



THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST



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an Incorporated Non-Profit Organization
Winner of Numerous Philatelic Literature Awards

A.P.S. Unit 18

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JULY/AUGUST 2001

No. 4, Whole No. 568

CHICAGOPEX 2001

A reminder that we hope to see all of our midwestern members at CHICAGOPEX 2001, Friday, Nov. 16 - Sunday, Nov. 18.

This has always been a large, exciting, and very interesting philatelic exhibition with items and exhibits of interest no matter what your collecting concerns. We especially enjoy the opportunity to meet and talk with our members, many of which are normally only a name on a list the rest of the year. Information -- both vital and also just social -- is exchanged face to face. It's your opportunity to tell us what we are doing wrong, or God forbid, what we are doing right. You can pick up some of the latest books which will be on sale at our table and maybe even look through a circuit or two.

To help the process for the out-of-town members, we have enclosed with this issue a sheet put together by our show coordinator, Cap Carone, that provides you with the names, addresses, phone numbers, and listed rates for hotels/motels in the exhibition area. On the back of the sheet is a map of the area indicating where a number of the residences are relative to the show. You might want to note that the rate shown for the Rosemont Suites hotel is the standard rate. There is a special rate of \$135 that you can get by calling the hotel at 888-476-7366, tell them you are associated with CHICAGOPEX, and are requesting the Chicago Philatelic Society rate. They have blocked a number of rooms at this rate; once they are gone, the rate goes back up, so don't wait.

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ELECTION RESULTS

In our recent election you selected one new board member, Bruce Sebek, M.D. of Shaker Heights, Ohio, and re-elected incumbent board members Alan Hoover, Robert Koschalk, Frederick P. Lawrence, Ph.D., and Charles J. Rehman. Their terms of office begin immediately and run through 2007.

* * * * *

Errata

-- In the March/April 2001 issue, page 13, we inadvertently left out that this article was translated from German into English by Hans Rolf W. Bauer. We regret the omission.

-- In the May/June 2001 issue, page 14, I accidentally transposed the day and month of the issue date of the Masaryk commemorative souvenir sheet. Instead of 3.VII.38, it should have read 7.III.38. It was my mistake.

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*All officers and board members serve the Society voluntarily
and without compensation.*

President's Corner

BALPEX 2000 in Baltimore proved to be a terrific setting for the Society's annual meeting and the kickoff of our philatelic activities in this new millennium. As reported by Fred Lawrence in the November/December 2000 issue of *The SPECIALIST*, our Society's members' exhibits fared extremely well in the Open Competition. Many of us who viewed the two non-competitive exhibits provided by Charlie Chesloe and Kim Wald are eager to see their philatelic material developed into competitive exhibits for our next annual meeting during CHICAGOPEX in November of this year. I want to acknowledge the efforts of those Society members who spend their time developing exhibits for the rest of us to enjoy. These exhibits enable all of us to expand our philatelic knowledge and encourage each of us to enter new areas of research and collecting. Those members who share their knowledge and time by exhibiting at our annual meetings deserve a very special thanks from all of us. Their efforts also highlight our Society as well as our collective philatelic interests to other philatelists. When you enjoy their exhibits at CHICAGOPEX this fall, take a moment to recognize and thank them.

The Society remains in solid financial condition. Ed Lehecka, Society Treasurer, reported a balance of \$17,000. Accordingly, the Board of Directors approved several expenditures aimed at improving services to our members. These are detailed later in this report. The sale of publications has now replaced the sales from Society stamp circuits as the second largest source of income. I'm pleased to report that membership dues continue to be sufficient to cover the cost of publishing and distributing the *SPECIALIST* to our members. This has been a long term objective of our Board. This accomplishment is all the more remarkable in light of the dramatic expansion of the *SPECIALIST* during the past few years. Our editor, Lou Svoboda, deserves a great deal of credit for orchestrating the growth of *The SPECIALIST* while controlling the costs associated with it. As Lou recently reported, the Board approved mailing the *SPECIALIST* in an envelope in order that it reach each of you without the damage reported by our members when mailed in the earlier configuration.

Membership remains stable at between 330 and 350 members during the year. We are experiencing an increase in the number of overseas members and a corresponding decrease in U.S. members. The Directors agreed to individually promote the Society at their local shows in order to attract new members. I ask each of you to do the same at your local Stamp Clubs and shows, and to help us to maintain a strong membership level.

Each issue of *The SPECIALIST* represents a major effort by our Editor and those Society members who devote their time researching and writing articles as well as those who translate key articles into English for those of us without the necessary language skills. Because of their collective efforts, *The SPECIALIST* continues to receive competitive literature awards and to inform each of us. We can always use additional articles so please consider sharing your philatelic knowledge by writing an article (or articles!) on those philatelic subjects which have captured your imagination, your interest, and, probably, your money. And to all of those who regularly support our Editor's efforts to produce our Society's periodical, a very sincere thank you.

THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST

Back issues of *The SPECIALIST* are still available to members. Fewer back issues were purchased by members during 2000 than in prior years, but several large requests are being processed already this year.

The Society Library continues to grow with over 350 individual books, pamphlets, and catalogs listed in our holdings. New acquisitions are periodically listed on the Society's web site and incorporated into the overall Library Catalog which is also on the Society web site. The major effort initiated years ago to catalog our Society's collection of periodicals and bind those that will be particularly useful and important over time is nearing completion. The periodical catalog will eventually be added to the Society's web site so that members will be able to identify our Library's entire holdings via the Internet.

Anne Vondra is nearing completion of her work compiling the new comprehensive *Index of the SPECIALIST* for the years 1939-1999. A new feature of the Index will be the use of both Scott and Pofis catalog numbers. Our thanks to Anne for this tremendous effort on behalf of our Society!

As mentioned earlier, publication sales continue to grow indicating that a large number of our members are interested in learning more about Czechoslovak philately and various specialty areas in this philatelic area. This is a healthy sign and portends well for our Society. Ed Lehecka, Publications Manager, reports that the Society has the largest listing of books ever. I'd like to thank Jiří Majer who has personally been carrying many of these books to the U.S. from the Czech Republic in conjunction with his periodic visits to this country.

The Society's stamp circuits continue to provide members with an opportunity to sell their duplicates and also provide circuit participants with the opportunity to purchase useful philatelic material for their collections in the comfort of their homes. Alan Hoover, Circuit Manager, has done a terrific job in orchestrating the circuits and, in the process, generating revenue for the Society's services and activities. The Society is fortunate that Alan is willing to devote the considerable amount of time necessary to ensure the success of this Society endeavor.

Similarly, Jerry Verner and his daughter have developed and maintained the Society web site by committing numerous hours to this project. If you haven't visited the site yet, I encourage you to do so. Jerry continues to have new ideas for expanding the site and lends his considerable philatelic knowledge and personal time to the site.

This year the Society will hold its annual convention at CHICAGOPEX 2001 in November. "Cap" Carone is the coordinator for our Society's activities in conjunction with CHICAGOPEX. He has already begun providing advance information on our Society's participation and the administrative details associated with our annual meeting. I want to specifically note our Society's return to the Chicago area, which has always played a significant role in our Society. Our annual meeting always provides an opportunity to meet other Society members and to showcase our specific philatelic interests through the exhibits that our members develop and display. In that regard, I encourage our members to once again share their philatelic knowledge and exhibit their material at CHICAGOPEX.

The Board of Directors have decided to hold our Society's future conventions in several new locales and to return to a few others:

- 2002: The Society will meet at NAPEX in June in the Washington, D.C. area. We will be holding a dinner with the Hungarian Philatelic Society, which will also be meeting at NAPEX.
- 2003: The Society will return to the West Coast and hold its annual convention in conjunction with the WESTPEX Show. We need some members residing in the San Francisco area to volunteer to assist in the Society's participation in this show. Please contact me if you are able and willing to help the Society have another great meeting there.
- 2004: The Society will meet in Philadelphia (actually Valley Forge). This is a show that our Society has not attended before and one with a good reputation. Selection of the Philadelphia venue reflects the Board's decision a few years ago to participate in different areas of the country in order to highlight our Society to various local philatelic groups and afford our members, who are geographically dispersed, an opportunity to more actively participate in the Society.
- 2005: The Board decided to try another new location, Minneapolis, for the same reasons articulated for going to Philadelphia in 2004.
- 2006: The Society will meet during the FIP Show in Washington, D.C. in May.
- 2008: The Society will return to the Czech Republic to participate in Praha 2008.

The organizers of CHICAGOPEX are planning to hold a Pan-Slavic exhibition sometime in the future, and to invite all of the Slavic philatelic societies to participate. Details are still being developed, but this should be an especially noteworthy and rewarding gathering.

New initiatives:

- The Board is in the process of updating our Society's Bylaws to reflect the current philatelic environment. A draft of the updated Bylaws was developed under the direction of Tom Cossaboom and reviewed by the Society's Directors during our BALPEX meeting. The proposed Bylaws will be changed to reflect the Directors' comments and presented for ratification at our annual meeting at CHICAGOPEX.
- Henry Hahn has developed a short slide show on Czechoslovak Philately that is now available for loan from the Society's Library. The slides are standard 35 mm slides, and there are 3x5 index cards that provide a brief narrative describing each slide. A more expansive slide show is under preparation by John Pojeta, one of our Society members.

The Society for Czechoslovak Philately continues to be a dynamic, respected organization. This is due to those members who devote their considerable talents and time to the benefit of the Society. I've tried to note the names of many of those members in this article, but there are many others who also deserve recognition. Please consider expanding your own personal contribution of efforts toward enhancing our Society through exhibiting, writing articles, acting as Society coordinator at our annual meetings, etc. Your active involvement is what makes our Society healthy.

See you at CHICAGOPEX!

Rich Palaschak
President

AN INTRODUCTION TO CZECH AND SLOVAK MUSICAL PHILATELY

by Richard Beith

(Continued from previous issue)

Inscribed ROK ČESKÉ HUDBY (The Year of Czech Music), three stamps appeared on 22 May 1954, in time for the Prague Spring of that year. Portraits of the three great composers were shown Dvořák (30h), Janáček (40h) and Smetana (60h) (19-21). For the 1955 Prague Spring composers were replaced with allegorical maidens entitled *Music and Spring* (30h) and *Music* (1Kč)(22, 23).

For 1956, the marking of the annual international music festival was linked with the bicentenary of the birth of Mozart in 1756. Some of Mozart's links with Prague were emphasized by the choice of subjects for some of this set of six stamps: Mozart himself was on the 30h value, the composer Josef Mysliveček (1737-1781) -- whom Mozart greatly admired and who was born in Prague -- had the 45h value, Jiří Benda (1722-1795) was on the 60h, while the famous Bertramka Villa, where Mozart stayed with the Dušek family, graced the 1Kč stamp.

František Xaver Dušek (1731-1799) and his wife Josefina Dušková (1754-1824) themselves appear on the 1.40Kč issue, the 1.60Kč value showing a view of the Estates Theatre which had last appeared on an occupation issue in 1941 (24-29). Mysliveček was famed for his successes as an opera composer in Naples in the 1760's and for the oratorio *Abramo ed Issaco*, given in Munich in 1777; Jiří Antonín Benda, a member of one of the larger families of travelling Bohemian musicians, became *Kappelmeister* at the Court of Gotha and developed the art of the melodrama. František Dušek was a composer and teacher, while his wife was famous as a singer. They were hosts to Mozart in 1787 and again in 1791.

