

# FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY YEAR THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST

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## MUCHA'S NEWSPAPER STAMPS

by Tomáš Morovics

Translated by Mirko Vondra

### I. Retouching the Design

There is always something new to be found when examining the first newspaper stamps of Czechoslovakia. Known as the "Sokol in Flight", this issue offers a challenge of possibilities to the specialized student. A row of plate faults or interesting retouches lies waiting to be discovered. For my part, I have devoted some attention to the finer retouching which appears on the design of stamps having values of 5h, 6h and 10h.

The 5h green has a retouch of the linear background to the left of the Sokol bird (see Ill. 1, fig. 1). It appears at position 19 on one of the first plates of the printing form. The stamp is dark green in color. Plate I also has a retouch at position 28 which is described at length in Monografie IV, page 153-154.

The 5h green also has a retouch at position 61 of the bird's tail (not shown). This retouch is

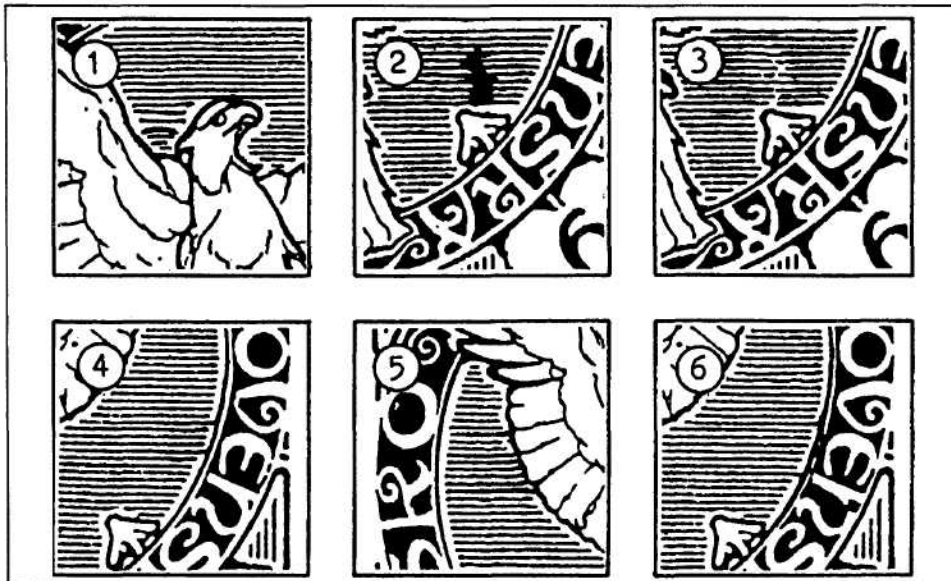


Illustration 1

## THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST

marked on the plate with four cuts at the left margin frame.

The 6h red shows a retouch of the large dark spot on the linear background above the arrowhead leaf on the right side. The original fault can be found on position 9 of Plate I (See fig. 2). The retouch is evident in the broken lines of the background (see fig. 3). A major flaw at position 9 is the connecting of one of the background lines with the letter "A". This concerns a fault in the supporting table for the blackprint, specifically a fault in the glass negative. Therefore it is also found on plate II. However, plate II has neither a large dark spot nor its retouch at position 9.

The 10h violet has a retouch of the letter "VE" in "Slovenská" and surrounding area. It appears at position 12 in plate I (see fig. 4). The contours of the "VE" have been trimmed, some of the lines in the background were thickened and two of them were extended to touch the borders of the lettering.

Again, the 10h violet has a retouch of the upper left outline of the feathered wing at position 21 of plate I (see fig. 5). In addition, the background lines between the letter "K" and "O" have been corrected and seven of them have been extended so as to touch the wing.

And still on the subject of the 10h violet, there is a retouch of the letter "E" in "Slovenská" as well as its surrounding area at position 22 (see fig. 6). This includes alteration of the bottom part of the "E" as well as the dark and white portions of the frame. Two of the background lines have been extended to meet that frame.

### II. Retouching the Signature

As noted above, these newspaper stamps, printed by typography, offer the serious collector a multitude of specialized possibilities. There are color varieties, different grades of paper, private perforations, proof and trial prints as well as plate faults.

I wish now to focus attention on the retouches of Mucha's signature on the 20h blue. This subject is covered in detail in Monografie IV. However, even a publication as thorough as that cannot possibly cover everything. On page 161, the authors mention at least four varieties of these retouches. Actually there are a total of twenty, all on plate II which was engraved without a sheet margin frame. The retouches occurred on positions 61-64, 73, 75-78, 81-88 and 93-95.

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Illustration 2

Monografie even lists position 74 where no such retouch exists. The individual retouches are easy to visually distinguish, but a verbal description would have to be lengthy and involved. Therefore I dispense with the verbosity and offer instead a pictorial magnification of the numerous retouches.

