

FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY YEAR THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST

(USPS 808300)

Official Monthly Journal of the



Society for Czechoslovak Philately, Inc.

Silver Award Interphil '76 - Silver Award Capex '78 - Silver-Bronze Praga '78 - Praga '88

A. P. S. Unit 18

ISSN: 0526-5843

Vol. 51

OCTOBER, 1989

No. 8, Whole No. 492

UNIQUE BRATISLAVA TAPESTRIES

*Compiled by Gerald Van Zanten and based on an article appearing in
Artia's philatelic journal of September 1974*

What does Greek Mythology have to do with Czechoslovak Philately? Think tapestries and let the story unfold!

Everyone interested in Greek mythology knows the story about the loves of Hero and Leander. Hero, a priestess of the Goddess Aphrodite, lived in a high tower on the shores of the Hellespont near the city of Sestos, guarding the eternal flame. Every year Sestos was the scene of a festival held in honor of Aphrodite and Adonis to which people came from near and far. Among them was Leander, a youth from the city of Abydos on the opposite side of the Hellespont, the ancient name for the Dardanelles or Strait of Gallipoli. Eros winged his arrows of love at the two young people. But because Hero was a priestess and bound by the vows of virginity, they had to keep their love a

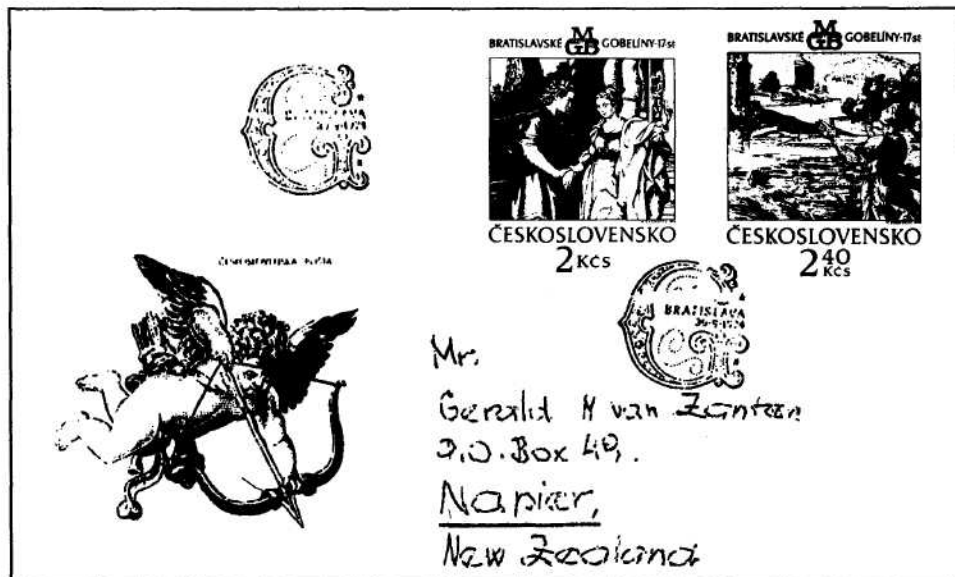


Figure 1

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secret and so Leander came to woo her only by night, swimming the Hellespont and guided by the light she set for him in the tower. One blustery autumn night, Leander set out as usual, plunging into the turbulent waters of the strait despite the warnings of his sister, Hermione. However, this time the light failed, blown out by the fierce wind. Unable to find his way in the darkness, the exhausted youth was dashed by the waves against the cliffs beside the tower where Hero awaited his arrival in vain. When she saw Leander's dead body in the light of dawn, she threw herself from the tower and perished. The faithful lovers did not abandon each other even in their hour of death. Eros was grief-stricken at the tragic end to the love he had been instrumental in bringing about.

This myth is depicted in a series of six precious tapestries which are the property of the Municipal Gallery in Bratislava, capital of Slovakia. They are on display in the permanent exhibition of world art of the 15th to 19th century in Bratislava's Primatial Palace. The Primatial Palace, also known as the Council Palace, is a historic baroque-classical edifice which Archbishop Jozef Batthyany, head of the Church in Hungary, had built in 1779-1781. The architect was Melfior Hefele of Vienna.

In 1903, the Palace, which was in a somewhat dilapidated condition, was purchased by the Bratislava town council for its own use. That is how it came to be known as the Council Palace. During the course of repair work, rolled-up tapestries were discovered underneath the wall coverings in the entrance hall to the Room of Mirrors. It is a mystery how the tapestries got there or when and why they were put there. The only clear bit of evidence is that Archbishop Batthyany bought the tapestries for his Palace from a merchant trading in art objects - one Jabakh by name - at Cologne. It is believed they may have been rolled up and secreted in their hiding place during the Napoleonic Wars.

