

Press release from SP The Swedish National Testing and Research Institute

World's most valuable stamp weighed – USD 71 billion per kilo!

The Swedish stamp, The "Treskilling" Yellow, is the world's most valuable stamp. Now its exact mass, volume and density are measured for the first time by SP The Swedish National Testing and Research Institute in Borås, Sweden.

The stamp was sold to an anonymous buyer in 1998 for USD 1.9 million. Its weight has been measured to 0.02675 grams (0.0009 ounces), which gives the stamp the staggering price of USD 71 billion per kilo (or USD 32.2 billion per lb.). This also makes the stamp the most valuable thing in the world per weight or volume.

The measuring process was initiated by the Zürich based company Stamp Collection AG, as a part of the research for a new book about the stamp, its colourful history and its different owners. The book will be published in Swedish, English, German and French and will be released in time for this years' Christmas season.

– The Stamp is a true legend. The book will help us to bring an important part of the Swedish national heritage to audiences all across the world, says Hans Lernerstål, CEO Stamp Collection AG.

Strenuous task

Advanced measurement equipment was used to perform the unusual task and a sophisticated optical microscope was used in order to calculate the exact area, a strenuous task considering the perforation of the stamp.

– It would have been too risky to use the original. Instead we used another stamp, an "Eight Skilling Banco" from the same printing series, which has the same physical properties as the original. This other stamp is relatively inexpensive, it's worth around USD 1,500, which makes us all a bit less nervous, says Mats Lidbeck, measurement expert at SP.

Many owners through the years

The stamp, The "Treskilling" Yellow, was found in 1885 by a young Swedish boy, Georg Wilhelm Backman, while he was looking through his grandmother's old letters during his Christmas holidays. He sold it to a stamp collector in Stockholm for 7 Swedish kronor.

The stamp, a unique, yellow misprint of the originally green "Three Skilling Banco" stamp, is the most valuable stamp in the world, a record recognised by Guinness World Records™. It has had a number of exotic owners through the years. It has also been a World War I indemnity, the centre of attention during several trials and acted as the main prize pursued by the hero in a 1963 Hollywood blockbuster starring Cary Grant and Audrey Hepburn.

Read the whole colourful history of the stamp on www.treskillingyellow.com. Here you can also find downloadable pictures and illustrations.

With a turnover of more than SEK 540 million, and a staff of about 630, SP is one of Sweden's largest research institutes.

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