



# THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST



OFFICIAL QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF THE THE SOCIETY FOR CZECHOSLOVAK PHILATELY,  
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**Forged Scout  
Post Cover  
Discovered.  
See Article  
on Page 10.**

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## THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST

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1. THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST is the official quarterly publication of the Society. For inquiries on contributing articles, obtaining back issues, bound copies, and advertising rates, contact Keith Hart, 4336 Las Lunas Ct., Castle Rock, CO 80104 or email: [kdhart46@icloud.com](mailto:kdhart46@icloud.com). Members are permitted to have one free small advertisement each year.
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7. A new online sales circuit is now available. Members can sell surplus philatelic material, as well as inquiring as to whether anything they need is available from other members. Members wishing to use this service should contact our circuit manager Marisa Galitz at [mmgalitz@gmail.com](mailto:mmgalitz@gmail.com).

Visit our web page at  
[www.csphilately.org](http://www.csphilately.org)



### Specialist

Here is your second opportunity to experience what the new *Czechoslovak Specialist* looks like. Please make sure to let our editor, Keith Hart, know what you think of it, or if you have some suggestions to make it even better. Keith has been the editor for over 3 years now and has made some significant changes – all to the good in my estimation – since he took over from me.

We realize that the change in size of the *Specialist* will possibly create problems for those of you (like me) who keep their *Specialist* on hand for follow-up research. But we believe that the benefits of the revised size makes it worth it.

By the way, those of you who have the Interactive Index CD 1939-2009 (absolutely essential for research) will be happy to hear that our Board Member Alan Hanzl has taken the time and effort to create an index listing for the 2010-2020 *Specialist* articles, in alphabetical order, based on subject areas to provide a more recent follow-on for research purposes. While it does not automatically bring up the article like the initial index does (you will have to look up the article in the issues you have kept), it does provide a means to investigate what has been written in the *Specialist* on various subjects over that current period of 11 years since the original index was produced.

You can access that index by going to the SCP website [www.csphilately.org](http://www.csphilately.org), select “Publications” on the black control bar, then “Publications for Free” on the drop down menu, then “Past issues of SCP’s journal The Specialist, and finally “Specialist index 2010-2020”. If you have not kept your past *Specialists* or never had the one you need, simply contact Marisa Galitz at [mmgalitz@gmail.com](mailto:mmgalitz@gmail.com) and ask for a pdf of the one that you need.

Hopefully you received this issue of the *Specialist* in a more timely manner than the Winter 2021 issue. That issue got tied up in the postal system’s second class mailing grinder and took more than a month to be delivered from the date that we sent it. It is the biggest drawback to using the second class mailing system, but the cost advantage is too great to ignore - \$0.42 versus about \$1.80 per item (if sent first class). Most of the time the issues are delivered in about a week or so, but not with this Winter 2021 issue.

### BALPEX

There is no sense in my repeating what Keith has already passed on to you in his announcement found elsewhere in this issue on BALPEX – except please come and see us and the many exhibits that we hope to have to entertain you.

### COVID

You are being bombarded with information about this subject all of the time, and it changes every time you turn around. But the one thing that I would like to emphasize – being fully vaccinated will go a long way to make sure that you are prepared to enjoy attendance at BALPEX and other stamp shows.

### Election of Society Officers

Since we have a “new” Board following the election earlier this year, per our By-Laws, we need to have an election of Society officers at our next convention, which will be at BALPEX. That election is conducted within the Board.

Because of personal reasons, I will not be seeking re-election as President. Another Board member will have to step forward to seek that position.

Ludvik Z. Svoboda

## THE MATRIX CONUNDRUM

by Mark Wilson

Insofar as typographic printing plate production is concerned, we are convinced that one aspect of the traditional literature is correct: electroplating was used to fabricate typographic plates. We will not describe the details of the electroplating process in this article save to take note of the fact that electroplating required a negative mold, meaning its relief aspects were reversed when compared to the plate it was to produce. In the traditional literature this mold was made of metal and called a matrix; the manufacturing process itself was termed matrix-based typographic plate production.

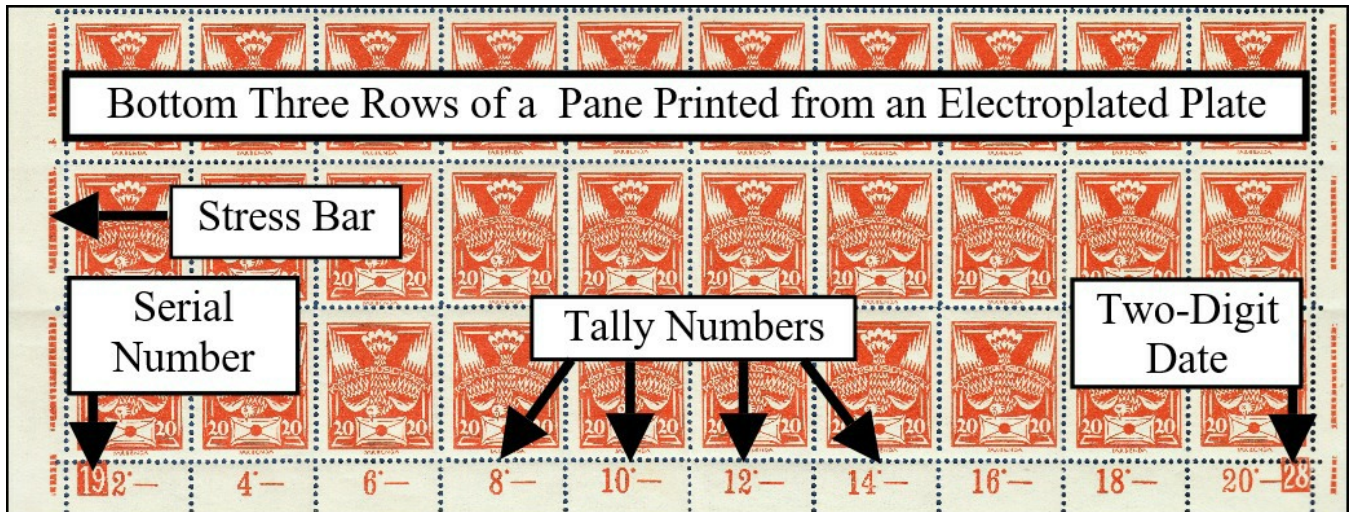


Fig. 1: Section of the 20 Haler Type II, Plate 54, showing constant components.

Most matrix-produced plates have a set of four common features: stress bars, a serial number, a two-digit date, and a replica of a 100 cliché etched plate (Fig. 1). To simplify discussion and avoid repeating *replica of a 100 cliché plate*, I would like to introduce a term used to describe that object in the Czech literature: *patrice*. The word means *die* or *punch* according to my Czech technical dictionary, but the word *die* carries with it the context of a single cliché and *punch* is too vague a term, so I shall adopt the term *patrice* to represent the 100 cliché plate used in the production of a mold.

All of the available Czech philatelic sources imply a negative mold made of metal was used directly to produce electroplated copies to be employed as new printing plates. The same sources also admit there is no evidence as to how these molds were created or even how they were used; all is conjecture. In the past, I had accepted that line of thought as it appeared plausible. I now believe this aspect of the traditional literature concerning typographic plates is incorrect.

Johan Sevenhuijsen recently reviewed a number of sources that offered no support for the negative metal mold theory. Instead, his sources indicated printing houses commonly used negative wax molds (or perhaps molds made from a similar pliable substance) to produce electroplated printing plates. For detailed information, please refer to Johan's article which is available online at <http://knihtisk.org/store/09-group/02/wax.pdf>.

Johan and I had then a spirited back and forth discussion. Reliance upon wax molds presents a major problem. Johan's sources indicated that a negative wax mold could only be used to produce a single plate. However, we know from our plating studies that many printing plates were taken from the same mold-producing source. We know this because examination clearly demonstrates that every plate taken from that source has its stress bars at precisely the same distance from its clichés. This consistency may have contributed to a belief (because the stress bars would have been integral to a metal mold) that

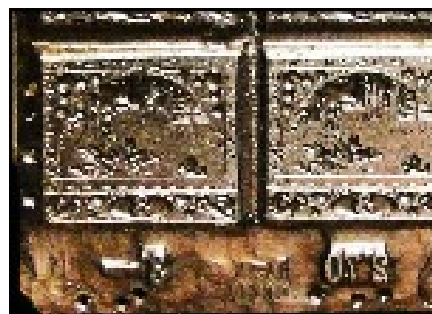
negative metal molds were used rather than negative wax molds. It is easy to envision a negative metal mold composed of a patrice and stress bars. Obviously, such a device could be used repeatedly.