In 1957 six famous Czech musical personalities were featured in the set issued on 12 May for the Prague Spring. All six stamps were of face value 60h and the first three subjects were: Jan Václav Stamic (1717-1757) a member of another important family of peripatetic Bohemians who had much success in Paris and Mannheim; the violinist Ferdinand Laub (1832-1875) who was the leader of the Weimar orchestra in 1853 and a professor of the instrument in Berlin and Moscow; and another violinist, František Ondříček (1857-1922), who gave the première of the Dvořák *Violin Concerto in a minor* (Op.53) [B.96] in 1883. The other stamps in the set show three later major national composer figures. They were: Josef Bohuslav Foerster (1859-1951) the composer of the opera *Eva*, Vítězslav Novák (1870-1949) and Josef Suk (1874-1935) (30-35). Illustrations of musical events don't always appear on stamps linked with music. The 60h stamp issued on 19 October 1957 to publicize television developments in Czechoslovakia shows a typical family happily watching their set (36). What are they watching? Why, *The Bartered Bride* of course!

The 30h stamp of a pair issued on 10 February 1958 to celebrate the 80th birthday of Zdeněk Nejedlý has a view of the Castle or Zámek at Litomyšl, the estate on which Nejedlý's favorite composer, Smetana, was born, Nejedlý himself having been born in the town (37). Only one musician was included in the series of eight stamps classified as issued for Cultural Anniversaries on 22 June 1959, this was František Benda (1709-1786), a senior member of the Benda family who served in Warsaw (1729-1733) and at the Court of Frederick the Great at Potsdam (38). A



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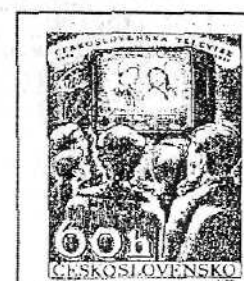
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similar series issued on 23 August 1960 commemorated two well known composer/conductors: the 30th anniversary of the death of Oskar Nedbal (1874-1930) on the 40h, and the 25th anniversary of the death of Otakar Ostrčil (1879-1935) on the 60h (39, 40).

The 150th anniversary of the founding of the Prague Conservatoire was honoured on 24 April 1961; three classical designs showed *instrumental music* (30h), a dancer (30h), and Apollo and his lyre (60h) (41-43). The 26 February 1962 cultural issue included stamps (10h and 20h) for the centenary of the birth of the conductor and composer Karel Kovařovic (1862-1920), who was a pupil of Fibich and later Opera Director at the National Theatre in Prague, and for the centenary of the death of František J Škroup (1801-1862), composer of *Kde domov můj* and the first fully Czech opera *Dráteník (The Tinker)* (44-45). The 1963 cultural issue (25 March) included a 60h value for the 80th anniversary of the National Theatre (46). The 60th anniversary of the Moravian Teachers Choir (*Pěveckého sdružení moravských*) was celebrated on 25 May 1963 with a single 30h value showing the head of a singer (47). On 20 August 1965, Bohuslav Martinů (1890-1959) appeared on stamps for the first time with a single 60h value commemorating the 75th anniversary of his birth (48). The first new issue of 1966 was a symbolic 30h value celebrating the 70th anniversary of the founding of the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra (49).

An attractive miniature sheet, issued on 21 March 1966, and containing a single 3Kč stamp inscribed *1866-1966 Sto Let Prodané Nevěsty (One hundred years of the Bartered Bride)* was a reminder that Smetana's most popular opera had received its first performance in Prague a century ago. The design shows a dancer in national costume and a few bars of the opera's opening chorus (50). A further symbolic Prague Spring Festival design (60h) appeared on 10 May 1967 (51). The third and fourth issues of stamps for the forthcoming 1968 PRAGA stamp exhibition each included a musical topic. The 1.40Kč issue of 5 June 1968 showed the tapestry *Prague* by Jan Bauch; one of the main features of the design was the Estates Theatre, then called the Tyl Theatre (52). The 1Kč of 21 June 1968 featured that well known building, the *Vila Amerika*, which houses the Dvořák Museum in Prague (53).

Only two of the six 60h stamps issued for the 1969 Anniversaries on 24 March had a musical context, those for the 50th anniversary of the Brno Conservatoire and the 50th anniversary of the Slovak National Theatre (SND), the latter issued slightly early for a 1920-1970 celebration. One name, in particular, linked to the founding of the theatre in Bratislava, was the composer and conductor Oscar Nedbal (54, 55). The 50th anniversary of the Slovak Teachers' Choir resulted in a single 30h stamp issued on 27 April 1971, showing the head of a chorister (56). Smetana and Josef Suk again appeared in head and shoulders portraits on two 60h multicolored stamps for "Celebrities birth anniversaries", issued on 4 January 1974. Smetana had been born 150 years before in 1824 and Suk in 1874 (57, 58).

At first sight, a set of five stamps issued on 12 May 1974 just show a rather eclectic selection of musical instruments. These were a Sousaphone of Czechoslovak manufacture (20h), native bagpipes (30h), an angular shaped violin of Martin Benka (40h), a nineteenth century vertical 'pyramid' piano by L. Sauer (1Kč), and a tenor quinton, an instrument combining features of the viol and violin families made by



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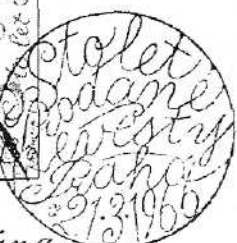
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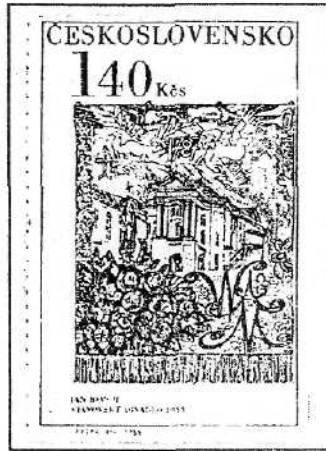


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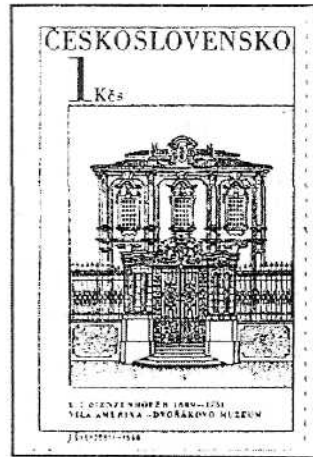


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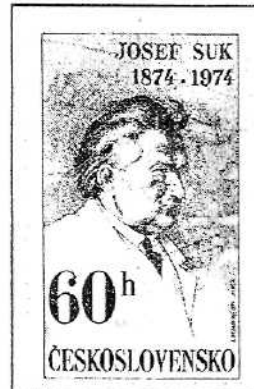
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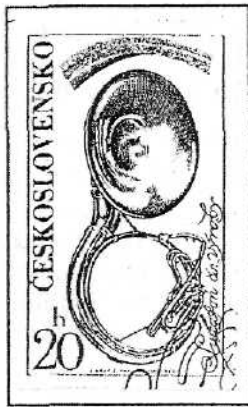
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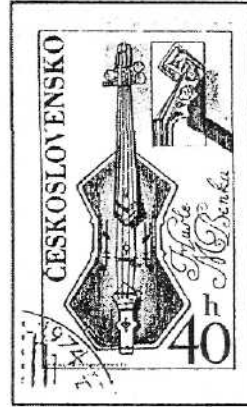
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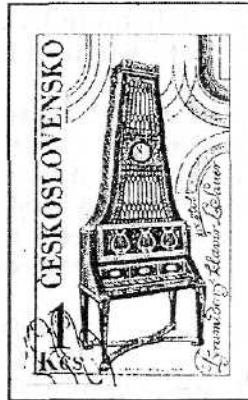
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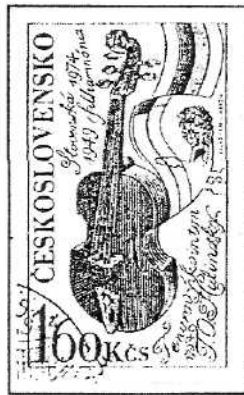
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Tomáš Ondřej Hulínský (1731-1788)(1.60Kč). However, the FDCs are lettered in honour of the Bratislava Music Festival (30h + 40h), the 1974 Prague Spring (20h + 1Kč) and the 25th anniversary of the Slovak Philharmonic Orchestra (1.60Kč)(59-63).

A regular series of stamps showing beautifully printed reproductions of fine works of art from Czech and Slovak collections started in 1966 and has continued to the present day. The 1.20Kč value from the 1974 series (27 November) showed a splendid painting from the National Museum, Prague, by Václav Brožík (1851-1901), of the noted violinist František Ondříček (1857-1922), already mentioned above (64). The 26 April 1976 Cultural Events and Anniversaries set included two 20h stamps, for the 50th anniversary of the Czechoslovak Radio Symphony Orchestra and for the 30th anniversary of the Prague Academy of Music and Dramatic Art (65, 66).

(To Be Continued)



Sister Society News

Czechoslovak Philatelic Society of Great Britain: Residential Weekend in Chester by Richard Beith

Forty-three members and partners visited the historic city of Chester for a very successful and friendly residential weekend at Blossoms Hotel from 27-29 April 2001. No less than sixteen 30-minute presentations were given, and there was strong interest in the Society's bi-annual trophy competitions. To give a break from philately on the Saturday afternoon, an excellent city guide conducted a tour of Chester's ancient walls, pointing out that the layout of the central streets can be related back to Roman times.

Presentations were given by: Lindy Bosworth -- *Czechoslovaks in the Austro-Hungarian Navy*; Bill Dawson -- *1938 Field Posts*; Brian Day -- *Exhibitions, Fairs and Festivals*; Hans van Doormalen -- *Postal Stationery of the Slovak State*; George Firmage -- *Švengsbír the Engraver*; John Hammonds -- *Bohemia and Moravia*; David Holt -- *Hungarian Occupation of Carpatho-Ukraine*; Barry Horne -- *The 1930 Air Stamps*; Reg Hounsell -- *Masaryk*; Robert Kingsley -- *Herčík the Engraver*; Ian Nutley -- *Theresienstadt Ghetto*; Colin Spong -- *Slovakia*; John Whiteside -- *Sudetenland and 1946 Parcel Post*; Garth Taylor -- *Brno Postmarks Through the Ages*; and Heinz Vogel -- *Aviation and Aerophilately of Czechoslovakia*.

In the competitions, the George Pearson Trophy (for 1918-1939 material) was won by Garth Taylor for *Czechoslovak Airmail Routes and Rates*, and the Francis Pettitt Salver (for post WWII material) was won by George Firmage for *The Graphic Art of Josef Herčík*. Trophies were presented by Chairman Robert Kingsley during the Saturday night dinner.

All collectors with an interest in this area will find a warm welcome in the CsPSGB. For membership details contact Mrs. Yvonne Gren, 146 Old Shoreham Road, Shoreham-by-Sea BN43 5TE, Great Britain.

PHILATELIC CULMINATION

by Alfred Weiner
and Ludvik Z. Svoboda

Each of us at some time will have to face this situation: Your days of collecting stamps are coming to an end, so what do you do with the philatelic materials that you have accumulated?

This is the situation that was presented to me a couple of months back when Society member Alfred Weiner sent me an e-mail asking whether I had any advice or help for him in finding someone who might be interested in purchasing his life's collecting interests, or advice on how to sell his collection/materials. I told him that the Society was investigating the possibility of setting up a program which would help widows/widowers to deal with such a problem (we are currently mired in legal liability questions on this issue), otherwise each individual had to deal with it on his own. He could try an ad in the *SPECIALIST* or submit the collection to any one of a number of auction houses. In either of these last two cases, he had to first establish a pretty good catalog value estimate for the materials as well as a good description of them. He took on this last task. After about a month he had his value estimate and description prepared. When I reviewed the description (set up as if it would be in an ad), I realized that it would not do justice to what he had. I therefore asked him to tell me something about how he got started collecting, why he collected Czechoslovak stamps, what was unusual about his material, etc. His responses add character to his material description.

