

AUSTRIA

Edited by Andy Taylor

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Meeting Dates for 2001:

30 June Tile Hill, Coventry - **MIDPEX**. Support our stand!

19-21 October Canterbury Cantfest 2001 (John Cottrell i/c)

29-Apr-2001 STOP PRESS! I have just received confirmation that:

A: a Special FRAMA will indeed be available at the Ovebria2001 in Graz this month, & probably from the Sammler-Service in Wien.

B: Numiphil will be on 8th December in the Vienna Stock Exchange.



Editorial 134

Life has moved inexorably on since the last issue; I won't comment on the organisational skills required to operate a nation-wide barbecue, but our Society has also undergone many changes in recent months. The London Local Group of the APS has been formed by the 24 members of the Association of Austrian Philatelists, which has been dissolved. There have also been many changes amongst the Officers: a careful reading of the inside front cover is recommended and should prove illuminating!

Gordon Rogers deeply regrets that owing to his continued ill-health he must demit office as Hon Secretary; Hans Smith has volunteered to take on this role.

Arthur Godden has retired as Honorary Librarian, after very many years of devoted service to this valuable but underused asset. The following changes take immediate effect: BOOKS will be kept by Joyce Boyer; PERIODICALS will be kept by Martin Brumby. The listings of periodicals and of Festschrifts will be enhanced Real Soon Now.

And recipients of the Packet will note that new packets will have been sent on their travels by the new Packet Secretary, along with new instructions for payment to a new account.

You will find that this issue is largely devoted to flight-related philately and, as is my practice, the wider scene in which it took place. Other topics being worked on include "American Cultural Diplomacy" and "Rupert von Trapp" (thanks to Sal Rizza), "Numbered Postal Forms (t.t. Henry Pollak), "Tante Mimi" (t.t. A Guttag) and "British Troops in Austria post-WWII (t.t. C Tobitt). Articles promised include "Plating the 1919 Newspaper stamp" (P Wood) and "Postal Stationery" (H G White). There is as always scope for more articles - don't be flustered, don't be worried, don't be scared...

Philatelic knowledge comes in handy: recently, I read, it was the Feast Day of (the probably fictitious) St Expeditus. It is thought that he was invented when the relics of an unknown Italian were shipped to Paris, and the box was marked "Speditio". Whatever, he is the patron saint of those beset by procrastinators.

The Nordia 2001 Stamp Show was held at Tucson, Arizona in January. Of interest is the third name in the list of three Grand Prix winners "Tonnes Ore of Norway won the International with 'Trieste'."

CANTFEST 2001 - The annual weekend is at Canterbury on 19-21 October 2001 in the Chaucer Hotel. More information from John Cottrell on 01233 850 352. All welcome! Twenty-seven people have booked so far with many interesting displays already offered. Some rooms still available.

“The build-up to WIPA 2000 (concluded) by Nick Harty”

This article does not exist in electronic format. The text follows.

This registered cover is item forty-eight franked with 4th series automatenmarken issued for WIPA on 30th May 2000. The design incorporates the WIPA logo and the special cancellation is one of two used on that day. This frama issue was only sold during WIPA.

The forty-ninth item is a special flight of the United Nations Postal Authority; WIPA to Geneva Administration Switzerland. Franked with 7AS (0.51 Euro) commemorative “Our World 2000” Vienna administration [ANK 308 issued 30th May 2000]

The fiftieth item is a special flight of UNPA; WIPA to New York in the U.S.A. Franked with 13 AS Vienna administration [ANK 149 definitive issued 7th May 1993]

The fifty-first item is a FDC for the Day of the Stamp 2000, issued on 30th May 2000. The design was the tenth and last in the series which started in 1991. The special cancel used only on this day at WIPA includes the first newspaper stamp issued in 1851.

The fifty-second item is also a FDC for the 150th birthday of the first adhesive stamp issued on 1st June 1850. The design incorporates the original stamp and also the newest stamp issued on the same day. The special cancellation incorporates the Blue Mauritius, which was exhibited at WIPA.

The fifty-third item is yet another FDC, for “Youth day” commemorative stamp “Confetti” issued on 31st. May 2000. The character portrayed is Pippi Langstrumpf, one of the characters in the popular children’s television programme Confetti which has been running for over six years . The special cancellation was applied with green ink.

The fifty-fourth item on an official souvenir cover is franked with the Day of the Stamp commemorative for 1998 with a special cancellation on the day that the International Federation of Stamp Dealers held their congress at WIPA. This is one of three of my own covers posted at WIPA which never arrived. I sent a letter of complaint and replacements were received.

The fifty-fifth item shows the commemorative cancellation for 1st June - The Day for Rescue Services and Helpers. The design shows St. Notburga, patron saint of carers, and was commemorated on [ANK 2321] 20 schilling definitive issued on 27.8 99. The souvenir cover is franked with the 7 schilling commemorative stamp issued on 17th April 1998 [ANK 2282]. The design shows St. Florian who is the patron saint of firemen.

The fifty-sixth item has the commemorative cancellation “The birthday child” being the 150th birthday of Austria’s first postage stamp. The cover is franked with two stamps, the 1 AS [ANK 962] issued on 20th May 1950 on the centenary of Austria’s first stamp; and the 6 AS [ANK 2206] issued 20th October 1995, the seventh in the workplace series and shows a postal official.

The fifty-seventh item is also a souvenir cover for UNO day on 2nd June. The cover is franked with two stamps; a 3 AS [ANK 1227] issued on 8th November 1965 on the tenth anniversary of Austria’s admission to UNO, the 4 AS [ANK 1647] issued on 20th August 1979. The cancellation shows the UN flag as background to UNO city.