However, since a wax mold could only be used once, each wax mold had to be constructed anew. Thus, while a negative wax mold could be used to electroplate one printing plate, it could not have stood on its own. Wax molds require an additional step in the plate manufacturing process.

Johan suggested the following scenario. A patrice and its stress bars were firmly attached to a wooden platform, forming a positive metal matrix. Whenever new plates were needed, wax molds could be taken from this positive matrix and one new plate produced from each negative wax mold. If this is true, the problem of the constant stress bar to cliché distance for wax molds is solved. We have, not as the traditional literature suggests, a negative metal matrix/mold used directly for electroplating, but a positive metal matrix one step removed from the electroplating process. It was used to repeatedly produce negative wax molds from which additional electroplated copies could be taken.

We are left with another problem. Unlike the stress bars, the serial number and two-digit date components change dramatically from plate to plate, not only in the information contained (the actual number and date) but also in the very shape of the digits. This means that the serial number and two-digit date information could not have been integral parts of a positive metal matrix.

Notice in particular that while the stress bars are clearly placed adjacent to the plate, the serial number and date are positioned within the area of the plate itself near where its tally numbers appear. Fig. 2 shows that the tally numbers are part of a plate itself: thus the serial number and date were superimposed upon the patrice rather than being adjacent to it. If we are to accept as our model the use of a positive metal matrix and negative wax molds for typographic plate production, we must explain how the serial numbers and dates were made to later appear on a printed pane.



*Fig. 2: A plate's tally numbers.  
(This is not a patrice!)*

The mechanics of typographic plate production all but require that these latter two informational components be a part of the matrix.

This is because typographic – or relief – printing requires that all inked surfaces, the lands<sup>1</sup>, be at exactly the same height. Even a slight difference causes havoc. If these objects were below the level of the patrice they would receive no ink. On the other hand, were they above it, the decimal line next to the date in Fig. 1 would not receive ink (it obviously has as it is printed on the pane).

Thus, we must solve this set of four problems when dealing with the serial number and date. First, they appear within the area of the plate itself. Second, they represent different objects for every electroplated plate (they differ in information and appearance). Third, they must be located in the same precise position on each patrice but may vary somewhat between different patrices. Finally, they must be set at the same level as the surface of the patrice.

Johan suggested that the lands supporting the serial number were indeed part of the patrice but that the information contained on the lands (the serial and date digits) were engraved on a new printing plate after the electroplating process. This would answer the four conditions above. First, as part of the patrice, they obviously would appear within the area of the plate itself. Second, engraving the information on a completed electroplated printing plate allows for the required changes in content and appearance. In addition, engraving the digits – placing them below the level of the lands – would produce white digits, as is the case for the serial numbers and dates (Fig. 3). Third, as part of the patrice, the two lands would remain in their required constant position relative to the clichés. Finally, if these two lands were etched at the same time as the patrice they were part of, they would be at the same level as all the other lands on the plate.

We are now left with only one question to answer. How did these lands which were not present on etched plates be made to appear on a patrice? There are two possibilities. Perhaps before transferring the image from a glass negative to a plate being prepared as a patrice, the printer removed emulsion from the negative in the appropriate places – to the left of the first tally number and to the right of the last tally number (see Fig. 3). This would create the required lands during the course of the patrice's normal etching.



Fig. 3: Positioning of the serial numbers and dates.

*For the first matrix the serial number and date are slightly offset from the cliché's sides, but for the second and third matrices only the date is offset. The latter two matrices used the same patrice. As the lands for the serial number and date were part of the patrice, that similarity naturally followed.*

However, the fact that the lands are in different places for the first and second matrix in Fig. 3 means that the negative could not have been altered. It is unreasonable to believe the printer replaced the emulsion removed for the first patrice then removed it again – slightly differently – for the second patrice. Rather, it is far more likely that before the patrice was etched the printer coated the required places on the plate with the same etch-resistant substance that protected its other lands from being etched away.

So, instead of a negative metal matrix being used to produce the electroplated typographic printing plates, the printer employed a far more common technique. First, the image on the original glass negative was transferred to a metal plate intended for use as a patrice. Next, the printer coated two small areas with an etch-resistant substance: one to the left of the first tally number and one to the right of the last tally number. The patrice was then etched and, accompanied by its stress bars, mounted to a wooden platform. Negative wax molds were repeatedly taken from the positive metal matrix, electroplated, and then the new lands introduced by the patrice were engraved with an identifying serial number and two-digit date.

#### REFERENCE:

1. Lands are the raised features on a typographic plate that receive the ink (Fig. 4)

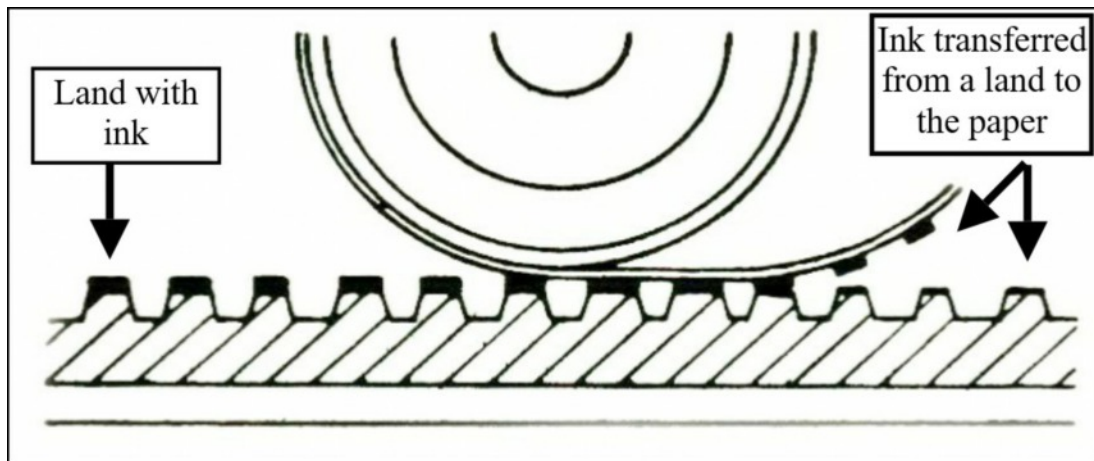


Fig. 4: Schematic of Lands on a typographic printing plate.

[Ed. note: The Specialist is pleased to publish this article. A similar version was originally published in Czechout's June 2021 issue.]

## BALPEX 2021

The good news is that this year's stamp show circuit is well under way. By the time that BALPEX 2021 occurs hosts and dealers will be up to speed with any new requirements that allow these shows to be both safe and successful.



This 83<sup>rd</sup> annual stamp exhibition and bourse, organized by the Baltimore Philatelic Society, will take place from September 3-5 at the Delta Hotels Baltimore Hunt Valley Inn, 245 Shawan Road, Hunt Valley, Maryland 21031. This is situated close to exit 20 on I-23 (Shawan Road). Admission and parking are free. Friday and Saturday hours are 10am-6pm, with Sunday from 10am-3pm.

Our Annual Board Meeting will take place from 1-4pm on September 2<sup>nd</sup> in Salon A. Our Annual Convention will be held on Saturday September 4<sup>th</sup> from 1-3pm in Salon B. This will include a presentation of "2018 Philatelic Commemorations of the 1918 Czechoslovak Scout Post" by Frederick Lawrence, Ph.D., FRPSL. Any additions or changes will be announced in our August Newsletter. A map showing the floorplan of the show is available online.

A special group rate of \$123 per night is available for Thursday – Sunday nights at the show hotel and can be booked via the BALPEX 2021 website [www.balpex.org](http://www.balpex.org). If booking hotel reservations by phone at (410) 785-7000 please mention the Baltimore Philatelic Society in order to receive the reduced rate. Bookings at this reduced rate can only be made before August 3<sup>rd</sup> but are unlikely to be available by then. If you are attending and plan on staying overnight we advise you to book as soon as possible.

Entry forms and prospectus for the World Series of Philately exhibits are also available online, with a closing date of August 2<sup>nd</sup>. Please note that besides these competitively judged exhibits BALPEX also allows exhibits in an Informal Exhibiting Class (Class E) and also a "One of My Favorites" Class (Class F). For anybody who would like to exhibit but are a little tentative as to how to go about it, these two Classes are "toe in the water" exhibiting and ideal for an initial tryout. Full details of the rules relating to these two Classes can be found within the online prospectus documents.

Our Society will have four exhibits:

- James Buckner's *Philatelic Expressions of Grief: The Development and Use of Masaryk Mourning Stamps*, (3 frames).
- Alan Hanzl's *Slovakia's First Republic (1939-1945)* (10 frames).
- Frederick Lawrence's *1918 Czechoslovak Scout Post* (3 frames).
- Ludvik Svoboda's *Trials and Tribulations with Czechoslovakia's Hradčany 1918-1920* (7 frames).

