

Colborne show gets stamp of approval

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The room is welcoming, like a favoured reading room. Soft pockets of light are thrown from lamps set out on tables. Everywhere are what appear to be books, open on tables, alphabetically sorted in shelves.

But there, off to the side, there's a man rummaging through a box of bits of paper. There are two ladies nearby, bent with concentration in the same activity.

Another woman digs in a box, then extends arm, the better to peer through her bifocals at a tiny square of paper held by tweezers in her right hand.

Aaah, it's the 14th annual Apple Country Stamp Show in Colborne. These folk are philatelists - and jolly ones, at that.

"Who won that last draw?" a stamp dealer from Brantford asks aloud. He has his door prize tickets set off to the side, surrounded by stamps in albums, in sleeves, loose in boxes and even under glass. He's happily searching for finds of his own ...

"None of your business!" a second dealer from London responds. "I have this sewn up!"

There are guffaws from throughout the room.

The 10 dealers who have come year after year to the Colborne Stamp Club's annual sale at the Colborne Legion seem to enjoy one another's repartee as much as they enjoy the visitors who come through the door (no charge) in search of stamps for their collections.

The Colborne show enjoys a reputation for welcoming fun and comfort. Visitor Al Hines came all the way from Oshawa with wife Wendy and kibbited with the dealers after completing his business.

While the era of "snail mail" may be waning, the variety and beauty of stamps from around the world can't help but grab one's interest on some level. Whether collecting by country, by theme, shape, size or date, it's aesthetically pleasing to look at stamps. Even mistakes in printing or issue are collected - and for big money!

One thing leads to another: a stamp invariably opens the door to so much more - history, the artistry, the reason for the stamp's issue, on and on it goes.

As you search or view or ponder, you can also talk with other aficionados. Stamp collecting is a highly social activity.



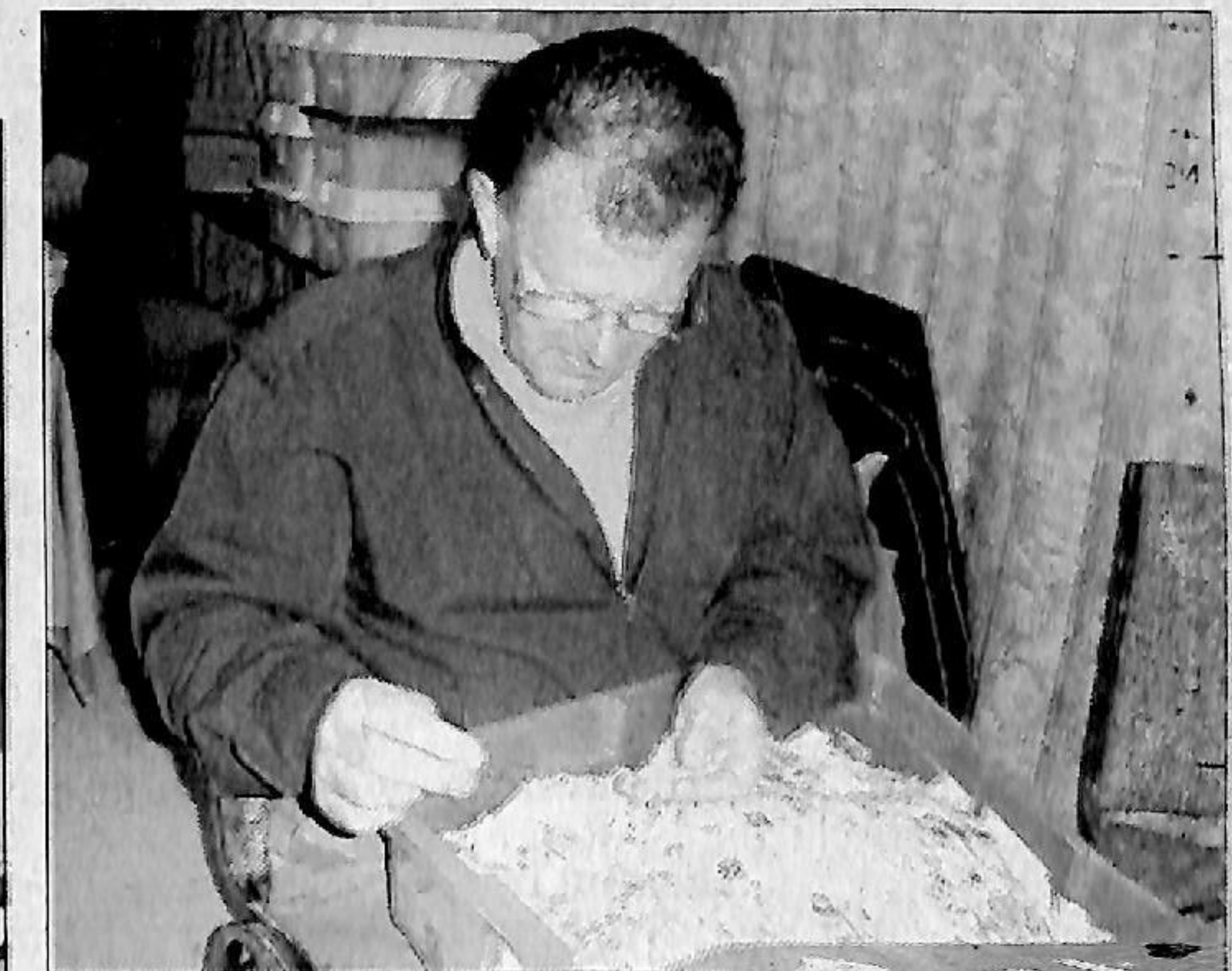
Avidly studying the fine details on historic stamps are dealer George S. Wegg of Toronto, left, and Derrick Paul of the Colborne Stamp Club.



Beryl Mutton of Shiloh was in search of themes stamps to augment her collection.



May Johns of Cobourg pours through a box of loose stamps in search of treasure for her own collection.



Collector Guy Barsi of Trenton searches for stamps.

PHOTOS BY MANDY MARTIN



Dealer Gordon Treffry of London.



Colborne Stamp Club member Germaine James takes a turn at the club's display table at the Colborne Legion last



From left, Bob Thorne of Loyalist Stamps in Brampton, John Geddes of Unionville Stamps and collector Dave Lloyd of Trenton.