The fifty-eighth item is an Inland Postal Stationery card on the first day of usage, 2nd. June 2000. The design shows an endangered species of bat - a horseshoe nosed bat. The commemorative cancellation shows detail of the bat’s nose and both the stamp and the cancellation were designed by H. Margreiter. This day was the Day for Thematic Philately.

The fifty-ninth item is a First Day Cover with the memorial miniature sheet produced at very short notice by the Austrian State Printing Works as a memorial to Friedensreich Hundertwasser and issued on the 2nd June 2000. He died on 19th February 2000. Professor Wolfgang Seidel, who had worked closely with Friedensreich Hundertwasser, was asked to produce the memorial block and he spent 350 working hours in just 20 days from start to finish to produce the block ready for printing. A truly remarkable effort. The design uses one of Hundertwasser’s paintings, “Blue Blues”. Each of the four 7 schilling stamps has the same design with different colour combinations. The commemorative cancellation design incorporates one of Hundertwasser’s remarkable building projects, the refuse disposal unit at Spittelau on the West bank of the Danube Canal. [Illustration shows page of mini-folder sold at WIPA]

The sixtieth item is a commemorative cover for The Day of European Philatelic Federations. It is franked with two stamps: the 1 AS buildings definitive series 1 AS Mariazell [ANK 1097] and 6 AS EUROPA [ANK 1802] issued 4th May 1984. The special cancellation shows the logos of the philatelic Federations of Holland, Switzerland, Germany and Austria.

The sixty-first item is a commemorative cover to recognise the partnership between telecom and WIPA as one of the co-sponsors. The cover is franked with 3 AS buildings definitive series [ANK 1105] and a 4 AS commemorative [ANK 1703] issued 29th May 1981 on the centenary of the Austrian Telephone. The special cancellation old and new shows Telecommunication equipment from the Morse key to the mobile telephone.

The sixty-second item is a commemorative cover to celebrate Day of European Stamp Collectors on the 4th June 2001. The franking is similar to that on item number fifty-six. The special cancellation has in its design a postman of the fifteenth century, taken from the Ambraser Collection.

The sixty-third item is a souvenir cover franked with the 150th anniversary stamp and cancelled on the last day, 31st August 2000, of the special post office 1063 WIEN-WIPA 2000 which was in a post bus parked outside the exhibition halls. The cachet incorporates the opening and closing days of this post office and was applied in red.

This item, the penultimate one, is an inland postal stationery card also cancelled on the last day, 31st August 2000. The notes of the previous item apply to this item. See also item fifty-eight for details of the card. The opening day of this office was 2nd March 1998.

This, the sixty-fifth item, is officially the last item in the collection and shows the special cancellation used at PHILA-GRAZ 2000 on the 14th October 2000 "DAS WAR DIE WIPA 2000". This item was sent free to philatelists who had subscribed to this series.

When the inland postcard rate disappeared on 1st January 2001, the remaining stocks of the inland postal stationery card issued at WIPA [700,000] were overprinted with the 50 groschen [ANK 1093] and since the WIPA logo is part of the design, it could be included in the collection.

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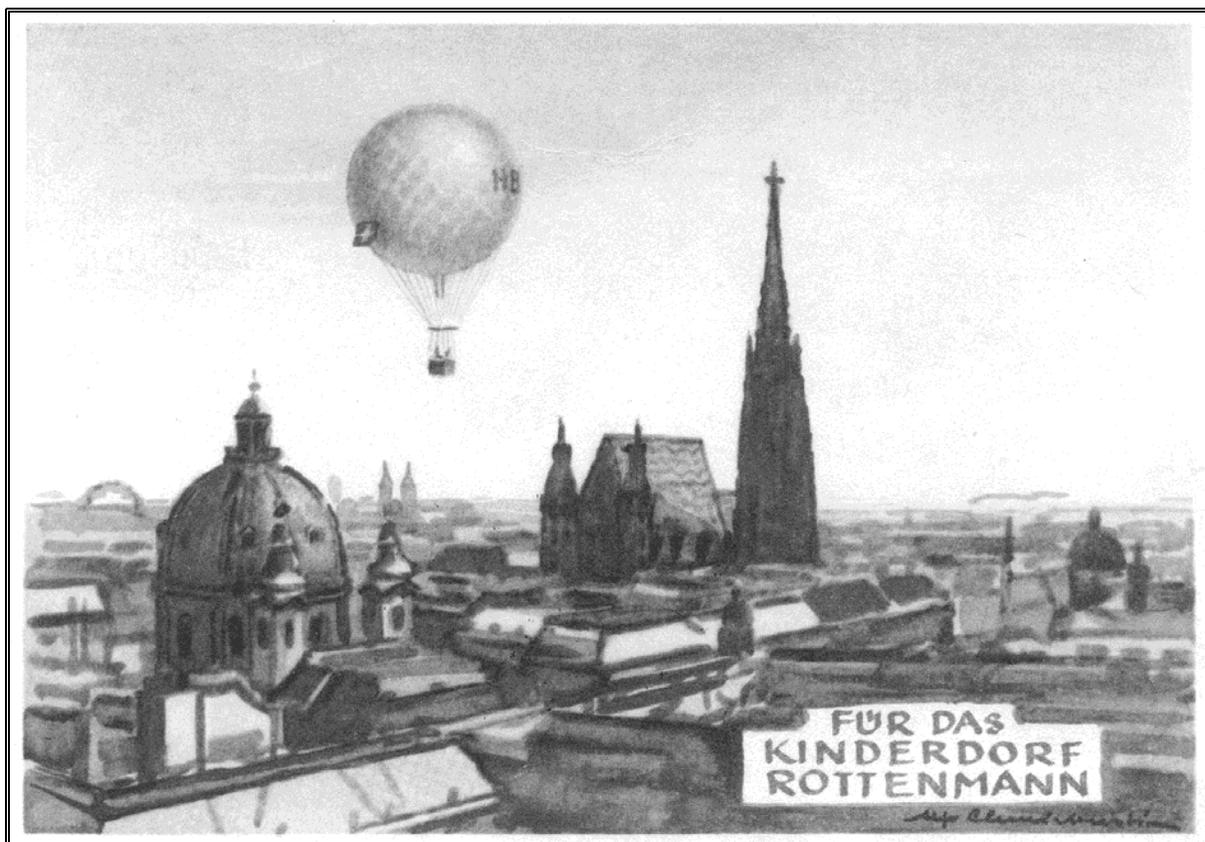
BALLOONS, BALLOON MAIL and the AUSTRIAN "KINDERDORF" CONCEPT

