



# THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST



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Official Bi-Monthly Journal of the Society for Czechoslovak Philately,  
an Incorporated Non-Profit Organization  
Winner of Numerous Philatelic Literature Awards

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## CZECH POST OFFICE HONORS SOCIETY!!

**THE CZECHO-SLOVAK  
PHILATELIST**  
MAY, 1939

**SOCIETY FOR CZECHOSLOVAK  
PHILATELY**  
MAY, 1999

**60. VÝROČÍ - 60th ANNIVERSARY**

ČESKÁ REPUBLIKA  
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(See story on page 3)

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Here is a list of all benefits to which S.C.P. members in good standing are entitled:

1. A sales circuit is operated by H. Alan Hoover. The circuit itself has been fully written up in the Aug/Sept 1989 SPECIALIST, page 8. For complete details, contact H. Alan Hoover, 6070 Poplar Spring Drive, Norcross, GA 30092.
2. A book sales division is run by Edwin Lehecka. Ads listing philatelic books for sale appear regularly in the SPECIALIST. For further information, contact Edwin Lehecka, 217 Hazel Avenue, Westfield, NJ 07090.
3. A Society library is housed with Richard Palaschak, librarian. For inquiries on borrowing books, buying past SPECIALISTS or making book donations, contact Rich Palaschak, 4050 Carbury Court, Chantilly, VA 20151-2613.
4. An expertization committee operates under the direction of Ludvik Z. Svoboda. Depending on the nature or substance of the item to be expertized, he will direct you to the appropriate source for expertization. Please contact, Ludvik Z. Svoboda, 4766 S. Helena Way, Aurora, CO 80015, or e-mail: Lsvoboda1@aol.com.
5. THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST is the official bi-monthly publication of the Society. For inquiries on obtaining back issues, contributing original articles of related significance, advertising rates, and bound copies, contact Ludvik Z. Svoboda, 4766 S. Helena Way, Aurora, CO 80015, or e-mail: Lsvoboda1@aol.com.

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***Editorial Staff***

Managing Editor: Lou Svoboda, 4766 South Helena Way, Aurora, CO 80015  
e-mail: Lsvoboda1@aol.com FAX: 303-627-9688  
Distribution Editor: Mirko L.Vondra, 2363 McCleary Dr., Chambersburg, PA 17201  
Assistant Editor: Gerald van Zanten, P.O. Box 159, Napier, New Zealand  
Foreign Editor: Henry Hahn, 2936 Rosemoor Lane, Fairfax, VA 22031  
Advertising Manager: Lou Svoboda (Address Above)

***Elected Officers***

President: Jaroslav Verner, 8602 Ewing Drive, Bethesda, MD 20817  
Vice President: Henry Hahn, 2936 Rosemoor Lane, Fairfax, VA 22031  
Secretary: R. T. Cossaboom, Jr., Box 25332, Scott AFB, IL 62225  
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Book Sales: Edwin Lehecka, 217 Hazel Ave., Westfield, NJ 07090  
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***All officers and board members serve the Society voluntarily  
and without compensation.***

## CZECH POST MARKS SCP 60<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY!

By Jaroslav J. Verner

The Czech Post issued a postal card to mark the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Society for Czechoslovak Philately on May 31. The card went on sale in Czech post offices and philatelic sales outlets. The card is intended to honor the Society for its six decades of steady devotion to Czechoslovak Philately, its serious study, development and advocacy of this hobby during good times and bad.

The Society for Czechoslovak Philately, with members in 20 countries, is the oldest organization devoted solely to the study and collecting of stamps, stationery, and postal history of the territory of the former Czechoslovakia. It offers its members a journal, *The Czechoslovak SPECIALIST*, which has never missed an issue since it first appeared in May, 1939. The *SPECIALIST* forms the most extensive body of information on all aspects of Czechoslovak philately in English, and it can be found not only on the shelves of serious collectors, but also in most of the leading philatelic libraries around the world. In addition to the journal, members are offered an expertization service, a book buying service, a members' sales circuit, an excellent lending library, and most importantly a network of fellow collectors and students of Czechoslovak philately. The Society holds an annual meeting and exhibition in conjunction with regional exhibitions, mainly in the United States.

The Society was first discussed in a 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue coffee house in New York City by two well known collectors of Czechoslovakia at a time that Czechoslovakia had ceased to exist as a political entity. The original members of the Society were determined that the democratic ideas and traditions of Czechoslovakia -- which were reflected in its stamps-- would not be destroyed by the German occupation of that country. Over the years, in spite of changing political winds in Czechoslovakia, members of the Society continued to study and collect philatelic materials of that country. Collectors found the high design and production quality of Czechoslovak stamps well worth collecting and found in them fascinating reflections of Czech and Slovak culture and history. They also valued the opportunity to write and publish in the Society journal about subjects which were suppressed for political reasons in Czechoslovakia, i.e. articles on T. G. Masaryk, (the founder of modern Czechoslovakia whom the Communist regime had declared a "non-person") or on the postal history of Czechoslovak units which fought on the side of the Allies in the first and second World Wars.

The idea of a postal card to commemorate the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary was first raised during the Society dinner at PRAGA'98. During a conversation about the Society, Ing. Miroslav Špaček, Deputy General Director of the Czech Post, suggested it might be possible to honor the work of the Society by issuing a postal card on some appropriate occasion. Since then our President worked with Ing. Špaček and his colleagues to insure this generous offer became a reality. Needless to say, the Society very much appreciates this rare honor.

### Technical Information

The postal card carries an imprinted 7 Kč stamp and was designed by Jaroslav Verner. It was printed by the Post Printing House in Prague using three color

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typography. In the center of the card under the logo of the Czech Post is a security hologram which changes color and its image as it is viewed from different angles -- it goes from the Czech Post logo to a flying pigeon.

### Ordering Information

The Society has arranged for a limited number of postal cards to be available to its members. Each member can order up to 10 cards from our Treasurer, Edwin Lehecka, 217 Hazel Avenue, Westfield, NJ 07090. The post paid cost is \$1.50 per card.

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## THE GERMAN BOHEMIA PROVINCE

by Lubor Kunc

The German Bohemia Province (Provinz Deutschböhmen in German) was located in part of Northern and Western Bohemia along the German borders. The most significant places belonging to the Province (which we will abbreviate as GBP) were: Liberec (Reichenberg), Ústí nad Labem (Aussig), Teplice (Teplitz-Schönau), Duchcov (Dux), Cheb (Eger), Mariánské Lázně (Marienbad), Karlovy Vary (Karlbad), Jablonec nad Nisou (Gablonz a.d. Neisse), Litoměřice (Leitmeritz), Most (Brüx), and Zatec (Saaz). The GBP was in existence for just 3 months from October 27 to December 27, 1918. Let's look at its history.

Even though this area was a part of the Bohemian Kingdom for hundreds of years, the majority of people living in it approaching WWI were of German origin. During WWI the German population of this area supported Austria and its emperor in collaboration with Germany in fighting France, the United Kingdom, Russia and the USA.

By October 1918 almost all of the people living in the GBP knew that Austria and Germany would lose WWI, and they were afraid of the potential situation once the war was lost. This fear by the German populace became greater than ever before when on October 14 the Czech inhabitants throughout Bohemia took part in a general strike, and a few villages even declared the independence of Bohemia. Trying to calm the situation, Charles I -- the last Austrian emperor -- issued the Federalist Act on October 16. This action, however, only incensed the Czech populace, because it separated the GBP from the rest of Bohemia.

Then, the Congress of German Deputies of Austria took place on October 21. This congress decided to combine all the areas that had German inhabitants in the Austrian part of the Monarchy into one state which would be incorporated into Germany after the war. This was followed on October 27 by Cheb (Eger) and its surroundings declaring their independence from Bohemia. But on the next day in Prague the Czech Deputies (Národní Výbor) declared their independence from the Austrian Monarchy.

On October 29 the German Deputies in Vienna followed through and declared the formation of a state consisting of any areas that had German inhabitants of the Austrian Monarchy. In Bohemia and Moravia there existed four such areas that ended up declaring their affiliation to the new state: The German Bohemia Province, The Böhmerwaldgau Province, The Sudetenland, and The German Southern



Moravia [see the November/December 1995 issue of the SPECIALIST for the history of this area].

The first head of the GBP government was R. Pacher, a Member of Parliament of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, who was soon followed by a Mr. Selinger. The capital of the Province was Liberec (Reichenberg) which contained the seat of Parliament as well as the Provincial Government.

On November 12<sup>th</sup> the Provincial Government requested the U.S. President, Woodrow Wilson, to support the self-determination of the German populace of



Fig. 1

Bohemia. They received a negative response, because the United States, France, Italy, and the United Kingdom had declared that all of the German areas in Bohemia and Moravia had to become a part of Czechoslovakia.

The new Czechoslovak government had never recognized the independence of the German Provinces. Late in November 1918 the Czechoslovak army began the occupation of the GBP by taking control of Most (on Nov. 29). By the end of 1918 Czechoslovak army units had occupied the entire area of the Province. The last town occupied was probably Litoměřice on December 27, 1918.

The GBP had its own army called the "Volkwehr". The Czechoslovak Government used Czech volunteers and legionnaire units from Italy. Due to the very bad economic conditions caused by the war and by hunger rebellions in the Province there were known examples of German municipal authorities asking the Czechoslovak army to occupy their towns, e.g. Ústí nad Labem. A sign of the troubled times was the issuance of stopgap bank notes (Notgeld) by City Hall of Liberec on October 30, 1918 to relieve a shortage of paper legal tender (Fig. 1).

On December 11, 1918 the Government of the GBP left Liberec for Germany

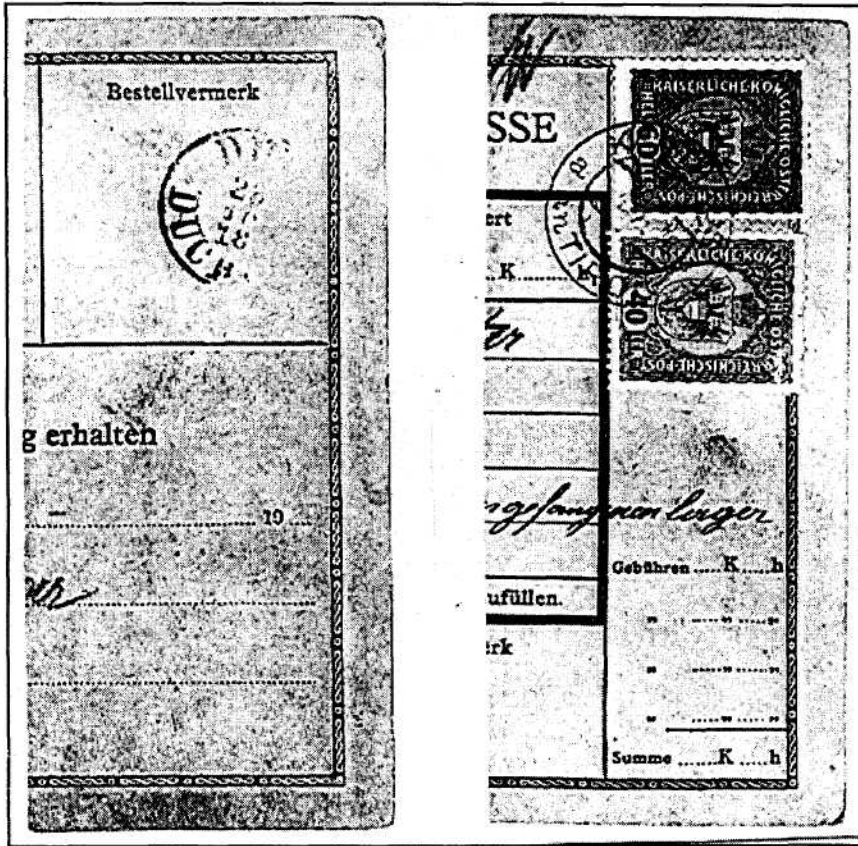


Fig. 2

(Zittau and Dresden) and then on to Austria (Vienna). Liberec was then occupied by Czech units on December 16. The final end of the "independent existence" of the four German provinces of Bohemia and Moravia came about through peace treaties between Czechoslovakia and Germany (signed on July 28, 1919) and between Czechoslovakia and Austria (signed on September 10, 1919). Both of these treaties declared that the areas belonged to the Czechoslovak Republic. As a quid pro quo the Czechoslovak Government granted pardons to anyone who had participated in

