

Lambda Philatelic Journal

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We look forward to hearing from you, our readers and members, for comments, ideas and articles for future issues.

We encourage advertising and correspondence between readers regarding their philatelic interests.

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POST
KORT
CARTE POSTALE



Åren 1638—1655 hade Sverige en koloni vid Delawarefloden. Marken köptes från indianerna, med vilka svenskarna hade mycket goda relationer. 1655 erövrades kolonin av holländarna. De avbildade frimärkena utgavs 1938. Postkortet hyllar Förenta staterna, jubileumsåret 1976.

From 1638 to 1655 Sweden had a colony on the Delaware River. The land was bought from the Indians, with whom the Swedes had very good relations. In 1655 the colony was conquered by the Dutch. The reproduced stamps were issued in 1938. This postcard honors the Bicentennial of the United States.

The postcard above was issued by Sweden in 1976 honoring the Bicentennial of the United States.

CHRISTINA, QUEEN OF SWEDEN

by: Kathy Hall



Booklet depicted above, issued February 20, 1986, celebrates 350th. anniversary of founding of Swedish postal system. Lower left corner portrays Christina who was instrumental in the formation of her country's postal service.

Queen Christina (alternate spelling Kristina) was well known for her cross-dressing. In recent years, research has also documented her lesbianism.



This 17th. century monarch was the subject of one of Hollywood's most blatant whitewash jobs, the 1933 production of "Queen Christina" starring Greta Garbo. Although Garbo was allowed to dress in men's clothing and act assertively, the script centered around a Victor, Victoria-like case of mistaken identity, which led to a heterosexual affair. Gay historian Jonathan Katz suggests that the few allusions to "perversion" were allowed under that era's film production codes because of their ambiguity and the straight ending.

A more honest appraisal can be found in Lillian Faderman's 1981 book, "Surpassing the Love of Men". Although she deals with Christina under the heading of transvestism, Faderman documents a twelve year affair with noblewoman Ebba Sparre and quotes gossip of the time. "The reputation of her erotic exploits lived on long after she did, Faderman writes.

Christina was born to King Gustav Adolf and Queen Maria Eleonora in 1626. The Swedish historian Franklin D. Scott writes, "Gustav Adolf did not admit disappointment that Kristina was not a boy, but he had her raised as if she were." She was trained as a scientist, and as queen, attracted foreign artists and scholars, including Descartes, to her court.



King Gustav Adolf



King Gustav Adolf on Post Card.

Her father died when she was six, but a regent ruled in her place until Christina reached her eighteenth birthday and ascended to the throne. However, Scott writes, Christina refused one of the responsibilities of monarchs -- marriage and the production of heirs. Rather than marry, she abdicated in 1654, passing the throne to her cousin Karl Gustav. Scott's mainstream history suggests a girlhood romantic interest in Karl Gustav, then speculates: "His playboy escapades and affairs with other women may have dampened the young queen's ardor. Or was it something in her own nature? ..." He did not elaborate further.

After her abdication, Christina wandered Europe as a queen without a country, dabbling in diplomacy between various nations. Faderman says she romantically pursued Ebba Sparre, and a number of other women in the thirtyfive years after her abdication. She died in Rome in 1689.

Although even mainstream reference books, including encyclopedias, refer to her "attired as a man," she is portrayed on a Swedish stamp (Scott # 272) in a gown with a bow at the collar.

On Jan. 23, 1986, Christina made philatelic headlines at State College, PA. The United States and Sweden Jointly issued a stamp collecting booklet. At the ceremonies the USPS was presented with a gift from Swedish stamp collectors. The Postal Service was the pleased recipient of Sweden's oldest philatelic item, a letter sent to Queen Christina in 1636.

REFERENCES:

- Faderman, Lillian, Surpassing the Love of Men, William Morrow & Co., NY, 1981, p. 55.
Goldsmith, Margaret, Christina of Sweden, Doubleday, Garden City, NY, 1935, the letters cited in Faderman were from pp. 204-208.
Halliwell, Leslie, The Filmgoer's Companion, Avon Books, NY 1977, p. 723
Katz, Jonathan, Gay/Lesbian Almanac, Harper & Row, NY, 1983, p. 490.
Scott, Franklin D., Sweden, The Nation's History, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1977, pp. 202-206.
The New Columbia Encyclopedia, Columbia University Press, NY, 1975, p. 552.
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The following excerpt is from a 1960's biography of Christina, by Georgina Masson. Considering the time period of the biography, and the fact that until the present day many biographers still gloss over any hint of homosexuality in their subject's lifestyle, Ms. Masson is relatively frank.