By Andy Taylor

Introduction

The Austrian institution of children villages (Kinderdörfer) for the caring and raising of orphaned children, a truly worthy and admirable subject in itself, has become an object of study for the philatelist due to an interesting and possibly unique way of raising funds: the dispatching of mail by means of the balloon.

The Balloon mail of the Austrian Pro Juventute has been providing great enjoyment to its collectors for over fifty years. Many details connected with the flights have been forgotten. Many of the transported letters are unknown to collectors, since they have become very rare. The catalogues of course can only list the standard mail, not the many varieties produced by collectors who put stamps of their personal choice on the letters. The balloons named in the postmark are often wrong, because the balloon had to be replaced by another one at the last minute. The study of balloon mail also provides a good survey of the history and development of charitable organisations such as Pro Juventute Austria. While the ANK (Netto) catalogue lists all the flights, a specialist catalogue can enhance a collection by providing interesting data and photos.



This article is a combination of articles by Thomas G. Klein (Bull Aus Phil NY Vol 11 nos 7/8); Leo Kovacs (Bull Aus Phil NY Vol 39 no 2); Henry Pollak (Bull Aus Phil NY Vol 22 no 2) and the introduction to the Austrian Pro Juventute balloon mail catalogue [APS Library item 60], written by the late Heinrich Menzel and translated for us by one of their members. Where inconsistencies exist, the Pro Juventute catalogue information has been taken as authoritative. Thanks also to James Hooper for many of the illustrations, for obtaining the translation, and for suggesting the topic in the first place; to Henry Pollak for much advice and more illustrations; and to Nick for some goodies

Orphans: the problem

From the earliest attempts to improve the lot of the orphans to the present "Kinderdorf" covers a span of time close to two centuries. Until the second half of the 18th century, the church was almost alone in caring for children who had been deprived of their parents. In that period, however, it was recognized that the state had a responsibility towards the unfortunate young. This awakening of the state toward its duties took place in Austria under the reforming Emperor Joseph II (sole ruler 1780-1790, pictured on ANK1716 below). In Salzburg, then not a part of Austria but an independent state, the orphans found their protector in the state's last sovereign, Prince-Archbishop Count Hieronymus von Colredo. (Not it seems shown on a stamp; ANK1910 below shows the city.)



However, the laudable efforts of these two sovereigns could be no more than a first step. The Austrian educator Franz Michael Vierthaler (1758-1800) brought a new spirit to the care of orphans in Austria. Not only was he responsible for the re-establishment and rehabilitation of orphanages in Vienna and Salzburg,

which had been much neglected, but he substituted knowledge, understanding and love for the brutal discipline and punishment that had previously made up the system of raising and educating children in general and orphans in particular. The Vienna orphanage, which at Vierthaler's death was caring for 2500 children, became a symbol of educational reform at that time.

Both in Europe and America, this work was continued over the years. From Rousseau, Von Franke, Pestalozzi and Froebel, to Barnardo, Makarenko and Father Flanagan, experiments, improvements and reforms have continued. But it was the two World Wars, with their horrors, revolutions, persecutions, and destruction, which heightened the children's plight to a degree never known before. No orphanage in the old sense could ever hope to fulfil the needs resulting from such chaos. World War II brought this to full recognition. From the war's ruins grew the determination to create something new. In Austria, this found its expression in the "Kinderdorf" village with a family-like setting, a haven for homeless, neglected, parent-less children.

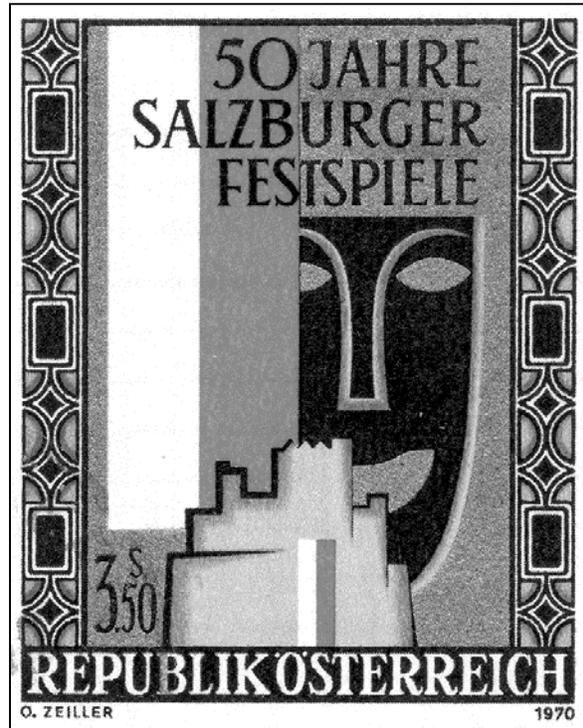
Orphans: an answer?