Based on the character drawing of each separate letter in Mucha's name, one can readily identify the corresponding position of each stamp on the plate. The table (see Ill. 2) shows the twenty retouches with the plate position of each. The last two figures were taken at random from stamps of the same plate which were not retouches. The strip of three 20h stamps shown in Ill. 3 indicates retouches on positions 63 and 64 and no retouch on position 65.

The 20h blue was printed from ten plates making up a total of 1,000 positions. This means theoretically one out of a thousand has a retouch. In reality, many more retouches exist, leading us to the conclusion that many more stamps were printed from plate II than from the other nine plates.

### III. "Trial Prints"

Recently I came across a so-called "trial print" of the 5h stamp in wine red color on thin yellowish paper and in violet on thick gummed yellowish paper. (see Ill. 4, fig. 1). Anyone who is familiar with the detailed origin of these newspaper stamps knows that trial prints in that likeness do not



Illustration 3

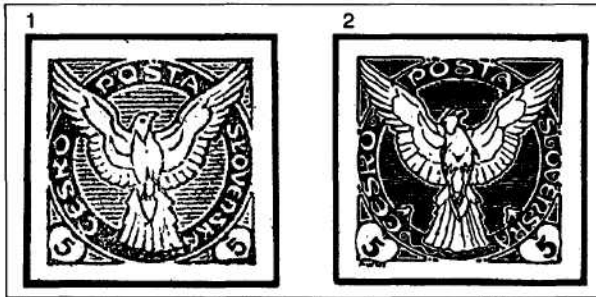


Illustration 4

fine thinly-spaced lines of the original. The lettering and the numerals are uneven and irregular. Most important of all, Mucha's name is missing.

The general appearance of this "trial print" is amateurish and unimpressive. One has to wonder how to categorize this "find". As a counterfeit, it would hardly fool a postal clerk, much less a philatelist. As a curiosity item, it merely confirms that in the unobtrusive abundance of varieties that mark this set of newspaper stamps, there is no dearth of surprises.

exist. This is even more evident when compared with Mucha's original design or with the definitive stamp of that denomination (see fig. 2).

The sketch of the picture offered as a "trial print" is grossly simplified in contrast to the original. The outline of the Sokol bird consists of rough cuts lacking detail and the horizontal lines of the background being thick and widely-spaced lines instead of the

## ALFONS MUCHA ON STAMPS

by Adolf Hujer



Czechoslovakia's Postal Administration seems to be in love with reproductions of paintings on postage stamps. They have been issuing these kind of stamps for many years now and one must admit that their artistry level is high and the printing - especially that of flat plates - is superior.

Twenty years ago on the occasion of the thirtieth anniversary of the country's most famous painter, Alfons Mucha (1860-1939), a set of four stamps was issued in Prague. It depicts reproductions of his works in beautiful style and design. But this year, fifty years after his death, no commemorative issue appeared in his honor. It leaves one wondering what happened.

Mucha was born at Ivančice in Moravia and began to study painting in Prague. After a few years he went to Vienna and Paris to continue his studies but met with little success. In 1881, he returned to Bohemia. There in the town of Mikulov, he displayed his sketches to a bookseller who brought them to the attention of the local landowner, Count Carl Khuen. The Count liked what he saw and commissioned Mucha to work at his castle, the Emmahof, restoring family portraits and decorating the dining room with classically-inspired murals. The

Count's brother, on hearing of this, invited Mucha to his castle in the Tyrol. There Mucha's works attracted the attention of the German Painter, Wilhelm Kray, professor at the Munich Academy. Kray persuaded Mucha to study at Munich and, after two years, sent him to two more Academies in Paris. While there, he worked as an illustrator for book publishers. His illustrations in "Figaro Illustré" and "Revue Mame" became well-known. Many of his works found their way to Prague to be published there in monthly and weekly journals such as "Zlatá Praha."

On Christmas Eve of 1894, Mucha was correcting proofs for a friend at the printing works of Lemercier when Sarah Bernhardt, dissatisfied with the poster for her new production "Gismonda" by Sardou, telephoned demanding a replacement poster by New Year's Eve. Mucha was offered the job and he produced, whether by chance or by inspiration, a poster so new and radically differ-

ent in design, that it became an immediate showpiece and a collector's item. It catapulted Mucha to deserving fame and also made him a close friend of the world-renowned actress who insisted on having him design all her future playbills. He signed a six-year contract to do all her posters which brought him a flood of commissions and attracted the attention of the famous French printer, Champenois. In return for a generous salary, Mucha gave Champenois the exclusive right to print his lithographic works. It was he who suggested the idea for the *panneaux decoratifs* which were basic posters with no text printed on high quality paper or even satin. Up to that point, Mucha's posters all bore text and lettering publicizing a particular theme or event. Champenois made repeated use of Mucha's designs not only on posters, but on calendars and postcards. These postcards reached their peak of production around 1900 and have become true collector's items.



