend we were there. This is the national French show, on par with our GASS. There, I had very good luck finding French dealers with Russian material, and I did take some home.

I also spoke with Maxime Citerne, who is helping Rossica members in Europe form a European Rossica Chapter. The French have been holding local meetings for over a year and wish to become affiliated with Rossica. We think this is a great idea! As I write this, the Society is preparing an information package on how to become a chapter according to our Constitution. They should have the package by the end of the summer. If anyone is interested, please send me an email and I will provide you with a copy of the packet and the POC in Europe.

That's about it for now. I'm still trying to catch up, and I have judging lined up in September. In closing, please keep exhibiting at shows—it is the best way to get other collectors interested in Russian philately. Hopefully, I'll get back to work planning local meetings for next year. Until then, take care of your families and yourselves. Enjoy the fall and winter holidays and keep on stamping.

Raymond J. Pietruszka, Rossica President

New Rossica Members

We welcome the following new applicants into the Rossica Society:

2268 - Petr Kovalev, Russia
2269 - Rene Hillesum, Netherlands
2270 - Oleg Feldman, Austria
2271 - William Fisher, TX, USA
2272 - Kin Chi Wong, Hong Kong
2273 - Matthew Chepelevich, CO, USA
2274 - Dr. Christopher Kolker, CT, USA
2275 - Tomas Babravicius, France

2276 - Alan Dolinko, IL, USA
2277 - Shivshankar Nair, Portugal
2278 - Alexander Tashtchiev, Israel
2279 - Viktor Maznyi, Canada
2280 - Ilya Burilov, OR, USA
2281 - Martyn Hladyk, NJ, USA
2282 - Prof. Rodrigo Zeidan, China

Rossica's Participation in the Boston 2026 World Stamp Expo



It has been a long 10 years since the last World Stamp Expo was held in the United States and it left wonderful memories of our society's participation at that New York show. That nostalgia for Rossica camaraderie got another jolt of togetherness this spring at the Boston 2026 World Stamp Expo, the 12th international philatelic exhibition held in the United States. It took place from May 23 to May 30 at the Boston Convention and Exhibition Center. The Rossica table was well staffed during the show. As in the past, it was a great place to catch up with old friends and make new ones. There were outstanding Russian area collections exhibited at the Expo by Rossica members, and just as he did in New York, our journal's editor Steve Volis made the rounds of auction houses and found new advertisers for our award-winning publication. Additionally, the ranks of Rossica members were once again substantially increased, as can be seen from the new members list above. There really is nothing better than face-to-face contact and interaction to help us remember, and our potential members to understand, what the Rossica society is all about.

As usual, the Rossica Society held its annual

meeting at the Boston Expo. The minutes of that meeting are published below. Our Vice President Semyon Brayman gave an excellent presentation at the meeting about rare and, in some cases, unique examples of zemstvo stamps used on covers contained in his outstanding collection.

As can be expected these days, many formal and informal photos were taken by phone cameras at the show. I would like to thank Greg Mirsky and Vitaly Geyfman for sharing their pictures for publication in this Bulletin. Those, along with a few of my photos are shown on the pages that follow.

The Boston show was a joyful event, a real shot of adrenalin for enjoying our favorite hobby and being a member of the Rossica family. Too bad that for those of us who live in the United States it will be another ten long years before the next such international exhibition is held here. But perhaps we can make a greater effort to attend the yearly Rossica meetings that are held at various large local philatelic exhibitions? Sadly, attendance, including mine, at these events has been quite paltry over the years. It would be nice to have more of us get together more frequently at them to talk stamps and enjoy each other's company. How about it? We really shouldn't have to wait ten years for another good adrenalin rush!