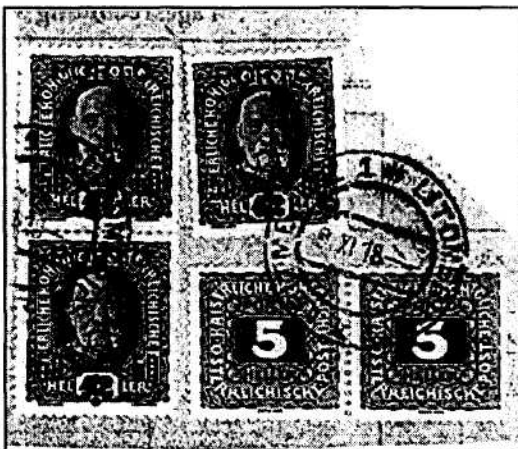


Fig. 3

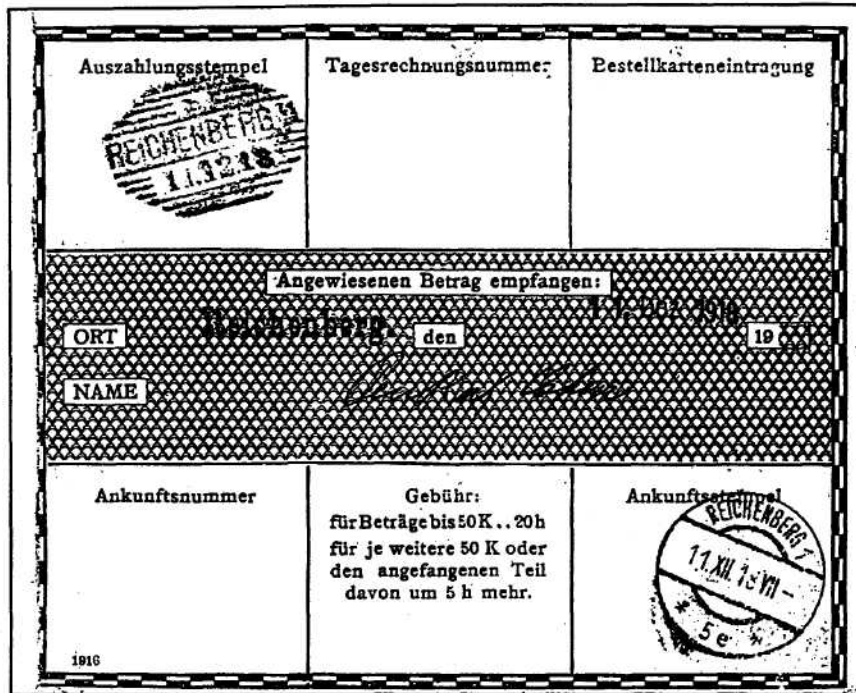


Fig. 4

activities against Czechoslovak interests. Unfortunately this rapprochement between the Czech and German populaces lasted only until 1938 when not only this area but others were annexed by Germany. But that is another story.

It is possible to find telltale signs of this historical drama in postal transactions.



Fig. 5

Figure 2 shows the front and back of a parcel dispatch card. The parcel was sent from Karthaus in Tirol (today in Austria) on Oct. 24, 1918 to the prisoner of war camp located in Duchcov. As can be seen the parcel arrived in Duchcov on Oct. 28, 1918. Although this was the day of independence of Bohemia, it is not considered a Czechoslovak first day cancel because the area was not under the control of any Czechoslovak

authority. This parcel must have been among the last ones to arrive at the camp since the prisoners (Russian and Italian soldiers) were released on Oct. 28 or Oct. 29 when the camp was dissolved. Some of these prisoners took part in a mass meeting held in Duchcov on Oct. 29 celebrating the independence of Bohemia.

Figure 3 shows mixed franking of Austrian postage due stamps used on a

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settlement sheet<sup>1</sup> from the post office Litoměřice 1 on Nov. 9, 1918.

On Dec. 11, 1918 the Government of the GBP moved from Liberec to Germany. Figure 4 shows a money order sent to Liberec (Reichenberg) and arriving on that day.

Figure 5 shows Austrian stamps bearing a cancel from Lovosice on Dec. 18, 1918. At that time this town was one of the last places belonging to the GBP. It was occupied by the Czechoslovak army -- together with Litoměřice -- at the end of December.

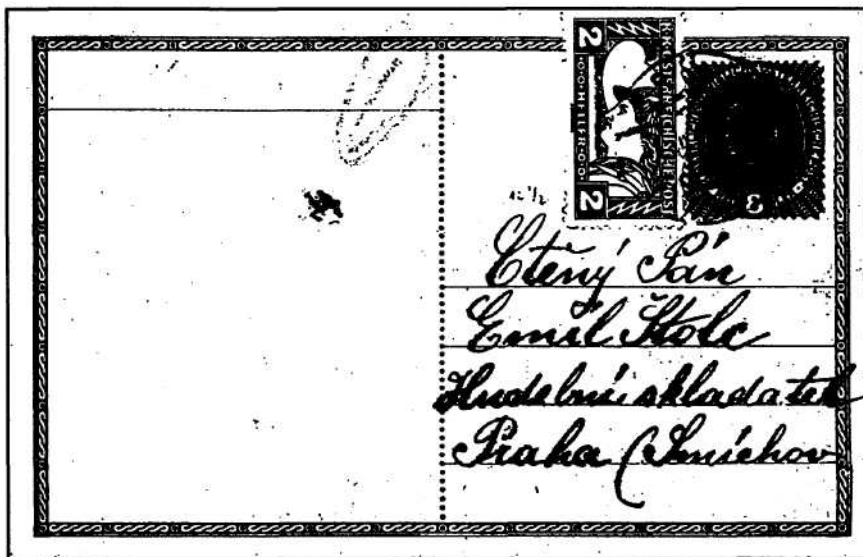


Fig. 6

Only Austrian stamps were valid for use in the GBP area. Even the areas occupied by the Czechoslovak units used the Austrian stamps. In Figure 6 we see an Austrian postal card (Charles I) upfranked by an Austrian express stamp (but here used as a definitive stamp) that was sent from Most on Dec. 13, 1918 -- this was

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<sup>1</sup> I don't know if this is the correct translation for this Czech term "zúčtovací arch". It was used in the old Austrian Monarchy at post offices as an accounting document. As an example, the post office was provided with a sum of money for insufficiently franked letters or other fees. The office was obliged to make a list of all such cases along with the sums received for each case. This listing was kept on the zúčtovací arch. On the back of the sheet the postmaster would attach postage due stamps valued at what the front listing totaled. This method saved the use of lower valued postage due stamps, and it was one of the only uses for the postage due stamps of higher values such as the one for 10 Crowns. These higher valued stamps were not useful for putting on normal letters, because the domestic postal rate for letters was 20h.

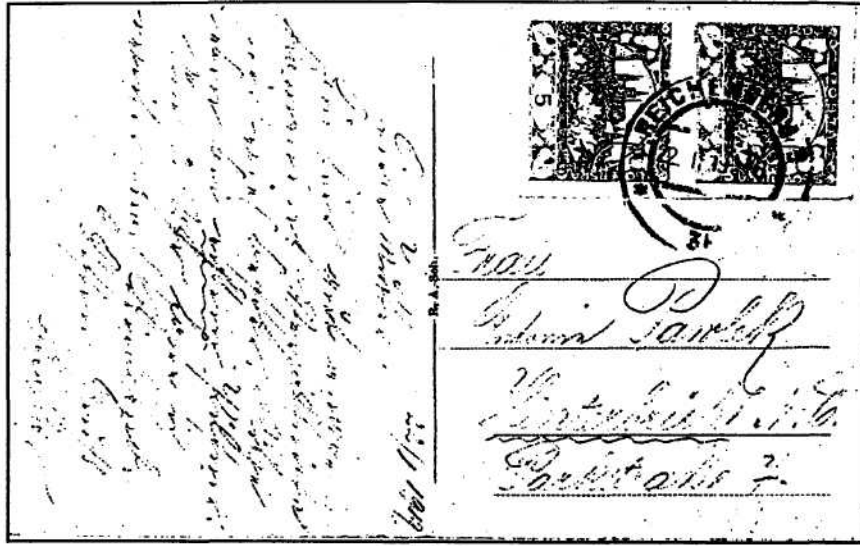


Fig. 7



Fig. 8

only 14 days after the occupation of the town by the Czechoslovaks.

Due to the fact that there are a very limited number of letters and cards in existence from this period, it is not possible to say when the first Czechoslovak "Hradčany" stamps were used in this area. I know of only two cards coming



Fig. 9





Fig. 10

from the area that were franked with Hradčany stamps. One was a card mailed at Most on Dec. 29, and the other was a card sent from Žatec on Dec. 31, 1918. It appears that some of the post offices received the 5h (light green) and 10h (red) Hradčany stamps in December 1918, but I am sure that the majority of the post offices got theirs in January 1919. An example of early use of the Hradčany stamps is pictured in Figure 7. This is a card sent from Liberec to Austria on Jan. 22, 1919.

Figure 8 shows a money order with mixed Czechoslovak-Austrian franking sent from Kadaň (Kaaden) to Kraslice in February 1919.

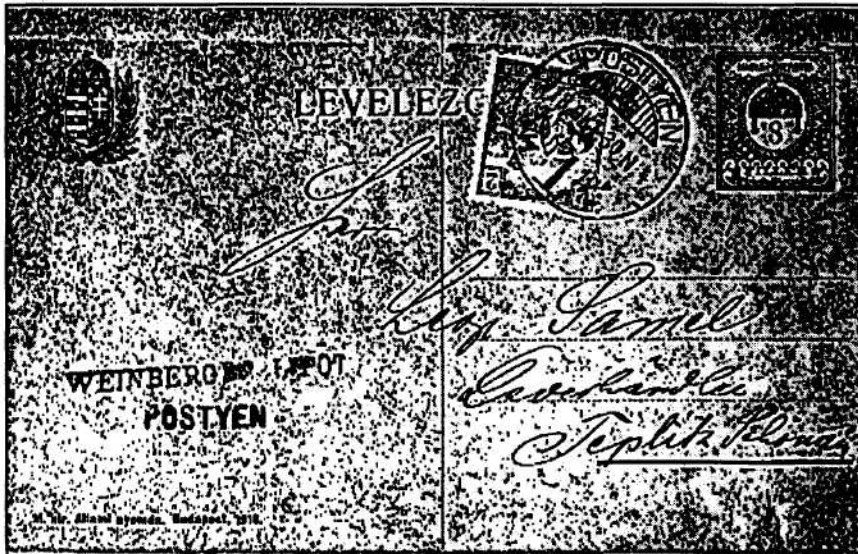


Fig. 11



Austrian stamps were valid in this area as well as in all of Czechoslovakia until Feb. 28, 1919. Monetary reform which replaced Austrian currency with Czechoslovak began on Feb. 26 and proceeded until Mar. 9, 1919. Figure 9 shows part of a money order sent on Feb. 25 (the day before monetary reform began) from post office Cheb 1 to Cheb 2. Due to the monetary reform just beginning it took 4 days to transfer the money (on the back is a cancel dated Feb. 28, 1919).

Austrian postal stationery remained valid in the area as well as in all of Czechoslovakia until Oct. 14, 1919. Figure 10 shows an Austrian Charles I letter card upfranked with a 5h Hradčany stamp. It was sent from Bor (Haid) on Apr. 22, 1919 to Theresienstadt.



Fig. 12

An interesting part of the history of the GBP is its intercourse with the areas outside of the Province. While the military units of both sides were fighting, the postal connections continued to function. A nice example is the postal card shown in Figure 11. This business card addressed to Teplice was mailed in Piešťany (Postyén) on Oct. 30, 1918. On this day in history the Slovak deputies declared Slovak independence from Hungary and expressed the desire to create a common state with the Czechs. Thus, this card is associated with more than just the history of the GBP.

An open question remains however. Who managed the postal operations in the German Bohemia Province? The head of all postal operations in all of Bohemia was the Directorship for Post and Telegraph in Bohemia with headquarters in Prague (Ředitelství Pošt a Telegrafů v Čechách). This organization attempted to also manage the postal operations in the GBP area, but there is serious question whether they succeeded.

Figure 12 shows a service postal card (a German-Czech version). It was sent without postage by the above mentioned Directorship (notice the big cancel that has

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Fig. 13

had the German text and Austrian eagle removed) to the Litoměřice 1 post office in November 1918. At this time Litoměřice was in the GBP, so the Directorship's influence was limited.

Finally, Figure 13 shows a similar card (a German version) sent by the postmaster of Dolina (Dörnsdorf) to the Postal Directorship in Ústí nad Labem (Aussig). This Directorship was the head of post offices in northern Bohemia. It also tried to become the alternate head of postal operations for the whole Province. The letters "D.Ö." mean "Deutschösterreichische" (German-Austrian). German Austria was the name of Austria at that time. These two examples would seem to indicate that some postmasters accepted the stewardship of the Directorship in Ústí nad Labem while others accepted the Directorship in Prague.

A very interesting (but expensive) part of the postal history of this area concerns the counterfeit stamps used to defraud the post offices. We know of the following ones from the period 1919 - 1921:

Name of Issue / Place(s) of Use	Face Value / Color
Hradčany stamps used in Vejprty (Weipert)	25h / blue
	100h / brown
	200h / ultramarine
	300h / green
Hradčany stamp used in Ústí nad Labem (Aussig 1)	20h / green
Hradčany stamp used in Liberec (Reichenberg)	100h / brown
Chainbreaker stamp used in Most (Brüx) and Vejprty (Weipert)	50h / green
Chainbreaker stamp used in Teplice (Teplitz - Schönau)	60h / blue
Chainbreaker stamp used in Cheb (Eger)	60h / blue

The counterfeit Hradcany stamps were most likely printed in Germany and smuggled into Czechoslovakia. We do not know for sure where the Chainbreaker stamps were printed, but it is possible that Germany was also their origin. Unfortunately, the "authors" of these counterfeit stamps have never been discovered. But it is clear that they had connections with the employees of the Czechoslovak Postal Administration who helped them with the distribution of the counterfeit stamps. The purpose of this endeavor was to harm the Czechoslovak state and also to earn some hard currency. You need to be aware that Czechoslovak currency at that time was very stable. German currency, on the other hand, was very unstable.