Between 1904 and 1912, Mucha spent considerable time in America. Though his arrival in the U.S. was heralded with much pomp and publicity, he was seen as the champion of posters and *panneaux*, extolling the virtues of feminine beauty. But this is just the image Mucha sought to dispel. He wanted, instead, to become a serious painter and portraitist. After numerous attempts at striving toward that image, he received a big boost from Charles R. Crane, A New York millionaire, who agreed to finance Mucha's main ambition, "The Slavonic Epic". This led to the commissioning of Mucha to decorate an interior section of Prague's Municipal Building. He produced a triumphantly theatrical fresco consisting of twenty panels depicting episodes from Slavic history. He worked on it intermittently from 1912 to 1928. During that time, his international reputation stayed alive through a very successful exhibition of his work at the Brooklyn Museum in 1921 which featured, among other things, his "Slavonic Epic".

In the context of his family life (he married a young Czech girl in 1903), he was generally a happy man. In being honored with designing his country's first postage stamps, first banknotes and even first policemen's uniforms, his patriotic ambitions were fulfilled. Few people, however, realize that only a small part of his career's productivity went into his philatelic and numismatic work.

Unfortunately, patriotism in those days had its pitfalls. When the Germans marched into Czechoslovakia in 1939, he was one of the first to be questioned by the Gestapo. As an aging person, his body and mind could not withstand the ordeal. He died shortly thereafter as his nation lapsed into a six-year coma.

For the set of stamps issued in July 1969 commemorating the thirtieth anniversary of his death, Prague's leading artist, Jiří Švengsbir, used three pictures of his "Arts Cycle", namely "The Dance", "The Music" and "The Painting". They were issued on stamps of .40, .60 and 1.20 Kčs. These are printed by Rotary Recess combined with engraving in four colors. The fourth stamp, of 2.40 Kčs., bears a reproduction of two of his paintings from "The Precious Stones Cycle" - "The Ruby" and "The Amethyst" - both appearing in five colors by steel print on flat plates. Illustrated



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here is the complete set favor-cancelled by a specially designed Mucha cancellation on an official publicity sheet. To complement this set, beautiful First Day covers were released bearing reproductions of various smaller works by Mucha and also designed by Jiří Švengsbír.

This unique set was a fitting memorial to Czechoslovakia's most celebrated modern artist. One can only wonder why twenty years later, on the fiftieth anniversary of his death, he was not again remembered perhaps not so much for his artistry, as for the patriotic service to his country for which he paid with his life. The absence of a Mucha Memorial set in 1989 is bemoaned and decried. To use the appropriate vernacular, - who goofed ?

#### MEMBER OF THE MONTH

### MEET ADOLF HUJER



The latest addition to our editorial staff has arrived as a seasoned veteran among writers and journalists. Adolf Hujer boasts an impressive array of published articles in such journals as *Il Collezionista Torino* (Italy), *Schweizerische Briefmarkenzeitung* (Switzerland), *Stamp Collecting* (England), *Stamps* (U.S.A.), *Sammler Luppe* (West Germany) and others. For his philatelic research and journalistic endeavors, he has been awarded such medals as the Big Silver (Madrid in 1975), a Silver in Budapest (1984), a Bronze in Prague (1962 and 1968) and many more.

Hujer was the son of a glass beads manufacturer in Northern Bohemia whose products were sold not only to the export houses of Gablonz (Jablonec nad Nisou), but also to direct importers in the U.S., Germany, England and other western nations. These commercial undertakings generated mountains of correspondence which brought postage stamps from all over the world into the Hujer household.

At age 8, while recovering from a prolonged illness, Adolf received a large bundle of stamps from his father. After sorting them, he was attracted to the picture sets of Bosnia and Herzegovina of 1906 and 1910. It became for him the first "country" whose stamps he collected. Later he expanded that collection to include Austria, Germany, France and finally Czechoslovakia.

After completing his studies at the Commercial Academy in Prague, Adolf joined the family export business, traveling all over Europe, America and even Africa promoting his father's enterprises.

In 1948, he was appointed Honorary Consul to the Republic of Haiti by the late Jan Masaryk. It was the last appointment to be made by the then Minister of Foreign Affairs before his tragic death. After the new government nationalized all private industry, Adolf spent some time in the mines and in the heavy machinery industry. Finally he landed in the plastics industry where he remained till his retirement.