For anyone interested, there will be a guided tour of our exhibits immediately after our Convention ends on Saturday afternoon.

The Society table will be very near the entrance to the show. As always it will be manned by enthusiastic Society members, who look forward to meeting members and other show attendees, for discussions about any Czech-Slovak philatelic subject matter you can imagine. We look forward to seeing many of you there.

## A PHILATELIC SOUVENIR OF THE 1918 CZECH SCOUT POST

by Frederick P. Lawrence, Ph.D., FRPSL

The 1918 Czechoslovak Scout Official Mail Delivery Service (Scout Post) operated in support of the provisional Czechoslovak National Committee of Liberation (National Council) government in Prague, unofficially from October 28, 1918 – the date of the declaration of Czechoslovak independence – and officially from November 7, 1918, through November 25, 1918. It was reactivated for one day on December 21, 1918 to support the arrival of President Tomáš Masaryk in Prague. Two stamps, a 10h blue and



Figure 1. 10h and 20h Scout Post stamps



Figure 2.  
28.X.28 PRAHA 1 red  
cancel with letter c

a 20h red (Figure 1), were produced by the Kolman printing firm in the Vinohrady district of Prague. It is estimated that 30,000 of the 10h and 50,000 of the 20h were produced, in two printings: the first on heavy paper with hand-applied yellow gum, often unevenly applied, and the second on thinner paper with machine-applied white gum. The stamps were relief-printed on pre-gummed paper, and the edges were die-cut out (“died out”), approximating a 12½ perforation, simultaneously. Only one die was produced for each value. The 10h stamp was used to account for delivery by Scouts of postal cards, printed matter, and unsealed envelopes; the 20h stamp for delivery of letters, telegrams, newspapers, and parcels. This accounting was necessary because the Junák Český Skaut (Czech Scout Association) was paid a lump sum from a special National Council fund for the operation of the Scout Post.

October 28, 1928 (28.X.28) was the tenth anniversary of the declaration of Czechoslovak independence. As part of the national celebration, double circle commemorative cancels in red were used on that day in major cities, including Prague, Brno, Bratislava, Košice, Opava, Pardubice, and Užhorod. The book *Československá Příležitostná a Propagační Razítka 1919-1969* lists these post offices in Prague: PRAHA 1 with letters a, b, c, and d in the cancels, PRAHA 10 with letters a and b, and PRAHA 25 with letter a<sup>1</sup>. Figure 2 shows a 28.X.28 PRAHA 1 red cancel with letter c. An enterprising stamp collector presented a set of the two Scout Post stamps for *par compliance* commemorative cancels at the PRAHA 1 post office, and received strikes of the cancel with letter c (Figure 3a), thereby creating a philatelic souvenir of the Scout Post. The stamps are mint with original hand-applied yellow gum from the first printing (Figure 3b). Although examples of the tenth anniversary red commemorative cancels on stamps, covers, and postal stationery are frequently offered at reasonable prices on the online auction websites, cancels on the Scout Post stamps are quite unusual.



Figure 3a.  
28.X.28 PRAHA 1 red cancels  
with letter c on Scout Post stamps



Figure 3b. Scout Post stamps (back)

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

I wish to thank Ludvík Z. Svoboda for assistance with the book *Československá Příležitostná a Propagační Razítka 1919-1969*.

### SOURCES:

1. Nebeský, Václav: *Československá Příležitostná a Propagační Razítka 1919-1969* [Commemorative and Propaganda (Promotional) Cancels 1919-1969]. Series of six booklets published by the SVAZ (through MERKURFILA, Brno) in 1971/1972.



## PHILATELIC NEWS AND VIEWS

### From Keith Hart

1. A special thank you to **Vera Devlin** for her support of the sales circuit and newsletter. Also many thanks to our **Anonymous Donor** for supporting the cost of printing the *Czechoslovak Specialist* in color. Please note that although donations to SCP are not tax deductible they are most appreciated to help us maintain and expand our activities.

2. It is with the deepest regret that I have to inform you of the death of **Karel Fischer** (member #1099). The Society extends its sincerest sympathies to his family. Karel was known for his single collecting specialty, the **1945 Košice issue**. Karel possessed some extremely rare examples of this issue. The Košice souvenir sheet was issued on March 26, 1945 and on the occasion of the first anniversary of this in 1946 President Beneš signed eight of these sheets. Karel owned the only known one of these eight sheets. His collection also included the only known First Day Cover for this issue with all three examples of the stamp showing the head of a Red Army soldier and the Czechoslovak coat of arms (Pofis 354-356, Scott 307-309).

3. It was obviously an unwittingly grave mistake by me in mentioning in the *Notes From Your Editor* section in the Winter 2021 issue about the Czech Republic's delay in issuing the stamp for **Kája Saudek**. Within weeks it had once again vanished from the list of this year's issues, to be replaced by an issue celebrating Dante Alighieri. As my mother would have said, "You really put the kibosh on that stamp issue by talking about it." I will mention it no more and sincerely hope that sometime in the future you will find it in the *New Issues* section.

4. **The Great American Stamp Show**, partially hosted by the American Philatelic Society, will be the largest show in America this year. It will take place from August 12-15, 2021 at the **Donald E. Stephens Convention Center, 5555 N. River Rd., Rosemont, IL 60018**. Admission is free with opening hours of 10am-6pm Thursday-Saturday and 10am-4pm on Sunday. The two show hotels

connect by skybridge with the Convention Center. The Embassy Suites O'Hare/Rosemont has rooms at \$155/night (+14% room tax). The Doubletree O'Hare/Rosemont has rooms at \$135/night (+14% room tax). Parking at both hotels costs \$29/day with in and out privileges. A link to make reservations online is [www.stamps.org/great-american-stamp-show/travel](http://www.stamps.org/great-american-stamp-show/travel). Both hotels offer a complimentary shuttle to the airport which is only a few minutes away. At present nearly 50 societies and almost 70 dealers will attend the show. As this show is only three weeks before our own convention in Baltimore, **we will not have an official presence. AS WE ARE READYING THIS ISSUE FOR PUBLICATION, WE HEAR THAT BOTH HOTELS HAVE NO MORE ROOMS AT THE REDUCED SHOW RATE.**

5. Exciting news in that POFIS has just announced that in 2022 they will publish **updated catalogs for the three periods of 1918-1939, 1945-1992, and 1993-2021**. They have asked for suggestions from readers as to how they could improve these essential guides to the stamps we collect. They would also like to hear of any mistakes or oversights in the current volumes. They will recognize the authors of new ideas in the revised issues. Send your suggestions to POFIS, Klimentská 6, 110 00 Praha 1, Czech Republic, or e-mail them to [stamps@stamps.cz](mailto:stamps@stamps.cz)

6. One of the Slovak stamps mentioned in the New Issues section of this Specialist is for Ladislav Grosman, writer of the novella **The Shop on Main Street**, turned in an Oscar winning film in 1965. This black and white movie captures the tragedy of the Aryanization period in Slovakia during World War II. It can be currently seen on Amazon Prime Video. Search for it by name as it will never turn up in their suggested lists.

### From Mark Wilson

7. Over the past several months a steadily growing group of collectors have formed a new online study group. Our interest is **The Typographic Stamps of the First Republic**. We have now had two Zoom meetings and several presentations of new information about these particular stamps. The group consists of

experienced philatelists eager to share their knowledge, as well as several newcomers to this aspect of our hobby, so all interested parties are welcome to join in. We meet about every three months and have members in the US, Canada, the UK, the Netherlands, Germany, and the Czech Republic. We do our best to find a meeting date and time to accommodate such a dispersed group. For the moment we have been meeting at 8am Pacific Time (11am Eastern Time) on a Saturday, which puts the members in Europe in a comfortable afternoon meeting.

Copies of each meeting's presentations – as well as a video recording of the presentations – is available at <https://knihtisk.org/09-group.htm>. In addition, some tutorials useful in the study of the typographic stamps are also posted on the same page. Please take a look.

Readers interested in joining in to participate, or simply listen, may contact Mark Wilson ([mark@knihtisk.org](mailto:mark@knihtisk.org)) to be put on the mailing list. People on the mailing list get an invitation to attend the Zoom meetings once each one is scheduled.



## SCOUT POST FORGERY DISCOVERED

by Keith Hart

This article is based on an announcement by František Beneš and Marek Vrba on the back cover of *Filatellie* magazine issue March 2021.