Resources:

- I would like to express my thanks to the employees of the Historical Research Institute of the Czech Army as well as the Museum of Duchcov.
- Československé Poštovní Známký a Jejich Padělky 1918-1939, Jan Karásek
- Various articles in the journals FILATELIE and Mladý Filatelista

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## ELECTION RESULTS

In our recent election you selected one new board member, Peter Z. Kleskovic, and re-elected incumbent board members Tom Cossaboom, Henry Hahn, Savoy Horvath, and Ludvik Z. Svoboda. Their terms of office will run through 2005.

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## *President's Corner*

You already know the really exciting news. You saw it on the front cover of this month's SPECIALIST. The Czech Post Office has issued a postal card to mark the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our Society in recognition of its decades' long effort to support and advance Czechoslovak philately. Those of you who were lucky enough to attend the Society dinner during PRAGA'98 will remember Lumir Brendl's kind words about the work of the Society and its importance in supporting Czechoslovak philately over the years. In private he was even more complimentary. It was because of several conversations that evening that the idea of honoring the Society was born. I realize that some may fault us for being both excited and proud of this honor, but it is not the sort of thing that happens often. I have inquired of the American Philatelic Society (APS) whether they are aware of a similar honor bestowed on an American philatelic group, and they have not come up with an example yet. Before leaving this subject, let me add that this honor was really earned by the long string of officers, Board members, editors, translators and contributors to The Czechoslovak SPECIALIST and our other philatelic activities. They donated their time and treasure to keep our Society vibrant and dynamic over the decades.

Another interesting possibility is coming our way. We have been working with Postfila (the Czech Post Philatelic Service) on a plan to make its new issues service

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available to our members. Postfilia is currently preparing an English version of its order form which will allow members of the Society to order new issues directly from the Czech post office. Members will be able to open individual accounts. Issues for the entire year will be sent on the basis of standing orders. Payment will be by dollar check against a pro-forma invoice. The order forms may be obtained by sending me a No. 10 self addressed envelope. (I recently spoke with the new Slovak ambassador regarding our difficulty establishing a satisfactory relationship with the Slovak Post, and he promised to check into it for us.)

Most members respond quickly when our membership dues come due. Those of us responsible for the ongoing operations of the Society appreciate this support, because it allows us to pay our bills promptly and to operate in an orderly manner. There is a group of our members, however, who deserve special thanks and appreciation. Each year a number of our members send along extra dollars, some a few and others quite a few, to support the activities of the Society. Such contributions are very much appreciated, not only because they help our financial situation, but also because we read this as a vote of confidence in what we are doing. To those of you who have made such contributions, a public and sincere thank you!

Elsewhere in this issue you will find the results of our recent elections. The new Board will be constituted at the annual meeting in Cleveland. This Board will elect new officers, and I ask you all to give them all the support you can to insure that our Society continues to develop and prosper. Since our By-laws limit the president to two consecutive terms, this is my last President's Corner column. During this time the Society continued to grow and prosper. I have been very fortunate to have such a strong group of officers and Board members to handle the activities of the Society. It can be safely said, I think, that all of the activities and services the Society offers its members are as active, perhaps more active, than four years ago. This was not all that difficult to accomplish since we had inherited such a solid base from our predecessors.

Looking back, I would like to share with you some of the things I think we have accomplished. First and foremost, the Society is in excellent financial condition. The most basic reason for this is growth in our membership. Some other activities also bring in a small income, or at least, as our Treasurer, Ed Lehecka insists, keep losses low. But it is the membership level which guarantees the financial stability we need to publish *The Czechoslovak SPECIALIST*. As you have certainly noticed, our editor, Lou Svoboda, has been able to increase the size of our journal, and we hope to have both the material to fill it and dollars to pay for it at the increased size. It was 60 years ago this May that the *SPECIALIST* began publication, and it has never missed an issue in all that time. To assist members in accessing the wealth of information contained in this journal, Anne Vondra completed a 50-year cumulative index and is almost finished with the 60-year update.

The circuit, library, and book sales programs have been reorganized and expanded. The Society circuit is well and efficiently run, with its only shortcoming being insufficient material that members submit to Allan Hoover -- our most capable circuit manager -- for sale. There are plenty of buyers. Rich Palaschak, our Librarian, has catalogued the entire library, many of the old and very valuable periodicals have been bound, and the catalog will soon be available to members by e-mail and on our web site. A number of donations of multi-year collections of the *SPECIALIST* were made to philatelic libraries, both in the United States and

abroad. The expansion of the amount of material in our book sales program has been impressive. In part this is due to availability of new titles and in part by our publication of the new Society English-Czech/Czech-English Glossary of Philatelic Terminology. This publication makes accessible the excellent Czech catalogs and other publications -- even to collectors with no knowledge of Czech. The Glossary has been very popular and is about to go into its second printing.

I strongly urge those of you who have not availed yourselves of these services to do so in the near future. You will be impressed, perhaps even surprised, how they can help you to improve your collections.

More and more philatelic activity is taking place on the Internet. The Society was one of the early players when it "went on line" about three years ago. Our web page has been complemented by many and criticized by some. The site often has the most current information on Society activities since it does not have to hold to a somewhat rigid publication schedule. It also has unique features, such as the "Cover of the Month", not found elsewhere. Our web site has been an effective recruitment mechanism among computer-savvy collectors. It should also be mentioned that just about all of our functions and records have been computerized -- at no cost to the Society. Each of the members responsible for a given activity has just gone ahead and computerized the needed records.

Stamp collecting is both a solitary and a social activity. We each put together our collections in our own way. We spend many solitary hours "playing" with our stamps, pouring over auction catalogs, and studying the literature. But there is the other side. We get together to learn from each other, admire what the other collector has found, and yes, let us admit it, brag about our successes in the hope of impressing our fellows. The high point each year for the social aspects of our hobby is our annual meeting and exhibitions. We hold them in divergent geographic locations and include a mix of philatelic and social activities in the hope that more of our members, and their spouses and friends, will become active participants in our Society. During the last several years we have met in Florida, New Jersey, Wisconsin, California, Maryland, and this year we will be in Ohio. In addition, for the first time ever, the Society held such a meeting overseas during PRAGA'98. I suspect all who participated in our activities in Prague will agree these were a high point in many of our philatelic experiences.

The bottom line is that the Society is in fine shape. What does the future hold? Good things, I hope. We will have to continue to expand our membership. The services the Society offers have to be maintained and, to the degree possible, improved and expanded. We need to urge our members to both exhibit and write. I see two specific benefits to exhibiting: first, it forces us to focus and hence discipline ourselves -- at least in some aspects of our collecting; second, it publicizes and advertises our specialty to the larger philatelic community. The more others know about Czechoslovak philately, the more they will appreciate it. The same is true of writing, but with an added benefit -- we, the members, will learn much from each other.

For me it has been an interesting four year. I have learned much and have profited from the friendships I have gained. I would like to thank all of you who have given me your help and support during this time. I look forward to doing the same for my successor.

Jaroslav J. Verner



*Jiří Majer and Jaroslav Thraumb Auctions  
announce their tenth auction  
on September 11, 1999*

*The auction will contain some of the most sought after philatelic material from the territory of the former Czechoslovakia. In particular this auction will feature a large number of 1920 SO overprint covers (about 20) and several rare forgeries to defraud the post, e.g., a 60h used (see Trojan p.41) and a 250h mint (see Padelky p.140/141).*

Please remember that we are always seeking quality material related to Czechoslovakia for our future auctions. Catalogs will be sent to all past bidders. Others should contact us through our American agents:

*L & J Consulting  
8602 Ewing Drive  
Bethesda, MD 20817-3846  
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18614 Praha 8  
Czech Republic  
Telephone/FAX  
011-420-2-819-70425**



## ALPHONSE MUCHA EXHIBITION

by Anthony F. Dewey

While "surfing" the Internet looking for Web sites about Alphonse Mucha (and there are many), I discovered that there is a major art exhibition of Mucha's works touring the country. The exhibition is described as the "first comprehensive exhibition of the work of Alphonse Mucha (1860-1939) in America since 1921". It features paintings, posters, decorative panels, pastels, drawings, and illustrations. Comprised of approximately 165 pieces, some well known and some never before exhibited, the works come from private and public collections in the Czech Republic, Britain, Japan, and America.

The organizer of the exhibit is Art Services International of Alexandria, Virginia. The tour started at the San Diego Museum of Art in February 1998 and has since visited museums in Seattle, WA, West Palm Beach, FL, and Raleigh, NC. It is currently showing at the Philbrook Museum of Art in Tulsa, OK. There are three shows scheduled after Tulsa, which ends June 20:

- Nevada Museum of Art -- Reno, Nevada: July 8, 1999 -- September 26, 1999
- Worcester Museum of Art -- Worcester, Mass.: October 16, 1999 -- January 2, 2000
- Dixon Gallery and Gardens -- Memphis, Tenn.: January 29, 2000 -- March 26, 2000

A lavish catalog titled "Alphonse Mucha: The Spirit of Art Nouveau", the same as the exhibition, has been produced in conjunction with the exhibition. Art Services International published the book in association with Yale University Press. Edited by Victor Arwas, Jana Brabcova-Orlikova, and Anna Dvorak, the catalog includes an introduction by Ronald L. Lipp and Suzanne Jackson, as well as essays by Quentin Bajac, Jean-Marie Bruson, Geraldine Mucha, and Jack Rennert.

While the essays provide some interesting and insightful observations about the artist, the outstanding feature of the book is the many illustrations of Mucha's work. Covering more than just the pieces included in the exhibit, there are 248 color plates and 112 black-and-white illustrations. The color images are faithful renderings of the artist's magnificent posters, paintings, drawings, and jewelry. Among the black-and-white plates are photographs taken by Mucha of his models and scenes from his travels.

Despite a note on the fly-leaf declaring the book "a full-scale treatment of Mucha's entire oeuvre", the book, like all other art books on Mucha that I have, completely ignores Mucha's work for the postage stamps and currency of the fledgling Czechoslovak Republic. However, I would still strongly recommend this book to aficionados of Mucha and Art Nouveau. The cloth-bound edition measures 297 x 248 mm, and contains 344 pages. It is available at \$65 from Yale University Press and may be found in the art section of major bookstores.

For those with access to the Internet, here are a few key addresses:

- Art Services International: <http://www.artservicesintl.org>
- Worcester Museum of Art: <http://www.worcesterart.org>
- North Carolina Museum of Art: <http://www2.ncsu.edu>

TO CHICAGO IN 1941  
VIA THE TRANS-SIBERIA RAILROAD  
by John Miskevich

War mail travels in devious courses. The rain, snow and gloom of night that failed in the past to stay the postal carrier from the swift completion of his rounds would be as nothing compared to the torpedoes, bombs and blackouts of communication that harassed postal officials in 1941. Some of the mail delivered to the United States from Bohemia and Moravia which in pre-war times would be delivered in a week or so, might now embark upon a trip half or three-quarters around the globe.

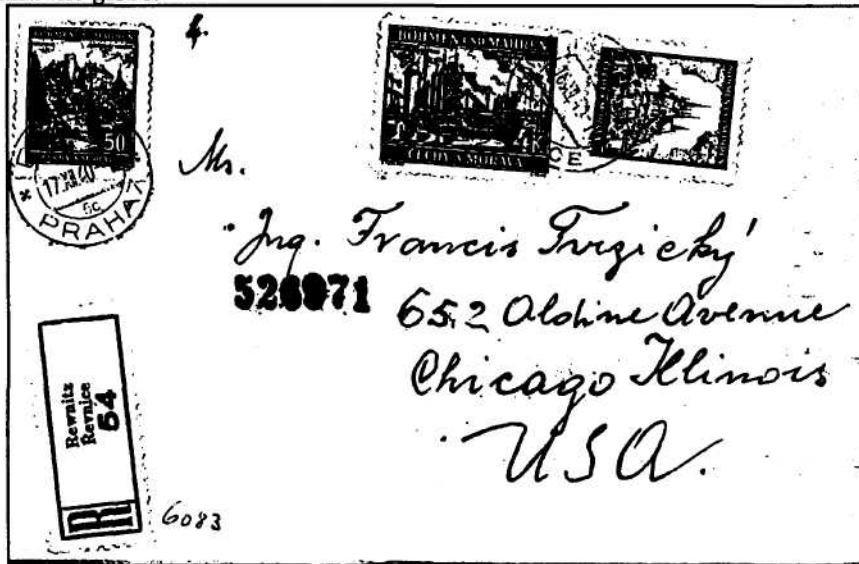


Fig. 1

The cover at Figures 1 & 2 is such an example. Registered at REWNITZ/REVNICE on December 16, 1940, and per the backstamp, the envelope did not arrive in Chicago until February 3, 1941. Note that the stamps to the right on the envelope were postmarked at REVNICE on December 16, while the 50h stamp at upper left has a PRAHA 7 postmark of December 17. The 50h was added to the cover because the fee for registration had been raised from 2.50 K to 3.00 K on October 1, 1940. The correct postal rate had not been charged at REVNICE.