It was during that time that he began writing short articles about stamps. During PRAGA 68, he was invited to join the Organization of International Philatelic Journalists which had been founded at PRAGA 62 (the Association Internationale des Journalistes Philateliques, - or AIJP). As one of its founding members, he served first as assistant press secretary and, in 1972, was elected press secretary at the Association's Congress in Poznan, Poland. He has now held that position for 18 years and is presently a member of its Presidium. Soon thereafter he was invited to join our own Society and has been an active member ever since.

Few persons on the Editorial Staff of our Specialist - both past and present - have had credentials to compare with those of Adolf Hujer. Although he has already been to the U.S. several times and has even attended at least one Society meeting (that in Bethesda, MD), his home is in Prague and he shares his membership with many other philatelic Societies. Even so, our own Society is proud to have him as a member and the Specialist, in particular, welcomes him aboard the Editorial Express !

## THE LIBERATED REPUBLIC Second Installment

*(This is a continuation of the Allegory Chapter from Monografie II translated specially for this publication by Vladimír Králíček. To save space, we have deleted the full-page illustrations on pages 273 & 274 of Monografie. They relate to the Schematic layout of the printing format. This installment continues with the text starting on page 275.)*

(Page 275)

### PRINTING PLATES FOR STAMP BOOKLETS

For this unusual arrangement, three values of the Liberated Republic Issue were printed: 40h (type II), 50h yellowgreen, and the 60h.

Details of the printing method and issuance are given on page 192. (See Nov. 1987 Specialist, page 8)

Opposing pairs (tête-bêche) have become favorites with collectors, especially the 50h value (both narrow and wide), which are the most sought-after. Additionally, these three values for the booklet issue were comb perforated 13 3/4.

Number of stamps printed for the stamp booklets:

40h (type II) .....	111,000 sheets (of 90 stamps)
50h .....	21,000 sheets (of 90 stamps)
60h.....	110,000 sheets (of 90 stamps)

### PRINTING PLATES AND THEIR MARKINGS

Up to the present time, the precise sequence of the printing format and plates has not been ascertained. Only the plate markings themselves and the discovery of various plate symbols form a definite base for compilation of the table of identifiable marks.

Besides the usual and known markings, there occasionally appear some new ones with this issue; e.g., one or two dots in the sheet margin frame of the 50h yellowgreen; the inscription "NÁKLAD" partly cut off on the full frame under the 91st and 92nd stamp of the 50h yellowgreen and the same inscription in the same place on the 100h stamp. In all these cases, reliance on the printer's markings was necessary in the absence of accurate plate designations.

In addition to the usual markings on the frame, compensating full lines irregularly positioned and mostly vertical are occasionally found in the lower part of the sheet under the row control number. They are there for the purpose of equally spreading the weight of the printing cylinder and preventing the possibility of skidding during printing.

(Page 276)

III. 475. Example of a part of 40h sheet for the booklets

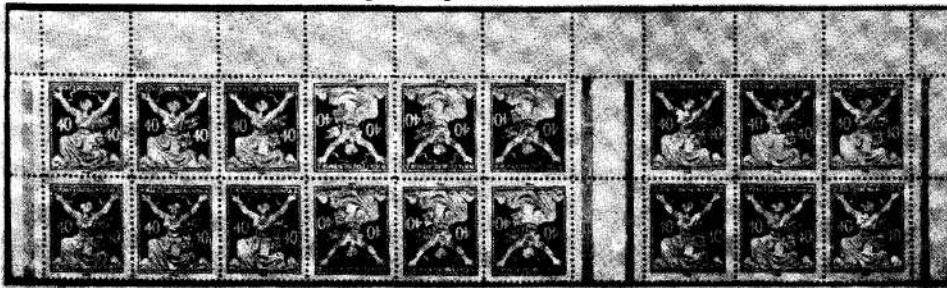


Table 51. 20h Printing Plates

Plate Markings	Remarks
2, - decimal dash uninterrupted (under the 91st stamp) 2, -- decimal dash once interrupted (under the 91st stamp)	joined with two plates of the 50h Liberated Republic (or 185h)
2, --- decimal dash twice interrupted (under the 91st stamp) 2, ---- decimal dash thrice interrupted (under the 91st stamp)	joined with two plates of the 50h (or 185h)