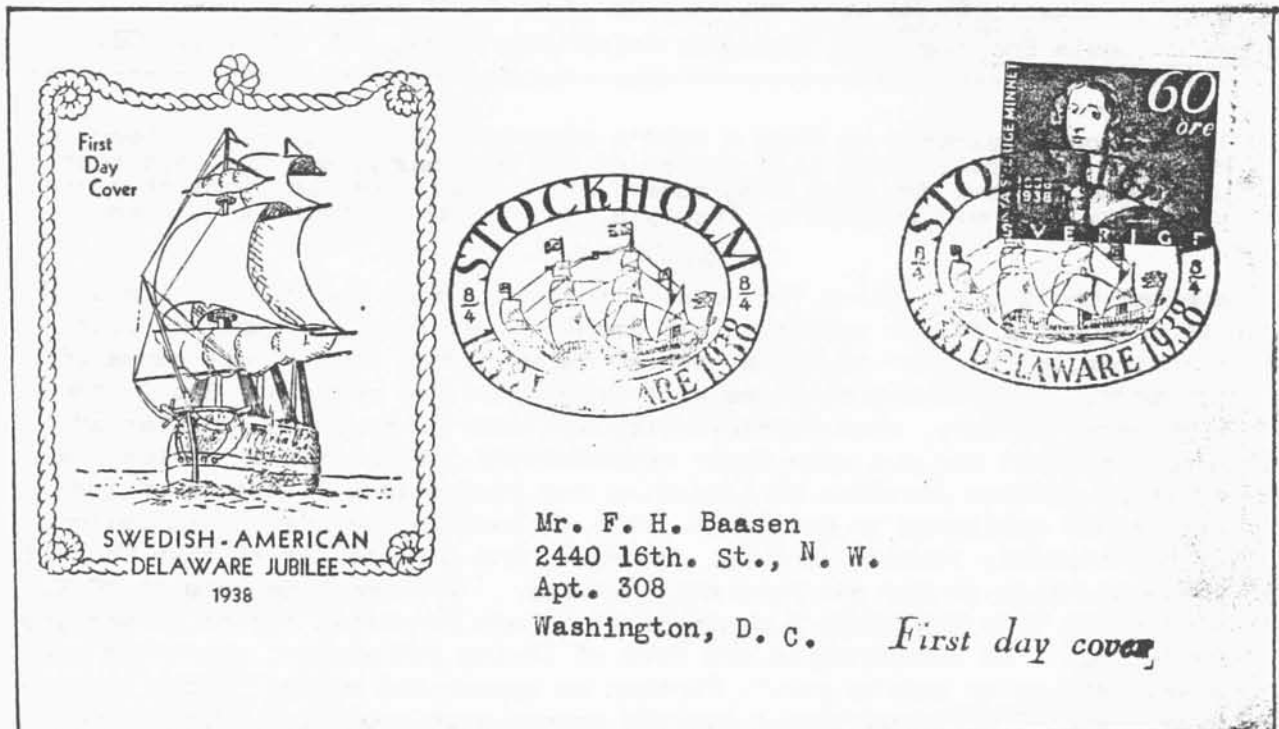
(page 86 & 87)

Whether Christina's being "in love" with Belle [Ebba Sparre] was a passionate friendship of the type that was fashionable among contemporary blue-stockings, or whether it was a lesbian relationship in the full sense of the term, is something which we will never know for certain. But in the eighteenth century, when homosexuality was much more common, the latter interpretation was put upon their relationship. A collection of letters entitled *Lettres Secrètes de Christine aux personnages illustres de son siècle* was published in Geneva in 1761; it included several faked letters of unmistakably lesbian content. However, one genuine letter that Christina wrote to Belle in her own hand still exists. Written from Rome in 1656, it begins: "Oh, how happy I would be if it was permitted for me to see you, Belle, but I am condemned to the fate of loving you always, esteeming you, always and never seeing you." Further on appear the words: "Did I deceive myself when I believed that I was the person whom you loved best?" The whole letter is on this theme, no news or comment on other events appears and, even allowing for the extravagant style of writing of the day, it is difficult not to believe that this is a love-letter in the ordinary sense.

The letter, with an apocryphal addition, and two others believed to have been written by Christina to Belle, together with many genuine official letters and documents, were published by Arckenholz in 1751. The earliest of these letters was dated from Brussels in 1655, about a year after Christina had last seen Belle. Apart from a rather dubious postscript, its style is so similar to that of the Rome letter that there can be little doubt that it is genuine. The same applies to the third letter, dated from Pesaro on 27th March 1657. This includes two particularly significant passages: "A friendship which has been tried by three years' absence should not be suspect to you, if you have not forgotten the rights that you have over me, and if you remember that it is already twelve years that I have been in possession of your love." Further on, when reminding Belle that she could always count on her, Christina wrote the words "remember the power that you have over me." These are guarded phrases, but it is difficult to doubt that for the writer and recipient they had a very special personal meaning,...