One thing is certain; that those who had set about restoring the Primatial Palace recognized the value of the six tapestries and had them cleaned and repaired. Between 1911 and 1913, the expertly-restored tapestries were hung in two of the reception rooms of the Palace where they may be viewed by the public to this day.

The series of six tapestries, presenting the story of Hero and Leander, are a truly exquisite and

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Published monthly except July and August - \$18.00 per year

Second Class Postage Paid at Lancaster, PA 17604

and additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to

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Figure II

unique work of art. They were made at the Royal Manufactory at Mortlake near London which was built by King James I of England in 1619. They were woven of wool and silk between 1630 and 1632 by a group of Flemish tapestry-makers after a sketch designed by the painter and engraver, Franz Cleyn of Rostock. All the tapestries are edged at the top and two sides (but not at the bottom) with an ornamental border consisting of plant and figure motifs. These borders were not designed by Cleyn, but rather by Philippe de Maecht, technical master of the shop, who had on hand a number of sketches for borders from Paris.

The authenticity of the tapestries is confirmed by the mark of the Royal House of England, namely St. George's cross consisting of a red Greek cross on a white background. They are the only existing complete set in the world. Though a greater number of tapestries with the same motif were made at Mortlake, the only other one that is known to exist is an incomplete set of smaller dimensions in Sweden.

Almost a century has passed since the discovery of these lovely tapestries by A. Helmar, Bratislava historian and high-school professor, and E. Radisics, director of the Museum of Applied Arts in Budapest who, in 1903, had been examining the possibilities of restoring the Primatial Palace. To this day, they continue to be a center of interest to connoisseurs as well as the general public.

On September 25, 1974, Czechoslovakia issued a staggered set of what were to be six stamps depicting each of the six tapestries. Designed by Miloš Ondráček, the stamps were printed by five-color flat-recess print in sheets of four. The capital letters "GB" for "Gobelins of Bratislava" (a type of tapestry) is the main part of the three different postmarks. All of the stamps show only the central and most striking portion of each tapestry. To appreciate the full impact of their total beauty, a visit to the location is highly recommended.

Below is a listing of the vital statistics regarding each of the six stamps comprising this unique set.

Scott Number	Pofis Number	Face Value	Quantity Issued	Date of Issue
1950	2102	2 kčs	430,000	Sept. 30, 1974
1951	2103	2.40 kčs.	404,800	Sept. 30, 1974
1952	2147	3.00 kčs.	568,000	Aug. 29, 1975
1953	2148	3.60 kčs.	378,000	Aug. 29, 1975
1954	2201	3.00 kčs.	546,400	May 9, 1976
1955	2203	3.60 kčs.	679,200	May 9, 1976



Figure III

In Fig. I, the 2.00 kčs. stamp shows Hero and Leander meeting at the sanctuary. The 2.40 kčs. depicts Leander's sister, Hermione, bidding farewell to her brother, Leander, as he starts to swim the Hellespont.

In Fig. II, the 3.00 kčs. shows a maid of Hero announcing the arrival of her lover. The 3.60 kčs. reveals Hermione trying to dissuade Leander from swimming the Hellespont.

In Fig. III, the 3.00 kčs. depicts Hero lamenting the death of Leander while the 3.60 kčs reveals Eros bemoaning his failure to save the love of the priestess Hero. It is this last stamp which describes the smallest of the six tapestries, measuring 280 x 250 cm.

PLEASE NOTE ELECTION RESULTS ON PAGE 15

A WORLD WAR I VIGNETTE

by Miroslav Vostatek

During the first year of World War I, the United States was still a neutral nation. Many of its inhabitants were Europeans. Among them were Czechs and Slovaks anxious to maintain contact with friends and relations in their homeland. Their letters necessarily had to pass through political censors.

I offer on the top of the next page an example of one such piece of mail sent from Milwaukee, Wisc. to Skuteč in the district of Chrudim, the center of the shoe industry. The Imperial Royal County Administration at Vysoké Mýto opened the letter, cancelled it with the work "Zensuriert" and closed the letter with its own seal of identity bearing the state coat of arms.

A memorable cover has thus been preserved for over seventy years from an era of great political upheaval which eventually led to the establishment of the free nation of Czechoslovakia.