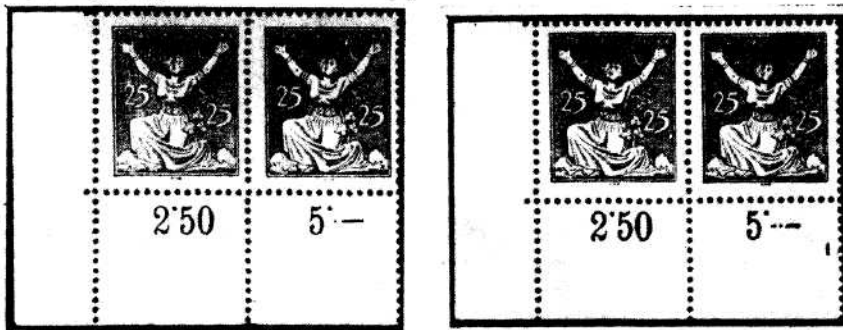


III. 476

Table 52. 25h Printing Plates

Plate Markings	Remarks
5, -- decimal dash once interrupted (under the 92nd stamp) 5, --- decimal dash twice interrupted (under the 92nd stamp)	joined with two plates of the 15h Dove

(Page 278)

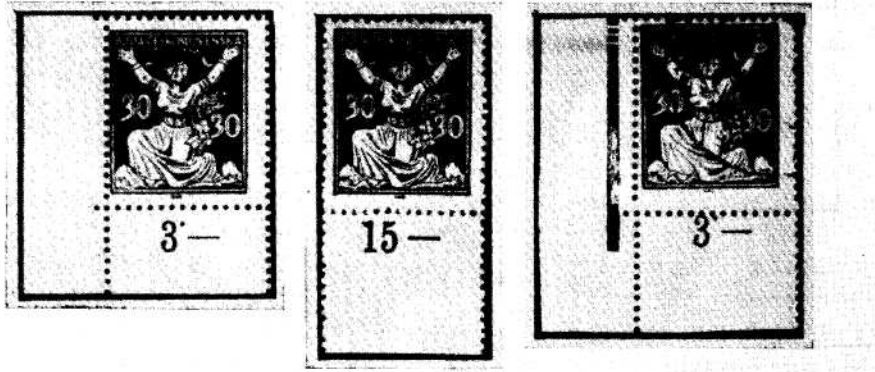


III. 477



**Table 53. 30h Printing Plates**

Plate Markings	Remarks
without marking, without frame without marking, with frame	
15 - without decimal point under the 91st stamp single horizontal notch in the sheet margin frame in front of the 91st stamp two horizontal notches in the sheet margin frame in front of the 91st stamp three horizontal notches in the sheet margin frame in front of the 91st stamp	
24 - 1 24 - 2	since 1924, with serial numbers and year



Ill. 478

*(Third Installment to continue in December Issue).*

## INDYPEX HAPPENINGS

The first of our Society's two exhibitions and conventions for this fiftieth anniversary year is now over. Held in Indianapolis and sponsored by the Indiana Stamp Club, INDYPEX was also the first of the American Philatelic Society's "World Series of Philately" shows for the season. It took place on Sept. 15, 16 and 17.

Our Society entered seven exhibits: five competitive and two non-competitive.

The competitive ones placed as follows:

Bob Koschalk: Bohemia and Moravia with Selected Pages form a specialized Collection.

INDYPEX Silver-Bronze; SCP Grand Award.

Jay Carrigan: Carpatho-Ukraine 1944-45. INDYPEX Silver-Bronze; SCP First Place.

Jack Benchik: Slovakia. INDYPEX Bronze; SCP Second Place.

Lolly Horechny: Czechoslovakia 1938-42. INDYPEX Bronze; SCP Third Place.

Joseph Janečka: German Cancels in Bohemia-Moravia. INDYPEX Bronze.

The two non-competitive exhibits were both submitted by our President and exhibition chairman Charley Chesloe. They consisted of Czechoslovakia's Turbulent Period (1938-39) and the Subetenland.

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The Society's reception on Friday, Sept. 15, was held at the hotel suite loaned by the Indiana Stamp Club, the hosting organization. The following morning members of the Board of Directors held their meeting which was then followed by a general membership meeting. On Saturday afternoon the Society's seminars, which included a walk through our members' exhibits, were on Slovakia by Jack Banchik and on the Sudetenland, Bohemia-Moravia and the Carpatho-Ukraine (Ruthenia) by Charley Chesloe.

As can be seen from the above, the component parts of Czechoslovakia after the 1939 breakup of the country at Munich was the theme of the show. 1939 was also the founding year of our Society. In honor of our golden anniversary, the SCP has issued a souvenir card (see adjoining full-page illustration) and four different cachets. The card shows the two hyphenated "Czechoslovakia" issues in the upper left corner, two Slovakia stamps in the upper right corner, one Bohemia-Moravia stamp in the lower left corner and the one only Carpatho-Ukraine commemorative in the lower right corner. The pictorial INDYPEX cancel ties the five Czechoslovak-related U.S. stamps to the card. The first on the left is of course the Czechoslovak flag of the Overrun Countries Set of 1943. Next is the 1945 commemorative for the U.S. Marine Corps showing the American flag-raising at Iwo Jima. One of the Marines is Sgt. Michael Strank who was born in Slovakia. The third and fourth are the two Champion of Liberty stamps honoring Thomas G. Masaryk, the country's first President. Last is the 1965 stamp issued for the centennial of the Sokol.