* * * *

I began collecting when I was nine years old and have continued to this day.

My mother was born in a part of Austria that became part of Czechoslovakia after WWI. She told me a great deal about the area around her home. When she arrived in the USA in 1912 (living in Chicago), she brought with her a large number of envelopes, government post cards, and picture postcards that had been received as correspondence in Czechoslovakia. She had also saved all of the envelopes and post cards that she had received after arriving here. When she decided that it would be good for me to become a stamp collector, she gave all of these items to me. Fortunately, I saved all of the items intact, and I have all of them to this day. They are part of my personal legacy from her. Although my parents spoke English they also spoke German -- particularly when they had personal (not for children) comments to make. (My father was born in the Pest part of Hungary.) As a result, I learned to understand and read a little bit of German which made it a little easier to also collect the stamps of Austria as they related to Czechoslovakia.

She continued to receive mail from Czechoslovakia, and I was given all of the items that she received. Gradually, I began to obtain stamps on approval and from family friends. As money was never excessive, I could not get any of the expensive stamps or covers. The stamps from family friends were torn from the envelopes and post cards so my collection began to grow as I soaked and mounted these stamps. Although I did not know the Czechoslovak language at nine years of age, I continued to sort the stamps and mount them by types. The postmarks were very interesting, and I was drawn to used stamps rather than unused or mint, although I did receive some mint stamps in the approvals and from family friends. I enjoyed the scenes on the stamps; however, I continued a stronger interest in the used items. It seemed to me that a used stamp -- on or off cover -- had completed its purpose.

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Over the years, I added other countries and specialties; however, the Czechoslovak stamps continued to draw my interest because of their designs and the family ties.

When I began to be interested in photography, I built a copy setup and photographed many of the Czechoslovak stamps. When I made black-white 8x10 enlargements (no color initially), I was fascinated by the details in the stamps.

I joined the CZECHOSLOVAK PHILATELIC SOCIETY [the previous name of the Society before its incorporation] and for many years I produced the photographic illustrations for the SPECIALIST. I became a friend of the editor, Frank Kovarik, and did a great deal of photography for him and other members of the club including John Velek -- an outstanding specialist in the Hradcany issues. I enjoyed the photographic work, the people, and seeing the many different Czechoslovak stamps. I have always been interested in the first issue (Hradcany), chain breaker issue, and the initial issues of the semi-postals, although these semi-postals frighten me since there are so many forgeries. If I had to select one issue it would be the Hradcany.

Unfortunately, I no longer receive stamps or covers from Czechoslovakia. My main source of Czechoslovak stamps is the Society circuit and buying from dealers and auctions. I do not have trading partners or a local stamp club. Now that I am retired, I have more time for stamps. Prior to retirement, my long work hours and growing children did not allow much time for stamps.

With my preference for used stamps, I always looked for the perfect copy for my main collection -- the best possible centering and the best possible cancellation. A well centered, lightly canceled stamp is -- for me -- a beauty to behold. When I had a less than perfect stamp, my goal has been to replace it with a better copy. My main collection has some spaces for common stamps that I do not have. These spaces are very difficult to fill because of my requirements. Of course, I do collect and appreciate a socked-on-the-nose cancellation for my postmark collection. Over the years I have acquired many mint stamps which I saved for possible trading purposes. Many of these mint copies have a high catalog value; however, this value has not interested me.

In recent years, I have acquired mint stamps and the canceled-to-order issues released during the Russian occupation years. Some of the canceled-to-order issues are in the main collection until they can be replaced with postally used copies. Many of them are in stock books waiting for sale or trading.

My accumulation consists of five groups:

- a. My main collection in two volumes on Scott Czechoslovak Specialty pages of single used copies from 1918 to 1960 -- each stamp carefully selected for quality and postmark; 1960 to Second Republic mostly used with some scattered mint -- all selected copies; Bohemia-Moravia used and mint; Slovakia used and mint.
- b. Two stockbooks mostly post WWII, light duplication, many 100's with some mint, includes some Slovakia.
- c. One stockbook and collection to the 1960's, used, including Bohemia-Moravia.
- d. A set of album pages for 1918 to 1975, used with some mint, approximately 1000+ stamps.
- e. A group of numerous postal cards, covers, and picture postcards, the majority from an area of Austria that became a part of Czechoslovakia after WW I, all from prior to WW II.

There may be particular stamps among the quantity of material that I have that are valuable as to types, perforations, watermarks, etc., that I am not aware of. In addition, these stamps are a ready-made collection for someone to continue building, and this would make me feel that my years of effort and enjoyment are not lost.

My reasons for leaving the collection of Czechoslovak stamps are my age and not wanting to leave the disposal of the stamps as a problem for my wife when I pass on. She is not a collector and would not know whom to contact nor what a fair price for the material was.

* * * *

So now you know about Al's situation.

If you are interested in any of his collection or material (he indicates that he would prefer to sell it all as a group, but would consider selling it as individual pieces), have questions, or would like to know the catalog values of the various pieces, contact him at 4105 Marietta Drive, Vestal, NY 13850, telephone (607) 722-6251, e-mail: almar@stny.rr.com.

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Souvenir Sheet Varieties

by Frank A. Garancovsky

F.I.P./W.I.P.A. 1981 Stamp Exhibition
Scott 2347a/POFIS A2489

The 7 Kčs Emperor's Coach postal wagon souvenir sheet was issued May 10, 1981 (Fig. 1). Originally this stamp was the high value stamp in the postal vehicle set of five issued earlier in the year (February 2). It is a strikingly colorful souvenir sheet that incorporates a map design of Europe showing Prague as the heart of Europe and illustrated with a red heart. In addition there are four different Praha Exhibition logos, plus the WIPA and FIP logos. The unique placement of the four stamps compliment the entire design.

The sheet was printed from one plate with varieties in a four sheet format. With the exception of AP 1, positions 2, 3, and 4 have other minor flaws. This makes the identifying task simpler since minor flaws are not always present on all sheet positions.

Another interesting fact in this printing, the 1998 Pofis varieties catalog indicates that the sheet was printed on FL 1 paper (a dim yellow under a UV lamp). The Bratislava 1989 edition of Pofis published for the ZVAS SLOVENSKÝCH FILATELISTOV 1945/1989 indicates FL 1 and FL 2 paper (glows a brighter yellow green under a UV lamp). I have examined numerous copies and have yet to find a sheet on FL 2 paper.

- AP1: There are two red stains left of the WIPA lettering in the lower inscription
- AP2: a. - There are two or three red stains in the upper left corner of the souvenir sheet
b. - Above the vertical lettering inscription, the INTERNATIONALE left of the WIPA logo, there are two fine hairlines that appear as two long dashes
c. - Right of the red heart and over the word PRAHA, there is a blue dot
d. - Before the first "ČSSR" in the lower inscription, there is a weak red dot
- AP3: a. - There is a black dot behind the hoof of the left front leg of the first horse in ZP 4
b. - There are weak vertical black lines following the lower inscription
c. - Above the upper left frame of the stamp in ZP 4, there is a black dot
d. - Below the lower corner edge of the frame line in ZP 4, there is a blue dot
- AP4: a. - There is a horizontal stain 30mm above the lower right edge of the souvenir sheet
b. - There are two red/blue stains above the right front leg of the first horse at ZP 4
c. - In the FIP emblem, there is a red dot after the year 1926
d. - There is a diagonal hairline scratch through the lower portion of the PRAGA 1962 emblem

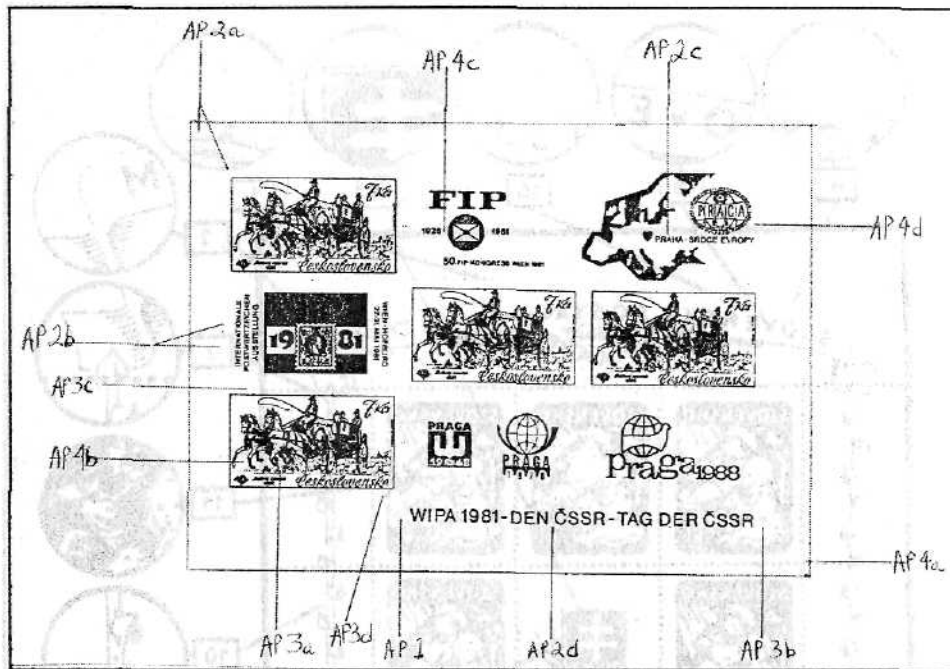


Fig. 1

**For the Benefit/Care of Children – Semi-postal
Scott Slovakia B-27, POFIS H 119**

There have always been rumors relating to the existence of varieties of the For Children semi-postal souvenir sheet. Following several years in a fruitless search, a definitive illustration and text has surfaced. The newly revised Slovakia Specialized Catalog 2001 released in November 2000 has provided the text and a point of reference illustration for the varieties.

The catalog is the third revised edition of Specialized Slovakia published by the Union of Slovak Philatelists in Bratislava. It is a soft cover 224 page comprehensive treatise of Slovakia 1939-1945 and 1993-2000, stamps and entires. The cover is a pale blue with pictures of Slovakia stamps on the front and reverse. The entire volume is printed in color and contains generous descriptions of perforations, types, plate flaws and varieties. It has sections relating to booklets, black prints, and souvenir cards, plus other postal stationery. The cost is \$20 which includes shipping here in the US.

The souvenir sheet "For the Benefit/Care of Children" was issued December 18, 1944 with a print run of 53,000 sheets (Fig. 2). The illustrated sheet was printed from two plates and each in a four position format (HP 1/1 - 1/4, HP2/1 - 2/4). There are a total of seventeen (17) plate or printing flaws, nine for the first plate and eight for the second plate. Several of these flaws are repeated in both plate formats however, in these cases there are one or more additional flaws not found in the original sheet position.