How do I know that this registered cover traveled the Trans-Siberia Railroad? Some background first. At the beginning of 1940, the British government decided to enforce a blockade against German business transactions with the United States. When the British initially began to remove airmail in January 1940 from the transatlantic clippers for the purpose of censorship, both Pan American Airways and the American Counsel protested. As a result, Pan American Airways began to skip Bermuda on its transoceanic flights. It was not until August 22 (during the Battle of Britain) before the United States government withdrew its objection to Bermuda censorship.

The ordinary surface mail had also been impacted. Ships of the American Export Line, which carried a considerable quantity of in-transit mail from all sections of Europe (including Bohemia and Moravia) to the United States, also began to resume stops at Bermuda on their way between Lisbon and New York City.

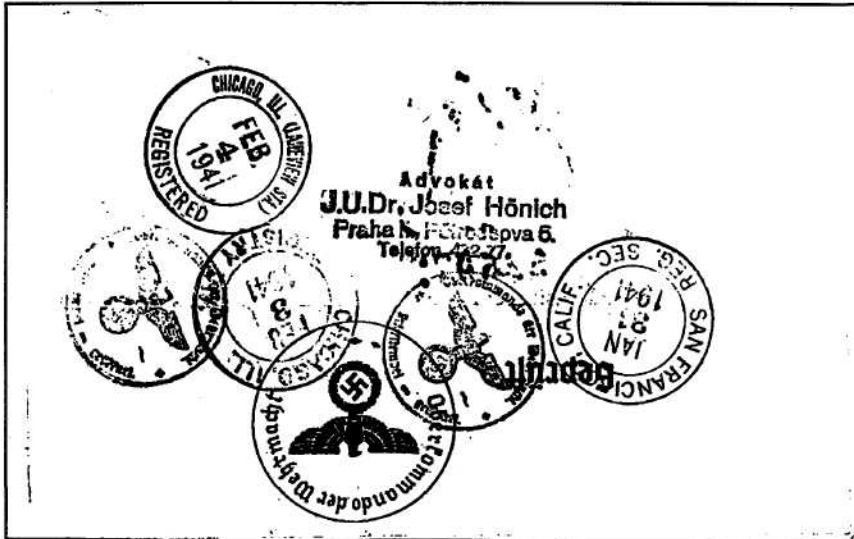


Fig. 2

British examination of most of the mail passing between Europe and the United States would make it difficult for German (or Czech) securities or anything which might be converted into foreign exchange to reach the United States.

Simultaneously with the publication in Berlin on August 23 of the news that American mail planes and ships would once again stop at Bermuda, enabling the British to remove European mail for censorship, the German government announced that mail for North, South, and Central America, Iceland and Greenland could be sent via Siberia and Japan. This applied to letters, postcards, small light packages, newspapers, and printed matter. The route remained open until the German invasion of the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941.

An envelope marked for dispatch to Chicago would journey to Moscow by rail continuing across Asia within a postal car of the Trans-Siberia Railroad, take a ferry from Manchuria to Japan, weather a voyage to California, and then travel half a continent to the banks of Lake Michigan. (The United States Post Office also began to allow mail to be dispatched to Europe via Siberia, but on October 9, 1940 rescinded its previous instructions that ordinary mail could be dispatched by the transpacific route, and ordered that all such mails, whether or not specially addressed for dispatch by some other route, would be sent to New York City for dispatch by steamships sailing from that port.) Mail from Germany and the General Government (German occupied Poland) addressed to the United States that traversed the transpacific route is not uncommon. Mail from Bohemia and Moravia, however, is rather scarce. Most ordinary surface mail from Praha continued to be routed west rather than east.

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## THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST

So just how does one identify a transpacific registry cover, destination the continental United States? There will be a San Francisco (or San Pedro), California registry backstamp pre-dating the registry backstamp of the city that is the destination. Here, there is a San Francisco postmark of January 31, 1941 and Chicago backstamps of February 3 and 4, 1941.

### References

The New York Times: August 23, 1940 at page 8; August 24, 1940 at page 2; October 9, 1940 at page 1.

\* \* \* \* \*

## PRAGUE PNEUMATIC TUBE MAIL SYSTEM'S 100<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY by Henry Hahn

On March 4<sup>th</sup>, the Prague Pneumatic Mail System reached its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of public service. It is not the world's first such system, nor is it the world's largest. You might say "So what?" So here is "WHAT".

It is the world's ONLY system still operating without major technical change. Its role has changed -- it is no longer available to the general public -- but the pipes and equipment installed between 1923 and 1929 serve its subscribers, mainly banks, industry, government offices, hospitals and also the regular post offices. Its 60 kilometer network of pipes carries messages or small items in canisters at a speed of 38 kilometers per hour at a cost of about 10¢ per dispatch on top of a monthly subscription fee which differs from subscriber to subscriber. The system has survived the invention of the telephone, FAX and e-mail, none of which can transmit currency, signed documents, laboratory specimens or other items generally delivered by couriers on bicycles.

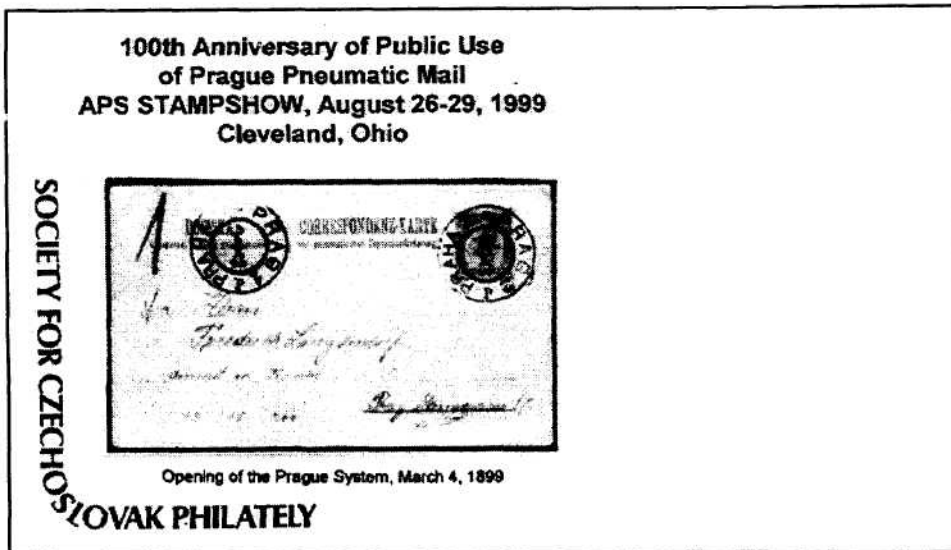
The network of tubes is configured in the form of a star, and all mail passes the same central station in the post office on Jindřišská Street which was also the central station a century ago. Entering the "dispatch room" one feels like stepping back in time. Along one wall of the system's nerve center stands a row of brass and black tubes and hatches. Each tube is fitted with a display of lights that blink different colors to indicate the tube's status. A pressure gauge is located on top of the apparatus. Below the receiving tubes are sturdy dispatch hatches labeled with engraved and painted brass plaques bearing the subscribers' names. In the system's heyday in the 60's and 70's, about one million canisters per year passed through the network. Today the system handles 8,000 to 9,000 canisters per month. The system tubes have an inside diameter of 65 mm and a wall thickness of 2.5 - 3.0 mm. The canisters are made of alloyed aluminum with an outside diameter of 48 mm and a length of 200 mm. The end of each canister is equipped with a soft seal to prevent air escaping between the outside of the canister and the tube wall. Each canister is also equipped with a plastic ring to reduce friction between the alloy aluminum and the tube wall. Hence the over-all diameter of the canister with seal is 57 mm and

the total length is 300 mm. The empty canister weighs 0.4 kilograms and can carry weights up to 3 kilograms. The tubes are buried 80 - 120 centimeters below ground and are wound with a 20 cm wide tape for corrosion protection. Each branch of the system leading to the various districts is equipped with a separate air compressor. Each compressor delivers about 5 cubic meters of air per minute. The compressors are reversible and can produce pressure to drive the canister or create a vacuum in front of the canister. Due to the age of the equipment, spare parts are generally not available and must be manufactured, along with canisters, by the system operators.

The system is fast compared to couriers, and perfectly reliable. Unique to Europe, negotiations are currently under way to designate the system as a "National Technical Heritage".

The pneumatic mail system which opened to the public in 1899 consisted of just three stations, emanating from the main post office on Jindřická Street. It was modeled after the Vienna system, which opened in 1875. The philatelic aspects of Vienna and Prague pneumatic mails have been covered and illustrated elsewhere.<sup>1</sup>

The Society for Czechoslovak Philately will commemorate this significant anniversary at its annual convention and show, which will take place at STAMPSHOW in Cleveland, August 26<sup>th</sup> - 29<sup>th</sup>. Pneumatic tube mail exhibits, lectures and a cachet showing a first day of operation postcard (shown below) will be sold. Orders for blank cachets at \$1.00 each or stamped and postmarked cachets at \$2.00 may be ordered in advance of STAMPSHOW (by August 20<sup>th</sup>) from Mr. Edwin Lehecka, 217 Hazel Avenue, Westfield, NJ 07090. Please include a SASE when ordering.



What is the future for pneumatic mail? Not only will it be collected, but it has been reported<sup>2</sup> that the Japanese have recently placed in service a huge pneumatic intercity system capable of handling three meter long containers.

<sup>1</sup>Hahn, H., "Pneumatic Tube Mail of Vienna and Prague", The Collectors Club Phil., Parts I and II, v. 77, Number 3, May-June '98, p. 163-177 and Number 4, July-August '98, p. 199-206

<sup>2</sup>Haka, J., "O městské síti potrubní pošty", TELEKOMUNIKACE No. 4/97, p. 20-22

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## POSTAL CARDS OF THE CZECH SCOUT POST TO PRIVATE PERSONS by Frederick P. Lawrence, Ph.D.

[Ed. Note: The SPECIALIST is pleased to reprint the following article from the SOSSI Journal, July/August 1998, with the permission of the editor and the author.]

In addition to the 10h and 20h stamps for letters carried by Scouts of the Czech Scout Official Mail Delivery Service of 1918, postal cards with the embossed indicium of the 10h stamp were issued for internal use with the Scout Post organization by the adult leaders who directed the message service. Only 1,000 cards were printed and the unused remainder was destroyed. Estimates are that only a couple hundred cards were actually used or retained by collectors in mint condition. It is believed that not more than several dozen postal cards, mint or used, have survived today. Of these, legitimately used cards are much scarcer than mint cards.

Although the principal purpose of the postal cards was the transmission of internal messages within the Scout Post organization, a very small number of the cards were sent by the adult leaders to private persons. One of these private persons was Dr. Karel Rix, a lawyer, whose offices were located on Jindříšská Street in

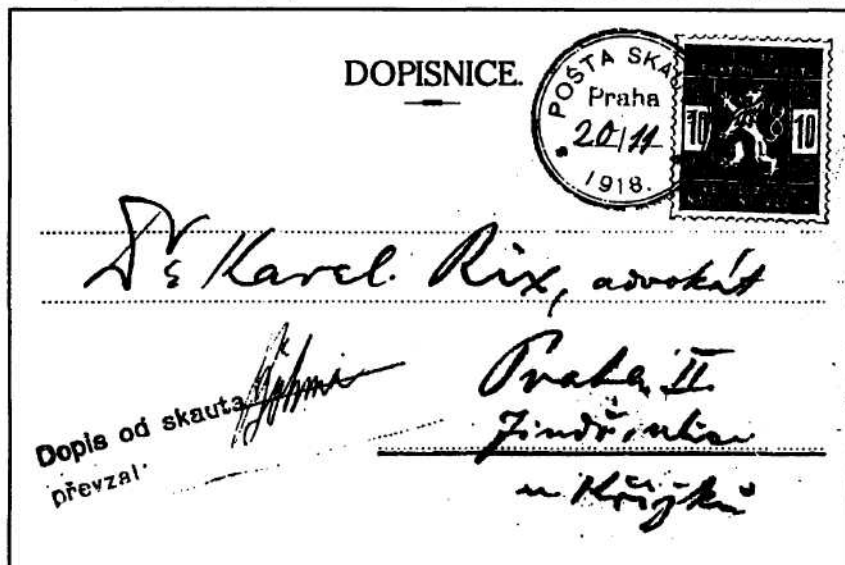


Fig. 1



Prague. Dr. Rix was personally acquainted with Joseph Roessler-Orovsky, the President of the Czech Scout Association and the organizer of the Scout Post, since he handled legal matters for Milde and Roessler, the business partnership which involved the Roessler family. Additionally, Dr. Rix was an active philatelist, who formed the premiere collection of postal stationery of the Czech Forerunners and Czech First Republic periods. Along with Roessler-Orovsky, he was a member of the Prague Yacht Club, a social organization where Prague's well-to-do collectors often gathered.

