

THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST

Official Monthly Journal of the

(USPS 808300)
Society for Czechoslovak Philately, Inc.

Silver Award Interphil '76 — Silver Award Capex '78 — Silver-Bronze Praga '78

A.P.S. Unit 18

Vol. XLIX

December 1987

No. 10, Whole No. 474

PRESIDENT'S NOTES

On Reflections

Two years have elapsed and my term of office as your President has come to an end. To the Board of Directors, the various officers and to the many members who helped me through calm seas and turbulent waters, my heartfelt thanks! It's been an eventful two years for the Society, with both its ups and downs. We have participated in three shows: the one at Northeastern University in Boston was our own show; the other two — at CAPEX in Toronto and at BALPEX in Baltimore — were participatory. We have added to our membership and to our treasury and have not had to appeal to our members for funds. But our Circuit and Exchange Division has suffered from a lack of material and so far our members have not responded in any numbers to Wolfgang Fritzsche's appeal for more sales and exchange books. We are short on translators of Czech language philatelic articles. One new translator has appeared in the person of Vladimír Králíček. But two others have dropped out due to age and infirmity. We also need more contributors of English language philatelic literature. We do not want to retreat to a position we were in during most of 1985 when we were barely able to put out a complete issue every two months.

By now you are aware that every issue will henceforth contain a "Member of the Month" column. You do not need a pass key or belong to an exclusive club to qualify for that column. If you are a member in good standing, send me a resume of your background, a description of your involvement in philately, when and why you joined our Society, what you collect, what you do with your collection, and any interesting philatelic experiences you wish to share with the readers. Along with that, please enclose a clear, crisp picture of yourself for publication. Address this to Mirko Vondra, 1511 Clearview Ave, Lancaster, PA 17601.

On Anticipations

We have several members who are either ill or recovering from surgery. Already mentioned in previous issues were Lada Fischmeister, C. J. Pearce, and A. J. Hrivnak. In addition, Joseph Stein and Richard Major are not well. Charley Chesloe is recuperating from heart surgery. Everyone at the Society, both friend and stranger, wishes them well in their early recovery. Those who would like to write notes or send get-well cards to these members, please refer to the membership list in the Nov. 1986 SPECIALIST for correct addresses.

I will officially take over as managing editor of the SPECIALIST with the Jan. 1988 issue. My staff will consist of Gerald van Zanten as assistant editor, Frank Julsen as literary editor, and Jack Benchik as advertising manager. While we look forward to a

(Continued on page 7)

CHARLEY'S CORNER

Probably the most outstanding National exhibit held during the first Republic would have to be the exhibit in Bratislava between Oct. 24 and Nov. 2, 1937. The exhibit was held at the Zemědělské (Agriculture) Museum and was very well displayed.

The exhibition catalogue is said to have been very well done, with many photographs of world rarities that were on display. It is probably a catalogue well worth seeking, as is the catalogue for the World exhibition held in Prague in 1938.

Admission charge was 3.50 Kčs, and 5 Kčs with an order for one souvenir sheet. There were philatelic lectures by Professor Gilbert, Ervin Hirsch, and A. Taschke. An auction was conducted by our former member-dealer Arthur I. Kessler, his 31st sale. At that time he had his business in Prague. The sale was held at the Hotel Carlton on the 25th through the 27th of October. At the same hotel, Ervin Hirsch and Jaroslav Franek, authors of the famous handbook "Československý Známky," were available for private consultation.

Many outstanding Czechoslovak rarities were offered in the Kessler auction, including the "50/50 Doplátit" error. Also offered were many rarities from old Italian States, including rare cancellations from Lombardy. The sale had over 3000 lots. Prices obtained for the different lots were quite substantial. A large bourse was also held and two souvenir sheets were issued for the show.

The newspaper sheet comes in 7 different types, as well as in gutter pairs both horizontal and vertical. Four sheets were printed separated by gutters in each of the two plates. The outer stamps of the sheets adjacent to the gutters were then cut apart to make up these gutters. These were done unofficially and are sought-after items by specialists.