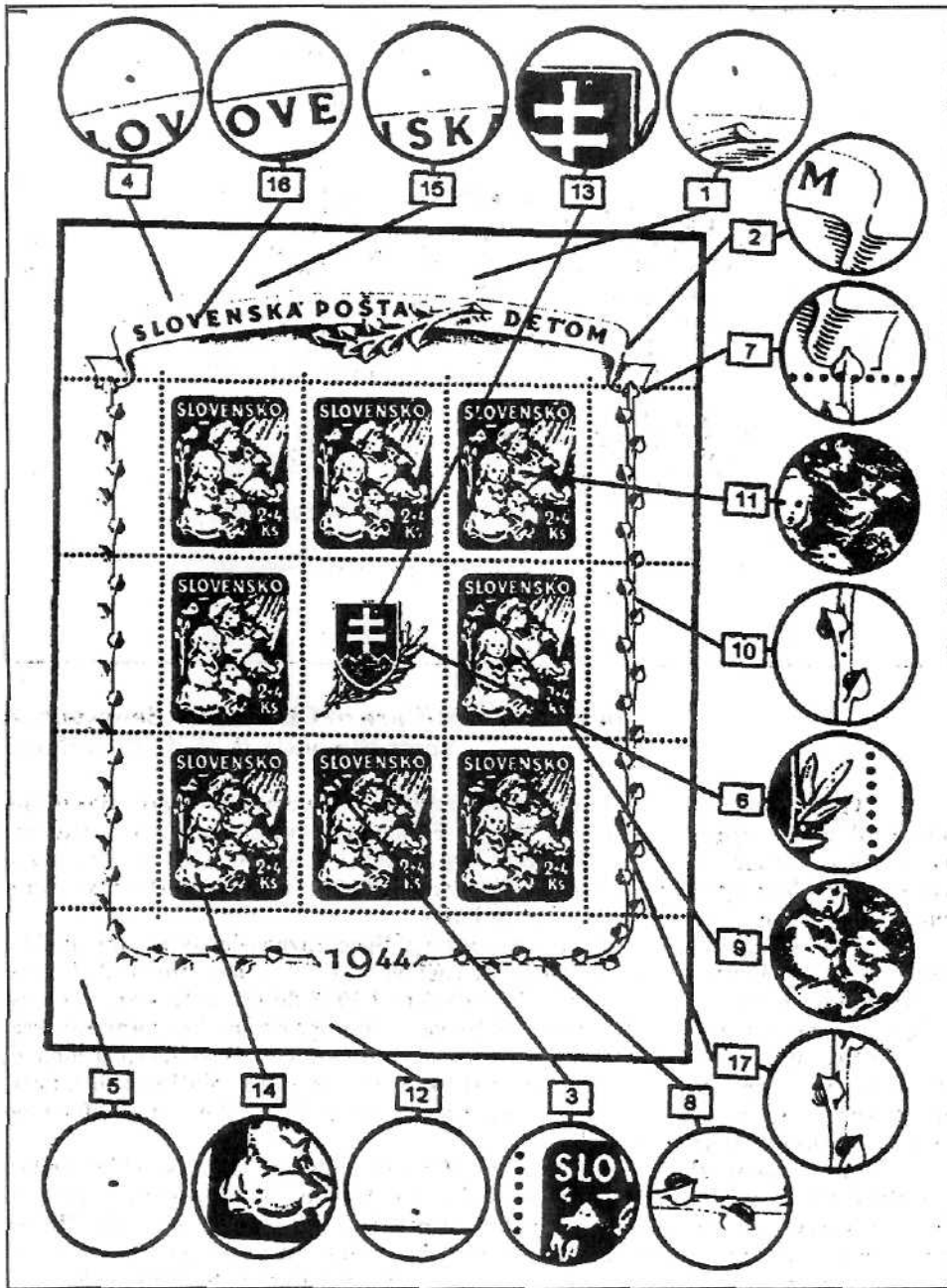


Fig. 2

- HP 1/1: (1) There is a short slanted brown line above the end of the branch pictured on the decorative ribbon at the top of the sheet.
 (2) There is a broken line on the ribbon just right of the letter "M" of DEŤOM in the inscription.
 (3) There is a blue stain in the "third window" directly below the letter "S" of SLOVENSKO on ZP 7.
- HP 1/2: (4) There is a brown stain above the ribbon over the letter "O" of SLOVENSKÁ.
 (5) A horizontal line appears in the lower left corner of the sheet.
- HP 1/3: (6) There is a brown stain on the third leaf of the branch located within the tab.
- HP 1/4: (7) There is a break in the ribbon at the upper right of the sheet next to the top leaf of the right vertical branch.
 (8) There is a brown dot between the third and fourth leaves on the lower right branch right of the year 1944.
 (9) There is a blue dot on the sleeve of the boy and in the skirt of the girl on ZP 5.
- HP 2/1: (2) There is a break in the ribbon right of the letter "M" of DEŤOM in the inscription.
 (10) There is a blue dot between the 8th and 9th leaves from the top in the right branch.
 (11) There is a blue dot on the sleeve of the boy in ZP 3.
 (12) There is a blue dot at the lower edge of the sheet below the numeral "1" of the year 1944.
- HP 2/2: (13) There is a white dot within the coat of arms in the tab.
 (14) There is a blue dot on the skirt of the girl on ZP 6.
- HP 2/3: (6) There is a brown stain on the third leaf on the branch located within the tab.
 (15) There is a brown dot above the letters "SKÁ" of SLOVENSKÁ of the top inscription.
 (16) The right leg of the letter "V" of SLOVENSKÁ is thinner.
- HP 2/4: (7) The decorative ribbon is broken near the top leaf of the upper right branch.
 (17) The 16th leaf from the top of the right branch is broken.

In March of 2000, a complete set of eight sheets appeared in an auction in Bratislava with an opening bid of 3,000 Sk. It has been reported that the winning bid was in excess of 5,000 Sk. A current auction in Bratislava advertises a set with an opening bid of 6,900 Sk against a catalog value of 4,750 Sk. Obviously a new retail level will be determined following this auction.

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A VISIT TO JAN HUS' PRAGUE by Christer Brunstrom

It was a dark winter's day in the year 1412. A cold wind came from the frozen river and spread through the narrow meandering alleys of Prague's old town. A man with a worried look in his face tried to protect himself from the bitter cold. When he saw the Bethlehem Chapel round the corner he hurried on his steps.

Jan Hus had every reason to be worried. For the past ten years or so he had been preaching on an almost daily basis in the chapel. Many considered his ideas about changes in the church to be heretic. In his sermons, Hus proclaimed that the church wasn't a visible organization but rather a group of people seeking their salvation together. He said that true knowledge about God's plan for us people was to be found in the bible.

This was of course extremely revolutionary at a time when the Pope was the one and only responsible for all kinds of church doctrines.

The congregation in the chapel listened to Hus with great attention. They liked what they heard. They wanted change in religious matters and they also appreciated his many ideas about political freedom for the Czech people of Bohemia and Moravia.

The worries that Hus had felt that cold and dark winter's day soon came true. That very same year he was forced to leave Prague where he had served as rector for Prague University in addition to his duties as priest in the chapel. Jan Hus settled in southern Bohemia but in spite of his banishment he went on to preach and to write. It is a fact, that Hus through his many writings helped create the foundations for a unified Czech language as we know it today.

We don't know very much about Jan Hus' early life but it is believed that he was born in the South Bohemian town of Husunec in 1370 or 1371. Like so many other young men of his day he wanted to become a priest. He was sent to Prague to study at the university. Soon after his ordination in 1402, the young priest began his long series of sermons in the Bethlehem Chapel.

In 1414, the first sessions were held of the Great Concile in the German city of Constance. Jan Hus had received permission by the emperor to put his case in front of the church leaders. Hus and his followers arrived in Constance on November 3, 1414. However, the Concile did not want to listen to Hus nor to his ideas about reformation of the church. Instead he was arrested on November 28, 1414 and subjected to a number of inquisitory interrogations. On July 6, 1715 Jan Hus was condemned by the Concile as an unrepentant heretic. He was deprived of his priesthood and sentenced to death by burning.

When asked to repent while chained to a pole to be burnt he flatly refused. It is said that he sang and prayed until the fire ended his life.

The Church thought that it had got rid of a troublemaker but it turned out that this was not the case. Jan Hus had now become the symbol for the reformation of the church and for greater freedom in the Czech lands. The Hussites and the Hussite Wars are now well-known names in Czech and European history.

Prague's Bethlehem Chapel was inaugurated in 1391. It soon became a centre for renewal of both church and society. Here the sermons were in the Czech language rather than in Latin, the official Church language. When the Hussites had been defeated, the Chapel was turned over to the Jesuits.

In 1661, the chapel was abandoned and turned into a dwelling-house. Over the years the chapel has seen many uses. When the Communists came to power in Czechoslovakia after World War II there was somewhat of a renaissance for Jan Hus. He was seen as a symbol for the Czechoslovak nation. When what was left of the chapel was examined after the war it was discovered that three of the original 1391 walls were still intact.

In 1948, the government decided to rebuild the chapel. The new Bethlehem Chapel was inaugurated in 1954. But already in 1952, the Czechoslovak postal service released a set of three stamps marking the 550th anniversary of Jan Hus' very first sermon in the chapel. Two of the stamps show a portrait of Hus while the third one depicts the chapel (Fig. 1).

Today Prague is one of Europe's most popular tourist destinations and quite a few take the time to visit the Bethlehem Chapel in the Old Town. The visitors can view a most interesting exhibition in Czech, English and German which tells about Jan Hus and his work. The chapel itself is used mainly for conferences and concerts today.



Fig. 1

In many ways Jan Hus was the predecessor of Martin Luther, the great German church reformer. Hus is undoubtedly one of the major figures in Czech history.

After having visited the chapel earlier this year I spotted the 1952 set in a stamp dealer's shop window. It was for sale at just 50 cents -- the perfect souvenir of a most interesting visit.

[Ed. Note: The SPECIALIST is pleased to reprint the preceding article from GLOBAL STAMP NEWS, April 2001, with the permission of the editor and the author, who is an associate editor. Readers who would like a complimentary copy of the GLOBAL STAMP NEWS should write to them at P.O. Box 97, Sydney, OH 45365.]

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EXCHANGE PARTNER

The following individual has contacted the Society with a request for an exchange partner. Any exchange relationships are strictly between the two individuals, because the Society is a disinterested and uninvolved party.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>1. Ivan Kovachev
Mladost 1A, bl. 504
ent. B, ap. 63
BG-1784 Sofia
BULGARIA</p> | <p>He collects/desires Czechoslovakia MNH sets. In exchange he is offering stamps, blocks, FDC, phone cards, coins from Bulgaria and series from Albania, the USSR, and other ex-socialist countries. E-mail is ivanbgs@hotmail.com.</p> |
|---|---|

“SLOVAN A ČECH” – “A SLAV AND A CZECH”
KAREL HAVLÍČEK BOROVSÝ

1821 - 1856

by G.M. van Zanten

The postcard shown here inspired the author to have a closer look into the life and turbulent times of this great Czech patriot (Fig. 1).



Fig. 1

Karel was one of seven children born near the Czech-Moravian border, where his father was a merchant. As a youngster he was somewhat unruly, however, he turned out to be a bright student while attending the archbishop's seminary in Prague. He lasted there for only one year since his witty, often paradoxical remarks and Pan-Slavic ideas were not always appreciated by his superiors.

From 1843 to 1844 he spent in Russia as a tutor, where he felt to be in an all-Slav heaven. His illusions were shattered however after he saw the poverty in the Russian villages, and he returned home. Because of his Russian involvement he was closely watched by the Austrian police. His enthusiasm for Russia gave way to a critical attitude toward Russian absolutism and its institutions.