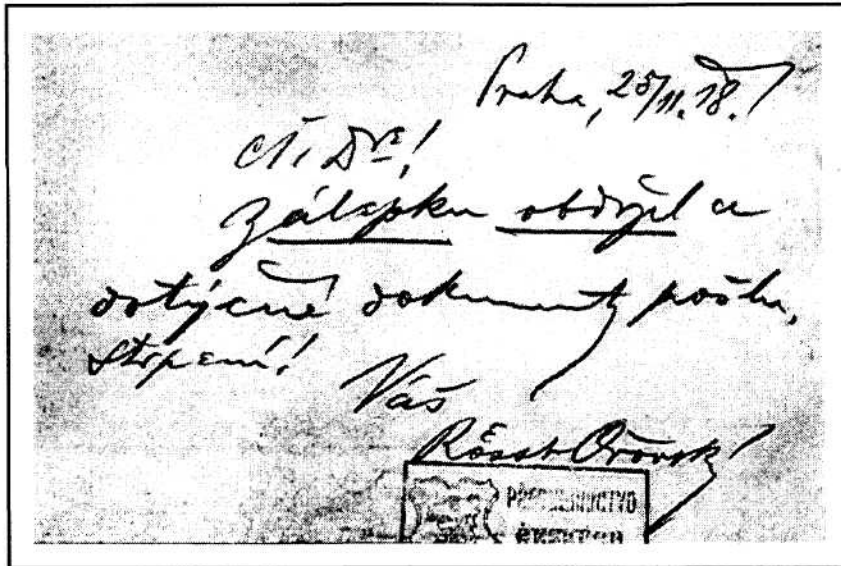


Fig. 2

The postal card and its reverse in Figures 1 & 2 was sent to Dr. Rix on November 20, 1918 by Roessler-Orovsky. It was carried by Scout Boehm. Since the recipient retained the card, he would have signed for it in the Scout's receipt notebook. The message, handwritten side by Roessler-Orovsky, reads: "Letter card received. I will send the pertinent documents. Patience!" Under the signature there is a partial strike in red ink of the scarce rectangular "Presidium of the Czech Scouts" hand stamp. This card was formerly in the international Grand Prix exhibit of Czechoslovakia formed by Fred W. Hefer of Germany. When this exhibit was broken up in 1990, the card was acquired by a Scouts collector.

Figures 3 & 4 illustrate a second postal card and its reverse sent to Dr. Rix by Roessler-Orovsky on November 25, 1918, the last day of regular operation of the Scout Post. It was carried by Scout Podobsky. (Scout Podobsky's name is misspelled "Podofsky" in the list of Scouts compiled by Lester A. Behnke and Dr. George V. Holland.) The message reads; "[from] Palace of the ministry of Internal Affairs. This evening ends for the present our postal service (rapid personal delivery with special delivery Scout stamps) and Scouting altogether depending on the future". This card

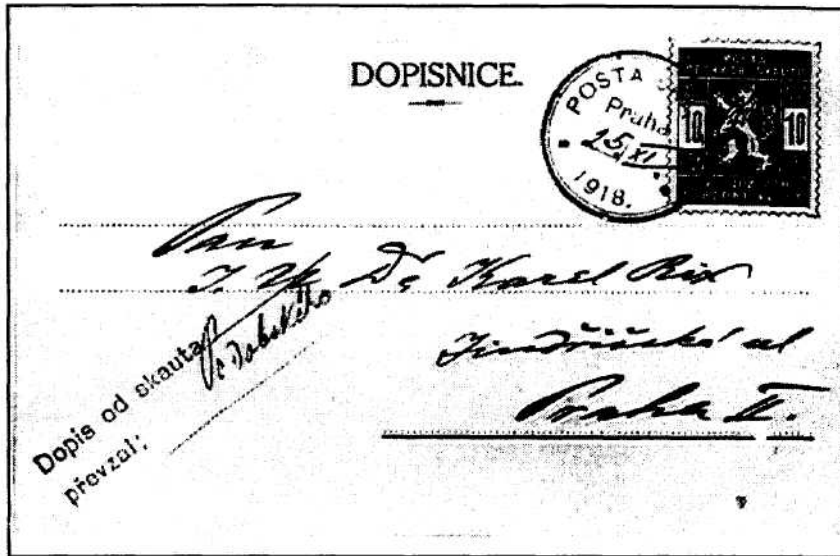


Fig. 3

was formerly in the Czechoslovakia Forerunners collection formed by the late Alexander Page, FRPSL, the well known British philatelic writer who passed away last December. As we reported previously, the card was acquired by a Scouts collector when his stamp collections were sold by his estate through Phillips International Auctioneers and Valuers in London on March 26, 1998.

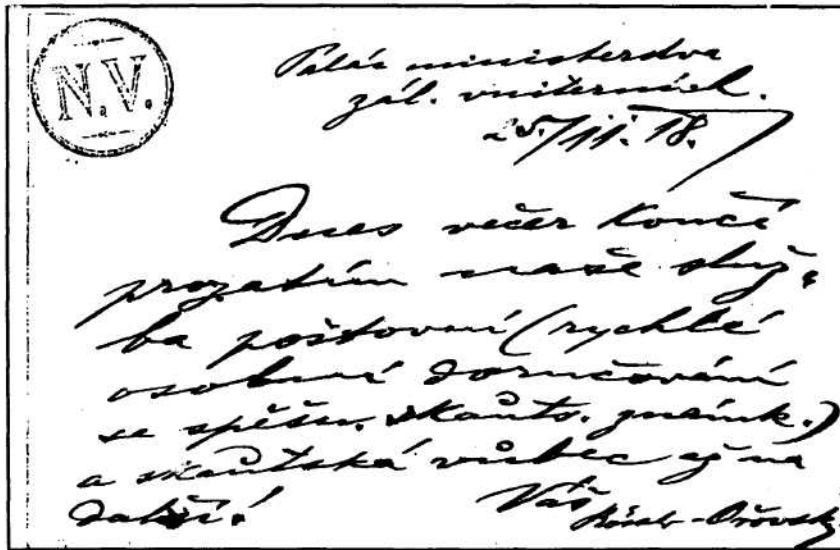


Fig. 4

*Book Review*

**RUKOVĚŤ PRO SBĚRATELE HRADČAN  
(MANUAL FOR HRADČANY COLLECTORS)**

by František Hamr and Jiří Škaloud

Svaz Českých Filatelistů ve spolupráci s Českou Poštou  
(Union of Czech Philatelists in conjunction with the Czech Post),  
Prague 1998

None of our readers need be told that the Hradčany series is comprised of the first stamps issued by Czechoslovakia. Nor do they have to be told that it is a long series much beloved by collectors of Czechoslovak stamps everywhere. In fact this series was recently the subject of an exhibit in Japan. Nor do they need to be told that it is a series much studied because of its interesting variations in paper, color, perforations, plate flaws, damaged and repaired plates as well as interesting usages. This issue has also been the subject of several good monographs and handbooks. So why do we need another one, you ask.

Whether another handbook is needed can be debated. Probably not for the average collector, but for the advanced collector interested in Hradčany there is never enough information. Hamr and Škaloud have made a useful contribution to the study and collecting of the Hradčany series. They have taken this large subject and organized it into two main sections, each with 17 sub-sections. The first half is the basic information on the stamps, their design, printing, paper, colors, perforations, unissued stamps, counterfeits, uses, stationery, covers, perfins, cancellations, statistics, postal rates, and references. The second half is just as detailed, but here the authors deal with pricing these stamps in all their variations.

The book extensively illustrates the main retouches (repairs), joined types and the currently much in vogue, column types. These illustrations show the specific stamps by plate position and describe their differences in detail. Another aid to the collector are the detailed tables covering the many variations considered. The cancellation types used on Hradčany stamps are also fully illustrated. Especially useful to me are the illustrations of the postal stationery bearing the Hradčany stamps.

Unfortunately the text is in Czech. There is a useful summary in English and German, but in my view it is much too short. Nevertheless, this handbook will be useful even to the non-Czech speaker because of the tables and illustrations. And with the help of the Society's Glossary of Philatelic Terminology even the more detailed texts should be manageable.

The authors promise a similar companion volume which will cover the Hradčany stamps with overprints, like the first air mail series, postage dues, and stamps used in the plebiscite territories. This companion handbook is scheduled to be available in time for the BRNO 2000 exhibition.

The Society book sales program has a few copies of Manual for Hradčany Collectors available for \$10.00 post paid.

Jaroslav J. Verner

## CZECHOSLOVAK STAMP COLLECTORS ON LINE

By Ludvik Z. Svoboda

The following individuals have expressed an interest in corresponding via e-mail with other collectors of Czechoslovak philatelic materials. Being listed in this way will give members a great advantage in pursuing their interest areas. If you have corresponded with someone in Europe/Australia/Near East, you know how long it takes to send and then receive an answer. If you use e-mail, you can conceivably get an answer in minutes rather than days or weeks. There are many of us who are already taking advantage of this rapid turn around in our communications with other members/friends in the Czech Republic. Also, don't forget that these benefits also accrue here in the United States.

Names are followed by specific interest areas (where known) and complete e-mail address.

### ON LINE COLLECTORS

Frederick Backeljauw [S.O. 1920, Hradcany Max Svabinsky] --  
formisano@pandora.be  
E. Clark Buchi [general all (especially cancels), Hradcany] -- eclark8@aol.com  
John C.E. Christensen [general all] -- paws@dc.seflin.org  
Tom Cossaboom [Hradcany, postal history, Feldpost (WWI Austrian/Hungarian)] --  
KLFCK1@aol.com  
CPS Great Britain [general all] -- www.cpsgb.freemove.co.uk  
L. Douglas Critser [1st Republic (Hradcany), POSTA overprints] --  
eagle@dragonbbs.com  
R. S. Frank [Scouts] -- rfrank@sossi.org  
Henry Hahn [general all] -- hhahn25@aol.com  
Robert J. Hill [provisional/revolutionary (44/45), postal history] --  
rjeltd@email.msn.com  
Lubor Kunc [postal history, general all] -- lubor.kunc@post.cz  
Frederick P. Lawrence [Scouts] -- lawrence@enuxsa.eas.asu.edu  
Ed Lehecka [general all, selective world used] -- edlehecka@juno.com  
Karl Ruzicka [general all] -- pacexprt@earthlink.net  
Ludvik Z. Svoboda [airmail, general all] -- lsvoboda1@aol.com  
Jan Verleg [Carpatho-Ukraine, 1st Republic, general all] -- jverleg@casema.net  
Jaroslav J. Verner [1st Republic, Siberian Legion, POSTA overprints, Eastern  
Silesia, airmail, general all] -- sibpost@erols.com

If you would like to have your name and information added to this list, please review the original article discussing this subject on page 26 of the May/June 1999 SPECIALIST issue. Please select your interest areas from the list that is provided in that article, if possible. Then, send me your information via e-mail at Lsvoboda1@aol.com.

## THE CZECH REPUBLIC'S OLDEST CHAIN BRIDGE

by Savoy Horvath

May 26, 1999 is the issue date of two stamps -- 8 Kč and 11 Kč -- which are part of the continuing series "Beauties of Our Country" started in 1993. These stamps show old bridges. [Ed. Note: See the New Issues area elsewhere in this journal for more details on this issue.]

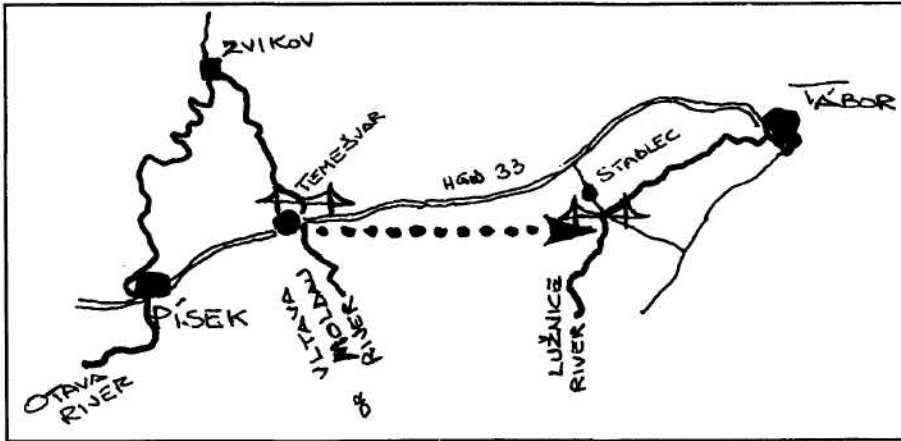


Fig. 1

The 8 Kč stamp depicts the oldest chain bridge in the country now located on the Lužnice river in the small village of Odměna near Stadlec and Tabor. The story takes a twist here because the bridge was originally built approximately 15 miles west, spanning the river Vltava in Temešvar near Písek (Fig. 1). The original construction started in the summer of 1847 and was finished exactly one

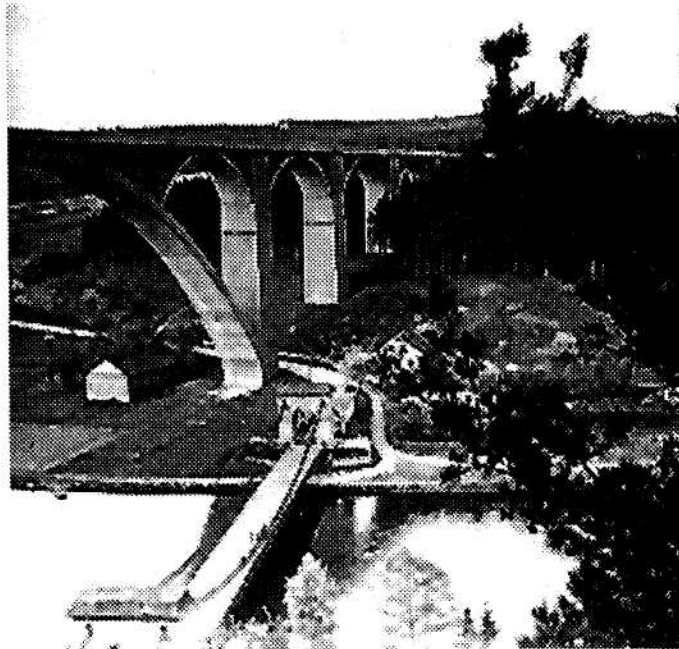


Fig. 2

## THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST

year later. The bridge structure consisted of two stoneblock tower gates with a 285 foot span of woodbeam floor suspended from steel bar chain.