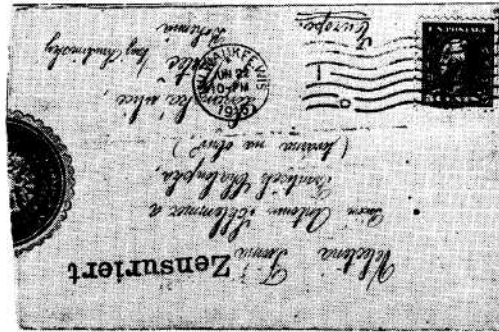


Figure I, PART 1

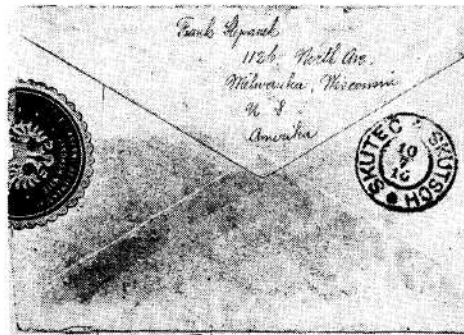


Figure I, PART 2

FROM AUSTRALIA TO CANADA BY CZECH BOAT MAIL

by Vladimír Bubák

Collecting philatelic material from the classical periods is a very popular pastime. But the modern era is beginning to offer collectors lots of surprises and joyful moments through some very extraordinary items, especially covers.

As most readers know, even landlocked countries such as Czechoslovakia have their own merchant fleet on the high seas and a whole line of successful sportsmen - "lone seamen" - whose white sails can be seen all over the world. And so it came as no great surprise when I received an interesting cover sent from Australia to Canada franked with a stamp of Czechoslovakia.

Figure One shows this cover bearing all the necessary postal markings of boat mail and franked, according to postal rules, with a Czechoslovak stamp. The cover contained a letter sent from Yacht S/-Y NIKE CZ 17 by a Czech "lone seaman", Richard Konkilski, from the seaport of Cairns, in Queensland on July 11, 1974. The cover shows the globe framed in a captain's wheel and bearing the inscription "S-Y NIKE - Czechoslovakia" with the name and address of the sender directly below and a framed cancellation "Paquebot".

When the letter reached Canada, it should have been cancelled "Postage Due" and charged an addition 3 kčs because 60 h was not sufficient postage.

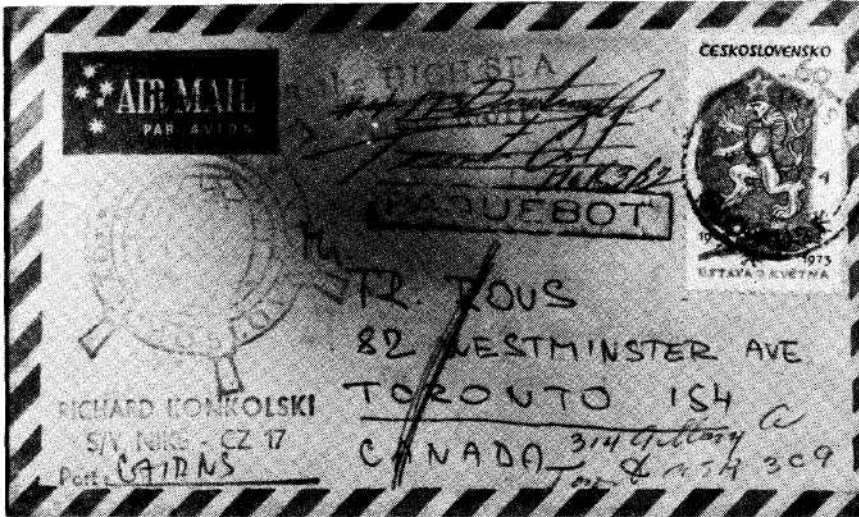


Figure I

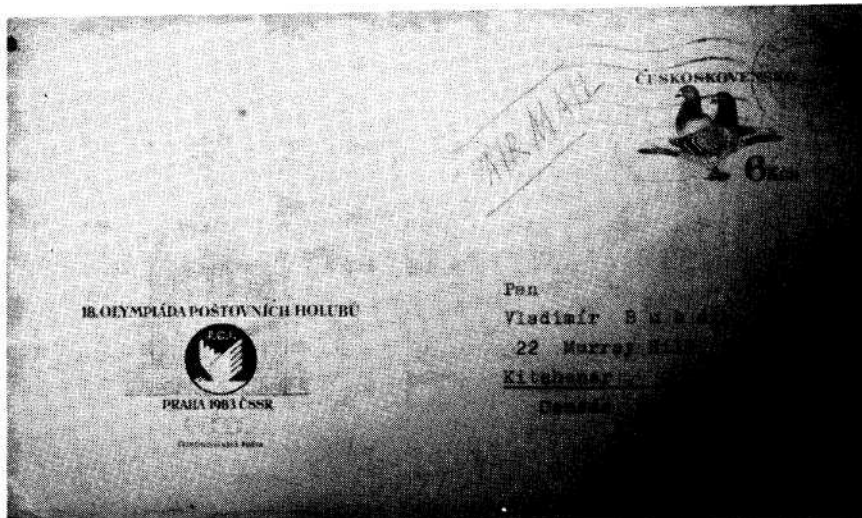


Figure II

In a slightly different view, Figure Two shows the famous ""Pigeon" postal stationary error of 1983. This 6 kčs postal stationary envelope was issued on January 20, 1983 to commemorate the 18th Carrier Pigeon Olympiad in Prague. Some two hours after the post office opened on the first day of issue and after about 400 envelopes had been sold, a spelling error was discovered and the sale was halted. The error consisted of "Československo" being spelled "Českovensko". And now the question arises. - How many of these error envelopes exist postally used? I know the answer: At least one.