Soon he established himself as a literary critic as can be seen from his *Obrazy z Rus* (Pictures from Russia), 1843-46. Between 1846 and 1851 he edited various Czech publications such as *Pražské Noviny* (Prague News), *Česká*

Včela (The Czech Bee), *Národní Noviny* (National News), and *Slovan* (Slav). The first number of *Slovan* appeared on May 8, 1850; in it he continued to uphold the political and National demands of his countrymen. The last number of *Slovan* appeared on August 15, 1851. Subsequently he had a run-in with the Vienna government, and he was exiled. In the early morning of December 16, 1851, he was taken from his home in Německý Brod (later renamed Havlíčkův Brod), where he and his wife Julie and daughter Zdenka had taken refuge. He was formally charged and taken by train to Brixen in Tyrol where he was put up in a fashionable hotel and later transferred to a small apartment. He spent a lot of time writing in his small room, adorned by a picture of Jan Hus above his desk. Meanwhile all of his correspondence was read by the Austrian police.

In 1852 his family joined him. The three went on long walks to improve Julie's health as she already suffered from tuberculosis. Occasionally a trip to a nearby spa was arranged. Then in September 1854 his wife Julie went home, because of the onset of a cold winter which would be detrimental to her health.

Early in 1855 Karel managed to convince the authorities that he wished to go home, and on April 15, 1855 this became a reality. However, on his return he found his wife had died in Prague of her tuberculosis and was already buried.



Fig. 2

Most of his former friends were loath to talk to him because of his exile. One of the few exceptions was Božena Němcová, who greeted him with open arms. Figure 2 shows her in a painting by Josef Vojtěch Hellich dating from 1845, and Figure 3 is the stamp issued on the 130th anniversary of her birth (Sc. 416/Pof. 548). Karel had much respect and praise for Mrs. Božena Němcová (1820-1862), a major Czech prose writer. Her masterpiece was *B a b i č k a* (Grandmother) -- a novel of village life incorporating her own childhood memories -- which was published in 1855.



Fig. 3

Karel now found himself without money or income. He had to place his daughter with friends and relations while he lived with his mother in the country. Legitimate employment in Prague was still out of the question.

Early in 1856 he contracted a severe cough and was diagnosed as suffering from tuberculosis. After a brief visit to a spa, he died in agony on July 29, 1856. His funeral was organized by Božena Němcová and another of his friends. Figure 3 depicts her in later years.



Fig. 4

His daughter -- after having passed from family to family -- became a "daughter of the nation". A lottery was organized, and a large sum of money was raised for her future. She also died of tuberculosis in 1872 at the age of 24.

To close, let me quote a few lines from the book "The Meaning of Czech History" by Tomáš G. Masaryk. He said of Havlíček:

"We have no more magnificent figure in our modern era.

Havlíček dedicated his entire life to reviving and strengthening our National awareness and our language. His faith in our cause was demonstrated not only by his inspired speeches but by his insistence upon writing exclusively in Czech at a time when our best thinkers were still using German.

As a Czech and a Slav, Havlíček was a realist in the same sense as the greatest Russian authors. If Palacký was the father of the nation, Havlíček was the nation's popular son."



Fig. 5

Two stamps were issued in his honor: Figure 4 (Sc. 315/Pof. 436) shows the one on the occasion of his death anniversary 90 years earlier (the label shows his home), and Figure 5 (Sc. 760/Pof. 897) from the series commemorating Czech writers. And finally, at Figure 6 we have an unpublished sketch by

Jindra Schmidt of a proposed stamp design.



Fig. 6

References:

- "BOHEMIA an Historical Sketch" by Count Franz von Lutzow
- "PRAGUE in Black and Gold" by Peter Demetz
- "The Meaning of Czech History" by Tomáš G. Masaryk

**MASARYK MOURNING CANCELLATIONS –
A DIALOGUE (PART 2)**

by Phillip Melamed and Lubor Kunc

[Ed. Note: Here are some final installments on the e-mail dialogue on this subject that was introduced in the previous issue (May/June 2001, pg. 8).]

20 May 2001, 10:28:

Dear Ludvik and Phil: I was very satisfied with the article in the SPECIALIST on our correspondence. I have some additional information to share with you.

(1) The card pictured as fig. 11 [pg 14] -- I don't know if the handstamp "Smutek.../Trauer..." was official or not, but in my personal opinion it is a private handstamp, probably prepared to be used during the philatelic exhibition in Lovosice (see the words "Briefmarken-Ausstellung in Lobositz" = Stamp Show in Lovosice). Around that time there were several private "prints" produced to commemorate Masaryk's death, e.g. stamps "overprinted" by someone with a mourning text, black borders placed on some Czechoslovak stamps, etc. Mirko Vondra had some nice examples of such material in his gold medal BRNO 2000 exhibit.

(2) Two days ago I received two auction lots that I had won which relate to the Masaryk mourning cancels. The first one has the BRNO 2 cancel error (Československo) which clearly bears a date of September 19, 1937 (Fig. 1). So we now have a date when the error cancel was used. The second entire was interesting as well. It is an air mail letter from Prague to Vienna posted at the Central Telegraph Office in Prague (Telegrafní Ústředná Praha) on October 26, 1937 at 4 p.m (Fig. 2). The letter was sent by Prague tube mail to the PRAHA 7 - Letecká Pošta (air mail post office). The tube mail delivery is confirmed by two other

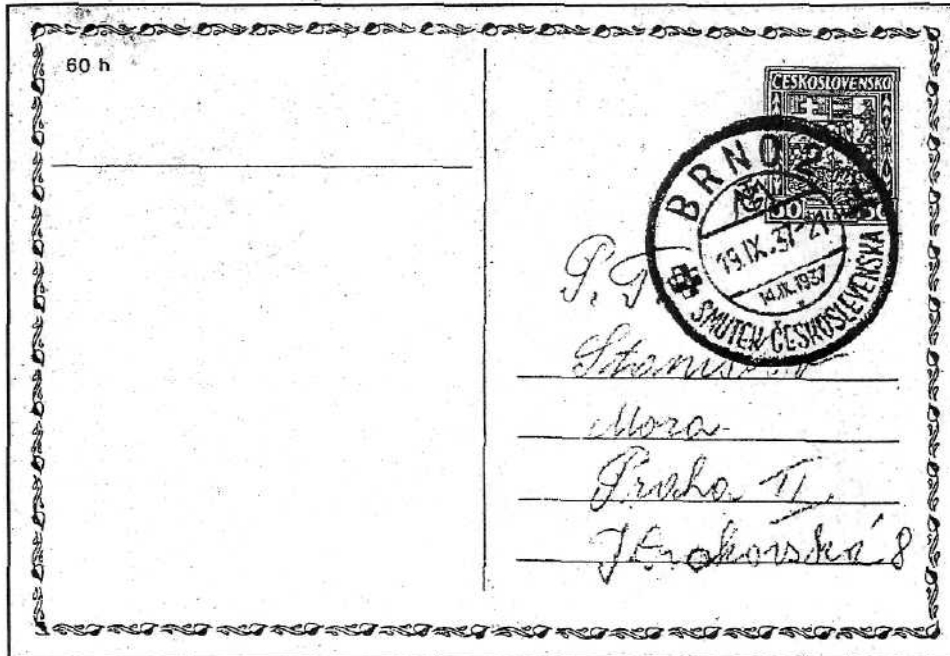


Fig. 1

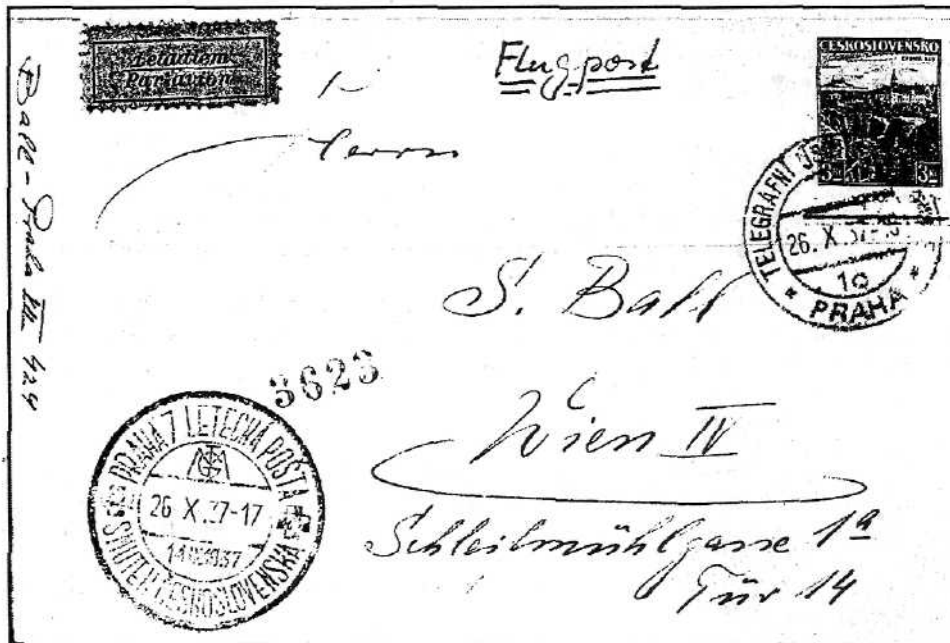


Fig. 2

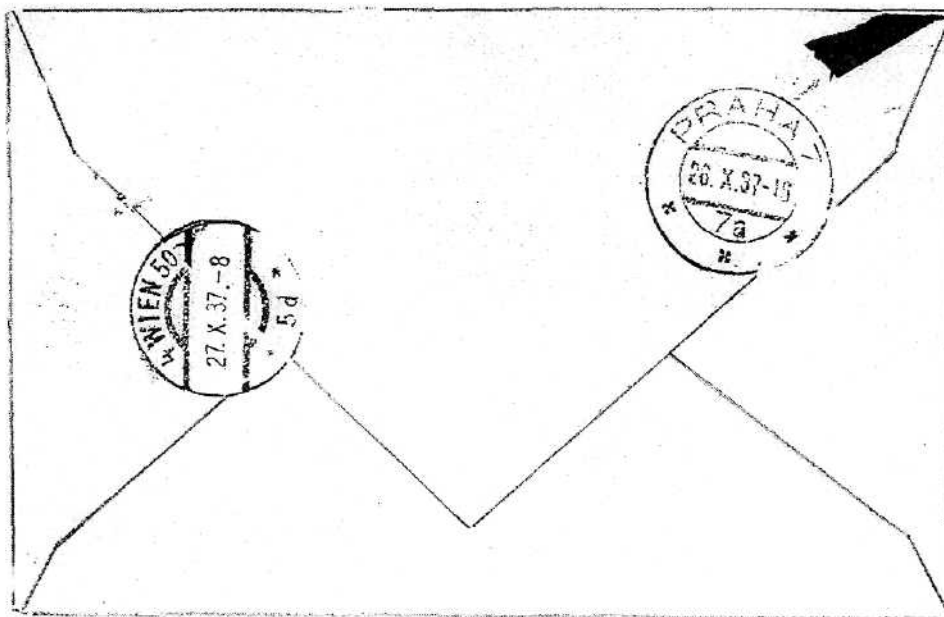


Fig. 3

indicators --the PRAHA 7 postal cancel bears the same hour digit (4 p.m.) as the Telegrafní Ústředná cancel (Fig. 3), and the cover bears a tube mail numeric counter imprint (in the Czech language "číslovačka" or "paginyrka"). The PRAHA 7 - Letecká Pošta provided the cover with the mourning cancellation showing 5 p.m. and used on the last day of its validity. The cover was arrival canceled the next day in Vienna at 8 a.m.

Lubor

20 May 2001, 13:11:

Dear Lubor: You are probably correct about the Lovosice handstamp which seems to be a private handstamp. Note that this card is a first day use (Sept. 18, 1937) of the 50h Masaryk mourning stamp, so having a private handstamp on it would seem logical.

One correction in the article -- the Masaryk sheet shown as figure 12 was issued on March 7, 1938 (7.III.38, his birthday), not 3.VII.38. [Ed. Note: Phil is correct -- see the Errata elsewhere in this issue.]