In 1938 construction was started on a more modern bridge right next to the original chain bridge (Fig. 2). The new bridge was a massive concrete and steel arch 210 feet above the waterline. This structure was finished in 1942. At that time it was the biggest concrete and steel bridge in Europe and third largest in the world. The old chain bridge continued to serve the local traffic for another twenty years.

When dam construction started downstream on the Vltava river for the Orlik dam, it became known that the old chain bridge would be submerged. In 1960 the bridge was taken completely apart including the stoneblock tower gates. Everything was numbered, cataloged, and transported to higher ground. A time capsule was found in one of the towers. According to an old document the time capsule was to contain a set of 1847 coins, a set of blue prints, and papers from that bygone era. It took experts 10 years to find a new location for the bridge since they did not want it to just be a historical monument but rather a working bridge. The need for a bridge at the new location came about during construction of a new highway connecting Pisek and Tábor. Today it is Highway 33. Before the bridge was constructed, a river ferry was used for crossings. Thus in 1975, the 2,000 stone blocks and 10 tons of steel parts were moved to the new location and the bridge was rebuilt. Shortly after the bridge was reassembled, somebody forced open the time capsule. Luckily they only stole the money, but left all the documents behind.

### Sources:

1. Jan Čáka, "Zmizelá Vltava"
2. M. Homolová, Lidové Noviny

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### ***Book Review***

#### **THE STORY OF JOSEF HERČÍK'S POSTAGE STAMPS by Jan Chovanec, Prague 1998**

Few collectors would dispute the technical excellence and artistic beauty of many of the stamps of Czechoslovakia and the Czech Republic. Many international prizes have been awarded their stamp production by both philatelic and artistic organizations. This is no accident, but rather reflects the strong artistic and technical traditions of those countries. From the beginning of Czechoslovak stamp production in 1918, the country's most talented artists were commissioned to design and produce its stamps. This tradition continues today.

Many of the best stamps produced in Czechoslovakia and the Czech Republic have been a combination of the talents of the artist who produced a design and of the engraver who "translated" the design into the cameo miniature we call stamps. This "translation" process requires extraordinary skill and patience, especially when the engraver is working on steel plates. One slip and the plate is ruined, and the process must begin again.



Jan Chovanec has given an account of one of Czechoslovakia's best and most prolific stamp engravers in his recently published book. Josef Herčík was born in Uherský Brod in 1922. Just prior to World War II an arms factory was built in Brod, because it was deemed necessary to move Czechoslovakia's arms industry into the interior of the country and away from its threatened borders. Herčík began working there in 1937 when he was just 15. According to his own account he learned both patience and precision making flawless fire arms in that factory. He also began his engraver's training from a master engraver who engraved guns for customers who wanted them as show pieces as well as for hunting.

The first part of this book is based on conversations the author had with Herčík and includes interesting insights on how the engraver mastered his art and how he became the producer of so many beautiful Czechoslovak and Czech stamps. The bulk of the book deals with the specific stamps the engraver created giving the story behind the stamp as well as the engraver's approach to his subject. Chovanec focuses on stamps which will be familiar not only to the general collector of Czechoslovak stamps, but also to the thematic collector, since most of the stamps covered have either an artistic or historical subject or, in many cases, both.

This is a short book written in good English, and extensively illustrated. It will certainly prove useful and of interest to all collectors of modern Czechoslovak stamps. **THE STORY OF JOSEF HERČÍK'S POSTAGE STAMPS** is available for \$6.00 post paid through the Society's book sales program.

Jaroslav J. Verner

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## **JAN KARÁSEK AWARDED THE HUNZIKER MEDAL**

by Pavel Pittermann, A.I.E.P.

trans. by Henry Hahn

The International Association of Philatelic Experts (AIEP) awards the highest recognition of expert activity, which is based on theoretical and practical contributions to the broadening of expert knowledge on an international basis, as well as for life-long expert practice and its propagation to the broadest range of collectors.

The name of the medal is derived from one of the most significant experts in the field of Swiss and European classics, Hansi Hunziker, who also was one of the founders and co-owners of the world renown firm Zumstein & Cie (the other partner was Max Herstchem) and most prominently took part in the establishment of the internationally recognized prestigious organization of philatelic experts, the A.I.E.P.

Among the recipients of the Hunziker medal are the most prominent experts. On the basis of this year's evaluation, this high award comes to the Czech Republic, and its bearer by rights is our most significant current expert in the area of Czechoslovak postage stamps, Ing. Jan Karásek. The festive presentation of this medal took place during the final presentation of philatelic awards at the world philatelic exposition IBRA, which took place recently in Norinburg, Germany. Due to the significance of the occasion, the organizers of the show agreed to include this presentation of the Hunziker Medal in the official program of presentations of philatelic medals and awards. The Secretary of the exhibition jury at IBRA'99 was

## THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST

Alan Huggins -- remembered as the Chairman of the PRAGA'98 jury -- who during presentation of IBRA awards called upon the President of A.I.E.P., Wolfgang Hellrigel, who, after briefly enumerating Karásek's contributions, festively presented him the above mentioned medal. In the hall were present the highest representatives of the International Philatelic Federation (F.I.P.), including its current President, Knud Mohr; Honorary President of F.I.P., Ing. Ladislav Dvořáček; the highest ranking representatives of the Union of German Philatelists and the Organizing Committee of IBRA, Michael Adler and Wolfgang Fendler; and more than 200 participants from the world's philatelic community, among whom many had just received large and small gold medals in recognition of their exhibits. Pleasing was the relatively high number of participants from the Union of Czech Philatelists.

Karásek's presence on the podium was undoubtedly quite well deserved. His expert activities go back to the mid-fifties, when he became one of the founding members of the Committee of Experts, then part of the Central Organization of Czechoslovak Philatelists. He continues to take part in the leadership of this organization (later known as the Commission of Experts and later yet Commission of Experts of the Union of Czech and Slovak Philatelists, respectively Union of Czech Philatelists), and also was its head. A student of Jan Mrňák, he uniquely and intensively continues to devote himself to the determination of genuineness of Czechoslovak postage stamps, in which particularly his activities in the area of stamps issued between 1918 and 1939 are singularly unique. His two major book publications dealing with forgeries of Czechoslovak postage stamps will for a long time be part of the basic text books of not only experts, but all advanced study-oriented collectors. The internationally recognized value of Karásek's works (cited in the justification of the granting of the Hunziker Medal) is the unselfishness and openness with which Karásek bestows his knowledge to his successors and students. Many experts in other areas still protect such knowledge as their working secrets. Through his intensive expert activity he summarized and expanded the findings of his predecessors, and thus established continuity with the unforgettable period of experts of not only Mrňák, Gilbert, Fraňek and Hirsch, but also those who participated in the establishment of organized activities to which we refer as scientific. Jan Karásek at present represents the pinnacle of such activities, and his achievement of international recognition is applauded by all in the Czech Republic as well as abroad.

I, as his pupil, and also as present Chairman of the Commission of Experts of the Union of Czech Philatelists thank Jan Karásek for all the work he did for Czechoslovak Philately and wish to express, most sincerely, my thanks and our universal recognition.

\* \* \* \* \*

## STAMPSHOW 99 -- FINAL DETAILS

by Bruce Sebek

The final details are now available about our annual meeting to be held in conjunction with STAMPSHOW 99 in Cleveland, Ohio, on August 26 - 29, 1999. This is the schedule of Society activities at the show:

-- The Board of Directors will meet at 2 p.m. on Wednesday, Aug. 25, in room 223C of the convention center.

-- A Society dinner, open to all members and guests, will be held at the Czech Inn in Garfield Heights at 7 p.m. on Friday, Aug. 27. Reservations must be made in advance to attend. Because the space may be somewhat limited, we strongly encourage you to contact me now, in advance, to make your reservations since they will be on a first come - first served basis. When you come to the show, check in at our Society table to reconfirm your reservations or to make them originally.

-- The Society general membership meeting will take place from 2-4 p.m. on Saturday, Aug. 28, in room 204 of the convention center. The meeting begins with the President's report to the membership. Then there will be two interesting lectures on "The Pneumatic Mails" -- our theme for this annual meeting. Antonin Smid of the Czech Republic will give a presentation on "The Pneumatic Mail System of Prague", and Henry Hahn will talk about "The Pneumatic Mail Systems of Vienna and Prague".

-- The traditional Society awards breakfast will take place at 10 a.m., Sunday, Aug. 28, at the Holiday Inn, 1111 Lakeside Avenue. Again, reservations are required and are encouraged to be made in advance. In any event, you must come by the Society table to pay for your breakfast beforehand.

As has already been referred to there will be a Society table manned throughout the show. We will have Booth B. Check here to confirm our meeting sites and times. Here you will also find the sign-up sheets for the dinner and breakfast and can reconfirm your previously made reservations. For sale at our table you will find literature related to Czechoslovak philately and a special Society cachet commemorating the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of public use of pneumatic mail in Prague.

Since our table must be manned whenever the show is open, we must have volunteers from the membership to cover it. In depth knowledge of Czechoslovak philately and of the Society is not needed for this assistance. If you would like to volunteer for table duty -- and we do need help -- or have other questions, please direct them to Bruce Sebek at 216-991-2356 or e-mail: BASebek@webtv.net.

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### ***Philatelic News and Views***

#### **From Savoy Horvath:**

- Reclaiming items that have been lost in the Czech Post is not free! Recently a relative of mine sent cash through the Postal Saving Center -- the money did not arrive. When the addressee went to get it, he was told that the money sack was missing. He was told to notify the sender to put in a claim in the post office from which the money was sent. The sender filled out the form and submitted it -- whereupon he was charged a 50 Kč filing fee!

- Poštovní Tiskarna Cenit (PTC)(Postal Paper Printer) of Prague has been experimenting with new kinds of paper for the printing of stamps. At first they tried using Swedish paper. Then, as of March 11, 1999, they exclusively began using Spanish paper for printing by rotary steel engraving presses. This Spanish paper has a high quality surface finish.

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- The Czech Post has been plagued by a whole series of robberies and highjackings in the last few years -- with losses in the millions of Crowns. For example, at the beginning of 1999 the Olomouc Central Post Office was robbed of 25 million Kč. Soon after robbers struck again by hijacking a Czech Post delivery van which contained 2.7 million Kč. Post Offices are excellent targets for thieves. Almost every one is also a banking and savings location, an agency where you can pay almost any bill, a deliverer of wages for a large number of workers, a foreign currency conversion location, and all of this is done in cash because relatively few Czechs have checking accounts or charge cards. As a result the Czech Post has come up with a way to trap the robbers and holdup men. They are preparing sheet metal money cases resembling suitcases that are equipped with electronic devices. If the case is not delivered to its destination in a specified period of time or if it is forcibly opened, then three things will happen -- a shrieking siren will sound, bright orange smoke is released, and the money will be destroyed.

From Mlada Fronta Dnes, March 20, 1999:

- The Finance Ministry does not plan to eliminate dual pricing for Czechs and foreigners, despite a Prague 6 court ruling that the practice was "morally indefensible". The Ministry has argued that banning the practice would lead to a general price hike, which would fan hostility towards foreigners. A spokeswoman said further that foreigners accept dual pricing. "All foreigners, apart from very few exceptions, fully accept dual pricing. A higher price for a foreign visitor is still very favorable for him", the ministry said. The EU disagrees; an official report said the policy must be "definitely canceled" if the Czech Republic is to join the EU.

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### *New Issues*

## CZECH REPUBLIC by G. M. van Zanten



Fig. 1

1. On April 14, 1999, the Ministry of Transport and Communications issued a 7 Kč multicolored commemorative stamp on the occasion of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the Council of Europe (Fig.