Too bad none of these have shown up as boat mail between Australia and Canada!

THE LIBERATED REPUBLIC

As noted in EDITORIAL HINGES (Aug - Sept issue page 13), the Specialist has already published the fifteen installments of "The Dove" portion of the Allegory Chapter, Monografie II, as translated into English by Vladimír Králíček. With this issue, we continue Králíček's translation by presenting the first installment of the "The Liberated Republic" portion of the same chapter.

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ORIGIN OF STAMPS

The design for the Liberated Republic was produced for the second stamp-designing competition in 1919 by Vratislav Hugo Brunner who received the first prize for Czechoslovakia's first anniversary. Even though it received this honor, the design was not accepted and was used by the author in later competition (the third one) with some modifications, that is, without the date and with a partly lined background. The drawing represents the allegorical figure of a kneeling woman breaking the chains which bound both her hands. It is a symbolic illustration of the liberation of the homeland.

The drawing is complemented in the lower background by the mountains Říp and Křivan. The initials of the designer's name - VHB - were centrally positioned beneath the bottom border of the picture.

The design was worked out as a model for the then current printing technique - typography.

As is seen, the original design by the author was changed a number of times before the final design was used for the definitive stamp issue.

It should be added that the artist used the submitted design under the slogan "1918" for the 3rd competition. The retaining of the same slogan clearly attests to the competition formality because it made the identity of the author obvious. It was generally believed that the predecessor of the drawing "Liberated Republic" was a half figure of a woman emerging out of a cloud, her outspread arms expressing the joy of liberation. As redrawn, the cloud was eliminated and the woman was shown seated in full form.

The drawing "Liberated Republic" is one of the most successful designs of postage stamps. Without embellishment and prominent framing, Brunner allows the figure of a woman with her broken bonds to stand forward. Exemplary is the planning of the area, divided with two diagonals and balanced with outstretched arms and folds of the skirt. The only addition to the picture besides the limetree sprig is the outline of two mountain peaks.

In conclusion, it may be said that Brunner had shown in his design how an allegorical picture should look.

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STAMPS ISSUED

The Liberated Republic stamps were issued in eleven values out of which one value (50h) was issued in two colors. They were released and also withdrawn from circulation pursuant to a staggered time frame. As with the preceding issues, the time of issue and withdrawal from circulation was announced through the Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications.

Bulletin No. 25, report No. 83 dated June 18, 1920, announces (among others) the issue of these stamps with the following values - 20h red, 25h light brown, 30h reddish purple.

Bulletin No. 38, report No. 45 dated August 7, 1920, announces issue of stamps with these additional values - 40h reddish brown, 50h red, 60h blue, 100h dark brown 185h dark orange, 250h blackgreen.

Bulletin No. 20, report No. 32 dated April 16, 1921, announces the termination of validity for the following values - 20h red and 25h light brown.

Bulletin No. 27, dated April 7, 1922, announced issue of these stamps - 50h green (new color) and 150h red.

Bulletin No. 1, dated January 15, 1923, announced the termination of validity of the following values - 100h dark brown, 150h red, 185h dark orange, and 250h blackgreen, with a special warn-

ing that termination was due to newly discovered forgeries.

Bulletin No. 4, dated December 16, 1925, announced the termination of validity for these values - 30h red-purple, 40h reddish brown, 50h green and 60h blue.

Table 49 shows all known issues inclusive of numbers issued, date of issue, and withdrawal from circulation.

From the table, it is obvious that the highest (almost 500-million printing) was reached with the 50h (yellow-green) stamp and the 60h (almost 270 million). These stamps also had a long period of validity.

The 150h red had the smallest printing as well as the shortest period of validity. The same is true of the lowest values of the issue, 20h and 25h. This is evidently due to the fact that the two Dove values, 20h orange and 25h green, whose validity ended in 1932, were in circulation simultaneously.