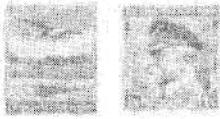
There are four cachets and each shows the stamps in one of the corners of the souvenir card with a brief description under each. The four corners of the card make for four different cachets having the carousal stamps as the theme of INDYPEX and its pictorial cancellation. The card and the cachets make for a very attractive combination. Sales at our lounge table at INDYPEX were brisk and more sales are expected at SEPAD. The complete package contains a set of four cachets plus the souvenir card with its five affixed U.S. stamps tied with the pictorial cancellation. **The package is available from the Society's co-chairman at INDYPEX, Jack Banchik, P.O. Box 555, Notre Dame, Indiana 46656, at a cost of five dollars postpaid.** By mail they are sold only as a complete set. Please support your Society in this endeavor. Not only will you receive a truly memorable philatelic record of the Society's fiftieth anniversary, but will also help defray the Society's expenses in making its anniversary worth your while. And for a really fine Christmas gift, consider our special offer consisting of one card and four cachets cancelled on each of the three days of the show for only ten dollars postpaid.

Honors to the member traveling the farthest to get to INDYPEX goes to George Connolly of England. Other members seen at random sampling include Allen Hoover of Fort Wayne, Ind; Ed Linhart of Chicago; Carl Lindner of Fremont, Mich; Willmont Wheeler Jr. of Southport, Conn; and Bob Koschalk of Waukegon, Ill. If we accidentally overlooked mentioning anyone, our apologies to them !

The Society's appreciation and gratitude is extended to Jane Sterba, George Connolly and Charley Chesloe for their efforts to help make the Society's participation at INDYPEX a success and for assisting me, especially in the manning of our lounge table during the entire show. Their combined patience, planning and preparation in the face of some unforeseen odds brought us through with flying colors.

J. B.

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Because of limited space and time constraints, the Society's participation at SEPAD will be fully reviewed in the December issue.



**50th ANNIVERSARY  
1939-1989  
SOCIETY for  
CZECHOSLOVAK PHILATELY**



The U.S.A. stamps shown above were selected because of their Czechoslovak topics. First is the Czechoslovak flag on the overrun countries issue of 1943. Next is the 1945 commemorative for the U.S. Marine Corps showing the American flag raising at Iwo Jima. One of these marines is Sgt. Michael Strank, who was born in Slovakia. Then there are two Champion of Liberty stamps for Thomas Masaryk, first president of Czechoslovakia released in 1960. Lastly is the 1965 issue for the centennial of the Sokols, a Czechoslovak physical fitness organization.

This card is an official souvenir for the Golden Anniversary of the establishment of the Society for Czechoslovak Philately. Originally it was founded as the Czechoslovak Philatelic Society of North America. In celebration of this event, this souvenir card is released in honor of our half century of existence.

Pictured on this card are representative examples of postage stamps issued 50 years ago in 1939 by Czechoslovakia. At the upper left corner are reproductions of the two stamps with the hyphenated "Czecho-Slovakia," a forerunner of the break-up of Czechoslovakia. The upper right corner shows one result of dismemberment, facsimiles of the two stamps from the Independent Republic of Slovakia. Portrayed are two Catholic priests from left to right, Father Andrew Hlinka, Head of the Slovakian Separationist Movement, and Msgr. Josef Tiso, the first and only President of Slovakia.

Down in the lower left corner is a typical stamp from the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia with a view of Prague, its capital city. Lastly, in the lower right corner is the only stamp exclusively for Carpatho-Ukraine (Ruthenia). It is known as the One Day Stamp because it was issued on March 15, 1939, and valid for only that day. On the next day the Hungarian Army marched into this small sovereign country, abolished its parliament and government. Then Hungary promptly annexed it until 1944, it was then recovered by Czechoslovakia. Next year it was turned over to the Soviet Union.

*Charley Chesloe*

Charley Chesloe, President  
Society for Czechoslovak Philately  
Chicago and Czechoslovak Philatelic  
Society  
Chairman, Convention and Exhibition

*Jack Benchik*

Jack Benchik, Vice President  
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### CHARLEY'S CORNER

Last fall I wrote of my Reflections on PRAGA 88 (see Nov. 1988 Specialist, pages 1 and 2). I predicted that the market and the prices for Czechoslovak stamps would drop after the international show. This would seemingly be the type of pattern that followed PRAGA 78. It now appears that my prediction was wrong. The contrary seems to have occurred.