1). The Czech Republic has been a member of the Council since 1993. The stamp depicts the logo of the Council of Europe -- 12 small stars in a ring -- against a background of a cloudy sky. The designer of the stamp was Jan Solpera, and the engraver was Václav Fajt. It was

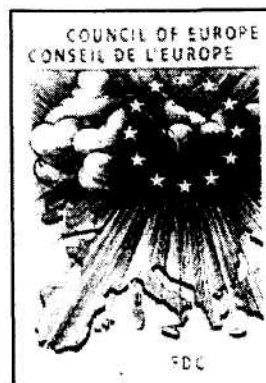


Fig. 2

produced by the Post Printing House Prague using rotary recess printing in blue combined with photogravure in yellow, red and blue in sheets of 50 stamps. A FDC in blue shows 12 small stars in a ring against a background of heavy clouds while the rays of the sun are illuminating the European continent (Fig. 2). It has a postmark from Praha within a ring of 12 stars.

2. On April 14, 1999, the Ministry issued a 9 Kč multicolored stamp commemorating the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Founding of the Czech Olympic Committee (ČOV) (Fig. 3). The stamp contains a portrait of Josef Rössler-Ořovský and the logo of the ČOV. Josef Rössler-Ořovský (1869-1933) co-founder of the



Fig. 3



Fig. 4

ČOV was a versatile sportsman, a functionary of physical education associations, a publicist of significant merit in the development of many sporting events, and for many years the leader of the Czech representation to the Olympic Games. He was also active in politics and scouting. The portrait on the stamp was designed by Kryštof Krejča, the overall stamp design was by Karel Dvořák, and the engraving was by Václav Fajt. It was produced by the Post Printing House Prague using rotary recess printing in black combined with photogravure in red and blue in sheets of 50 stamps. A FDC in brown shows a drawing of Rössler-Ořovský as a skater with a number of medals (Fig. 4). It has a postmark from Praha with a tennis player in a cap and knickerbockers.

3. On May 5, 1999, the Ministry issued a 9 Kč multicolored definitive stamp in the Signs of the Zodiac series (Fig. 5). The stamp depicts the sign of Libra -- a balance scale -- along with the appropriate astrological symbol.



Fig. 5



Fig. 6

The designer was Vladimír Suchánek, and the engraver was Miloš Ondráček. It was produced by the Post Printing House Prague using rotary recess printing in black combined with photogravure in green and brown-orange in sheets of 100 stamps.

4. On May 5, 1999, the Ministry issued a set of 2 multicolored commemorative stamps in the EUROPA series showing two national parks -- the Šumava and Podyjí (Fig. 6). Both stamps were designed by Alfred Fuchs and engraved by Václav Fajt. They were produced by the Post



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Fig. 7

Printing House Prague using rotary recess printing in black combined with photogravure in yellow, dark pink, light blue and dark blue in printing sheets of 8 pieces.

- The 11 Kč stamp shows a view of the forested Šumava hills and green fields with a gigantic spruce in the foreground. The Šumava National Park -- the largest in the Czech Republic at 685 km<sup>2</sup> -- was designated a national park in 1991. In the upper reaches there are secondary spruce forests and glaciers, while in the lowlands there are numerous peat-bogs with rare flora. The Vltava river and its tributaries arise in the Šumava. A FDC in green depicts the flora of the Šumava (Fig. 7), and has a postmark from Kvilda with a small flowered plant

- The 17 Kč stamp shows the meandering flow of the Dyje river with the hilly countryside of the surrounding area. The Podyjí National Park -- with area of 63 km<sup>2</sup> -- was declared a national park in 1991. Plant species which favor cold and humid conditions grow in the valley around the river. Higher up there are warm climate forests and rock forest-steppes. Great numbers of rare species of plants and animals (above all invertebrates) grow here. A FDC in dark pink shows the landscape in the neighborhood of the Dyje (Fig. 8) and has a postmark from Vranov nad Dyjí around a flower.



Fig. 8

5. On May 26, 1999, the Ministry issued a 4.60 Kč multicolored stamp in the Detem (For Children) series (Fig. 9) commemorating the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of the Czech, Ondřej Sekora (1899-1967). He was an artist, illustrator, journalist, writer, and author of books for children. The illustrations from his book "Ferda the Ant" were used for this issue. The stamp shows Pytlík the Beetle holding back Ferda the Ant as the proud Lady-



Fig. 9



Fig. 10

Bird struts by. The stamp was designed by Jaroslav Fišer and engraved by Josef Herčík. It was produced by the Post Printing House Prague using rotary recess printing in black combined with photogravure in red, yellow, and blue in sheets of 30 stamps. In addition, there was a philatelic booklet produced showing a drawing of Ferda the Ant with a gun and a bag of cartridges. A FDC in black shows Ferda the Ant lifting a gigantic bar-bell while beetles watch him in wonderment (Fig. 10) and has a postmark from Praha with the image of Ferda the Ant.

6. On May 26, 1999, the Ministry issued a set of 2 multicolored commemorative stamps in the Beauties of





Fig. 11

Our Country series depicting old bridges (Fig. 11). Both stamps were designed by Emanuel Ranný and engraved by Václav Fajt. They were produced by the Post Printing House Prague using recess printing from flat plates in printing sheets of 8 pieces.

- The 8 Kč stamp (in brown, ocher, green, and blue) shows the chain bridge at Stádlec (between Tábor and Bechyně). The bridge is a technical monument and was built according to the design of Ing. Gassner who worked in accordance with the calculations and specifications of B. Schnirch. The foundation stone was laid on May 26, 1847, and construction was completed in 1848. The bridge was originally built in Podolsko on the Vltava. After the Orlik dam was built it was moved to its present location on the Lužnice, where it was put into service in 1975. It is the only bridge of its kind in the Czech Republic which has been conserved. A FDC in dark grey shows a drawing of

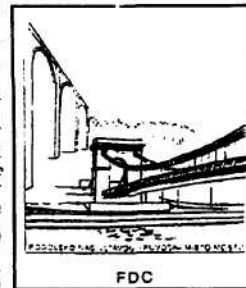


Fig. 12

two bridges across the Vltava at Podolsko (Fig. 12). To the right is the wooden bridge from 1848 (depicted on the stamp) which was taken apart and moved to Stádlec on the Lužnice. To the left is the new bridge designed by Jan Blažek and constructed in 1936-1940. At that time it was the largest bridge constructed with arches having a span of 150 meters. The postmark is from Stádlec showing an arch against a wavy background.

- The 10 Kč stamp (in brown, yellow, green, red, and blue) shows the wooden bridge across the Svatka river in the middle of Černvír near Tišnov dating from 1718. Its folk construction went through many later modifications. The wooden beam construction supported by stone pillars is covered by a shingle saddleback. Today the bridge is only used by pedestrians. A FDC in brown shows a view of the wooden beam construction in the inner part of the bridge (Fig. 13). The postmark is from Nedvědice showing three interlaced circles with the head of an ox in the middle.

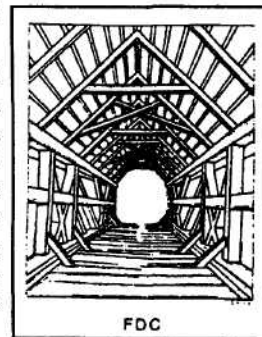


Fig. 13

### Postal Stationery

7. On April 14, 1999, the Ministry issued a postal card with imprinted 7 Kč stamp for commercial and promotional use with a free left part for surcharges (without lines for the sender) (Fig. 14). In the middle of the postal card below the logo of the

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Czech Post is a hologram added as a security feature. From various angles of view the Czech Post logo in the hologram alternates with a flying pigeon -- the color also changes. The stamp imprint consists of a stylized number 7 designed by Jan Solpera. The card was produced by the Post Printing House Prague by offset in red and black and sells for 7.70 Kč.

8. On April 14, 1999, the Ministry issued a commemorative postal card with

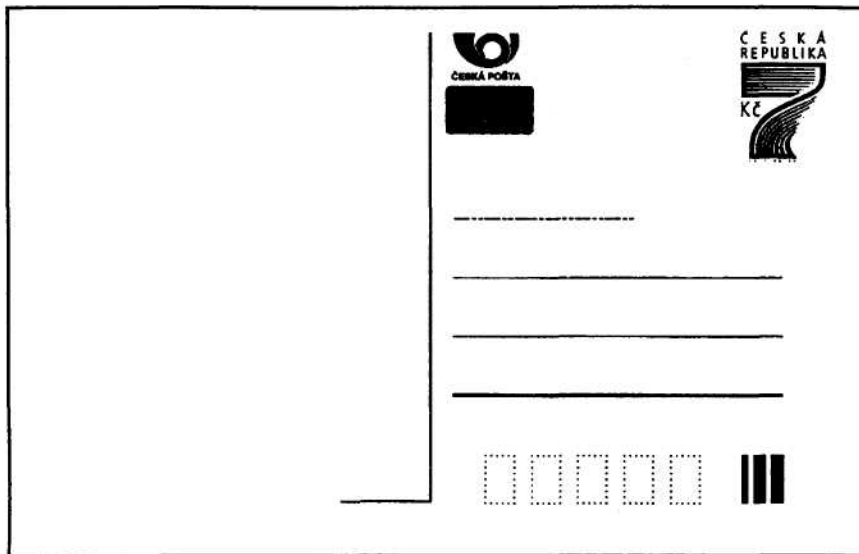


Fig. 14

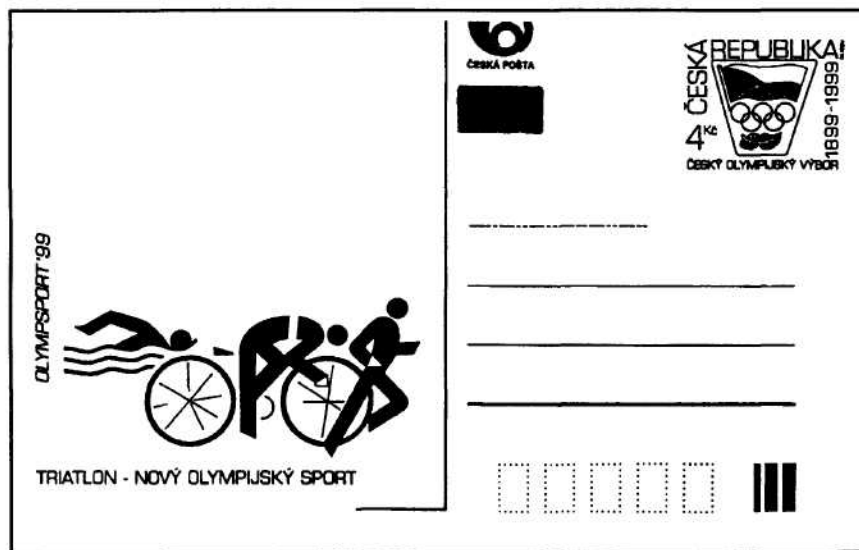


Fig. 15

imprinted 4 Kč stamp on the occasion of the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the Czech Olympic Committee (COC) (1899-1999) (Fig. 15). The stamp imprint is largely made up of the COC emblem. In the left part of the postal card is a stylized drawing of the triathlon -- swimming, cycling, and running -- along with OLYMPSPORT'99. The International Olympic Committee recognized the triathlon as a new olympic sport which will appear for the first time as a new olympic sporting event in Sydney in 2000. OLYMPSPORT'99 is a postal exhibition with the theme of sports and the Olympics which will take place in May 1999 in Prague. The designer of the card was Jaroslav Fišer. It was printed by the Post Printing House Prague by multicolored offset in black and blue and sells for 4.70 Kč.

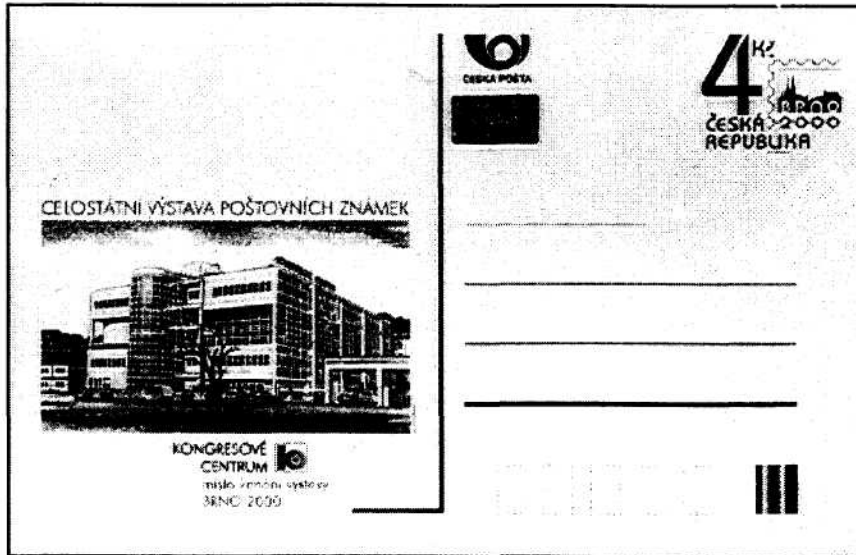


Fig. 16

9. On May 5, 1999, the Ministry issued a commemorative postal card with imprinted 4 Kč stamp for BRNO 2000 -- Congress Center (Fig. 16). The imprinted stamp consists of a stylized 4 and the logo of the BRNO 2000 National Stamp Exhibition to take place from 5<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> March, 2000. On the left side of the postal card is a drawing of the Congress Center building in Brno, appropriate text, and the Congress Center logo. The appropriate security hologram is located below the Czech Post logo in the upper center of the card. The card was designed by Karel Dvořák and was printed by the Post Printing House Prague using multicolored offset in black, dark blue, blue, and red, and sells for 4.70 Kč.