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Table 49. Liberated Republic, Printing Numbers and Validity

Value (h)	Original Printing (No)	Subsequent Reprinting (No)	Printing (No)	Day of Issue	Valid Until
20	61,070,000	2,700,000	58,370,000	22.5.1920	30.4.1921
25	13,920,000	4,700,000	9,220,000	18.6.1920	30.4.1921
30	91,260,000	-	91,260,000	22.6.1920	31.12.1925
40	165,860,000*	-	165,860,000	16.8.1920	31.12.1925
50 (red)	41,840,000	(100?)	41,840,000	17.9.1920	31.1.1923
50 (y.g.)	469,990,000*	-	469,990,000	23.1.1922	31.12.1925
60	268,530,000*	-	268,530,000	15.10.1920	31.12.1925
100	197,940,000	6,360,000	191,580,000	15.10.1920	31.1.1923
150	10,000,000	3,390,000	6,070,000	10.4.1922	31.1.1923
185	21,100,000	10,300,000	10,800,000	17.9.1920	31.1.1923
250	24,900,000	-	24,900,000	15.10.1920	31.1.1923

* exclusive of stamps for booklets



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The Liberated Republic stamps were used as current franking values to a considerable extent and were sold at all post offices with the majority being postally used (favor cancelled). Part of the remaining stock of some values in 1927 were affixed with the overprint DOPLATTI (20, 25, 100, 150, 185 and possibly by mistake a sheet of 50h red) and with the overprint of another value number. The stamps were available at the philatelic counter in Prague until 1936, where they were gradually sold out: value 150h in 1936; values 20, 25, 50h red, and 250h in 1934; values 40, 60, and 185h; at the end of 1935; and values 30, 50h (yellow-green), and 100h. in Jan. 1936.



III. 471. Registered letter - with six 50h green stamps

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PRINTING OF STAMPS

The stamps were printed by the Czech Graphic Union in Prague in conjunction with the Dove and the Agriculture and Science issues (1920) by typography, initially with etched plates and later by the latest production technique - electrotpe. In the preparatory stages, a number of trial printings were carried out not only typographically but also in recess printing.

The printing plates were produced in the same way as for the preceding issue. The model was photographed and reduced to stamp size. This was then transferred to the metal plate with a sensitive surface and a printing plate was produced by etching.

Original stamp design with full background already modified had a sketched value of "30"; this was progressively taped over with the other values in the series.

The printing form was a varying arrangement of two or four plates: Either two plus two of dif-

ferent values or two plates of one value of the Dove issue and two plates of the same value of Liberated Republic; if need be, four plates of the same value in later stages. The arrangement of a pair of plates was either both facing in the same direction or in opposite directions to each other (vertically). The Postal Museum has preserved a few samples of the complete printing form. Unfortunately up to the present time, it was not possible to determine accurately the printing form numbers, the form combinations and the relevant plate markings.

Table 50. Liberated Republic Printing Plates

Value (h)	Printing forms with two or four plates of similar values	Plate number	Remarks
20	2	4	
24	1	2	
30	4	12	so far not possible to determine accurately
40 type I	1	2	so far not possible
type II	6	14	to determine accurately
	1	2	Těte-běche
50 (red)	2	4	
50 (yellow green)	12	38	so far not possible to determine accurately
	1	2	těte-běche
60	5	14	so far not possible to determine accurately
	1	2	těte-běche
100	6	16	so far not possible to determine accurately
150	1	2	
185	1	2	
250	1	2	

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We list the numbers of the printing forms and plates above according to existing identification signs on the plates based on preserved material in the Postal Museum. From Table 50 we deduce that the accurately ascertainable number of plates and printing forms is still an open question. However, it is possible for collectors to verify the arrangement of the plates partly from the printing combinations, and the gutters which were preserved from printers' waste on numerous colored paper.

Plate markings

As with the Dove issue, the plates were initially without any markings. Later they were found variously marked. The following principal markings have been disclosed:

Without visible markings, with or without the sheet margin frame;

Variously shaped engravings inside the sheet margin frame;

Dots inside the sheet margin frame (but here it is not altogether certain whether they are associated with the plate markings);

Numbers in various positions inside the sheet margin frame;

Engraved inscriptions in the lower horizontal colored frame(and here it is not altogether certain whether they are associated with the plate markings);

Serial numbers in the bottom left corner and corresponding year in the bottom right corner.

As far as the set-up of the printing forms is concerned, we offer below those combinations that were actually found and are still preserved in the Postal Museum. The examples always have the same two plus two values (plates) :

25h + 15h Dove	30h + 20h	60h + 40h (type II)	250h + 100h
50h + 20h Dove (type I)	20h + 50h (red)	185h + 50h (red)	

As was the case with the Dove issue, the horizontal distance between the plates was from 24.0 mm. to 25.5 mm. and this entailed usage of the new perforating machine from comb perforation 14.

REVIEW OF NEW ISSUES

The June 1989 issue of the Specialist (see page 18) contained a schedule of stamps our editorial staff obtained from the Postal Administration in Prague. In last month's issue we discussed on page 13 and 14 two of the sets issued earlier this year: the Young Pioneer's Organization and Treasures of the National Gallery. This month we review the two previously issued sets: Czechoslovak Ocean Shipping and Important Personalities.