The show featured classical Europe and a tremendous showing of Czechoslovakia. It was an excellent staging area for the World exhibition to be held in Prague less than one year later. The exhibition was sponsored by the Club of Czechoslovak Philatelists of Bratislava, whose President was Ing. Klement Ptačůvský. The President of the organizing committee was Leopold Vališ of Bratislava and the organizer of the exhibition was the famous catalogue author, Ladislav Novotný, also of Bratislava.

REMEMBER!
PRAGA '88 IS JUST NINE MONTHS AWAY!!

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v. ř. LEOPOLD VALIS.



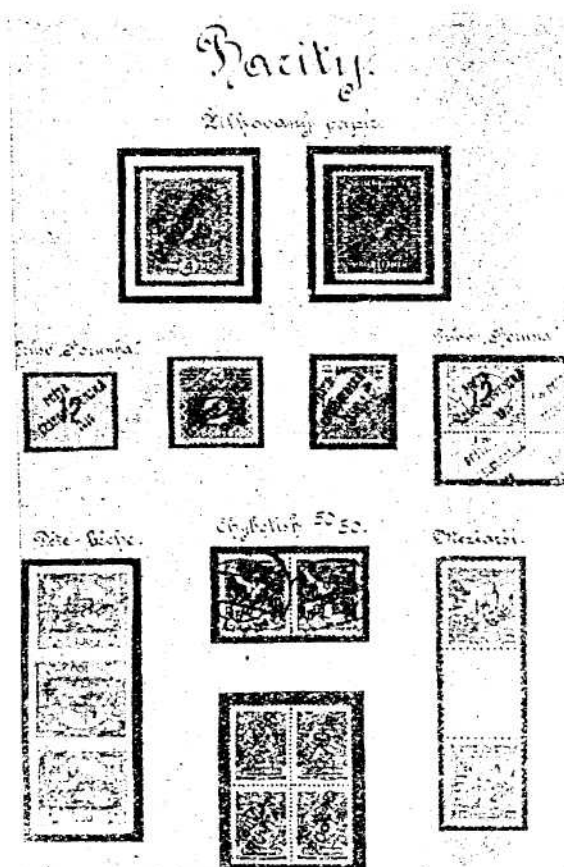
ING. KLEMENT PTAČOVSKY.



LADISLAV NOVOTNY.

Eleven large gold medals were awarded as well as twenty-six small gold. The top award (Čestná Cena) went to A. Tučný, minister of Posts and Telegraph for his exhibit of classical and modern rarities and for his service to philately. It was a beautiful enlarged engraving of the 1935 1 Kčs Masaryk on silver plate set in onyx, done by Bohumil Heinz.

The other top award was presented to Arnost Berka of Prague, who also received three large gold medals for his different exhibits housed in 14 frames. It was a beautiful enlarged engraving of the 50h Tatra design of the 1937 souvenir sheet, also in silver. This engraving was done by Karel Seizinger. Mr. Berka exhibited one page entitled "Rarity," which to this day is probably the most formidable page of Czechoslovakia ever exhibited. The layout was as shown in Illustration. Top row – 4 Kčs and 10 Kčs. "Posta Cesk. 1919" on granite paper. The second row of "Posta 1919" included the 12f Hungarian black numeral with crown "X" type watermark, 2h large Austrian due, the 20f "Magyar Posta," and another 12f Hungarian due from the lower right corner with the overprint on the salvage.



Between the 2nd and last row was mounted a horizontal *pair* of the "50/50 Doplart" error. The bottom row showed vertical tête-bêche strip of 3 of the 100h Hradčany on printers waste. This piece was later owned by John Velek of Chicago. Next a *block of 4* of the 10Kop Čeljabinsk ovpt. Češkja Pošta for use in Siberia, and finally a gutter pair of the 3.50 Kčs Křivoklat.

Two large gold medals were also awarded to Leopold Vališ and a Mr. Rudolf Jarabek also of Bratislava. The other three large medals were given to foreign exhibits.