Pro Juventute started in Austria after World War II when two Austrian teachers from Salzburg returned from a prisoner of war camp in France. In Austria at that time there were many orphaned children. These two men decided to build a children's village or "Kinderdorf" to aid them, similar to the one established earlier in Switzerland. This was their way to give thanks that the war was over and that they had outlived that terrible time. The two drew up plans for the establishment of such a village, but had to overcome a number of problems before their village could be established.

Aside from the problem of developing an organization capable of transforming an idea into a reality, official permission to establish such homes had to be obtained and then the necessary funds to finance the project had to be raised. At the end of the war Austria was divided into four areas of occupation. The charter had to be translated into each of the languages of the occupying powers, English, French and Russian. Many revisions of the bylaws were necessary in order to gain approval, each revision requiring translation and resubmission. Finally on 21 June 1947 the charter was rewritten in such a way that all four powers accepted the wording.

On 7 October 1947, a general meeting of all interested parties was held at the Festspiel House in Salzburg, resulting in the founding of the "Österreichische Pro Juventute Kinderdorfvereinigung" (the "Austrian 'For the Youth' Childrens Village Society"). The cornerstone of the Pro Juventute "Kinderdorf" program was therefore laid and the implementation of that programme could begin.

The organization attempted to raise money from various sources but the people and the economy of Austria had not recovered from the war and money was very hard to come by. Less than 10% of the direct solicitations for money yielded funds and only 50% of the program members made financial contributions to the fund. Raffles were held to raise more. The Swiss Pro Juventute was called upon for advice. Based on the idea of the Swiss, Fred Dolder, who had arranged Swiss balloon flights, an agreement was made with the Austrian postal administration to allow a balloon flight to carry postcards and letters with the full co-operation of the postal authorities. [In the immediate post-WWII period, Austrians were forbidden to have balloons in case of military misuse.] Postcards and envelopes for this flight could be purchased only from the Austrian Pro Juventute.



Building begins



In 1949 the town of Rottenmann, in the province of Styria, decided to donate the necessary ground; so the building of the children's village could begin in 1950, the cornerstone laying ceremony taking place on April 22nd. By 1999, this village consisted of four houses, harbouring four "families" with thirty-four children. This, however, was only the beginning. In 1953, an estate in Landreith near Hieflau in Styria was acquired. The children's home established there played an especially prominent part at the time of the Hungarian uprising and the resultant migration into Austria in 1956 and 1957; it has proved invaluable whenever sudden catastrophes occurred. In 1958 the Society

continued its work by founding children's establishments in Mauernkirchen and Salzburg; others have followed.

Other Organisations

Since the founding of the Austrian "Pro Juventute" Children's Village Society, other similar societies have sprung up in Austria. One is the Societas Sociales (SOS Kinderdorf), which also issues special postal items. It started its work with the founding in 1949 of a children's village in Imst in the Tirol with 150 juvenile residents, followed in a remarkably short time by similar ones in Altmünster in Upper Austria, Moosburg in Carinthia, Lienz in East Tirol and Hinterbrühl in Lower Austria; and later in many other countries and continents. These operate under the "house-mother" system; see the biography of Hermann Gmeiner in Austria issue 132 page 70, ie



"People on Austrian Stamps Add. 197", with an illustration of ANK2160. The SOS-K also issued, in 1979, a special stamp booklet containing a 4-block of the "International Year of the Child" stamp [ANK1628] commemorating also their 30th anniversary. A third organization, "KD-Vorarlberg", which originally provided only a holiday home for orphans, has extended its activities to year-round care. The principles of the children's village, with its more informal structure and family-like atmosphere, has also made an impact on various institutions for mentally or physically ill children. Especially outstanding in this respect are the children's villages of St. Isidor near Linz and St. Anton near Bruck at the Grossglockner highway. The stamp below [ANK1333] was issued in 1969 to mark 20 years of the Childrens Movement in Austria. The Postablage (Kü 1189) was only open 10-24.6.1969; the FDCs went by post-coach to Imst.



The "Pro Juventute" system

While in many children's villages the children are raised only by a foster father or a foster mother, the Austrian "Pro Juventute" Society, in its projects such as in Rottenmann and Trogen, have chosen the most radical departure from the traditional methods of raising and caring for orphans. This method provides for both a "father" and a "mother" to care for and raise the children. Despite greater difficulties and the fact that many pedagogues are far from convinced of the superiority of this method, the Society firmly believes that only by having the benefit of both "parents" can orphans be raised in an atmosphere actually resembling a real family and become fully equal members of society free of any feeling of inferiority.

Thus these villages see to it that each house harbours a true family. There are no community rooms, community kitchens, or community work. Believing the one-family house to be the ideal framework for its purposes, the "Pro Juventute" Association has concentrated on building clean, well-built structures, large enough to comfortably house eight children and their two "parents". Uniformity in these houses is avoided: individuality in all respects is recognised as being essential for the proper upbringing of a child.

The family of a "Kinderdorf" lives like any average family. The "father" must have a steady job and income, as it is considered important that the children have the experience of the elders performing their regular duties. What the "father" earns is his and his wife's. They get their home (bedrooms, living room and bathroom) as well as heat, water and electricity without cost, thus enabling them to save for their future. Each month the "mother" receives an amount for each child, varying with the prevailing cost of living. With this she must cover all expenditures of her ten member household. Medical supervision is provided by a physician of the Association. Both care and advice are received from a village commission, made up of volunteers. In addition, a member of the central committee regularly visits and advises each family.

Of primary importance in the endeavours concerning the children's village is the attempt to establish for the orphaned children a background as similar as possible to a normal household. The "parents" are given free choice as to the way they wish to furnish their homes, what they wish to buy, eat or wear. Growing up in a true family setting, the children have a better chance than ever before to have a happy, normal and constructive childhood.