The Anniversary of Important Personalities

is a set of six stamps issued on March 9, 1989. They are all of 50h denomination; all of the pictures measure 19x23 mm. and all of the stamps come in sheets of 100. Rotary recess printing combined with multicolor photogravure was employed by the Postal Printing Office in Prague.

The first stamp shows Jan Botto, 1829-1881, a Slovak poet. His poems are based on folk traditions from an integral part of the cultural heritage of the provinces of Czechoslovakia. Design was by Albin Brunovský and engraving by Martin Činovský.

The second stamp depicts Taras Grigorievich Shevchenko, 1814-1861, a great Ukrainian poet and lyricist. He was also a very gifted painter. Design was by Ivan Schurmann and engraving by Miloš Ondráček.

Modeste Petrovich Mussorgsky, 1839-1881 is the subject of the next stamp. He was an outstanding Russian composer. His operas and piano compositions are based on Russian Folk songs and the characteristic melodic sound of the Russian language. Design in this instance was by Ivan Schurmann and engraving by Bedřich Housa.

Jean Cocteau, 1889-1962, French artist, is the subject of the fourth stamp in the set. He was a versatile creative personality - a poet, painter, dramatist, scriptwriter and movie director. His film "The Beauty and the Beast" is popular worldwide. Design was by Pavel Hrach and engraving by Bedřich Housa.

The fifth stamp shows Charles Spencer Chaplin, 1889-1977. Born 100 years ago of British origin, a pioneer of American film and comedy, he was also an actor, scriptwriter, dramatist, film director and occasional composer. Design was by Pavel Hrach and engraving by Bedřich Housa.

The final stamp commemorates the centennial of the birth of Jawaharlal Nehru, 1889-1964, a great thinker, politician and writer. As Gandhi's protégé, he was the first Prime Minister of the independent state of India and a staunch advocate of peaceful co-existence among races and nations. The stamp was designed by Rudolph Klimovič and engraving was by Václav Fajt.

First Day Covers are as follows:

One cover for Jan Botto.

One cover for T. G. Shevchenko and M. P. Mussorgsky.

One cover for J. Cocteau and C. S. Chaplin.

One cover for J. Nehru.



CZECHOSLOVAK OCEAN-GOING SHIPS

by Adolf Hujer



In the April 1983 issue of the Specialist, I discussed the issuance of six postage stamps by the Czechoslovak Postal Administration in 1972 showing Czechoslovak ships of current vintage and of the recent past. I noted that Czechoslovakia possessed her own merchant fleet of eleven ships as early as 1930 but lost them all during World War II. That fleet was not reestablished until after 1946.

On March 27, 1989, the Postal Administration issued another set of six stamps dedicated to virtually the same topic - the present visible status

of Czechoslovakia's ocean-going ships.

As we all know, Czechoslovakia has no seaport whatsoever, but does have a fleet of sixteen maritime ships of different classes and sizes. Some are larger than many of their equivalents flying flags of coastal nationals. The only other land-locked countries having maritime ships are believed to be Austria and Switzerland.

It is expected that in the near future more new ships are to be added to the 16-ship fleet now flying the flag of Czechoslovakia's tri-colors. These are being built mostly in Communist China and South Korea. By 1990 there will be at least 23 ships owned by the Prague Shipping Agency. Considering the relative scarcity of good modern commercial transports on the world's shipping market, this undertaking makes sense and sound business.

The nearest ports and harbors to the Czechoslovak borders are more than 500 kilometers away and therefore most Czech ships used to dock at ports in Yugoslavia and Poland and in Hamburg and Bremen in West Germany. Today the tri-color flags of Czechoslovak ships may be seen in the most remote harbors of the world. And the service these ships provide ranks among the world's best and most efficient.

The vessels shown on the 1972 set now belong to history. Most of them no longer exist. Those that do have been sold for salvage or scrap as we will see later on. As a matter of fact, a few of the ships shown on the 1989 set are history too. And therefore both sets in some respects show both the past and the present in Czech maritime development.

Both the 1972 and the 1989 issues were produced in the Postal Administration's printery by rotary recess printing combined with multicolor photogravure.

The six stamps of 1972 were designed by Jaroslav Lakovský, a well-known artist who passed away a few years ago. He designed many stamps after World War II and some of them were selected as the best of the year. At that time the engraving was done by Ladislav Jirka and Miloš Ondráček.