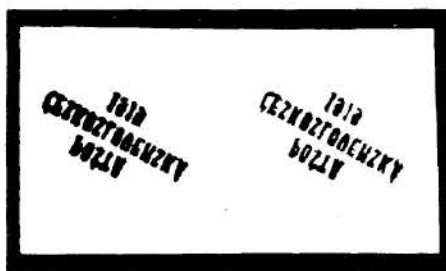
Getting back to Mr. Arnost Berka, his son Egon settled in Chicago in the 5200 block of Everett Ave. in the Hyde Park area. I remember going to his house for a club meeting around 1954. At that time the Chicago branch of the Society used to meet in another home. Egon and his son Egon, Jr., eventually sold off all of Arnost's vast collection. One can only wonder where it all went and where it may be today.



WHEN IS AN "OFFSET" NOT AN "OBTISK"?

By J. L. Klein

In the November 1986 POFIS auction sale I acquired a very unusual pair of what was described as *offsets* of proof impressions on plain yellowish paper. Although not fully described as to overprint Class and Type, the pair was "POSTA 1919" Class B-b, Types 2 and 1, respectively, and the paper of course was ungummed.



There was a very intriguing aspect to this so-called "offset," which of course is printed in reverse and positioned in what might be called the 90° angle. In any case, on all other offsets I have seen on actual postage stamps, the offset generally is the result of stacking sheets one upon the other, with the wet ink sometimes transferring to the gum side of the neighboring sheet. Sometimes the offset is quite weak; other times the offset is very strong — in fact, as strong as the basic overprint on the face of the stamp.

The above offset, however, very clearly shows that the face of the proof paper was exposed to a dry (uninked) plate or pair of cliches from the plate. The impression of the overprinted type clearly *indents* upon the paper, as can be seen when the item is held sideways to the light, showing the indentations on the front of the proof paper. Obviously, the offset impression on the reverse side of the paper was the result of this proof paper being laid upon an inked pad or some other inked substance, so that when the front of the paper received the uninked overprint impression, the back of the paper picked up the "obtisk."

One can only wonder about the "Why?" of this creation. Overprint trials on regular proofing paper are a necessary step in the production process. However, one must also wonder what value there is to this process of an offset/obtisk/abklatsch? We know that strange happenings went on in the printing plant in those days. Perhaps one of the workers had one pivo too many at lunch that day!

In any event, this was an interesting addition to my representation of "POSTA 1919" varieties. It is quite possible that other examples now rest in the collections of our members. I'd be pleased to hear of them.

A COVER SPEAKS FOR ITSELF

By Vladimír Bubák

What is a postage stamp?

To most people, it is a receipt for the payment of a mailing fee. To topical collectors, it is — in most instances — a beautiful miniature of graphic art. Assuming its true intent to be the validating of mail as a delivery service, it is easy to understand its significance. That significance is not so much as a mint stamp standing apart from the envelope or package to which it is affixed, but as part and parcel of the item being mailed.

For specialized philatelists, stamps show up best when they appear undamaged and carefully cancelled on original covers or other postal documents combined with postmarks, additional labels, addresses and other special markings. This makes such pieces very specific, revealing interesting stories and very often bearing testimony of historic events of national or international interest.

Stamps usually exist in multiples of singles, pairs, blocks, strips and sheets. Whether a single stamp or a sheet, it says nothing more than what it is — a commemorative honoring a person or event. On a postally used cover, it is an entity all its own. Rarely are two covers identical even though they may both bear the same stamp. Each tells its own story apart from the stamp that adorns it.

Witness today's trend at philatelic exhibitions. Judged to be meritorious and worthy of awards are exhibits containing mostly covers. Even where stamps are shown in thematic form, it is practically mandatory that they also be shown postally on cover.