Nik Sorokin



After-Action Report on Rossica Meeting at Boston Stamp Show, 24 May 2026

1. On Sunday at PM the Rossica Society held a membership meeting in Rm 157B of the Convention center.
2. There were 17 Rossica members in attendance
3. The officers each discussed the status of the Society from their portfolio:
 - The President, Ray Pietruszka, gave a welcome and a general overview of the Society. He then turned it over to the other officers.
 - The Treasurer, Steve Volis and Journal Editor, provided a review of the membership numbers, which stand at 260 members worldwide. There are members from 40 different countries. Treasury is in good shape, and the Society is covering all its expenses from year to year.
 - The Journal continues to be produced every six months and is a first-class publication. Thanks to the work of Steve and Nik. It is entered in the literature competition at this show.
 - Greg Mirsky, Librarian, made the following report:
 - i. The library is the largest repository in the West. He is currently working on digitizing publication. The purpose of this effort is to make the materials more accessible to members of the Society and to help preserve the materials from damage or loss due to the

mailing process.

- ii. Greg also maintains the Rossica Identification Service (RIS). Members can submit a request free; for non-members it is \$5.00.
- iii. Greg is hosting the Facebook site, which currently has over 460 members using the service. Yes, many are not Rossica Society members.
4. From the floor a question was asked about chapters. As the Society does not have any local chapters but a couple are under discussion; one in the mid-West and the other in France. The leadership needs to formalize the process, but individuals are free to organize their own meetings.
5. The President closed the membership meeting with many thanks to the current board for the great job they have been doing. And a reminder that members need to be prepared to step up to the various leadership positions when the current Board moves on.
6. The meeting was followed by a presentation by Semyon Brayman, Vice President, on Zemstvo postal history based on his 128-page exhibit, many of the covers being unique. The presentation was excellent and well received.

*Submitted for the Secretary;
Raymond J. Pietruszka*

ROSSICA PALMARES AT BOSTON 2026

- Dmitry Frenkel** "International Airmail in Russian Empire, RSFSR and USSR 1870-1941" 8 frames 96 points LG
Dmitry Frenkel "Stamps of RSFSR 1918-1923" 8 frame 8 frames 95 LG
Dmitry Frenkel "Postal History of Odessa 1897-1900" 8 frames 95 LG
Semyon Brayman "Zemstvo Postal History of Russian Empire XIX Century" 8 frames 95 LG
Semyon Melamed "DELAG - The World's First Airline: Development of Airmail Service 1910-1919" 8 frames 93 G
Esa Kärkäs "Imperial Russia including the Kingdom of Poland 1857-75" 5 frames 91 G
Vesma Grinfelds "Cancellation Types of the Provisional Era in Latvia: 1919-1921" 8 frames 91 G SP
Vesma Grinfelds "Postmarks of Mail Routes Within the Latvian Territory of Russia: 1765-1858" 8 frames 90 G
Bernard Furnon "The Zemstvos Posts of Russia" 5 frames 88 LV
David A. Jay "Mail Service in Rural Russia: Volostnoe Pravlenie Offices, 1895-1917" 5 frames 86 LV
Dzintars Grinfelds "Failures of the WWI Imperial Russian Mute Cancels Within Latvia: 1914-1918" 1 frame 86 points
Dzintars Grinfelds "Imperial Russian Machine Cancels of Riga: 1908-1917" 1 frame 85
Igor Grigorian "Production Archival Material and Final Appearance of 1993 "Garni" Stamp" 1 frame 80