Phil

20 May 2001, 14:00:

Dear Lubor: One last point. You mentioned that the BRNO 2 error cancellation cover you have is dated Sept. 19, 1937. Note that one of the original set of cancel illustrations that I sent you had a BRNO 2 cancellation dated Sept. 20, 1937 without

the error. So apparently the error was corrected by the day after your cover was postmarked.

Editorial Hinges

For those of you who have been in the Society for a number of years, you will recall that there was actually a time -- quite a while ago -- when the membership dues were other than \$18 per year. In fact, you have to go back to February of 1989 -- just over 12 years ago -- to find that the dues were \$15 per year.

Don't worry, this lead-in is NOT to ease you into a dues increase. Quite the contrary. The Society's finances are in excellent shape. This is largely due to the leadership and financial skills of the officers and directors that have served you over these last 12 years. They have fostered or rejuvenated special services sought by some of our members (book sales, circuit sales, sales of past SPECIALISTS, philatelic expertization) and have used them to generate additional funds for the Society's operations thus obviating the need for dues increases. But there is only so much that this group of fifteen individuals can do by themselves.

Absolutely vital to the Society's good financial condition is maintaining and improving our membership totals. Our membership had been climbing for a number of years, from about 270 in the 1980's to as much as 345 recently. But the past year has seen not only an end to the growth, but there has actually been a small decline. Our current membership stands at about 330. Why? While I don't know for sure, some of it must have to do with our membership recruitment efforts. In the past they have consisted largely with again the same fifteen people talking up the Society at various meetings and exhibitions. That is apparently no longer enough.

This is where you come in. We have a much better chance to recruit new members if we have an additional 315 people doing the recruiting. It doesn't have to be a major effort, it can simply be talking to a friend or acquaintance about Czechoslovak stamps and the Society. Or, you could move up and make a short presentation at your local stamp club or social organization (the Society has a presentation with a script and slides that you can borrow from the librarian). Or, you could man a booth for the Society at a philatelic exhibition near where you live. This isn't as difficult as it might sound.

On May 18-20, I took on just such a task at ROMPEX, a major national stamp exhibition here in Aurora, Colorado on the east side of Denver. The show organizers were very helpful and interested in our participation. Since nothing was being sold at the table there was no license necessary and no table fee. In order to have standard signs above the tables, the organizers had a sign made for me -- it cost me \$10, which is to be reimbursed by the Society. I brought sample copies of SPECIALISTS and books (only those that were listed as being for sale in the Available Publications section of the latest issue) for people to examine. The books and SPECIALISTS were from my own library. If anyone was truly interested in a book, I took their money and forwarded the order to our Book Manager, Ed Lehecka, who then sent it to them. I had Society membership applications and information sheets available at all times. I kept a sheet handy where I could record questions that were asked that I could not answer. I also took down their name and address so that I could send them a postcard when I had an answer.

While I did not sign up any new members at the show -- during its three days I passed out eight membership applications to people who expressed an interest --

THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST

I did take in \$319 in book orders. I met many interesting people, a number of which were not even aware that the SCP existed. I would like to thank one of our newest members, Colin Barnhorst, who spelled me at the table. I feel that the philatelic public in the Rocky Mountain region now has a much better appreciation for the Society for Czechoslovak Philately, and I definitely plan to do this again next year.

If you would like to try this yourself, I can supply you with the Society information forms, and our Secretary, Tom Cossaboom, can provide you with the membership applications. I can, of course, answer any questions you might have about my experiences.

There is another way that you could help. If you subscribe to LINN'S STAMP NEWS, then you have an opportunity to advertise our Society -- for FREE!!

When it is time for you to renew your subscription to LINN'S, they will include a form to return for a free one-issue 25 word ad. Indicate that you want the ad to run in Classified Section 180, Philatelic Societies. The suggested ad is:

Society for Czechoslovak Philately, award winning bi-monthly journal, sales circuit, expertising, translations, conventions, auctions, lending library. Write: Tom Cossaboom, POB 25332, Scott AFB, IL 62225.

Among our 300+ members there must be enough subscribers to Linn's so that we can have this ad appear in most issues.

Finally, if you have any suggestions as to what other methods we might try, please send them -- we need the help. But remember that we cannot do it ourselves.

Ludvik Z. Svoboda

* * * * *

THE XX AMERICAN SOKOL SLET IN DETROIT, MI

by Anne Eisner

The American Sokol Organization (ASO), a non-profit educational and physical culture association with headquarters in Chicago, IL is in final preparations for the XX American Sokol Slet, to be held in the Detroit Area from June 27 through July 1, 2001.

Sokol (the Czech word for falcon -- a symbol of independence, strength, and the fearless defense of its domain) has an unprecedented history: in 1862, Dr. Miroslav Tyrš [Fig. 1, 2, 3] created the society in Prague during a time of oppression toward all non-German nations of the Austrian Empire. Tyrš and his friend, Sokol co-founder Jindřich Fuegner (1822-1865)[Fig. 4 - 10th All-Slavic Sokol Games in Prague], understood that only physically fit, mentally alert, and culturally educated people could form a healthy, strong nation. Thus, they followed the Ancient Greek

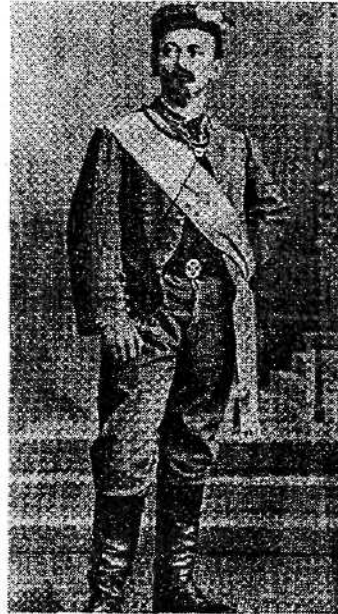


Figure 1: Dr. Miroslav Tyrš,
founder of Sokol



Figure 2: Dr. Tyrš, Sc.187-190/Pof. 268-271

credo of a sound mind in a sound body.

Sokol was soon introduced to the United States by Czech immigrants. The first branch was established in St. Louis on February 14, 1865. Within a few decades, the American Sokol grew into 75 local units organized into six geographical districts (*župy* in Czech) with more than 15,000 members. All members are united in the American Sokol Organization [Fig. 5 - *Centennial of the Sokols, Physical Fitness*]. In



Figure 3: Dr. Tyrš, Sc. 191/Pof. 272

addition, ASO closely cooperates with other similar organizations of different nationalities, including the Polish Falcons of America, the Slovak Gymnastic Union Sokol of the U.S.A., and the Russian and Ukrainian Sokols, among others.



Figure 4: Jindřich Fugner, Sc. 246-248/Pof. 339-341

Sokol members have always stood at the forefront of Czech national aspirations; they were among the most sincere and brave supporters of Tomáš G. Masaryk's Czechoslovak independence movement during WW I, and later formed the core of the anti-Nazi resistance movement. In fact, the very possession of a membership in the Sokol organization was cause for great suspicion from the Nazis and thus, many Sokols were sent to concentration camps. Only a short while later, the strength of the Sokol ideology was clearly realized by the Communist regime, as well. Immediately after the Communist takeover in February of 1948, the Sokol organization was closed, its leaders imprisoned. Many took refuge in the United States, where they continued the fight for democracy and human rights back in their old country. Not surprisingly, in 2000, Czech Foreign Minister Jan Kavan bestowed the Jan Masaryk Gratias Agit award upon two American Sokol leaders, Vladislav Slavik and Fred Kala.



Figure 5: US Sokols, US Sc. 1262



Figure 6: Slet in Prague, Sc. 343-345/Pof. 467-469

Within the Sokol community, the Slet is the climax. Slet, originally a Czech word, means much more than a gathering of people: Slet means huge gymnastics performances, mass calisthenics perfectly designed to demonstrate physical fitness, spiritual unity, and the patriotism of its members [Fig. 6 - *XI All-Sokol Slet in Prague*]. The American Sokol Organization's Slets are organized every four years, though individual districts hold their contests on an annual basis. A worldwide gathering of all the Sokols takes place in Prague, usually at six-year intervals.

Hosted by Sokol Detroit, the 2001 Slet will serve as a unique opportunity for those who have never had the chance to watch the great performances of hundreds and thousands of disciplined athletes, or experience the rich cultural program, great food and friendly people that a Slet offers. For further

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information, please visit the American Sokol Web-site at: www.American-sokol.org or contact Ms. Anne Eisner at 313-382-0406.

[Ed. Note: The SPECIALIST is pleased to reprint the preceding article from CZECH THE NEWS, May 2001, the newsletter of the Embassy of the Czech Republic, with the permission of the editor, Petr Janoušek, and the author.]

* * * * *

Philatelic News and Views

From George Kobyłka:

-- This coming July 2 is the 84th anniversary of the Battle of Zborov. This battle was the first time that the Czechoslovak forces were formed into a cohesive attack unit, the Czechoslovak Brigade, and fought as such with great distinction. The battle was commemorated for its 20th anniversary by the issuance of a pair of stamps on June 15, 1937 (Fig. 1, Sc. 228-9/Pof. 318-9), and memorialized in a poem by soldier/writer Rudolf Medek from Hradec Králové which I have freely translated [excerpts presented]:



Fig. 1

Zborov

There they march, our regiments,
platoon follows platoon,
standards cheerfully fluttering in the breeze,
hundreds of them above their heads,
bayonets reflecting with cold light.
Like a long, evil, merciless dragon,
through a valley darkened with the coming night
marches an army into the front battle line!

...
From here appeal is heard, heard is a command
to all those who still linger, to all those
who are perishing in disgraceful slavery!
Brothers, today open your faithful hearts!
Never forget!
And be alive
forever with fire
of those loving and heroic hearts,
that throbbed and stilled here,
for you and your children
in immeasurable love and sacrifice
here at ZBOROV!