As an example, there is no problem for a collector to obtain a reasonably good copy of Austria's Scott number 1. But try to find the same stamp on a cover posted in Prague on June 1, 1850! Or consider the first issue of Czechoslovakia. The Hradčany 5h green and the 10h red belong among the usually cheap and plentiful, whether mint or used. But try to locate them on cover canceled on Dec. 18, 1918, their first day of issue! Surprise yourself by trying to bid for covers like those at auction!



Not long ago, a philatelic expert and collector from Olomouc — Victor Indra — sent us an interesting cover for display. The cover contained a letter sent from Bratislava to Switzerland by Air Mail on Feb. 6, 1945. It passed Slovak censors (see thick looped line across and slightly below center of cover stamped "C 194") and went on to Switzerland. In all probability the address was fictitious because from there it was forwarded on Feb. 17 to the correct address in England. There it was delivered through the Czechoslovak Fieldpost on April 15 to its intended addressee, a member of the Czechoslovak Army in exile.

This cover not only represents possible postal contact with the enemy and its territories during World War II, but illustrates the ingenuity utilized in conveying a message through the use of mails across enemy lines. This is but one example of how a complete story can be revealed from analyzing the markings and cancellations on a cover without even reading the contents of its letter. This can only occur in the case of postally used material because a cover speaks for itself.



PRESIDENT'S NOTES

Continued

bigger and better publication, there is little doubt that in the final analysis the SPECIALIST is the product of the Society's members. What you put into it is what you get out of it. Help us make it an outstanding philatelic journal. Contribute part of your time to writing articles that we on the editorial staff will be proud to publish. As an example, word has gotten back to me that some of you would like to see more literature on post-World War II stamps. That is fine! We will publish what you write and submit to us on any philatelic subjects as long as it is accurate and appropriate for our journal. Naturally we reserve the right to edit your articles as necessary.

1989 will be the 50th year of the Society's existence. It will also be the 50th year of our publication of the SPECIALIST. We are planning a few special projects to celebrate the occasion. To what extent these projects can be realized is not yet certain. Our treasury is able to meet the routine demands that the Society makes upon it in the ordinary course of a year's business. Whether it can meet the extraordinary demands of a golden anniversary year remains to be seen. We may set up an anniversary project fund toward which donations will be welcome. If so, I will let you know more about that in subsequent issues. Meanwhile, if you have any ideas or suggestions, do not hesitate to let us know about them.

At this time, I want to congratulate and welcome to our Board of Directors the following five members whose election to the Board has just been certified:

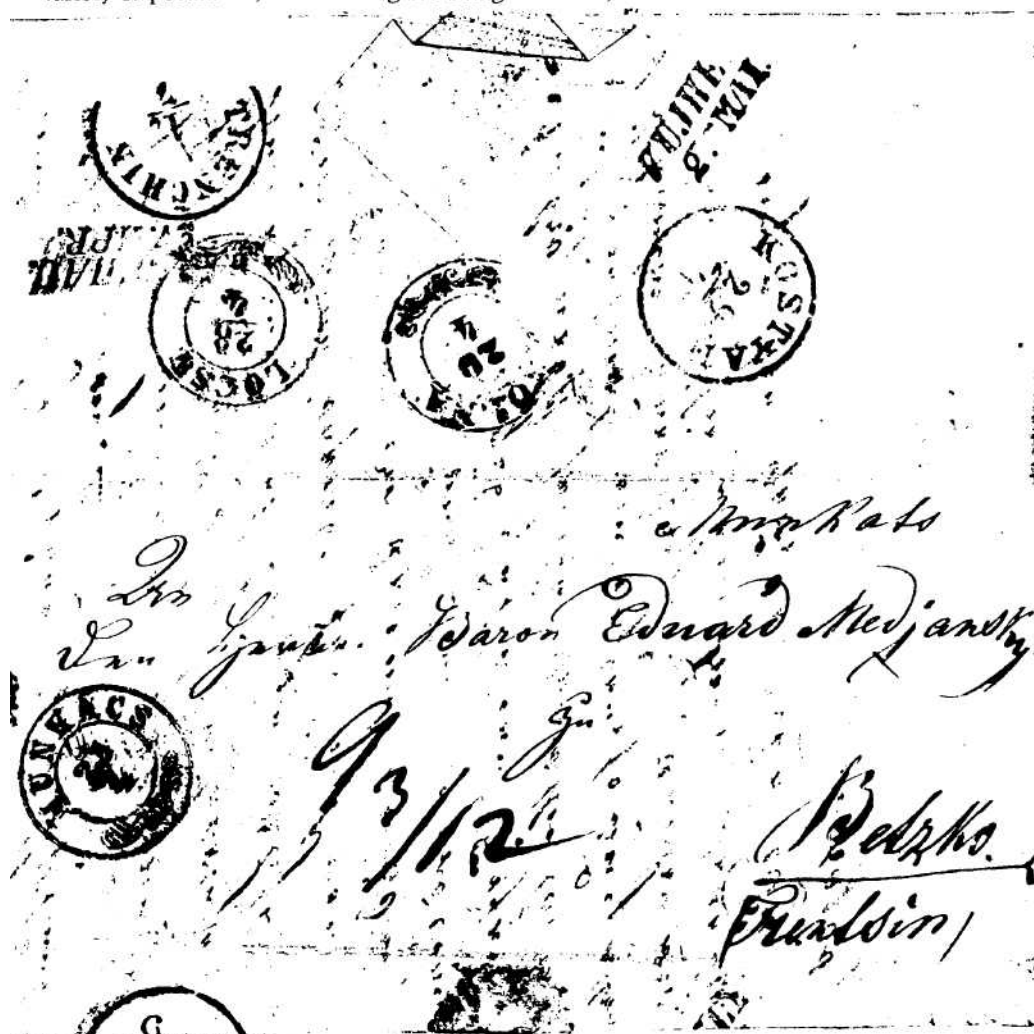
1. Charles Chesloe of Willow Springs, IL.
2. Jane Sterba of Berwyn, IL.
3. Edward J. Benchik of Notre Dame, IN.
4. Edwin Lehecka of Westfield, NJ.
5. Fred Hefer of Munich, West Germany.

THE PRISONER FROM MUNKACS

By J. L. Klein

Recently, I acquired a letter, sent in 1851 from the prison of Munkacs in Carpatho-Ukraine, by a Szeperedy Lajos to a nobleman, Baron Edward Medjansky.

This letter, written in German and closed with a seal "Festungs-Kommando," had been censored and marked "Read by Austrian Military Censor — Schwantner, Oberstleutnant." En route to the Baron in Betko/Becko/Beckov the letter picked up a variety of postmarks, the most legible being Trenchin, the destination.



Of interest is the content of the letter. Apparently, Lajos had been a participant in the Hungarian revolution of 1848, when also part of Carpatho-Ukraine was involved in the rebellion against the Austrian government. Now serving an undisclosed prison term, he writes that gradually he forgets the days of disappointment (an obvious reference to the unsuccessful revolt), but he hopes that "the rays of generosity will at last reach his dungeon." He goes on to write that he has begun to learn the art of shoemaking. In his leisure time "we enjoy the superb view from the terraces of the fortress," indicating that he was detained in the castle shown on the 1.20Kč stamp of 1936.



This interesting bit of postal and political history prompts the hope that one of my fellow-collectors of Carpatho-Ukrainian postal history can supply some information about the writer, Szeperedy Lajos, or the nobleman addressee Baron Mydnyanski (the unfortunate Lajos misspelled the Baron's name, I have been able to determine from birth records of (a son?) Laszlo Mydnyanski on April 23, 1852). We must wonder whether and when Lajos gained reprieve from his prison sentence, and whether the Baron was of any help.



GREGORY J. MENDEL, SCIENTIST

In 1935, the then-free city of Gdansk celebrated the memory of a man born in Moravia, Gregory J. Mendel, an Augustinian monk with an issue of a post stamp in the series of "Outstanding Physicians and Scientists." Mendel was the acknowledged founder of the science of inheritance and in Brno, during the years of 1854–1864, conducted experiments in crossbreeding of peas and in their development he discovered the fundamental principles of inheritance.