Even though the Pofis auction in Prague during the 1978 exhibition was somewhat subdued (with the exception of a few items), the Pofis auction in May of this year at the Palace of Culture turned out to be a bidding war among many collectors and prices realized again "going through the roof".

On July 4, 1989, H. R. Harmer held a sale in London on an old-time collection which earned a Silver medal at the First International Exhibition in Prague in 1938. It was the collection of Dr. A. Winzer. Some of the more noteworthy prices obtained were: the First Prague Local Issue - 88 pounds sterling (\$139.00); Second Prague Issue - £77 (\$122.00); Srobar Issue - £132 (\$210.00); 20h Scout overprinted "Přijezd Presidenta Masaryka" - 418£ (\$660.00); 30h Hradčany tetě-beče gutter pair - £770 (\$1220.00) against estimates of £40, £40, £60, £200 and £200. Further, seven color proofs of the 10h (3) and 20h (4) brought £297 (\$470.00) against an estimate of £70. The two newspaper stamps of 1919, 2h and 10h gutter pairs, brought £330 (\$520.00) against a very low £75 estimate. A specialized collection of proofs, essays and color trials of the 1920 Masaryk Issue (over 300 items) brought £2,310 (\$3,650.00) against an estimate of £1,500. Three blocks of four of the 20h red Hradčany imperf were offered. The first sold for £154 (\$243.00) and a bottom marginal block with control numbers went for £297(\$470.00). The third, a brilliant block with full offset went for £308(\$486.00), which was a bargain when compared to prices realized for the other two blocks.

An imperf 30h violet block went for £363(\$575.00) against all estimates of £150. Two blocks of four of the rare 30h perf 13 3/4 x 13 1/2 in the darker shade went for £935(\$1,480.00) and the better pale shade brought £1,210(\$1,910.00) even though the centering was heavily off to the left.

This underscores the fact that the pale red violet is much more desirable than the darker red violet.

Blocks of four of the inverted air mail issues were offered and an imperf set of Scott no. C-1 to C-3 realized £418(\$660.00) and a set of blocks of C-7 to C-9 inverted realized the same price.

Three other noteworthy items were blocks of four of the 20 kčs airmail of 1936 perf 13 3/4 x 12 1/4 which sold for £2,420(\$3,825.00) and the 100h Allegory overprinted "Doplatit" of 1927 with the rare line perf 13 3/4 which brought £935(\$1,480.00). A vertical used strip of the 100h redrawn Agriculture and Science Type III - II - III went for £176(\$280.00). It had the perf 13 3/4 x 13 1/2, the line perf 13 3/4 being much rarer. You may write to H. R. Harmer of London for a catalog and prices realized. Or you may write your President, Charles C. Chesloe, 8300 South Wolf Road, Willow Springs, IL 60480. He will supply you with a clear photocopy for \$3.50 postpaid.

There will be an excellent Czechoslovak philatelic sale conducted in April 1990 the proceeds going to our Society. Please see ad on page 12 of this issue.

## EDITORIAL HINGES

### I. A FEATHER IN OUR CAP

Add one more medal to our growing list of awards that the Specialists keeps winning! The latest took place at the 103rd Annual Convention of the American Philatelic Society at StampShow 89 in Anaheim, California during the latter part of August.

The Literature competition seemed to be divided into two classes: Single publications and periodicals. As a periodical, the Specialist received a Silver medal for submission of the March, April, May and June issues. Judges for the Literature exhibits were Felix Ganz of Illinois (chairman), Douglas N. Clark of Georgia and Lowell S. Newman of New Jersey.

One of the criticisms which prevented the Specialist from receiving either the Gold or Vermeil was contained in the following comment: "The running head sometimes reads "Specialist" and sometimes "Czechoslovak Specialist." Unfortunately, that was not an accurate observation.

All four issues submitted for competition consistently contained only "Czechoslovak Specialist" as its running head. However, the May issue on pages 3 to 6 reproduces the first issue (vol 1, no. 1) of the Specialist in its complete form. The running head reads "The Specialist" on two of those four pages just as it appears on the original. Had the jurors taken the time to read the short notice titled "The First Issue" on page 2, they would have realized that the next four pages comprised that reproduction in its original format.

Your editor is not making an issue of the "faux pas". He merely wishes to remind those who set themselves up as jurors that they are duty-bound to examine all the material with careful scrutiny before passing judgment. There is no excuse for such an oversight. It is a kind of negligence that borders on indifference and seems to have permeated judging of philatelic exhibits even at national level.

### II. THE UNISSUED MUCHA STAMP OF 1989

As a general rule, we do not honor the death anniversaries of famous personalities in America. In Europe they do. On the occasion of the 30th year of Mucha's death, Czechoslovakia issued a set of four beautiful stamps illustrating some of the painter's graphic art plus numerous artfully-designed cachets used as first day covers.