-- The Czech Sydney Olympic Games stamp [see Nov/Dec 2000 SPECIALIST,

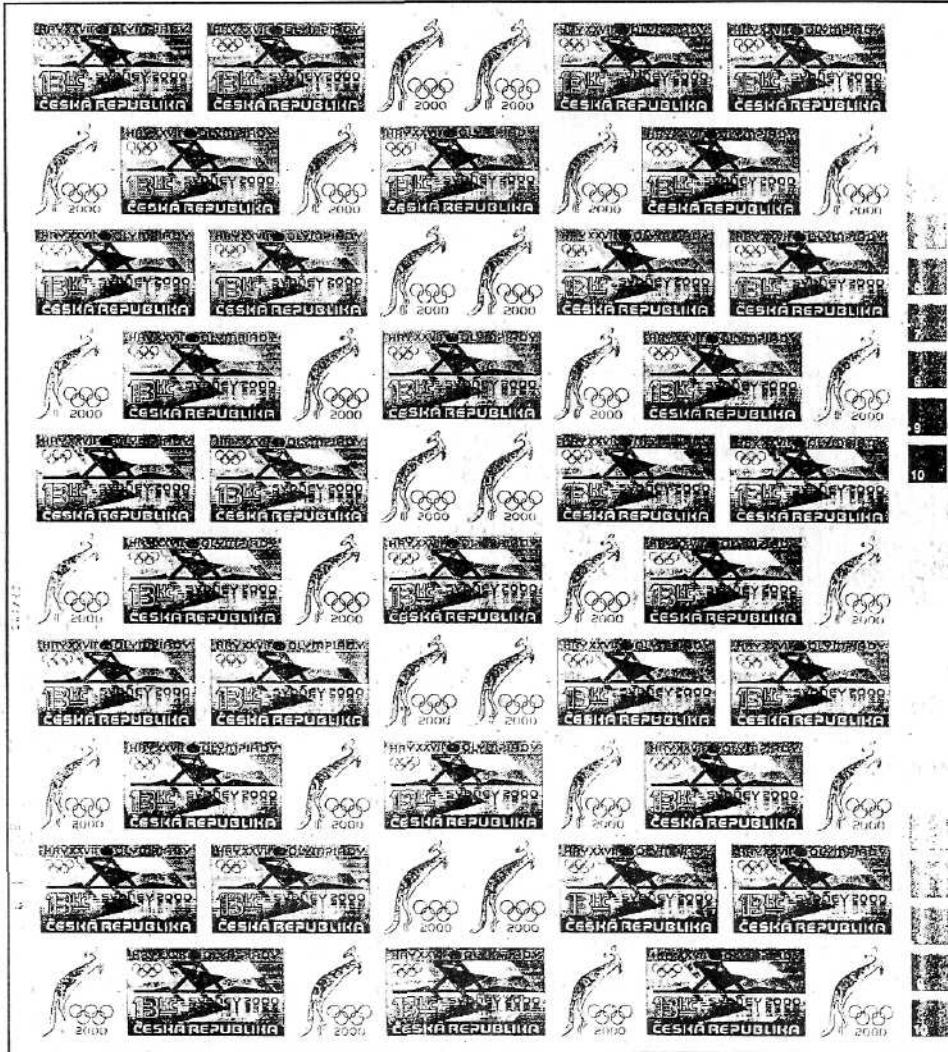


Fig. 2

pg 30] comes in a printing sheet that is a little bit of a mess (Fig. 2). While there are coupons all over the sheet, there are only 5 of the 35 stamps which have coupons (doubled) up or down! But there are 25 of them that have coupons left or right. The up or down ones should carry a higher value.

From Savoy Horvath:

-- On 19 March 2001, our longtime Society member, Joe Lacko, celebrated a great milestone, his 80th birthday! (Fig. 3) Joe was born in Dobrá Voda which is about 10 km from Bradlo -- the resting place of General Stefaník and the location of

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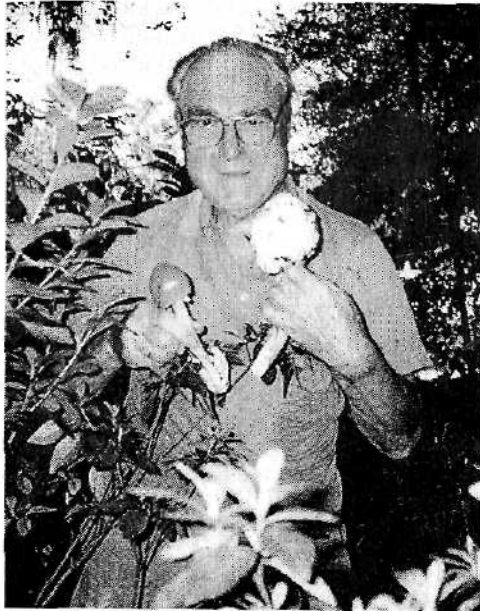


Figure 3: Joe collecting mushrooms

his monument. He came to America with his parents in 1935. Beginning with his youth Joe had two main hobbies, sports and philately. In sports he excelled at soccer, going on to play it even as a professional. He is a lifetime member of Sokol. When he finally quit playing soccer, he really got serious about his philately and tied sports into it by specializing in world soccer, Czechoslovak sport themes, Olympic sports and hockey. Along the way, he joined the Olympsport Society section of the Union of Czechoslovak Philatelists. He is also a big contributor to their Bohemika section. His other philatelic specialty is Slovakia.

-- Here is some information about a stationery and postal history auction in the CR [see ad in this issue for additional details]. It is held twice a year. Each time, it has about 2,000 items, mostly

from Czechoslovakia, Slovakia, and the Protectorate. A new catalog will be coming out in September 2001. For a small fee they will send you a copy; also by Internet: www.volny.cz/icernik. You can also find it through a link on our Society web site: www.erols.com/sibpost.

-- In a recent Czech philatelic auction there was a lot consisting of a vertical strip of three of the variable rate/automated stamps, none of which had a denomination printed on them. The minimum bid on this lot was 1,500 Kč (about \$40)!

-- Here is some key information on the newest Czech Republic postal rates (as of January 1, 2001). Within the country, the basic letter (up to 20g) requires a 5.40 Kč stamp, while a registered letter (again up to 20g) takes 14.40 Kč. To European countries, a letter up to 20g requires a 9 Kč stamp, while a registered letter up to this weight requires 42 Kč of postage. And finally, to other than European countries, a 10g letter requires 12 Kč, the 20g takes 2 Kč more (14 Kč), the 10g registered letter requires 45 Kč, and again the 20g registered letter takes only 2 Kč more (47 Kč).

-- The second biggest holiday in the CR (after Christmas/Vánoce) is Easter/Velikonoe. Just as here in the US where we have towns like Loveland, Colorado taking advantage of Valentines Day (you can send mail there to get a special postal cancel), so a mountain town in the Czech Republic has developed a similar service for Easter. Kraslice is in extreme western CR, north of Cheb, north west of Karlovy Vary, and only 4 km from the German border. This is the seventh year that they have been providing this service, and it has developed to the point that tens of thousands of letters, post cards and greetings are being handled. The town's notoriety has spread to the extent that even people from nearby countries are



Fig. 4

sending their mail. Shown here is this year's commemorative cancel showing a bird looking over a painted Easter egg (Fig. 4). The cancels for the last several years have been designed by historian, teacher and former city chronicler Václav Kotěšovec. If you would like to use this service in the future, send your Easter greeting to be canceled to Pošta Kraslice, ul. 28 Října 1705, CZ-358 01, Kraslice, CZECH REPUBLIC.

-- FILATELIE/#5 has some interesting news. First, about a new counterfeit -- the 7 Kč Ostrava definitive of 1994 (Fig. 5, Sc. 2891B/Pof. 60). It first appeared in the southern Moravian city of Kyjov. And second, that



Fig. 5

the 9 Kč Komenský issue of March 2001 (May/June 2001, pg. 39) has been found with the 9 Kč denomination missing from an entire sheet of 50 and from 1/3 of another sheet. FILATELIE already has an ad for a single asking 3,998 Kč (about \$100) and a strip of four with date/plate number on the selvage for 22,998 Kč (about \$590).



New Issues

CZECH REPUBLIC

by G. M. van Zanten

1. On April 18, 2001, the Ministry of Transport and Communications issued a commemorative miniature sheet entitled "Czech Baroque Art" and containing a single 50 Kč stamp (Fig. 1). The baroque style of art originated in Italy in the 16th century. It arrived in the Czech lands during the Thirty Years' War and reached its climax in the early 18th century. The leading personalities in Czech baroque painting included Václav Vavřinec Reiner (1689-1743)(Fig. 2), who developed the artistic legacy of K. Škréta and P. Brandl. He painted portraits, altar paintings, landscapes and battle scenes. He is best remembered for his murals and especially his ceiling paintings. Reiner's frescoes decoratively and sensitively harmonize with the architecture of churches, palaces and gardens. The stamp on the miniature sheet shows the ceiling fresco "Allegory of Art" (1720-21) by Václav Vavřinec Reiner from the *salla terrena* in the Vrtbovská garden in Prague's Lesser Town (Malá Strana). Reiner was born in Prague in 1689. His surname indicates that his family came originally from Germany (Upper Bavaria) in 1654. He was introduced to the world of graphic arts, and in due course became a painter of murals and frescos although

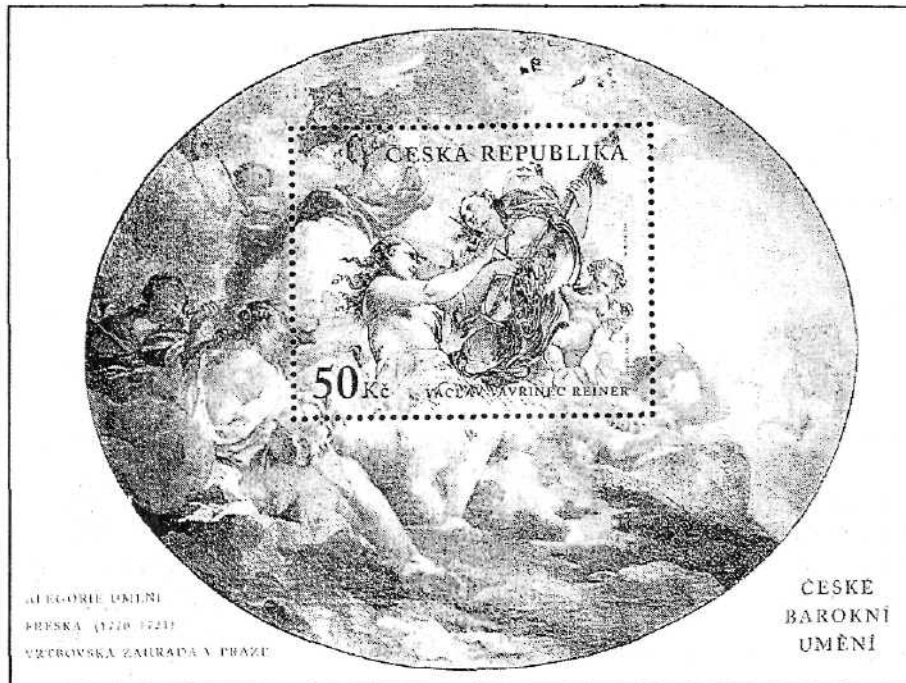


Fig. 1



Fig. 2

not exclusively. His works show signs of an Italian influence, but it is not clear if he ever visited Italy. The *salla terrena* -- by František Maximilián Kaňka -- resembles an Italian grotto and dates from 1725. The approach to it is via an archway topped by a sculpture of Hercules by Matthias Braun (Fig. 3), who was also responsible for the rest of this most charming Baroque garden at the foot of Petřín Hill. The miniature sheet was designed by Zdenek Ziegler and engraved by Miloš Ondráček. It was produced by the Post Printing House, Prague, using recess print from flat plates in brown combined with multicolored offset. A FDC in brown contains a detail of a garden decoration from the Černín palace in Prague (about 1722)(Fig. 4) also by Matthias Braun.

2. On May 9, 2001, the Ministry issued a 9 Kč commemorative stamp in the Europa series entitled "Pond Construction in the Czech Lands" (Fig. 5). The stamp depicts the largest pond in South Bohemia, Rožmberk, before it was dredged. It is the Lužnice river which ends as it empties into this fishpond. This part of the river is actually a national park known as the *Stará Řeka* (old river). The first mention of the construction of ponds for fish farming in the Czech lands is from 1115. Fishpond



Fig. 3



Fig. 4



Fig. 5

culture was already extensive in pre-Hussite times, and further expansion came after the battle of Lipany in 1434. Leaders in this field included Josef Štěpánek Netolický, Mikuláš Ruthard of Malešov and Jakub Krčín of Jelčany and Sedlčany, who arrived in the Třeboň basin, built the Nová Řeka (new river), and constructed the country's famous largest fishpond, Rožmberk, called the "South Bohemian Sea". It was laid out between 1584-90, had a water surface area comprising 1790 acres, and was retained by a centuries-old oaken dam measuring 2,600m long, 80m wide, and 12m deep. The muddy surface of this pond before it was dredged is shown on the stamp. Besides this fishpond there are many smaller ones in the region, occupying altogether an area of more than 750 acres. The fishponds are linked by many canals which were constructed in the Middle Ages. Another wave of development in pond construction in the second half of the 19th century was largely due to the work of J. Šusta. Fish farming in this country is largely based on the breeding of common carp. When the ponds are emptied every three years, it is a great event throughout the district. The fishing lasts three days, and the catch is over 1000 quintals of excellent Třeboň carp. The stamp was issued, as every year, as part of a common European theme -- this year's is water and aquatic wealth. The stamp was designed by Jan Solpera and engraved by Václav Fajt. It was produced by the Post Printing House, Prague, by rotary recess printing in black combined with photogravure in four shades of violet in printing sheets of 8 stamps. A FDC in red depicts one of the oldest maps of the pond system in South Bohemia, attributed to

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Mikuláš Ruthard of Malešov (Fig. 6). In the lower part there are signatures of Štěpánek Netolický, his successor Jakub Krčín of Jelčany and Sedlčany, and Josef Šusta, who renovated the expansion of the fish farming in Třeboň.