The six stamps of 1989 were designed by a lesser known Czech artist, Vladimír Hájek, who

started designing stamps only about two years ago. His work shows promise. Engraving was again done by Miloš Ondráček and also by Václav Fajt. Three first day covers engraved by the same artists were issued on March 27, 1989, Easter Monday, when practically all post offices in the country are closed. When questioned why they were issued on a holiday, postal authorities replied that the Postal Administration can do as it wants regarding post-office matters and therefore is not subject to criticism in its area of operations. They noted that certain so-called emergency post-offices throughout the country are open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. However novel this explanation may seem, the official FDC's bearing this issue will have some marked significance because of this interesting quirk.

As far as the 1989 Merchant Fleet set is concerned, the 50h stamp shows an old historic mercantile ship named REPUBLIKA. It was the oldest ship in the fleet, referred to as "babushka" or "grandmother". It was built in 1920 in Sunderland, England having 10,510 DWT. It was in the service of the Czechoslovak merchant fleet from 1952 to 1962 when it was sold to the Italians for scrap. During those ten years it made 40 long-distance trips, covered some 528,000 sea miles and transported over 389,000 tons of goods - a commendable performance for a vessel its size and vintage. By the way, do not confuse this REPUBLIKA with REPUBLIKA II having 13,878 DWT. Built in Poland in 1964, Repubika II sailed under the Czechoslovak flag and was sold to Sweden in 1973. It appears on the 80h stamp of the 1972 set. These are two distinctly different ships.

The second stamp of the 1989 set is the 1 Kč and depicts the most hard-luck ship of the entire fleet. Built in Varna, Bulgaria in 1960, it was named PIONÝR and had a 3150 DWT. On August 6, 1969 at 8:53 PM, it hit a coral reef off the island of Mayaguana in the Bahamas. On Sept. 13, 1969, all attempts to salvage the ship were abandoned and the flag was lowered. During its relative short tenure, it logged 91 long-distance trips, 374,000 sea miles and transported 276,000 tons of goods. Its sister ship was the JISKRA, having 3947 DWT. It was in service from 1963 till 1980 when it was sold. It is pictured on the 50h stamp of the 1972 set.

The third stamp of the 1989 set is the 2 Kčs showing the merchant ship BRNO of 15,250 DWT. Built in 1965 in Štětín, Poland, it was sold to a Greek Shipping Agency in 1981. During its 16 years of service as freighter, it made 96 long-distance trips, logged 881,000 sea miles and transported 1,062,000 tons of merchandise mostly in the Indian and Pacific Oceans.

The next stamp in the series shows the container ship TRINEC of 33,230 DWT on a 3 Kčs stamp. Its ports of call were mostly in the Americas on both the Atlantic and Pacific side. It was built in Štětín, Poland ten years after the BRNO. After 13 years of service, it boasted 115 long-distance trips, logged over 817,000 sea miles and transported 3,391,000 tons of bulk material. Its sister ships are the PRAHA (32,357 DWT) and the BRATISLAVA (31,882 DWT). Both have been in full service since the early seventies.

The 4 Kčs is the fourth stamp of the set and is dedicated to the merchant ship ORLÍK (15,226 DWT). Built in Rijeka, Yugoslavia in 1981, the freighter saw eight years of service covering 57 long-distance voyages during which it logged some 346,000 sea miles and transported 662,000 tons of merchandise. Its sister ships are the ŠLAPY, the LIPNO and the ORAVA. All three were constructed since 1981 and have been flying the flag of Czechoslovakia from the outset.

The last of the set shows the merchant vessel VLTAVA (7,939 DWT) on a 5 Kčs stamp. This freighter was built in Xingangi in Communist China and has been in service only since April 1988. During 1989, three sister ships are due to join this class of freighter, - the OTAVA, the BEROUNKA and the SÁZAVA. Yet another larger freighter being currently built in South Korea is expected to join the Czechoslovak Fleet in the near future.

As for the ships appearing on the 1972 set, their fate has already been touched upon briefly earlier in this article. To recapitulate in greater detail, the JISKRA I shown on the 50h stamp was sold to Sweden in 1980. The MÍR, pictured on the 60h stamp, was transferred to China in 1967, almost five years before the 1972 set was even issued. The REPUBLIKA II as seen on the 80h stamp was sold to Sweden in 1973. (Again, it is not to be confused with the REPUBLIKA I known as the "Babushka" on the 50h stamp of the 1989 set). The KOŠICE shown on the 1 Kč stamp was scrapped at Taiwan in 1986. The DUKLA appearing on the 1.60 Kčs stamp had been transferred to

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Communist China some seven years before issuance of the 1972 set. Lastly, the KLADNO was sold in 1973. And such are the unpredictable lives of ocean-going merchant ships!

Unlike the ships, the people that man them, maintain them and operate them have a certain devotion to their vessels and to the seas they sail. During the 19th century reign of the Austro-Hungarian monarchs, many Czechs worked on their ships not only as engineers and technicians, but as seamen, including Captains and officers. They were among the best of their day. And the vessels were equipped with parts devised by Czechs, such as the ship's propeller.