Literature

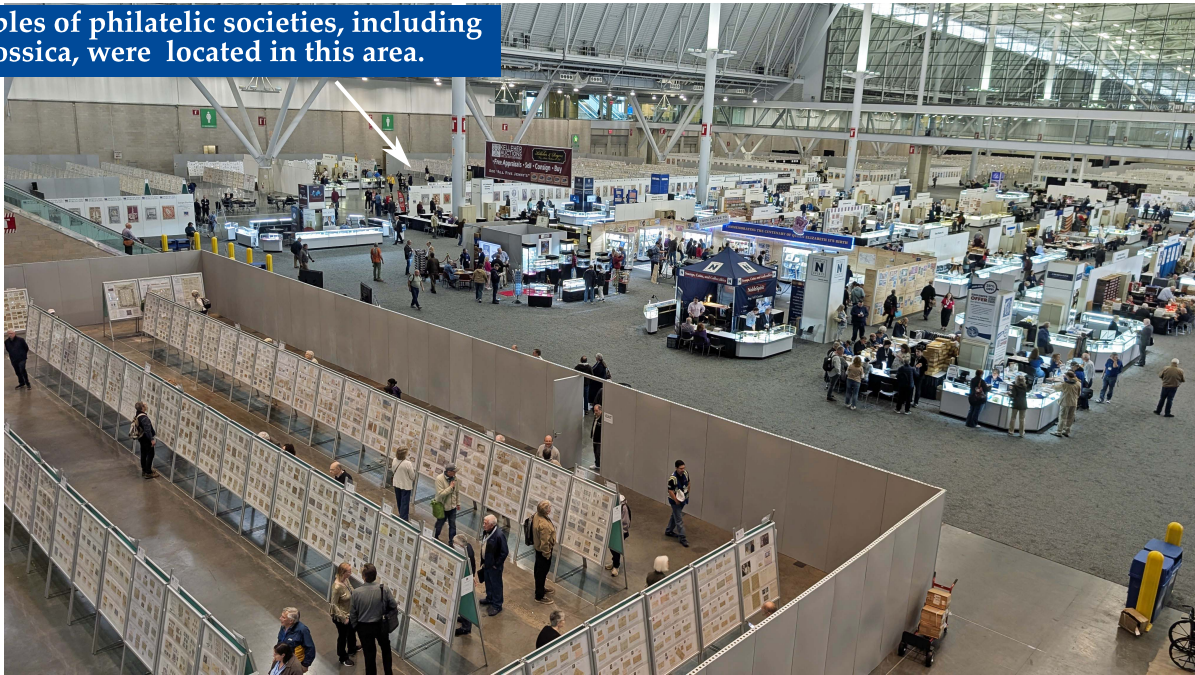
- Semyon Brayman** "Disinfection of Correspondence in the Russian Empire" 90 G
Gregory Mirsky "Revenue Stamps of Russia Catalog," vol I, II 90 G
Igor Ryss "History of Kronstadt in Postal Documents 1704 - 1945" 86 LV
Valentin Levandovskiy *World of Russian Philately* journal 85 LV
Steve Volis *Rossica* journal 81 V

A special separate exhibition was featured at Boston 2026 World Expo known as a **Polar Salon**. Rossica member **Paal Berg Helland** received 91 point and Gold for his 5-frame exhibit "Via Siberia".

NOTE: One frame exhibits are awarded points but no medals at such exhibitions.

Photos from the Boston 2026 Expo

The tables of philatelic societies, including Rossica, were located in this area.



The Rossica Society's team that manned the table.
L to R: Steve Volis, Greg Mirsky, Ray Pietruszka,
Nik Sorokin, Semyon Brayman



Nik and Steve with
Leon Finik (Loral Stamps)



Rossica Librarian Greg Mirsky, Rossica Secretary Vesma Grinfelds, and Rossica member Dzintars Grinfelds.



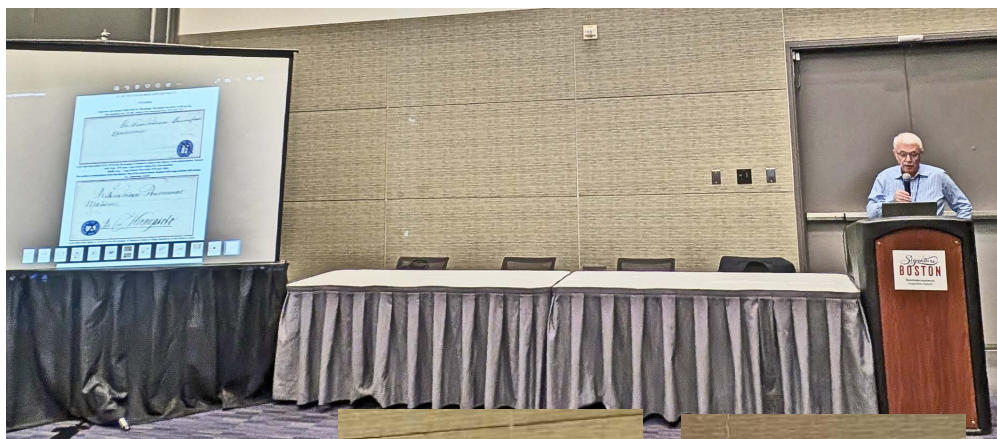
A philatelic discussion with Leon Finik, Greg Mirsky, and Andrew Farberov.