The cover shown on this issue's cover was sold at a 2020 auction for a "really high price", from a German auction house, probably to a Czech buyer. On receipt of the cover they took it to SČF in Prague asking for it to be authenticated. When it was sold a supposed letter of authentication, dating from 1983, from Zbigniew Mikulski in St. Gallen, Switzerland was attached to the auction lot. It should be noted that at this time, neither the auction house, seller, or buyer have been identified.

It quickly became apparent that the cover was a partial forgery as there were several inconsistencies with other known authenticated covers. However, it was perhaps surprising to find that the experts consider the two stamps to be genuine. In fact František Beneš considered the 10h blue to have "a really light blue tint."

Other than the use of genuine stamps, virtually everything else about the cover is a forgery. The envelope used is not consistent with those used in that time period. The typewriter's font was also considered to be from a later period. The mailroom cancel may well be a period official cancel used in an office, but this cancel has never been documented as being used for the Scout mail. The handwritten notes were also thought to be from a much later period. Of course while the stamps used were genuine, as the handwritten data covers the corner of the stamps, they must be considered partial forgeries themselves.

The writer's note that Mr. Mikulski was extremely diligent and responsible as an expert and conclude that this was an exception to his normal observations. It was also mentioned that while Mikulski was an expert in the authentication of the stamps themselves, it is possible that his expertise in other fields of cover authentication may have been limited. It was surprising to me that the authors did not comment on Mikulski's letter itself. Might this be a forgery as well?

One imagines that the buyer has been reimbursed by the auction house by now. However, because of the possibility of the seller trying to peddle the cover again, Beneš and Vrba thought that it was important to bring this to the attention of collectors and auction houses immediately. There is also the possibility that the stamps will be removed from the cover in an attempt to sell them separately, despite the fact they have been totally devalued by the actions of the forger.

Finally, as a tease for a future article, František Beneš notes that when examining the cover, they found previously unpublished and interesting facts about the printing of the stamps. We await that article with bated breath.

## HOW I BECAME A COLLECTOR – MY LIFE WITH CENTRAL EUROPE AND STAMPS by Patrick Moore



Although I do not have ancestral roots in Central Europe, I grew up in a Detroit neighborhood among many families whose parents or grandparents came from what became Czechoslovakia, Poland, Yugoslavia, Hungary, or the Soviet Union. Visits to neighbors' homes, where I saw fascinating folk art from those countries and first encountered framed pictures of revered statesmen like President Tomáš G. Masaryk or Marshal Józef Piłsudski, whetted my appetite to learn more about those countries and peoples.

Eventually, I majored in Eastern European history at the University of Michigan and studied history at the University of Sarajevo during 1973-74 on a grant from the US Fulbright Program and the Yugoslav government. Then came graduate studies and an MA in history at Indiana University, where I concentrated on the political history of 19<sup>th</sup> century Croatia and national conflicts within Austria-Hungary as a whole.

While in Yugoslavia and during my travels to neighboring countries, I developed a passion for the contemporary affairs of the region. In 1977, I jumped at the chance to work for Radio Free Europe (RFE) in Munich, the US congressionally funded broadcaster to Eastern Europe. RFE acts as a surrogate national public broadcaster for countries that do not have free media of their own, as was the case with Czechoslovakia in those days. I served from 1977-2008 as Senior Political Analyst for the Balkans in the RFE Research Department.

After the collapse of communism in 1989-91, RFE accepted an invitation from President Vaclav Havel of the newly formed Czech Republic to move to Prague at the end of 1994. I had visited Czechoslovakia during my student days but now I was thrilled by the chance to live and work there. This was a fascinating time, during which the old system had collapsed but not quite disappeared, and the new one had not really taken root. I generally spent one-week vacations in different corners of the country, getting to know the country, people and language. I lived and worked in Prague until my retirement in 2008 to historic Bonn in the beautiful Rhineland. But to this day I often spend vacations in Mariánské Lázně, not to take the waters but to continue my studies of the area as a microcosm of modern Central European and Czech history. The individual hotels often have fascinating histories. One hotel, for example, was favored by the Soviet military and later by President Havel. Another building in a quiet, leafy setting was once the busy focal point of the local Nazis and their visitors from Germany. Yet a third was the exclusive preserve of the top leadership of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia.

And stamps? My father first introduced me to US and UN stamps in 1960, when I was nine years old. I never lost my interest in the hobby and have collected continuously since then. My first interest intellectually and philatelically was in Egypt and its ancient civilization, and I also sought to "travel the world" through the stamps of the British Empire. Both of those interests remain with me down to today.

My neighbors in Detroit gladly shared with me stamps received on their mail from relatives in Poland, the USSR, Hungary, Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia. The quality of the Czechoslovak engravings had already caught my attention as a teenager. I expanded my collections of those countries through ads in "Linn's", visits to local stamp stores, and at meetings of a Detroit stamp club. In my travels during my student year in Yugoslavia, I experienced the excitement of buying stamps in those countries themselves. While working in Munich and Prague I had direct contact to Central European dealers and auction houses.

My collecting interests have generally centered on philately as a mirror of history and contemporary history. To that end, I wrote several articles starting in 1982 and ending about 20 years later entitled

“Politics and Philately in Eastern Europe.” They were first published by RFE Research and later by the “The American Philatelist.” I meanwhile deepened my interests through memberships in specialized societies, including the SCP, the Society for Hungarian Philately, and Rossica. I still keep up with the new issues from the Czech and Slovak Republics, Hungary, Croatia, Serbia, and Russia.

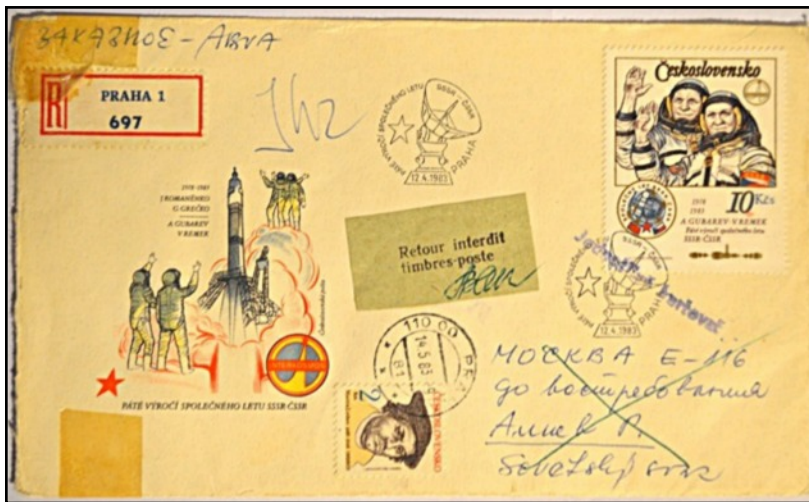


Figure 1

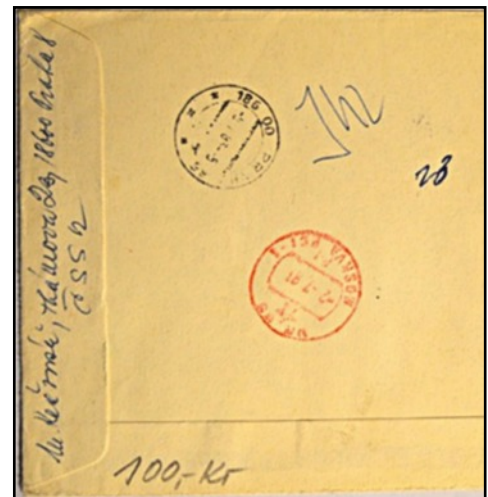



Figure 2

Here is one of my favorite covers, which nicely combines my interests in stamps and communist-era politics. It was sent by a Czech collector in Prague to a Soviet colleague at a poste restante address in Moscow. The cover features Pofis catalog number 2586 on a FDC from April 12, 1983 (Fig. 1). Then, as later on, Czech official FDCs could be used for a limited time after the date of issue for postage, and this one was actually sent to Moscow on May 14, 1983, as can be seen from the cancellation on Pofis number 2577 on the same cover.

So far, so good. But what makes this cover fascinating is that the main stamp and FDC commemorate the fifth anniversary of the first Soviet-Czechoslovak jointly manned space flight, in which Vladimír Remek of Czechoslovakia and Aleksei Gubarev of the USSR took part in the Soyuz 28 mission. Both the stamp and the cover are full of symbolism alluding to the official “friendship” between the two socialist countries. But what was this friendship worth on the ground, namely when the collector in Prague sent a cover that apparently contained stamps to a Soviet counterpart? The Soviet censors blocked it and returned it to the sender with a label reading (in UPU French): “Returned. Forbidden. Postage stamps.” The back of the cover shows a Moscow cancellation from July 2 (Fig. 2), indicating that the Soviet censors sat on the cover for well over six weeks before rejecting it. It also includes a Prague receiving postmark from July 5, after which it presumably went back to the Czech collector. Friendship, indeed.