10. On May 12, 1999, the Ministry issued a commemorative postal card with imprinted 4 Kč stamp for the End of the Operation of the Railway Post (Fig. 17). A stamp from a 1995 postal card commemorating the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the railway post was used for the imprinted stamp although the denomination and colors were changed. The stamp shows a steam engine with tender pulling a historical carriage for the transport of the mail. The left portion of the postal card has a drawing

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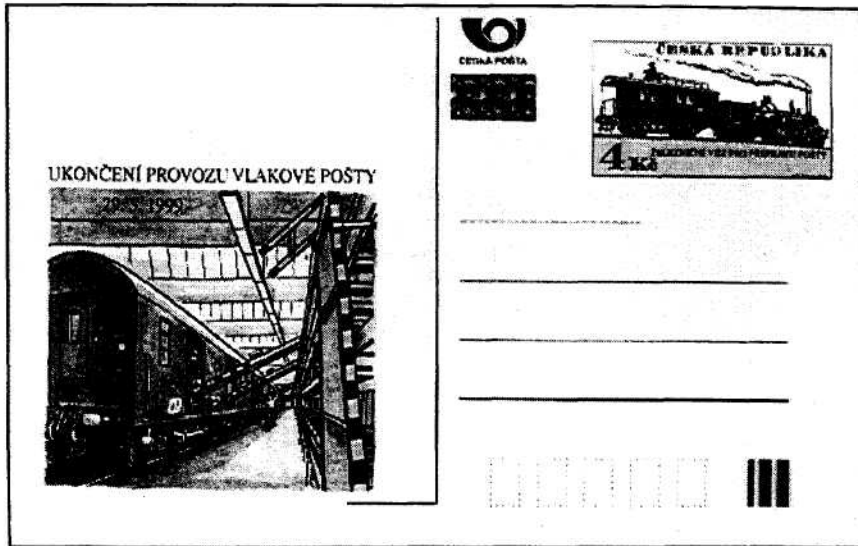


Fig. 17

showing the mechanized loading of the railway post into railroad cars at the tracking hall of Malešice sorting center. The appropriate security hologram is located below the Czech Post logo in the upper center of the card. The designer of the card was Jiří Bouda. It was printed by the Post Printing House Prague using multicolored offset in black, green, blue, yellow, red, and other, and sells for 4.70 Kč.

11. On May 12, 1999, the Ministry issued a commemorative postal card with

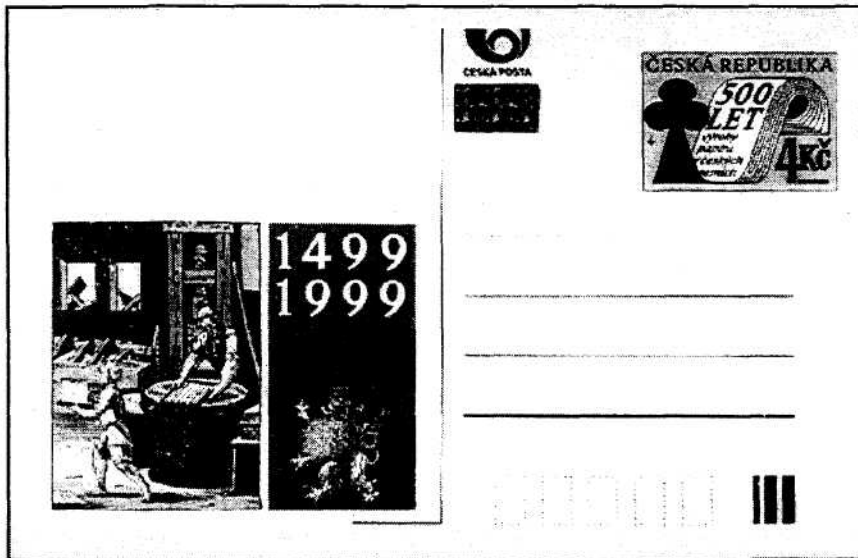


Fig. 18

imprinted 4 Kč stamp for 500 Years of the Production of Paper in the Czech Lands (Fig. 18). The stamp image is dominated by the old symbol for wood -- a highly stylized tree (by R. Koch) -- the raw material for the production of paper. The first written record in connection with the production of paper in Bohemia (from the Cistercian Monastery in Zbraslav) originates from the era of King Vladislav II and is dated May 24, 1499. On the left side of the postal card is the oldest known illustration of the production of paper according to an engraving by Jost Amman from 1568. To the right of the illustration are the dates 1499/1999 over the coat-of-arms of a Melantrich lion and the quotation "Paper for the Use of the Common People of the Czech Lands" in Czech. The appropriate security hologram is located below the Czech Post logo in the upper center of the card. The designer of the card was Jiří Rathouský. It was produced by the Post Printing House Prague using multicolored offset in black, brown, ochre, and brown-red, and sells for 4.70 Kč.

**SLOVAKIA**  
by F. Garancovsky

12. On March 12, 1999, the Ministry of Transport, Posts and Telecommunications issued a set of 3 commemorative multicolored stamps in the "Splendors of Our



Fig. 19

Homeland" series titled "National Costumes" (Fig. 19). The designs of the stamps were done by Kamila Štanclová using photographs by Karol Plicka. The engravings were by Rudolf Cigánik (4 Sk, 15 Sk) and František Horniak (18 Sk). They were produced by the

Postage Stamps Printing House - Prague using rotary recess printing in combination with offset printing in sheets of 10 stamps each.

- The 4 Sk stamp depicts a woman with a bonnet from Čajkov. A FDC in dark-blue shows making bobbin-lace bonnets (Liptovské Sliache) with postmark from Čajkov.

- The 15 Sk stamp depicts a woman with a bonnet from Hel'pa. A FDC in brown shows a piper with a boy (Hel'pa) with postmark from Hel'pa.

- The 18 Sk stamp depicts a woman with a bonnet from Madunice. A FDC in dark-brown shows boys having fun in a pasture (Horehronie) with postmark from Madunice.

13. On March 12, 1999, the Ministry issued a 4 Sk stamp to commemorate the 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the UPU, the representative body that regulates international mail (Fig. 20). The stamp shows automated sorting equipment that is capable of sorting between 35,000 and 40,000 items an hour.



Fig. 20

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Also included is the emblem of the UPU in the upper-right corner. The emblem features five messengers -- representing the five continents -- exchanging letters around a globe. This emblem is based on a monument created by French artist Rene de Saint-Marceaux for the UPU's 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 1909. The statue is located in Bern, Switzerland, the city where the UPU has its headquarters. The designer and also engraver of the stamp was František Horniak. It was produced by the Postage Stamps Printing House - Prague using recess printing in sheets of 50 stamps. A unicolored FDC includes a symbolic drawing (a globe, a line of envelopes, and the logo of the Slovak Post Office) and carries a postmark from Bratislava.

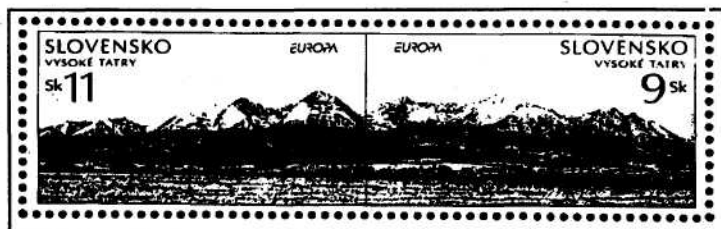


Fig. 21

14. On May 5, 1999, the Ministry issued a set of 2 multicolored commemorative stamps in the "EUROPA" series on "High Tatras National Park" (Fig. 21). A panorama painting of the High Tatras runs across both the 9 Sk and 11 Sk stamps. This pair of stamps is connected se-tenant with gutter to another pair. A total of 4 couples are stacked on top of each other on a sheetlet. In the middle of this group of stamps is printed the title "High Tatras National Park" and a map of the territory. The design and engraving of this issue were both done by Martin Činovský. It was produced by the Postage Stamps Printing House - Prague using recess printing from flat plates in five colors. A FDC shows an icefall in the Bielovodská valley and has a postmark from Tatranská Lomnica.

15. On May 5, 1999, the Ministry issued a 16 Sk stamp commemorating the "50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Establishment of the Council of Europe" (Fig. 22). The stamp is produced in two formats -- as a counter sheet of 10 stamps and as a miniature sheet (85 x 67 mm, vertical) containing one stamp. The stamp image includes the face of a woman surrounded by a circle of 12 stars with her hair flowing out to the sides. The bottom of the miniature sheet contains the logo of the Establishment of the Council of Europe on a flag. The designer of the stamp was Karol Felix, while the engraver was František Horniak. Both forms of the issue were produced by the Postage Stamps Printing House - Prague using rotary recess



Fig. 22



printing in combination with recess printing. A FDC in blue includes a painting and has a postmark from Bratislava.



Fig. 23

16. On May 5, 1999, the Ministry issued a 5 Sk multicolored commemorative stamp in the "Spiritual Renewal" series (Fig. 23). The stamp shows an illustration of the Vincent Hložník painting "Transformation" from a cycle on the Old and New Testament. The graphic design of the stamp and its engraving were done by Martin Činovský. It was printed by the Postage Stamps Printing House - Prague using rotary recess printing in combination with recess printing in sheets of 50 stamps. A FDC in black depicts the painting "Crucifixion" from the previously mentioned cycle of paintings by Hložník. It has a postmark from Bratislava.

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### Letters to the Editor

*[Ed. Note: I need help from our members. I have only received two letters or e-mails from readers in response to questions that have been raised in this column in over two years. It doesn't take that much time or effort to share your knowledge. Please respond to your fellow members requests for help!]*



Fig. 1

**THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST**

1. Dear Lou:

Perhaps you or one of the readers can help me learn about a card that I purchased (front & back) (Fig. 1 & 2).

If I am correct, cards with the imprint "Feldpostkorrespondenzkarte" were intended to be used by troops to write home. Anyhow, the card was mailed from Kunnersdorf on May 19, 1919. At that time the post card rate was 10h for domestic mail, right? Was there a special rate for troop cards?

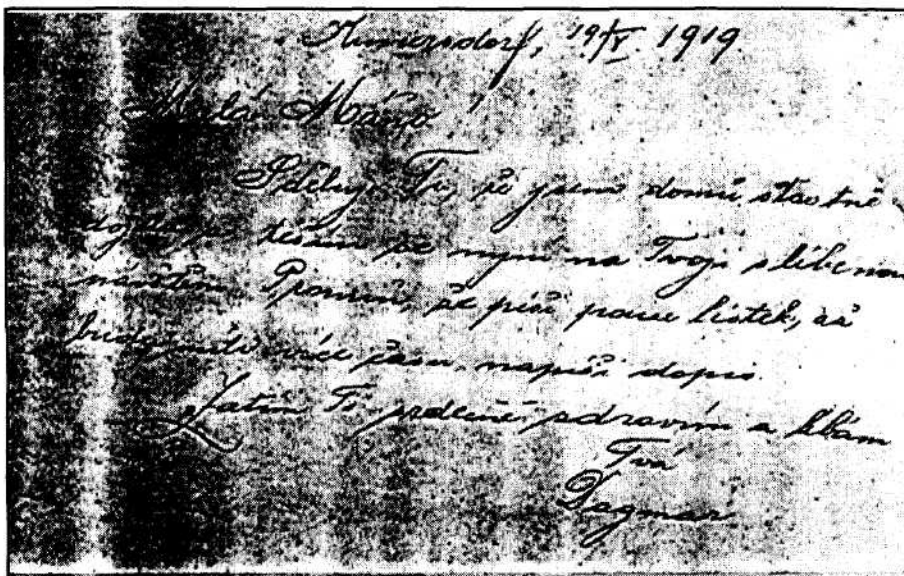


Fig. 2

Even more interesting is the fact that the card is franked with a postage due stamp. But this one is overprinted with "FRANCO". If I'm interpreting this correctly, the intent was to convert this postage due stamp into a postage stamp. I found a short reference to this in "Specializovana Prirucka" on page 370, but had difficulty translating the paragraph. How common was this practice and how common are covers bearing such stamps? I looked through all of the Tribuna and Majer & Thraumb auction catalogs that I have, but could not find an example of this use. Any information that I can get about this cover would be greatly appreciated.

Tony Dewey

2. Dear Lou:

In 1975 the Czechoslovak Postal Service issued two President Gustav Husak stamps -- 30h & 60h (Scott #2035-6).

In my album (Leuchtturm), in addition to the space for the 1975 issues, there is a space for the two same stamps in 1978 with notation "phosphor". I checked Scott and Trojan, and there is no mention of any 1978 issue on phosphorous paper or print. Would you or any of our members know if there was a 1978 "phosphor" issue of these stamps?

Karl J. Ruzicka

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