Balloons

The flight of a balloon is based on Archimedes principle, that an object is buoyed up by a force equal to the weight of the fluid it displaces. Thus, when a balloon is filled with a gas lighter than the surrounding air, the displaced air causes the balloon, together with its load, to rise. While the height to which the balloon rises can be controlled by varying the weight of the carried load (ballast), or the amount of gas in it, the horizontal direction which the balloon takes is completely dependent on the then prevailing winds and air currents.

The Montgolfière and the Charlière

In spite of different evidence about trials and experiments with constructions of flying objects similar to balloons in the Late Middle Ages and even earlier, the honour of the first balloon flight belongs to Joseph Montgolfier. On 5 June 1783 he flew a big hot air balloon in public in Annonay, a provincial town of South France. The balloon was nearly as round as a ball, 35 feet in diameter. The cover was made of canvas, lined with paper and strengthened with a sewed on net. The pieces were connected with buttons and buttonholes. The lower part was a square wooden frame through which hot air entered the balloon. The filling of the balloon was complicated: first the balloon's cover had to be hung on a rope between two poles, then after the filling an iron basket filled with fuel was fixed to the wooden frame. This type of balloon was run on hot air only and was named "Montgolfière" after the inventor.

The young scientist Jacques Alexandre Charles (12.11.1746-7.4.1823) had the idea of filling up the balloon with hydrogen gas, which had just been discovered in Britain. As hydrogen escapes through the tiniest gaps, Charles constructed his so-called aerostatic machine. The material used was gum-varnish-impregnated taffeta, and could be closed at the bottom with a tap. The preparation of the gas caused lots of difficulties. For the first ascent, the half-filled balloon had to be carried 2 miles to the Champs de Mars near Paris, where it was filled up. On 27 August 1783 at 5 pm it lifted up watched by a huge crowd of people. After a voyage of 45 minutes the balloon landed near the village of Gonesse at Paris, where the peasants took the balloon for the devil or one of his creatures and destroyed it with gun shots, cudgels, pitchforks and stones. The tradition thus established was continued in Hungary in 1873: see later!

From now on there were two types of balloons: the one filled with hot air (the Montgolfière) and the other filled with hydrogen (the Charlière). King Louis XVI permitted only ascents with animals on board: so the first passengers were a sheep, a cock and a duck, placed in a cage that was hung on to the bottom of the balloon. The young scientist Jean-François Pilâtre de Rozier decided to try to get this order of His Majesty cancelled.

Montgolfière built a balloon much bigger than any other before; underneath he fixed a gallery made of woven willow branches covered with cloth. This balloon was allowed to rise on a rope and successfully taken down by it. From 15 to 19 October 1783 Rozier experimented in the streets of Montreuil in this way with and without passengers. As these ascents were without any incidents, the Marquis d'Arlandes could persuade the king to revoke his order. So on 21 Nov 1783 at 13:45 the Montgolfière with Rozier and the Marquis on board began the first passenger voyage in a balloon, landing the same day at 5 pm, near the castle of La Muette. An interesting detail is Benjamin Franklin's signature on the landing certificate (he was staying in France as American Plenipotentiary).

The following voyage was on 1 Dec 1783, when Charles and a companion Robert ascended in a Charlière from the gardens of the Tuileries in Paris. At this ascent Joseph de Montgolfier was present and his help was considered to be a sort of reconciliation between the two competing inventors. Landing took place in La Tour du Lay. The Charlière had an integrated valve and a boat-shaped gondola which was attached to the balloon by a net.

Further Developments

The further development of ballooning was characterized by ascents in many European countries. On 7 Jan 1785 N. F. Blanchard (1753-1809) succeeded in crossing the Channel between Dover and Calais with his balloon. On 15 Jun 1785, Rozier wanted to cross the Channel too, in the opposite direction. He tried to combine the Montgolfière and Charlière systems in his balloon (ie, to put a burning brazier under a bag full of hydrogen). Unsurprisingly, the experiment ended with an explosion and the death of two balloonists.

N° 14, Mercredi 7 Décembre 1870.

<p>PARAIT les Mercredi et Samedi à 10 h. du matin D. JOUAUST, RÉDACTEUR</p>	<p>LETTRE-JOURNAL DE PARIS <i>Gazette des Absents</i></p>	<p>EN VENTE A PARIS Rue Saint-Honoré, 338 et au bureau du Figaro RUE ROSSINI, 3</p>
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Prix : 45 centimes