Masson, Georgina, Queen Christina, Farrar, Straus & Giroux, NY, 1968.

CHRISTINA
(1626-1689)
QUEEN OF SWEDEN



Gustavus Adolphus died when Christina was six. He instructed that she should be well-schooled in the manly arts.

Christina, in love with her lady-in-waiting, Ebba Sparre, was forced to abdicate the throne. Ebba would not follow her into exile. Christina wrote from Italy:

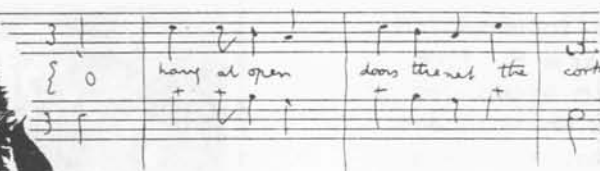
Only when I die will I cease loving you.

Page from Paul Hennefeld's collection
'Alternate Lifestyles of Famous People'

Sir Peter Pears by Georg Ehrlich

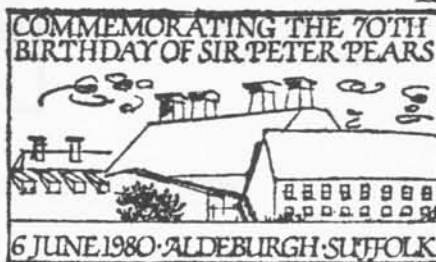


Commemorating
the 70th Birthday
of Sir Peter Pears
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PETER PEARS

Peter Pears, the great British tenor, was born in Farnham, Surrey, educated at Lancing College and at Oxford University, and started adult life as a school master at his old preparatory school. His interest in singing soon developed and he took up an operatic exhibition to the Royal College of Music, where he found himself on stage singing the Duke in "Rigoletto" after only four lessons.

Following a period first with the BBC Singers and then with the New English Singers, with whom he made two American tours, he joined the chorus at Glyndebourne. It was there he met Benjamin Britten and they subsequently toured the United States as a duo. Returning to England, he joined Sadler's Wells Opera and in 1945 created the now legendary title role in Britten's "Peter Grimes". In 1948 he became one of the founder members of the English Opera Group and of the Aldeburgh Festival. Since that time Britten wrote no less than 12 principal operatic roles for Peter Pears, the last of which was Aschenbach in "Death in Venice", besides many song cycles, canticles, cantatas, the "Spring Symphony" and the "War Requiem". His performances of a variety of English Songs and German Lieder, accompanied by Benjamin Britten, have been acclaimed throughout the world, as have his interpretations of the Passions of Bach and Schutz. Another facet of his artistry is his collaboration with Julian Bream on Elizabethan music for voice and lute. He is now working with the harpist Osian Ellis, and together they have inspired a number of new works for this unusual combination, including Britten's songs "A Birthday Hansel" which was written at the suggestion of H.M. the Queen to celebrate the 75th birthday of H.M. the Queen Mother.

Early in his career Peter Pears was signed up to record exclusively for Decca (London) for whom he has made many recordings, including several best-sellers. The list includes all the works of Benjamin Britten written for him, with the composer himself either playing the piano, conducting or directing; the Passions of Bach and Schutz; song cycles of Schubert and Schumann and many more classical and contemporary works. His most recent large-scale recording is Stravinsky's "Oedipus Rex" under Georg Solti. A record of Schumann songs will appear this year, with Murray Perahia.

For his services to music, Peter Pears was created a Commander of the British Empire in 1957, and Knighted in 1978.

Our Spring '86 issue showed a cover with a cancel honoring the 70th birthday of Benjamin Britten. Above piece honors Peter Pears' 70th Birthday. These covers were purchased from: J. & M. Arlington Ltd., 45 Lakenheath, London, N14 4RL, England.

Nildo Harper sent us this information from Linn's Stamp News, June 9, 1986 issue, page 57, 'Errors in stamp design. Both Thomas Mann and Walt Whitman are shown on a Sierra Leone souvenir sheet. Whitman was not an immigrant, he was born and raised in the United States. What about Thomas Mann? He was born in Germany and raised in Switzerland. When did he immigrate to the U.S.A.?



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Issued at AMERIPEX '86



Germany, King Ludwig II, issued, May 5, 1986.

EMERGENCY

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