**Captions:** Figure 1: FDC showing a 10 Kč stamp celebrating the fifth anniversary of Czechoslovak-USSR Intercosmos Space Program [Pofis 2586, Scott 2455], together with an added 2 Kč stamp issued earlier for the 500th anniversary of birth of Martin Luther, from the *Celebrity Anniversary series* [Pofis 2577, Scott 2446].

Figure 2: Back of cover with a red Moscow cancellation and a black Prague cancellation.



### COOPERATION AGREEMENT WITH THE CZECHOSLOVAK PHILATELIC SOCIETY OF GREAT BRITAIN

Check out our sister organization, the Czechoslovak Philatelic Society of Great Britain, at their website: [www.cpsgb.org.uk](http://www.cpsgb.org.uk), and through their new Membership Secretary, Hans van Dooremalen at [cpsgb1@gmail.com](mailto:cpsgb1@gmail.com).

Their publication *Czechout* and our *Specialist* have little duplication in content. In addition, under a new agreement the two societies have arranged for payment of your CPSGB dues to our SCP Treasurer without having to worry about foreign currency or sending it to the UK. So why not have more fun, become a member of both societies! CPSGB dues are \$10 for digital, \$35 for printed copies by airmail or \$28 for printed copies by surface. Payment can be made via Paypal to [sales@cspilately.org](mailto:sales@cspilately.org) or by check to:

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## SLOVAK FIELD POST DURING WORLD WAR II

by Richard G. Palaschak

The cover shown in Figure 1 illustrates an adaptation of a Czechoslovak Field Post cancellation device for use by the Slovak military during World War II.

Figure 2 compares the cancellation on the cover (shown on the right) with a similar (not exact) cancellation of a Czechoslovak Field Post unit from the period after the Munich Agreement was signed (shown on the left). Note that the letter "Č" at the bottom of the Czechoslovak Field Post cancellation has been removed in the Slovak Field Post cancellation, leaving the letters "S.P." (i.e., Slovak Post). Note also that the period after the letter "Č" has been inexplicably retained in the revised cancellation<sup>1</sup>. Another change addressed the difference in the spelling of Field Post in Slovak



Figure 1

(Poľná Pošta) and the Czech spelling (Polní Pošta). The letters "NI" were removed from the Czechoslovak Field Post cancellation but the bottom left vertical stroke in the letter "N" was retained as a period<sup>2</sup>.

In order to fully understand this cover an accounting of Slovak military units in this time period is



Figure 2

necessary. This short account of the Slovak military's involvement in early World War II illustrates some of the difficulties in obtaining that understanding. The Slovak Expeditionary Army Group of about 45,000 men entered the Soviet Union in support of German forces shortly after Germany attacked the Soviets during Operation Barbarossa (22 June 1941). Because of logistic shortcomings, a Slovak Mobile Command was organized as a smaller, more mobile unit. At the beginning of August 1941 the Slovak Mobile Command was dissolved and two Slovak infantry divisions were formed. The Security Division (Zaistovacia Divisia), formed from the original 2<sup>nd</sup>

Division, was relegated to rear area security, but the Fast Division (Rychla Divisia), formed from the original 1<sup>st</sup> Division, was a front line unit that fought in the campaigns of 1941 and 1942 as a part of German Army Group B.

Field Post 8 was utilized by numerous units of the Slovak military. This cover is from a member of the Žula-2 rota (Figure 3), the code name for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Company, 101<sup>st</sup> Infantry Regiment, which was part of the Security Division. Where was Field Post 8 on 28 September 1941, the day that the cover was mailed? The Field Post was located in Drogybyč, Ukraine from August until early September. It moved to Tarnapol, Ukraine in September and stayed there until 15 September 1941,

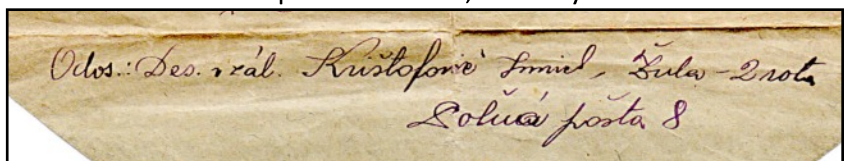


Figure 3

at which time it was moved to Starokonstantinov, Ukraine; this is where the Field Post was located when the letter was posted.

Once again, an understanding of the details surrounding a cover required research into the general history of Slovakia, in this case its military history, as well as its postal history.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

My sincere thanks are extended to Mr. Miroslav Bachratý for his considerable assistance in providing the detailed information on Field Post 8, the units serviced by the Field Post, and the locations of the Field Post over time.

#### ENDNOTES:

1. Many cancellations were modified in this manner by Slovak Post Offices (i.e., the period after the Č was retained).
2. Poľna Pošta 8 opened in 1939 during the Slovak Army campaign into Poland. The cancellations for Poľna Pošta 8 were modified from the Czechoslovak Field Post cancellation devices during the Polish campaign.

#### REFERENCES:

1. Wikipedia: [www.wikipedia.org/wiki/slovak\\_Expeditionary\\_Army\\_Group](http://www.wikipedia.org/wiki/slovak_Expeditionary_Army_Group).
2. Miroslav Bachratý: Slovensko, 1938-1945, Poštová História, Zväzok 1, 2020 [The Postal History of Slovakia 1939-1945, volume 1.



## SLOVAKIA NEW ISSUES

by Keith Hart

1. On January 4, 2021 the Ministry of Transport and Construction issued a 0.05 € stamp in the series **Slovak Applied Arts: Roman Glass from Zohor** [Pofis SK730]. The stamp, showing a ribbed dark blue bowl (Fig. 1), was designed by Peter Nosál and produced by Tiskárna Hradištko, s.r.o (THS) using multi-color offset combined with serigraphy in printing sheets of 100. 2000 years ago the Amber Road connected the large deposits of amber found on the southern coast of the Baltic Sea with the Roman empire which lay mainly south of the River Danube. This road was actually a series of trails that stretched



Figure 1

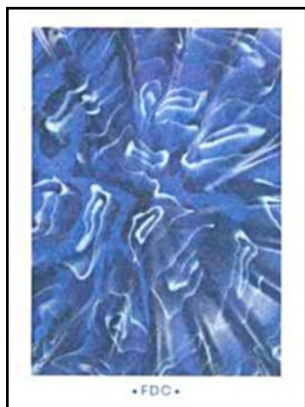


Figure 2

northward from the Danube, one of which passed through Zohor, just north of Bratislava. The Romans considered this Barbarian territory, but secured rights for their traders to cross these lands, usually by offering gifts of materials not found in that area. The Zohor area was occupied by Germanic tribes and during the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century archaeological excavations discovered graves of the local Germanic rulers from that time. Included in these graves were items of Roman origin. The ribbed blue glass bowl was found in a grave that also contained fragments of bronze and silver objects. The cachet of the FDC shows a different view of the same glass bowl (Fig. 2) and the cancellation is the outline of the bowl corresponding with the stamp itself.

2. On January 4, 2021 the Ministry issued a 0.10 € stamp in the series **Slovak Applied Arts: Gothic Goblet decorated with Glass Beads from Bratislava** [Pofis SK 731]. The stamp, showing a broken goblet decorated with glass beads (Fig. 3), was designed by Peter Nosál and produced by THS using multi-color offset combined with serigraphy in printing sheets of 100. Even in prehistoric times there was a marketplace on a trade route coming from the north, alongside the Danube and adjacent to a fortified encampment on the nearby hill, where Bratislava Castle was eventually built. These beginnings led to a market



Figure 3

next to what is today's Ventúrska Street. In the 13<sup>th</sup> century the market gradually moved to, what is today, the main square of Bratislava. However the wealthiest families still lived in the houses that were near the old market site. In the 1960s a detailed archaeological project was conducted in the area of these houses, which were found to have been established by the 10<sup>th</sup> century. By the 15<sup>th</sup> century these houses were inhabited by families, such as the Venturas, whose name lives on connected to a major street today. The artifacts found during these excavations included luxurious objects such as the thin-walled imported goblet illustrated on the stamp. These goblets had sides decorated with irregular sized glass beads, reminiscent of raspberries. They were not for mere decoration, as they prevented these precious items from slipping out of the drinkers' hands. The FDC cachet details a closeup of these glass beads (Fig. 4) and the cancellation is an outline of the goblet. [Ed. note: my thanks to Štefan Holčík, from whose original notes in Slovak this is a translated and edited form].