His work was published in the yearbook of the Brno Society of Natural Science in year of 1866. To the end of the century, natural scientists did not comprehend Mendel's innovative principles and exposition. Since 1900, his work has been translated and published in numerous languages.

When on January 6, 1884, Mendel died, no one in Brno knew that he was an outstanding researcher. He, however, was convinced of the significance of his research, and expressed his views in a letter to Professor C. Nagel in 1867: "I realize that the results of my experiments to date will not be easy to bring into agreement with today's scientific situation, and also that under these circumstances the publication by a lone researcher may become dangerous to him and endanger the matter presented by him."

In Brno, at the site of his scientific research his experimental garden is preserved and is admired by visitors to a museum known as Mendelianum. Here also is exhibited the Gdansk stamp issued with his portrait, and stamps issued later in his honor. In 1984, the Vatican City State issued two stamps in Mendel's honor, listed in Scott's as No. 729 and 730.



The Mendel experimental garden.

THE DOVE

Third Installment

SURVEY OF PRINTING PLATES AND THEIR MARKINGS

(Page 195): Due to the lack of documentation in collections and in the Postal Museum, it was not possible to determine accurately the exact number and sequence of the plates and how they were assembled into printing formations. Therefore, the printing plates are described according to their markings based on known theoretical assumptions.

In Tables 39-46, the printing plates and their markings are categorized by information thus far available.

Table 39. 5h (Blue) Printing Plates

Plate Markings	Remarks
No marking, no sheet margin frame.	Darker print; retouch VI/5 R-45 stamp; retouch I/5 R-56 stamp.
No markings, no sheet margin frame.	Lighter print, with stronger plate etching; retouch VI/6 R-45 stamp. Both plates were used joined together with the two 10h green plates.
No markings, no sheet margin frame.	Retouch VI/5 R-45 stamp; retouch I/5 R-56 stamp.
No sheet margin frame, but interrupted decimal dash in row control number 5.--	No retouches.
Numeral "3" within the uninterrupted sheet margin frame at position 90; two white circles with a colored dot in the middle at position 60. Numerical "4" within the sheet margin frame at position 90; white circle with colored dot...position 60. Numerical "4" within the interrupted sheet margin frame at position 90; white circle with colored dot...at position 60.	
Narrow, interrupted sheet margin frame, marking 1-26. Narrow, interrupted sheet margin frame, marking 2-26.	Plate 2-26 also exists with uninterrupted sheet margin frame.



Illustration 306



III 307



1 26 2 26

Illustration 308



Illustration 309

(Page 197):

Table 40. 5h (Violet) Printing Plates

Plate Markings	Remarks
No marking, no sheet margin frame.	Two plates joined together with two 20h Type I plates.
No marking, no sheet margin frame.	
No markings.	Two plates for the stamp booklets; their differences are not known.
No markings, narrow uninterrupted sheet margin frame.	
No markings, narrow uninterrupted sheet margin frame with circular notch.	
No markings, wide uninterrupted sheet margin frame. Two colored dots between row control number 5.--	First plate was subsequently marked with a notch in the sheet margin frame.
Numerals "3" within the uninterrupted sheet margin frame at position 90. Two white circles with colored dot in the middle at position 90.	
Numerals "4" within the uninterrupted sheet margin frame at position 90. White circle with colored dot in the middle at position 60.	

To be continued

NEW ISSUES

By G. M. van Zanten — Courtesy ARTIA of Prague

THE DESTRUCTION OF LIDICE AND LEŽÁKY

June 10, 1987, the 45th anniversary of Lidice and Ležáky is commemorated by two 1 Kčs stamps:

- 1 Kčs — Destruction of Lidice shows a painting by Pavel Šimon 1945 called "After Battle." Engraving by Jiří Bouda. In colors: black, redish-violet, ochre and red.
- 1 Kčs — Destruction of Ležáky shows a painting by Ludmila Jiřincová entitled "End of Play." Engraving by Josef Herčík. In black, blue, grey and red.