Josef Ludvik Ressel, born in Chrudim, Bohemia, on June 29, 1793, is credited with inventing and marketing the propeller. Sent by the Imperial Navy to serve duty at Venice and Trieste, Ressel lived there for many years. While there, he came upon the idea of using Fulton's screw for pushing ships. After his experiments proved successful, he obtained a patent in Vienna on June 11, 1827 and later one in Paris and London. The ship CIVETTA was equipped with a Ressel propeller and was the first ship in marine history to be driven by screw.

Ressel's name was given to the High Technical School which opened in Prague in the middle of the 19th century. And a street in Prague was also named after him. Reslová ulice runs from Karlovo Náměstí to the river Vltava. Many monuments have been erected in his honor throughout Bohemia. And last but not least - you guessed it! - a stamp bearing his portrait was issued on July 5, 1957, paying tribute to him as the inventor who opened a new epoch in the world's shipping industry.

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DURING THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE ARGE TSCHECHOSLOWAKEI IM BDPH ON 10TH AND 11TH OF JUNE IN WERNEK BAVARIA, THE 48 ATTENDING MEMBERS VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO SEND CON- GRATULATIONS AND GREETINGS ON THE OCCASION OF YOUR SOCIETY'S 50TH ANNIVERSARY.			
PLEASE ACCEPT OUR VERY BEST WISHES AND SINCERE CONGRATULATIONS.			
ON BEHALF OF THE OFFICERS AND MEMBERSHIP			
 FRED W. HIFER VORSITZENDER			

ANOTHER SHOW COMING UP!

INDYPEX 89 is now history. Probably by the time you get this issue of the Specialist, SEPAD 89 will also be concluded. Our staff will be providing you with full coverage of both shows. Please watch the November issue for complete details.

In the March issue (top of page 7), President Chesloe announced the forthcoming World Stamp Expo 89 to be held at Washington D.C.'s Convention Center from Nov. 17 to Dec. 3. More information on this important philatelic event may be obtained by contacting the U.S. Postal Service, P.O. Box 23261, Washington, D.C. 20026-3261. On Sunday, Nov. 19 at noon, Henry Hahn will present a slide lecture entitled "The Many Facets of Collecting Czechoslovakia." Pavel Pitterman of Prague, accredited F.I.P. judge, noted collector and author, will be asked to comment (in translation form) on a philatelic subject of his choosing. Society members and friends interested in attending or participating at World Expo 89 are invited to contact Henry Hahn, 2936 Rosemoor Lane, Fairfax, Va. 22031, telephone: 703/560-2972 for details.

Meanwhile another big international show come to an end while some of us basked in the sun on ocean beaches. PHILEXFRANCE took place during mid-July in Paris and was proclaimed by many as the best international show ever. As one philatelic writer put it, "in terms of attendance, exhibits bourse activity, presentation, pomp and almost anything else, the July 7 to 17 show set new standards." There are of course those who differ. For example, the AMERIPEX international exhibition held in Chicago in 1986 drew 160,000 paid customers. Paid attendance at the eleven-day PHILEXFRANCE event topped 260,000. But the week-long PRAGA 88 show drew 460,000 customers. Those kinds of figures, when compared, speak for themselves and reveal more than just one man's opinion.

At PHILEXFRANCE, our Society was represented by two winning entries. Henry Hahn received a Large Vermeil for his "Czechoslovakia - Selected Pages for a Specialized Collection". Hans Klein won a Small Gold. Nice going!

ANOTHER ELECTION IS OVER!

You have all read about our eight nominees to the Board of Directors of our Society in the June Specialist (page 19) and about your duty and privilege as members to vote for five of them to help govern the Society for the next four years. The Society appreciates and thanks those of you who are conscientious and cast votes by using the ballots we sent you. The votes were counted by Charles Chesloe and Jane Sterba and count was certified by Jack Benčhik and Robert Koschalk. Here are the final results:

1. Ludvik Svoboda*	40 votes
2. Henry Hahn*	37 votes
3. Mirko L. Vondra*	34 votes
4. Frank Julsen*	28 votes
5. Vladimir Bubák	26 votes
6. Mrs. Earl F. Blinn	20 votes
7. Jay T. Carrigan	16 votes
8. J. L. Klein	13 votes

Those with asterisks in front of their names denote re-election to the Board. Congratulations to the first five who received the highest number of votes! You have been elected to the Board.

WANTED: 1 kč. NITRA gutter, either pair or larger unit. If you have one available, write or call Frank Julsen, 8721 Via La Serena, Paradise Valley, Arizona 85253, telephone 602/948-7336.

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