Figure 4



Figure 5

3. On January 4, 2021 the Ministry issued a 0.50 € stamp in the series **Slovak Applied Arts: The Golden Suzanne collection from the Zlatno Glass Factory** [Pofis SK732]. The stamp, illustrating a goblet whose stem encases an orange-colored globule (Fig. 5), was designed by Peter Nosál and produced by THS using multi-color offset combined with serigraphy in printing sheets of 100. Jozef Staník (1908-1986), was a master glassmaker, working at Zlatno's n.p. Stredoslovenské sklárne factory. In the 1950s he revolutionized the design of domestic glassware, introducing new shapes and colors. The elegant shape of the goblet shown became well-known worldwide following its showing at the Brussels World Fair in 1958. More than 60 years later glassware following his designs are still manufactured for every conceivable use. The FDC cachet shows a larger detail of the globule on the stamp (Fig. 6) and the cancellation is an outline of a goblet.

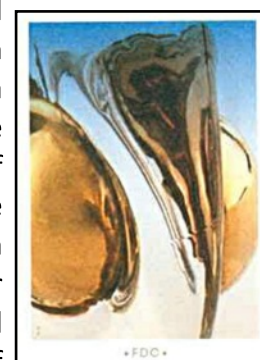


Figure 6

4. On January 29, 2021 the Ministry issued a stamp in the series: **Personalities – Ladislav Grosman (1921-1981)** [Pofis SK733]. The 1 € stamp shows a portrait of Grosman in the upper half, while the lower half shows a scene from the movie *The Shop on Main Street*, together with the golden image of an Oscar statuette (Fig. 7). The stamp, celebrating the centenary of Grosman's birth, was designed by Natalia Ložeková and printed by THS using multi-color offset in printing sheets of 50. Grosman was a Slovak novelist and screenwriter whose most famous work was *Obchod na korze* (The Shop on Main Street). Expanded from a short story it was made into a film in 1965. It became one of the most celebrated films of the Czechoslovak era. Starring Ida Kamiňská as Rozália Lautmannová, the elderly Jewish owner of an unprofitable haberdashery, it depicts her ultimately tragic relationship with Tóno Brtko, played by Jozef Kroner, who was tasked with taking over the shop during the Aryanization program during World War II. The critically acclaimed film was awarded the Academy Award for Best Foreign Language film in 1965, the first such award for a Czechoslovak film.. The FDC cachet shows a Star of



Figure 7

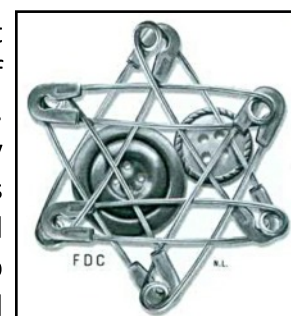


Figure 8



Figure 9

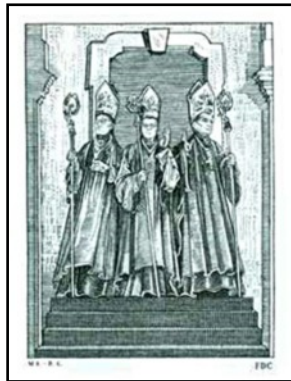


Figure 10

David made from safety pins and buttons (Fig. 8) and the cancellation is also a button.

5. On February 12, 2021 the Ministry issued a stamp to commemorate **The 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Ordination of the First Slovak Bishops** [Pofis SK734]. The 0.65 € stamp, designed by Martin Schwarz, shows the three bishops acknowledging their ordination (Fig. 9). It was produced by THS using multi-color offset in printing sheets of 25.

Before the establishment of Czechoslovakia in 1918, there had been Catholic bishops of Slovak heritage in the Slovak lands. They were, however, considered to be Hungarian by the rulers in Budapest. Following the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian empire Pro-Hungarian bishops were deported from Czechoslovakia. After the establishment of diplomatic relations with the Holy See the process began which led to the first three Slovak bishops. They were Ján Vojtaššák, Bishop of Spiš, Karol Kmeťko, Bishop of Nitra, and Marián Blaha, Bishop of Banská Bystrica. Their ordination took place at the Church of St. Ladislav in Nitra, on February 13, 1921. The FDC cachet, engraved by Martin Cigánik, shows the three bishops on the steps of the church (Fig. 10), while the cancellation is a bishop's miter. A commemorative sheet [Pofis SK 075PaL734/21] was issued the same day.

6. On February 15, 2021 the Ministry, as a joint issue with the Czech Republic, Poland and Hungary, issued a 1.70 € commemorative stamp to recognize **The 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Foundation of the Visegrád Group** [Pofis SK735]. The stamp, designed by Agnieszka Sobczyńska, shows the logo for the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary meeting. It was produced by THS using multi-color offset in a sheetlet containing nine stamps, with printed margins and 8 coupons (Fig. 11). The Visegrád Group (V4) is a trans-national political, economic and social group consisting of Slovakia, Czech Republic, Poland and Hungary. It was established after the collapse of the totalitarian communist regimes in 1989. Their first meeting was in Bratislava in 1990, leading to the Visegrád Declaration being signed in Visegrád in early 1991. At that time they were known as the V3 Group. The split up of Czechoslovakia at the start of 1993 led to the current designation of V4. The symbolic name originates from a 1335 meeting between three kings in the small Hungarian town of Visegrád. John of Luxembourg, King of Bohemia, Casimir III, King of Poland, and Charles I, King of Hungary, met to form a diplomatic alliance, as a united defense against the Habsburg Empire. This led to the three kingdoms entering a period of unprecedented economic expansion. The cachet of the FDC, designed by Adrian Ferda, shows a map of the four countries formed from their national colors (Fig. 12) and the cancellation is a graphic form of the V4 logo. A commemorative sheet [Pofis SK 075PaL735/21] was issued the same day.



Figure 11



Figure 12





Figure 13

7. On March 5, 2021 the Ministry issued a T2 50g (0.65 €) stamp to celebrate **Easter 2021: Folk Faience** [Pofis SK736]. The stamp, designed by Adrian Ferda, depicts a pitcher decorated with plant and bird motifs symbolizing spring (Fig. 13).

This pitcher is from the Museum of Slovak Ceramics, part of the Ľudovít Štúr Museum SNM in Modra. It was produced by THS using multi-color offset in printing sheets of 50. This form of pottery was introduced into the Slovak lands in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, brought by the Haban sect of the Anabaptist Christians. Their pottery uses a unique glaze, combined with specific decorative motifs and colors. The main centers of production were

in Western Slovakia, centered around Modra. In 1883 a school, focused on the production of ceramic ware, was established in Modra. An early graduate of the school, Heřman Landsfeld, carried out research into the history of the Haban ceramic culture. This led to a book of historic ceramic designs still in use today. The FDC cachet is an egg rack (Fig. 14) and the cancellation is a chicken shaped egg container. A booklet, containing 10 self-adhesive stamps was issued the same day, as was a pictorial postal card with an image of three floral decorated jugs.



Figure 14

8. On March 13, 2021 the Ministry issued a commemorative postage stamp to celebrate the **100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Foundation of the Slovak Teachers' Choir** [Pofis SK737]. The 0.65 € stamp shows a



Figure 15

section of the choir in performance (Fig. 15). It was designed by Daniela Olejníková and produced by THS using multi-color offset in printing sheets of 50. Founded on March 3, 1921 in the area around Trenčín, by 1933 it had a permanent headquarters building constructed in Trenčín. Within Slovakia they perform with the Slovak Radio Symphony Orchestra and the State Chamber Orchestra in

Žilina. They have performed in many overseas countries and released numerous albums. The FDC cachet shows their headquarters (Fig.16) and the cancellation image is the first conductor of the choir, Miloš Ruppeltd. A commemorative sheet was issued the same day. [Ed. note: in 1971 Czechoslovakia issued a 30h stamp to celebrate the choir's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary: Pofis 1892, Scott 1751].