<p>AVIS. Nous publions, les lundi et jeudi, un SUPPLÈMENT contenant les rapports militaires, accompagnés, s'il y a lieu, de quelques nouvelles. Notre gazette se trouve ainsi renouvelée deux fois de plus, et cette combinaison équivaut à une périodicité de 4 numéros par semaine. — Le supplément est mis en vente dans nos deux bureaux : à midi, au prix de 5 c. Il passe moins de 1 gramme, et peut être inséré dans la Lettre-Journal sans que le poids réglementaire soit dépassé.</p> <p>NOTA. Le bruit a couru ces jours-ci qu'il ne paraît plus de Ballons-Posts, et beaucoup de personnes nous ont questionné à ce sujet, nous témoignant la crainte que leurs lettres ne fussent pas expédiées. Nous ne pouvons mieux les rassurer qu'en leur disant que, dans la nuit de dimanche à lundi, nous avons assisté en personne, à 1 h. du matin, à l'ascension d'un ballon de M. Godard, le Franklin, qui emportait toutes les lettres mises à la poste jusqu'au dimanche soir. Le mystère dont on est obligé d'environner les départs de ballons, joint à la circonstance que des vents défavorables les ont quelquefois fait retarder, est sans doute la cause qui a donné à penser que ces départs étaient suspendus. Il souffle actuellement un vent de nord, nord-est, qui entraîne nos ballons dans la direction de Tours et du Mans, ce qui va probablement motiver des départs plus fréquents. Quatre nouveaux aérostats sont tout prêts et n'attendent que des ordres; ce sont : le <i>Denis-Papin</i>, le <i>National</i>, le <i>Parmentier</i> et l'<i>Union-des-peuples</i>.</p> <p>SAMEDI, 3 décembre 1870. — RAPPORTS MILITAIRES (résumés) : 2 décembre, 3 h. 10. Dès le matin, l'armée du général Ducrot a été attaquée. Notre armée n'a pu résister que pendant quelques heures.</p>	<p>INFORMATIONS ET FAITS DIVERS. — <i>La Prusse et le Droit des gens.</i> On sait que les Prussiens élèvent la singulière prétention de ne considérer comme ayant le droit de leur résister que les gens revêtus d'uniformes. A ce sujet, le <i>Journal officiel</i> publie une note dans laquelle il fait remarquer que la Prusse, à une époque où la fortune l'accablait, raisonnait tout autrement. Ses armées régulières étant détruites, elle appela la nation entière à la guerre des partisans, et c'est sans uniforme, et armé de tout instrument propre à l'attaque, que s'organisa le <i>landsturm</i> de 1813. Aujourd'hui que les rôles sont renversés, la Prusse tient un tout autre langage. A l'Europe d'apprécier la bonne foi de ce peuple soi-disant civilisateur. — <i>La Prusse et la Convention de Genève.</i> Hier 2 décembre, sur le plateau de Champigny, une escouade des ambulances de la presse s'est dirigée vers les lignes prussiennes pour relever des blessés : elle portait, comme d'habitude, le drapeau de Genève, très-visible pour l'ennemi. Après avoir fait faire par le clairon les quatre appels d'usage, elle a obtenu pour toute réponse une vive fusillade. Le fait est attesté par l'aumônier Bauer, protonotaire apostolique, et par treize autres personnes des plus recommandables qui l'accompagnaient. Déféré également au tribunal de l'opinion publique européenne. — <i>Un mot de Louis Blanc.</i> C'est à propos des Prussiens. "C'est me faire l'effet d'un trait-il dit, de Mohicans</p>
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A milestone of ballooning was the siege of Paris by Prussia in 1870-71. Though at the beginning of the siege Paris had only 9 balloons, they constructed 55 Post Balloons between 23 Sep 1870 and 28 Jan 1871, which took 10 tonnes of mail out of Paris by air - see the contemporary newspaper cutting above! In spite of the undeveloped techniques, some of the balloons covered long distances - eg La Ville d'Orleans carried 250 kg mail in 4 bags to Kongsberg, 100 km south-east of Oslo (Norway), so covering a distance of 1460 km from Paris. Around the same time, at the siege of Metz, smaller and pilotless balloons were let off from the besieged fortress.