Our Rossica table was a great place to get together and socialize. Note all of the journals and other publications that were being offered for sale. By the end of the show's third day most of them had been sold. There is definitely an interest in Russian philately out there!



Group photo of most of the attendees at the Rossica Society's annual meeting at the Boston 2026 Show.



Semyon Brayman

At the official Rossica Society's annual meeting the President, Treasurer, and Librarian provided brief reports on the present-day status of the Society. The reports were followed by a presentation from the Rossica Society's Vice-President Semyon Brayman, who showed and described some of the rare and unique zemstvo covers franked with zemstvo stamps that he has in his collection.



Ray Pietruszka,
Rossica President



Steve Volis, Rossica
Treasurer and Journal Editor

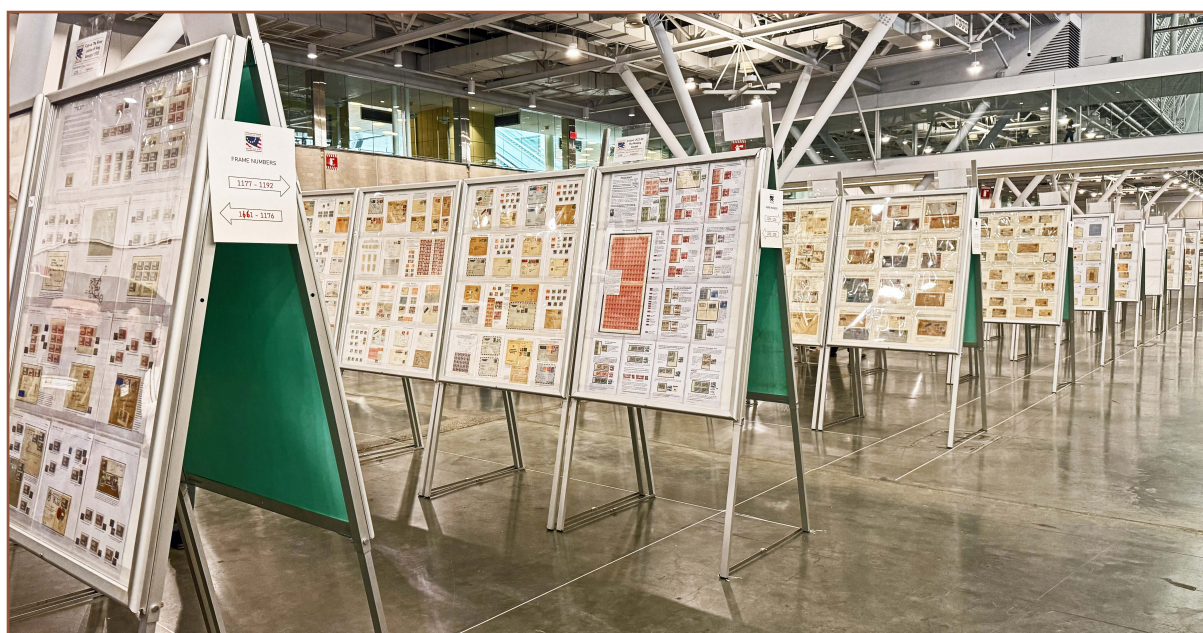


Dr. Greg Mirsky,
Rossica Librarian

The American Revolution against British rule began in Boston, in 1776, 250 years ago. The Expo's award medal's design commemorates that historic event.



Gold fellows: Greg Mirsky, Semyon Brayman, and Dmitry Frenkel. Between them they won a total of four Large Gold and two Gold medals in Boston!



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