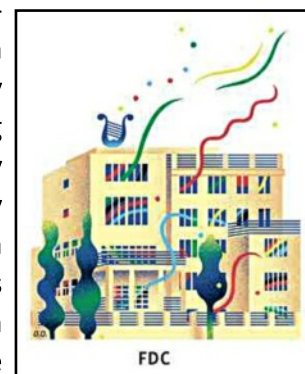


Figure 16

9. On April 14, 2021 the Ministry issued a 1.55 € stamp to commemorate the **XXXII Summer Olympic Games, Tokyo** [Pofis SK 738]. The stamp, designed by Nana Furiya, shows relay runners against a background of the rising sun and cherry blossom (Fig. 17) and was produced by



Figure 17

THS using multi-color offset in printing sheets of 50. The Summer Olympics were postponed for a year due to the COVID-19 pandemic and will now take place from July 23 – August 8. The Paralympic Games will now be from August 24 – September 5. Unfortunately, no spectators will be allowed at the major Tokyo sites. These

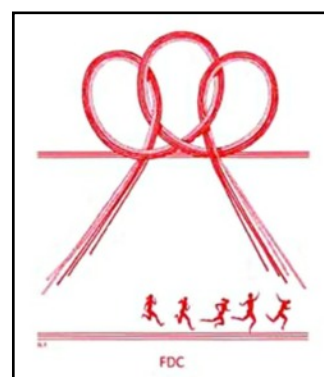


Figure 18

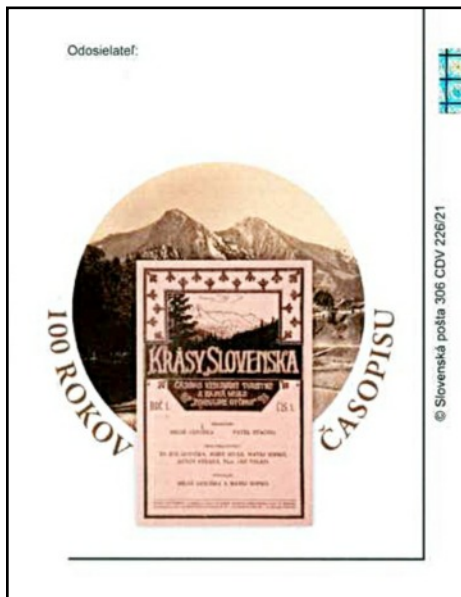


Figure 19

stamps were printed and stored for a year. The cachet of the FDC has an image of Mizuhiki, the ancient Japanese folk art of rice-paper cord arranging (Fig. 18) and the cancellation is an interpretation of the Olympic flame. A collection sheet was issued the same day.

**Postal Stationery**

10. On March 13, 2021 the Ministry issued a postal card with additional printing to celebrate 100 Years of *Krásy Slovenska* Magazine [Pofis SK 306 CDV 226/21]. The T2 50g imprinted stamp celebrates the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Slovakia’s entry to the EU. The motif of the additional print, designed by Adrian Ferda, shows an image of the first cover of the *Krásy Slovenska* (Beauties of Slovakia) magazine against a background of mountains (Fig. 19). 1500 cards were issued.



**CZECH REPUBLIC NEW ISSUES**

by Keith Hart

1. On January 20, 2021 the Ministry of Industry and Trade issued a stamp in the series: **The Tradition of Czech Stamp Design – Václav Zapadlík** [Pofis 1104]. The stamp, with a value identified by the letter “B” (19 Kč), shows a portrait of Zapadlík, along with two of his automobile artworks. A stamp booklet containing eight self-adhesive stamps and four coupons was also issued [Pofis ZSL65] (Fig. 1). It was designed by Zdeněk Netopil and produced by Tiskárna Hradištko, s.r.o (THS) using multi-color offset in printing sheets of 50. Zapadlík (1943-2018) was a painter and illustrator who specialized in the accurate portrayal of vintage cars. His illustrations are renowned for inclusion of the smallest technical details. Examples of his artwork can be seen in many museums across the globe that specialize in automotive history. His first stamp designs were issued in 2012 and in the following five years he completed 20 stamps. The cachet for the FDC shows the artist completing the headlight detailing on a vintage car (Fig. 2) and the cancellation is a line drawing of another classic model. [A complete listing of his stamp designs by Pofis numbers is 735-740, 768-769, 779-780, 810, 819-820, 834-836, 838, 857-858, and 903].

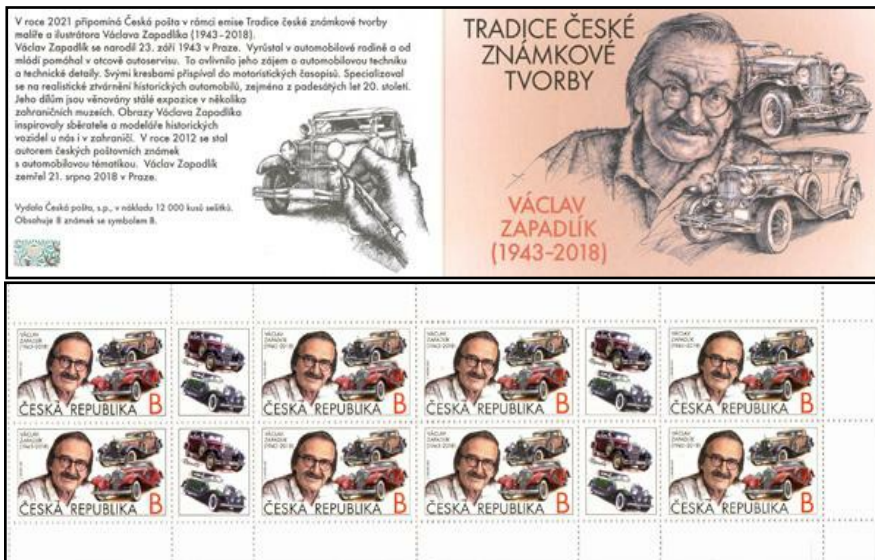


Figure 1

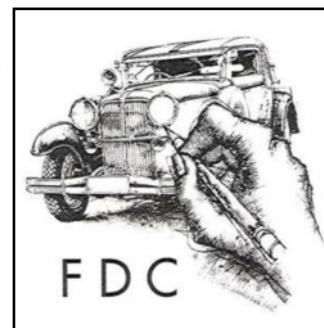


Figure 2



Figure 3

2. On January 20, 2021 the Ministry issued a definitive stamp to observe the **Census 2021** [Pofis 1105]. The stamp, with a value identified by the letter “B”, shows a graph symbolizing data collected for the census (Fig. 3). Graphic design is by Jan Ungrád, based on the Census 2021 logo created by Jan Moucha. It was produced by THS using multi-color offset and printed in sheets of 50. The previous census for the Czech Republic took place in 2011 and this year it will provide updated key data on the national population. Social and cultural data regarding language, cultural background and dwelling size will provide the statistical information the government requires, particularly for democratic processes such as elections.

3. On January 20, 2021 the Ministry issued a definitive stamp to celebrate **Carnival** [Pofis 1106]. The stamp, with a value identified by the letter “B”, shows a traditional Czech Carnival procession. The stamp was also issued as a booklet [Pofis ZSL66] containing eight self-adhesive stamps and four coupons (two copies each of two different coupons) (Fig. 4). The stamp was designed by Jiří Slíva and produced by THS using multi-color offset in printing sheets of 50. The festival of Carnival precedes Lent in the Christian calendar. It starts after Epiphany and ends on a Tuesday designated as Shrovetide. Related to the date of Easter it can end between mid-February and early March. In Slavic countries these festivities date back to the pre-Christian era where parties, eating of home-bred pigs, and weddings typically occurred. The final days before Lent are Ostatky, Končiny, Fašank and Masopust. They are used for various ritual masked processions, parades, street performances and the final Masopust (Carnival) party. Because of the Covid virus celebrations in the Czech lands, as well as other places around the world, were inevitably muted this year.

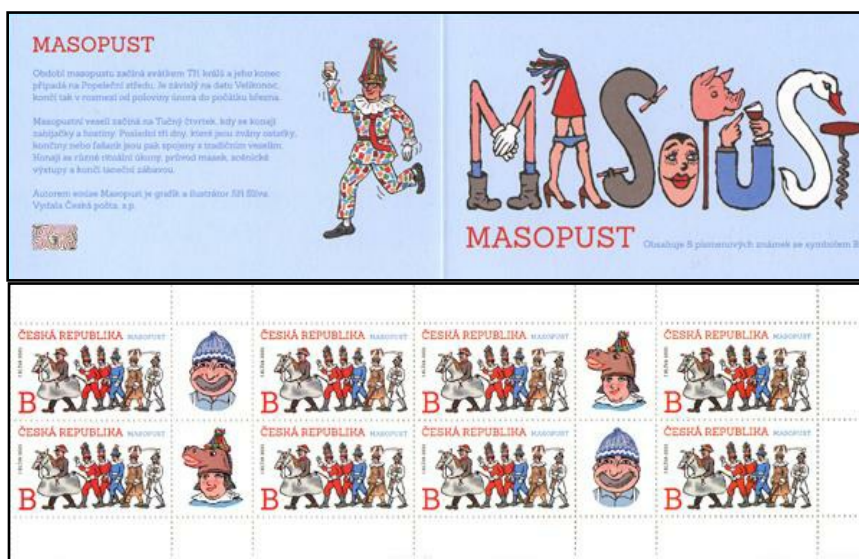


Figure 4



Figure 5

4. On February 9, 2021 the Ministry issued a commemorative stamp in the series: **Personalities – Josef Masopust (1931-2015)**. The 19 Kč stamp [Pofis 1107] celebrates the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Masopust and has a well-known image of the footballer (soccer player) together with a “Ballon d’Or” award (Fig. 5). The stamp was designed by Petr Minka and produced by THS using multi-color offset in printing sheets of 50. Born in Střimice u Mostu, in 1952 he joined ATK Praha (now Dukla Praha), the newly founded Czechoslovak Army football club. He played there for 15 seasons as a left-sided midfielder. During this time the team won 8 league championships and were 3 times cup champions. In 1954 he made his debut for the national team, eventually earning 63 caps and scoring 10 goals. He became part of the most successful national team in Czechoslovak