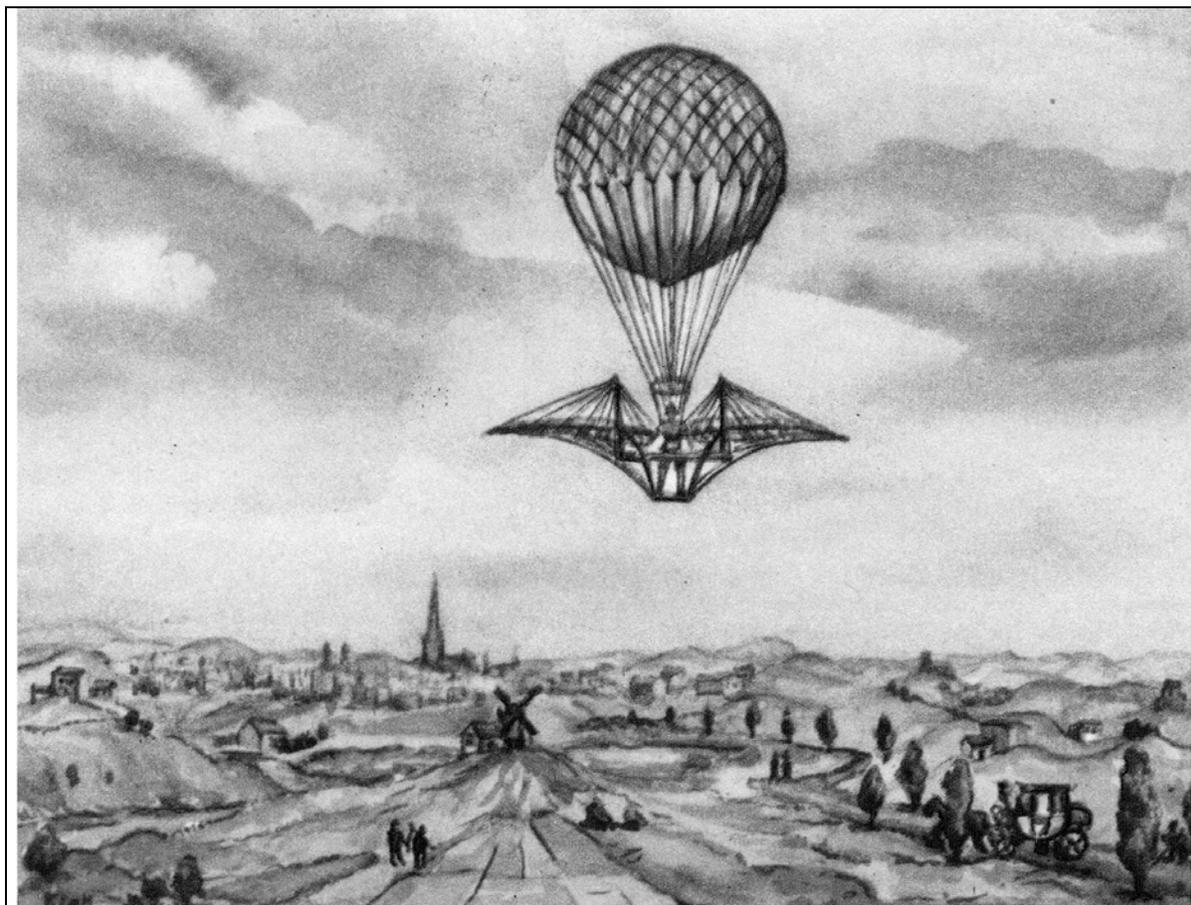
The balloon reaches Austria

In Austria the invention of the balloon caused great interest. The first displays took place in the area of Vienna, Caspar Stuver and 4 others going up on a tethered Montgolfière on 6 Jul 1784. [According to other sources his name was Johann Georg Stuver.] On 25 Aug 1784 the balloon was lifted up again with 4 persons. Unfortunately a strong wind broke the rope, thus transforming the tethered balloon into a free balloon which sailed as far as the Tabor-Donauauen, where it landed successfully. The stamp ANK1819 was issued to commemorate this.

On 19 May 1788 the brothers Enßler arrived from Straßburg. They attracted a lot of attention with their Montgolfières in the form of aerostatic figures such as a beautiful woman and



flying riders. Those were lifted without crew. Jean Pierre Blanchard, the first professional pilot, finally arrived in Vienna in 1791 after his great show tour to all big European cities. On 7 June at noon he started his 38th air-voyage at the Prater, landing in Groß Enzersdorf 4 hours later. On 2 Aug he started at 6 pm and landed at 7 pm in Simmering. Professor Robertson, whose balloon had a big sail, started on 8 Oct 1804 from the Prater and landed in Korneuburg. Jakob Degen, a Viennese watch-maker, whose balloon was equipped with wings (shown in the picture below), began test voyages on 3 and 5 Nov 1808. Another balloon voyage worth mentioning is that of Christian Lehmann in May 1846 starting from the Prater.

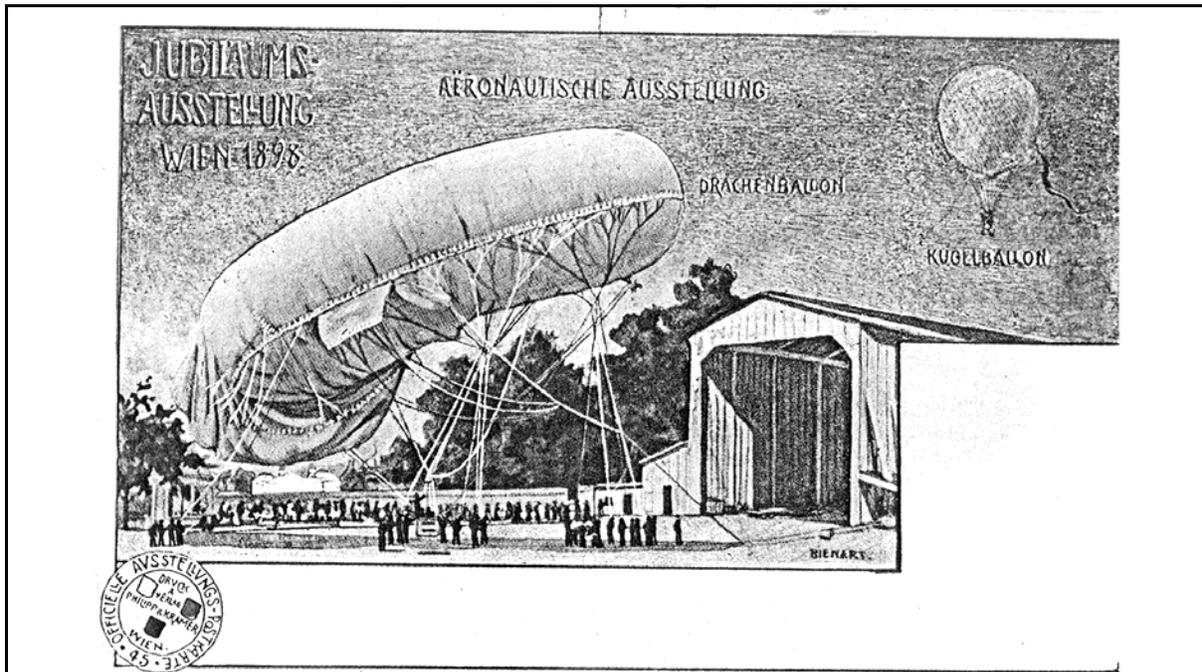


At the 1873 world trade exposition in Vienna, an enterprising promoter had brought a tethered balloon from Paris. It had a basket (or gondola) which held 12, and was used to give people a view of the city. During a thunderstorm on 29 June, it broke loose, despite the chains that held it and despite the efforts of 40 people who got scared when it threatened to carry them off. It finally came down in Wieselburg in Hungary, where a man named Budo was reported to have attacked the monster and stabbed it to death. The damage was irreparable. The exposition management threatened to sue him for ruining their balloon. Another balloon was ordered from Paris, but it is not clear if it ever arrived.