Fig. 7



Fig. 8



Fig. 9

3. On May 9, 2001, the Ministry issued a 12 Kč commemorative stamp entitled "European Men's Volleyball Championship in Ostrava" (Fig. 7). The stamp shows a "blue" team player spiking the ball while a "red" team player attempts to block it. Volleyball was invented at the end of the 19th century in the USA, where it rapidly became very popular. At the end of WW I, the American Army brought the sport to Europe. It began to be played in Czechoslovakia in 1919, and a volleyball association was organized a few years later. Volleyball is a popular team sport, which is often played for recreation by all ages. The stamp is issued to mark the European championship to be held in Ostrava from 8 - 16 September. The stamp was designed by Zdeněk Netopil and engraved by Václav Fajt. It was produced by the Post Printing House, Prague, by rotary recess printing in black combined with photogravure in ocher, red, blue, and gray in printing sheets of 50 pieces. A FDC in gray-green depicts a volleyball-player lifting the ball with a "dig" (Fig. 8).

4. On May 30, 2001, the Ministry issued a 5.40 Kč commemorative stamp entitled "For Children" on the occasion of International Children's Day (Fig. 9). The stamp shows the favorite giant dog Maxipes Fík -- from the Večerníček cartoons -- riding on a bicycle. This giant dog was given pictorial form by the painter and graphic artist Jiří Šalamoun from the book by Rudolf Čechura. The designer of the stamp was Zdeněk Ziegler, and the engraver was Bohumil Šneider. It was produced by the Post Printing House, Prague, by rotary recess printing in black combined with photogravure in orange, red, blue, and brown in printing sheets of 30 stamps. The stamp will also be issued in booklets with 8 stamps and 2 labels. The label shows Maxipes Fík as a puppy with its little girl keeper named Ája. A FDC in black-gray depicts a scene with Maxipes Fík and Ája confronting a mouse (Fig. 10).

5. On May 30, 2001, the Ministry issued a set of two commemorative stamps in the "Personalities" series. The stamps were designed by Hana Čápková and engraved by Václav Fajt. They were produced by the Post Printing House, Prague, by rotary recess printing combined with photogravure in printing sheets of 50 stamps.

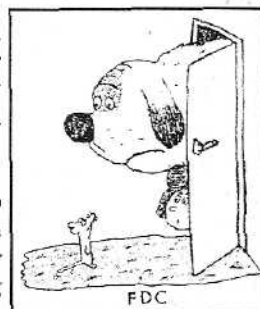


Fig. 10



Fig. 11a



Fig. 11b

1857. His association with that theater went back to 1823, when he sang as a high baritone who could manage tenor roles as well. He was the author of the first Czech original work of opera, "The Tinker". However, his best known piece is the scenic music to Josef Kajetán Tyl's (Fig. 12, Sc. 759/Pof. 896) play *Fidlovačka* (Spring Festival) which was the Prague festival of cobblers and took place on the Wednesday after Easter (Fig. 13). From this music is taken the national anthem, *Kde Domov Můj* (Where Is My Home?)(Fig. 14). During the play a blind violinist is led by his grand-daughter onto the stage, when the people ask him to play something for them. He begins to sing *Kde Domov Můj*, and as if by magic it plucks at their heart strings. The first performance of *Fidlovačka* took place on December 21, 1834 at the Estates Theater. In 1860 Skroup took up conducting at the Rotterdam opera and died there on February 7, 1862. The tune *Kde Domov Můj* was played when Tyl was laid into his grave and again on the trumpet during Skroup's funeral. The stamp is issued on the 200th anniversary of his birth. A FDC in red-violet depicts the Prague Estates Theater against a background of part of the score of the tune *Kde Domov Můj* (Fig. 15).



Fig. 12



Fig. 13

-- The 16 Kč stamp in black-violet (recess print), ocher, pink, green, blue and red-violet depicts František Halas (1901-1949)(Fig. 16). He was a Czech poet, essayist and translator, who was born in Brno where he also served an apprenticeship as a bookseller. This stamp commemorates his 100th birth anniversary. He later lived in Prague, where he worked as editor for various magazines and publishing houses. His work is among the greatest of Czech



Fig. 14



Fig. 15



Fig. 16



Fig. 17

poetry between the wars. It was predominated by proletarian motifs and later inclined towards existentialism, motifs of death and a poetic embodiment of a tragic sense

of life. A significant part of Halas's work consists of translations of Polish, Russian and Hungarian poetry. He also wrote essays and studies on poetry and art. A FDC in dark green depicts a composition of flowers (Fig. 17).



Letters to the Editor

1. Dear friend:

I would like to add a few more details to the variable rate stamps article on page 21 of the Mar/Apr 2001 issue.

The stamps were printed in France in rolls of 1000. In total 3000 rolls were ordered. The interest in the machines and in variable rate stamps at BRNO 2000 was very high. According to unofficial information, about 90,000 stamps and 7710 commemorative sheets were sold. Those at BRNO 2000 were all Type I (Fig. 1) where there is no asterisk in front of the face value.

After BRNO 2000 one of the machines was used in Postfila, Prague for the printing of variable rate stamps for the new stamps service and for stamp dealers. The other machine was installed in Brno for public use later. The machine in the Postfila shop was installed for public use on 21 June 2000. It sold stamps of all the face values issued at BRNO 2000, but with an asterisk in front of the face value. These are Type II stamps (Fig. 2).

At the beginning of 2001, some face values of the variable rate stamps were changed in connection with the change of some postal rates. The machines do not sell values intended for postcards (Kč 5, 7, and 8) any more. Values of Kč 11 and 13 for priority (airmail) post to the overseas were replaced by values of Kč 12 and 14. Moreover, six additional face values were programmed. This change was done in the machine in Brno on 8 January 2001 and in the machine in Prague on 18 January 2001.

At present, machines sell variable rate stamps in the values of Kč 0.40, 1, 2, 4, 5.40, 9, 12, 14, 14.40, 17, 23, 26, and 33 (Type II).



Fig. 1



Fig. 2

Miroslav Langhammer

2. Dear Lou:

Remember in my article [A Philatelic Obituary from an Old Friend, May/Jun 2001, pg.15] I asked ". . . But where is the photo of the entire Board lined up on the front lawn of my house? I remember seeing it but I cannot find it. The picture would reveal exactly who the members were." Well, I found not the picture itself, but something more revealing than that. Amongst my boxes I discovered a sign-in book of members who attended that first Board meeting. There were actually two meetings, and my only problem is that I don't know which of them is the one that applies. The first is dated June 10, 1971 and was attended by Edwin Hanish, Tom Buresch, Emil Michaelson, M. Votruba, Peter Kleskovic, Milo Karchuta, plus the gentlemen mentioned in my original article. The other one is dated June 29, 1974 and includes Thomas Buresch, Mr. and Mrs. Wolfgang Fritsche, Henry Samek, Emil Michaelson, George Koplowitz, Edward Lisy, Thomas Meeks, including myself and the gentlemen mentioned previously. I suspect it is the latter meeting that applies. Does anyone know for sure?

Mirko [Vondra]

3. Dear Lou:

I ran across some more information about newspaper stamps that would be additional to that presented in Lubor Kunc's letter in the May/Jun 2001 issue, pg. 34.

The first newspaper stamps in Austria (and therefore at that time in the Czech lands also) were issued in 1851, and are thus celebrating their 150th anniversary this summer. They were issued without any indication of their value, but were discriminated through their color. For a single newspaper a blue stamp was affixed, for ten newspapers they used a yellow one, and the rose colored one was for sending a bundle of 50 newspapers. The stamps were only sold to the producers of newspapers, who affixed them to the front title page of the newspaper. Overall

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it was estimated that the postage represented about 15% of the selling price of the newspapers.

Savoy [Horvath]

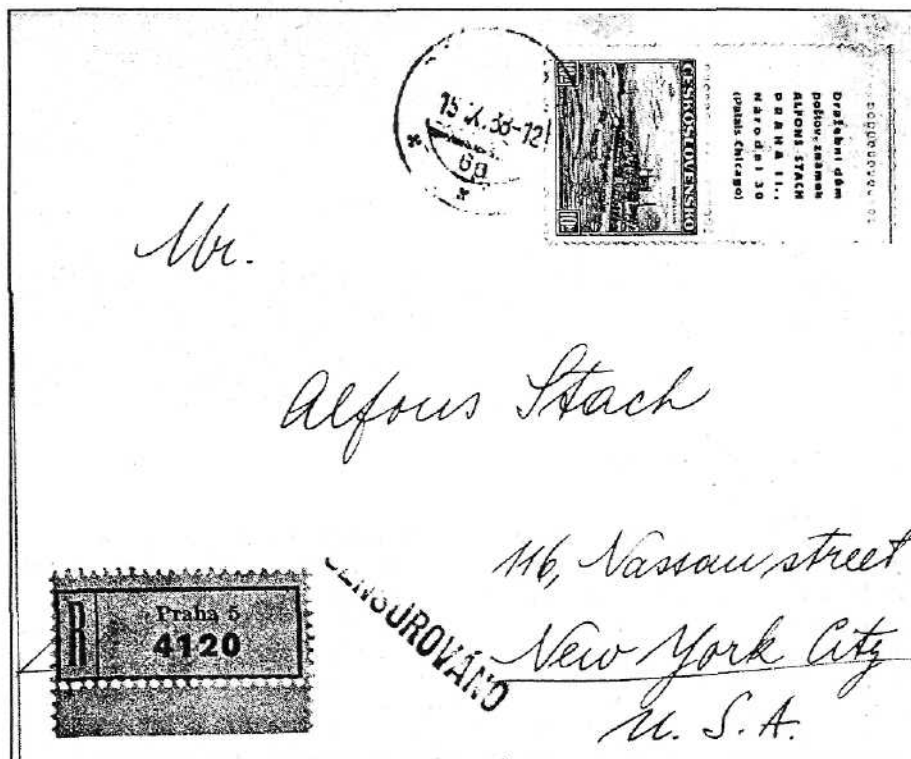


Fig. 3

4. Alfons Stach's Private Advertising Coupons:

a. Dear Lou: Going along with the discussions of the Stach coupons in the May/June issue [pg 37], here is a cover that used one of these "constructed" couponed stamps to actually frank a registered cover from Prague to New York (Fig. 3). Being registered, it bears two backstamps from New York.

Frank [Garancovsky]

b. Dear Ludvik: Referring to Palac - Chicago in Prague from Phil's article [letter] on page 37 of the last SPECIALIST [May/June], I would like to mention that the Palais Chicago is really a building situated at Národní Třída (street) in Prague -- the building is located near the Národní Divadlo (National Theater). The building consists of offices, some apartments, stores, and a big passageway. At that time it was a very prestigious address for business!

Lubor [Kunc]

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