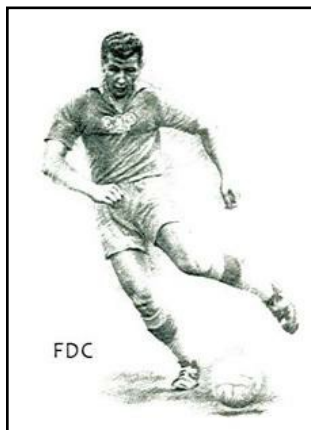


Figure 6

history. They placed third in the 1960 European Football Championships and two years later were runners up to Brazil in the FIFA World Cup. His outstanding play during the 1962-63 season earned him the Ballon d'Or as the European Footballer of the Year. He is regarded as one of the greatest midfield players of all time. After retiring as a player he managed the national team for four years. In 2009 the football stadium in Most was named after him. The digitally printed FDC cachet shows Masopust in action (Fig. 6) and the cancellation is a period ball.

5. On February 9, 2021 the Ministry issued a commemorative stamp in the series **Beauties of our Country: Milotice State Chateau in Kyjov** [Pofis 1108]. The 23 Kč stamp shows a view of the chateau from the gardens (Fig. 7). The

stamp was designed by Pavel Sivko and produced by THS using multi-color offset in a sheetlet of 8 stamps. Milotice is a chateau in the Hodonín region of Southeast Moravia, near the border with Slovakia. It is the best preserved complex of baroque buildings and garden architecture in the Czech Republic. The buildings have remained virtually unchanged since the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The garden



Figure 7

was laid out in the style of a French garden, with elements of English estate views, the orangeries and terraces subtly connecting the gardens with the house. The chateau was in private hands until 1945 when it was confiscated by the state as the owners had German nationality. In 2013 the gardens were restored to their original design where vegetables, fruit and herbs were grown for use within the estate. The digitally printed cachet of the FDC, designed by Jaroslav Tvrdoň, shows the silhouette of a sphinx statue from the chateau's entrance bridge (Fig. 8) and the cancellation is an urn from the garden parterre.



Figure 8

6. On February 15, 2021 the Ministry, as a joint issue with Slovakia, Poland and Hungary, issued a commemorative stamp to recognize **The Visegrád Group (V4)** [Pofis 1109]. The stamp, with a value designated by the letter "E" (39 Kč), was designed by Agnieszka Sobczyńska, showing the logo for their 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary meeting (Fig. 9). It was produced by THS using multi-color offset in a sheetlet containing nine stamps and printed margins. (See the similar Slovak sheetlet on page 16.) The Visegrád Group (or V4) is a transnational political, economic, and social group, consisting of Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, and Poland. The group was established after the collapse of the totalitarian communist regimes in 1989. The first meeting being held in Bratislava in 1990, with the Visegrád Declaration signed in early 1991. At that time they were known as the V3 Group. The split of Czechoslovakia at the start of 1993 led to the current designation of V4. The symbolic name for the group originates from a 1335 meeting between three kings in the small Hungarian town of Visegrád. John of Luxembourg, King of Bohemia, King Casimir III of Poland, and King Charles I of Hungary, met to form a diplomatic alliance, as a united defense against the Habsburg Empire. This led to the three kingdoms entering into a period of unprecedented economic expansion. The FDC cachet, designed by Petr Foltera,



Figure 9

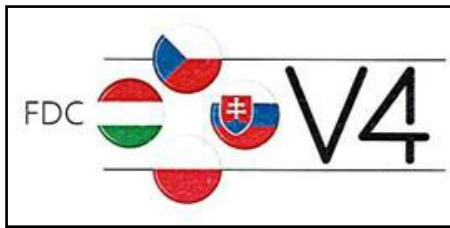


Figure 10

is a symbolic representation of the national flags of the group with its acronym 'V4' (Fig. 10). The cancellation is a line drawing of the V4 logo.

7. On February 15, 2021 the Ministry issued a 1 Kč definitive postage stamp: **The Orange Tip Butterfly** [Pofis 1110].

The stamp, designed by Jaromír and Libuše Knotek, features a male butterfly with its distinctive, orange-edged forewings (Fig. 11). It was produced by THS using multi-color offset in printing sheets of 100. This butterfly is found throughout Europe and is recognized for the fact that females and males occupy different habitats. Females frequent open meadowland, while the males prefer the edges of wooded areas.



Figure 11

8. On March 24, 2021 the Ministry issued a stamp in the series: **Technical Monuments: Negrelli Viaduct** [Pofis 1111]. The stamp, with a value designated by the letter "B", shows a 19<sup>th</sup> century train crossing



Figure 12

the stone viaduct, a hot-air balloon in the background. A stamp booklet [Pofis ZSL67] containing 8 stamps and 4 coupons was issued the same day. (Fig. 12) It was designed by Milan Bauer and produced by THS using multi-color offset in printing sheets of 50. Construction of the viaduct was commenced 175 years ago and was required for the rail line that connected Prague with Dresden. At this time bridges/viaducts were usually still constructed of timber. The decision to build with sandstone and granite made it one of Europe's most

technically modern viaducts. Austrian engineer Alois Negrelli oversaw a workforce of nearly 3000 that completed the 3600ft. (1100m) structure in three years. At this time it was the longest bridge in Europe and the first railway bridge to span the Vltava. Its 87 arches cross the river from Nové Město/Karlín in the south, over Štvanice island to Holešovice. It underwent a major renovation starting in 2017, which was completed on June 30 this year. The FDC cachet is a portrait of Negrelli (Fig. 13) and the cancellation is a facsimile of his signature.

9. On March 24, 2021 the Ministry issued a stamp in the series: **Works of Art on Postage Stamps: Bohumil Zemánek** [Pofis 1112]. The 30 Kč stamp shows a sculpture of a man known as *Bohouš*, from the Galerie Liberec (Fig. 14). The stamp has a graphic design by Zbyněk Kočvar and was produced by THS



Figure 13



Figure 14

the fall of communism in 1989. Together with Michael Bílek he worked extensively to clean and restore public sculptures throughout Bohemia. The digitally printed cachet of the FDC, designed by Miloš Ondráček, portrays the work *Plavecký Bazén* (Swimming Pool) from the Poliklinika Čumpelíkova in Kobylisy (Fig. 15). The cancellation is a line drawing of the artist's initials.

using multi-color offset in a miniature sheet containing four stamps and four coupons. The design of the sheet and coupons allows us to see the sculpture from all four sides. Zemánek (1942-1996) was a sculptor and restorer. Studying at the Academy of Fine Arts in Prague, he developed the humorous style of ceramic human figures that he used throughout his career. This style was sadly not consistent with the communist ideals of social realism and he was little known until

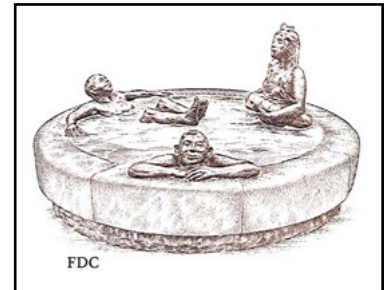


Figure 15



Figure 16

10. On March 24, 2021 the Ministry issued two stamps with a value designated by the letter "B" to commemorate the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of **The First Derby - AC Sparta v SK Slavia** [Pofis 1113 & 1114]. The stamps, printed in se-tenant fashion, each show half of a football in the team's colors, with the entire ball containing images of each team's fans hands (Fig. 16). It was designed by Filip Hejduk and produced by THS using multi-color offset in printing sheets of 25+25 stamps. These two Prague football (soccer) teams first played each other on March 29, 1896 and the clubs have remained fierce

rivals ever since. The two clubs are historically the most successful in Czech football. At the time of writing, this fixture has been played 297 times, Sparta winning 133 times, Slavia 92 times, with the remaining 72 ending in a draw. The First Day Cover, containing both stamps, has a cachet of their supporters' scarves, featuring both the club's names (Fig. 17) and the cancellation is a vintage football surrounded by text referring to the first game.



Figure 17

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