1989 is the fiftieth year following Mucha's death at the hands of the Nazi invaders of Czechoslovakia. Not a single stamp, no cachet, not even one philatelic item has come out



Figure 1





Figure 2

reproduction of the 10h Hradčany stamp (see fig. 1). Out of sheer curiosity, your editor undertook a random count and discovered that the Hradčany stamp has been reproduced at least eight times on postally valid material such as miniature sheets, cards and various postal stationery. Oddly enough, he has not found a single reproduction of either Mucha's newspaper stamp or his special delivery stamp. Therefore, to atone for these omissions, the Specialist offers its version of the unissued philatelic item of 1989 - a miniature sheet commemorating the 50th anniversary of Mucha's death (see fig. 2).

of the Post Printing Office this year. What sort of mental lapse has befallen the postal authorities? Instead of wasting efforts on such nondescript stamps as the 1k "Haliaeetus Albkilla" - a bird which does not even inhabit the territory encompassed by Czechoslovakia, more attention should be paid to what is historically important. What greater significance could be attached and what higher honor bestowed on the country's most famous artist than to issue at least one philatelic item reminding the world that Mucha lives in the hearts of his countrymen?

Since the postal authorities have dismally failed in their obligations this year, the Specialist offers what its editor believes should have been the minimal philatelic tribute paid to an outstanding personality. Last year on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of Czechoslovakia's first stamp, the Ministry of Posts issued an attractive miniature sheet bearing two 5 kčs. stamps of Mucha and a

**NEW ISSUES**

**I. THE FRENCH REVOLUTION**

As we all know, France celebrated its most important state holiday on July 14 - the 200th anniversary of its great revolution.



Figure 1

On that day, the Czechoslovak Postal authorities commemorated the event with issuance of a miniature sheet with a value of 5 Kčs. The design was by Ivan Schurmann, painter and graphic artist; engraving was by Josef Herčík, engraver and graphic artist. The picture on the stamp itself is 40 x 26 mm. The sheets were produced on multicolored steel print from flat plates.

The design of the sheet recalls the history of this epochal event and paints a symbolic representation of the fighting people in the throes of battle, aided by iron will and strength. It is reminiscent of the musical show "Les Misérables", based on the book by Victor Hugo who was born in 1802.

Below the picture in both Czech and French text are the words: "1789 - 1989; 200th Anniversary of the French Revolution". Beneath that is a graphic motif of three flying gulls, the so-called logo-type. It is taken from a French original - a symbol of the



Figure 2

important anniversary. Also of note at the top of the miniature sheet is the official emblem of the World Exhibition of Postage Stamps, PHILEXFRANCE 89, which took place in Paris from July 7 to 17. The first day cover shows a drawing of a French revolutionary and the three gulls along with Czech and French text.

Compare this miniature sheet (see fig. 1) with the 45 cent U.S. airmail stamp (see fig. 2) issued recently and you will get a sense of two completely different perspectives: The brute force of violence at the time the events took place versus the tranquil memories that honor the glory of triumph over tyranny.

## II. ENDANGERED SPECIES

On July 17, a 1k. stamp was issued to draw attention to the sea eagle, a magnificent bird of prey, now sadly endangered.

*HALIAEETUS ALBICILLA* lives along sea coasts and in the river basins of low-lying countries. It is one of the largest European Birds, having a wing span of up to 240 cm. In Czechoslovakia all species of eagle are strictly protected.

The stamp shows the eagle with its nest of eaglets, the parent bird with its wings slightly spread, displaying its sturdy body and the beauty which nature bestowed upon it. This majestic bird is also depicted on the first day cover.

The stamp was produced by rotary steel print combined with multicolored photogravure. Printed in sheets of fifty stamps, the size of the picture itself measures 40 x 23 mm. Design was by artist and graphic designer Radane Hamsiková while the engraving was by Bedřich Housa.



## III. SLOVAK FOLD ART COLLECTIVE

On August 29, one stamp with a value of 50h was issued to commemorate the above event. The designer was academic paintress and graphic artist, Sibyla Greinerová. Engraving was by Miloš Ondráček. The stamps were printed in sheets of 100 by rotary recess print combined with multi-color photogravure. Dimensions of the picture are 19 x 23 mm. Printing was by the Post Printing Office in Prague.



frequent tours of foreign countries.

The stamp features a dancing couple in picturesque Slovak folk costume. A dancing swain wielding a hatchet is depicted on the first day cover.

Folk art has a rich tradition not only in the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, but even prior thereto, both in the sphere of material culture and in folk singing and dancing. Besides a large number of amateur ensembles, professional groups often perform this form of art. In doing so, they attract the attention of large audiences at home as well as abroad during the groups'

- G. M. van Zanten  
(courtesy of ARTIA)

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