The design and graphical conversion of the original in both cases was by R. Vaněk.

The stamps were printed by the Post Office Printing works in Prague by rotary recess print, combined with three color recess print in sheets of 50 stamps measuring 23×30mm.



INTERCOSMOS — 20 YEARS OF SCIENTIFIC PROGRAMME

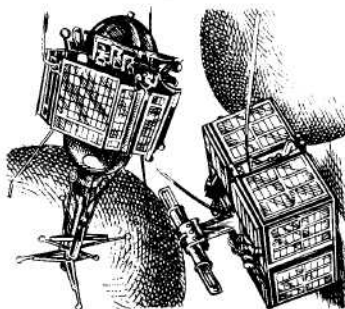
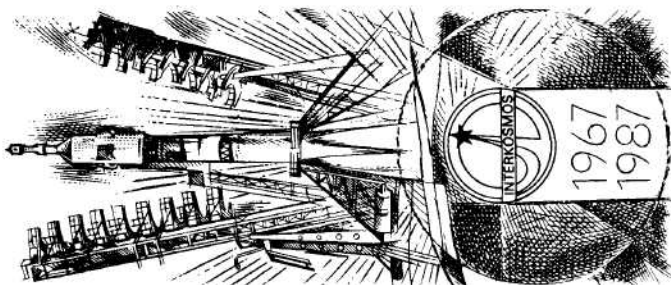
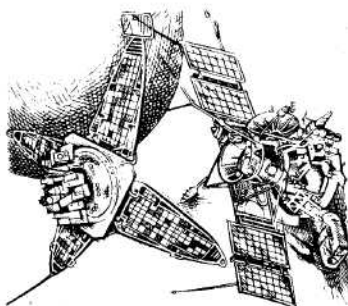
The above was commemorated by the issue of a sheet containing two 10 Kčs stamps situated in top left and right corner.

The size of the stamp is 40×26mm. It shows the Intercosmos emblem and the dates 1967–1987. Also shown, symbolically, are the start of Intercosmos satellite and the first joint cosmic flight SSR — ČSSR with the participation of the Soviet cosmonaut A. Gubarev and the first Czech cosmonaut V. Remek.

Printing was by the Post Office Printing works in Prague in recess print from flat plates in black, yellow, blue and red.

On the sheet, in the stamp colors, are in the lower part stylized drawings of the satellite Intercosmos (1969) and the first Czechoslovak man-made satellite MAGION (1978) in cosmic space. The center part of the sheet represents the launching platform for the SOJUS 28 rocket with below it the Intercosmos emblem and the dates 1967–1987.

In the right lower part are drawings of the satellite PROGNOZ-10-INTERŠOK. The stamp was designed by Josef Baláž, engraving was by Miloš Ondráček.





*Světová výstava poštovních známek
Praga 1988*

PRAGUE CASTLE

This annual set of two stamps was issued on May 9, 1987, in values:

- 2 Kčs — Shows details of a window in St. Vitus dating from the 70th year of the 19th century; it is the work of František Sequens (1836–1896). In colors black-brown, red, blue and yellow. Design by J. Solpera, engraving by L. Jirka.
- 3 Kčs — Shows an old palace wall painting in new provincial plates (1605). Design by J. Solpera, engraving by J. Herčík. In colors black-green, yellow and red.

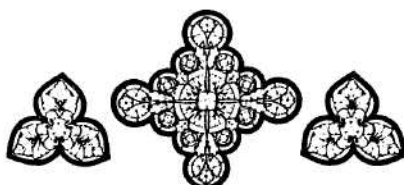
The pictorial part of the stamps measures 26×40mm. Printing was by the Post Office Printing works in Prague in recess print from flat plates in sheets of 6 stamps. Both stamp sheets have gutters.

2 Kčs — In black-brown and blue.

3 Kčs — In black-green and red.



Reduced



← PRAŽSKÝ HRAD →



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