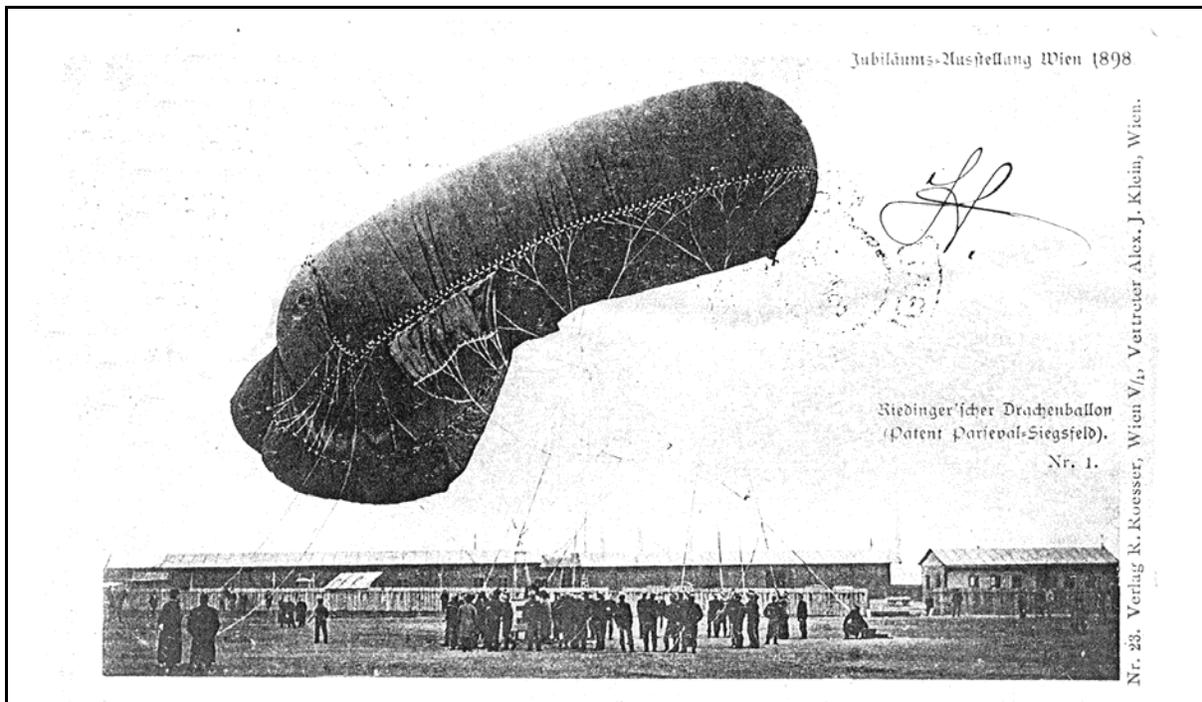
We can call the year 1882 the beginning of balloon-sport for Austria, as Victor Sliberer, a multi-talented sportsman, started his ascents with his balloon "Vindobona" on 11 August 1882, and up to 1887 he did 98 ascents. Altogether he made 147 ascents, and he was the first to take photos out of a balloon.

The 1898 Jubilee Exposition in Vienna

There was a balloon at this Exposition also; it is pictured on multicolored postcard number 45 of the official series, which also has a spherical balloon (Kugelballon) in the background. The balloon was called Riedinger'scher Drachenballon (Patent Parseval-Siegfeld). It was part of the "Aeronautical Exhibition". Riedinger was presumably the name of the person who owned it.



What is a "Drachenballon"? "Drache" means two things, "dragon" and "kite". The balloon's shape was like a big fat knockwurst, which isn't like either a dragon or a kite! The map of the exhibition shows a building called "Ballon-Halle" with open space in front of it. Could the balloon have been a tethered balloon which was brought out in good weather, and in which people could get a ride up for the view?



A contemporary photograph; the basket is on the ground, the balloon strains at the ropes...



A "Grüss aus" card - the basket beneath the balloon, and the thin rope securing it to the ground, are just visible.

Military Ballooning

In 1890, Silberer became the leader of the newly founded k.u.k. military aeronautic class in Vienna. Among his pupils were Colonel Hinterstoißer, Lieutenants Hoerns, Mannsbarth, Heller and Macha; the latter was the only Austrian officer who navigated an airship. The courses were carried out with the balloons Radetzky and Budapest. With these military voyages, as well as private voyages, which took place until WWI, postcards with information about the balloons and the request to forward them to the next post office were dropped.

A further interesting topic is the balloon mail of 1915 from the fortress of Przemyśl which was besieged by the Russians. The first balloon mail was sent in small paper balloons. On 19 March the manned balloons Przemyśl, Austria, Erzherzog Josef Ferdinand, and Schicht left the fortress with the mail; but all landed in Russian-held territory. [See APS Library items 50 & 194]

After the collapse of the Danube monarchy, balloon voyages were undertaken from the Austrian Aero Club. A flight on 27 Sep 1937 with the balloon Marek Emma II transported mail to its landing place near Frauenkirchen. The history of ballooning shows that very soon after the invention of the balloons, they became the preferred means for transport of mail, especially out of besieged towns. At the same time souvenir mail for spectators was produced. Some of the

pilots tried to finance new balloons or the flights by selling those cards. Thus balloon mail has a long tradition.

Thanks to the initiative of the Swiss pilot Fred Dolder, the balloon-mail was utilized for charity. The time of balloons was over, the aeroplane taking their place. In spite of this there were always lots of people to gather as soon as one of the "romantics of the air" got his vehicle ready for a voyage with the wind. Together with this initiative came along not only help for a good cause but also the revival of ballooning in Austria. The majority of balloon voyages after WWII served to transport balloon mail.

Kinderdorf balloon mail

It was the idea of obtaining funds through the sale of special cacheted postcards and envelopes, imprinted with stamps, and transported by means of balloons, which brought "Kinderdorf" into the philatelic spotlight. The balloon's lack of dependability, and above all the inability to accurately predict the length of flight and the landing site, not only adds to the suspense of the flight itself, but lends interest to mail carried in this manner. Thus there are many pieces which show by means of special markings that they were deposited at a destination quite different from the intended one.

The first "Kinderdorf" balloon mail flight was delayed by the weather and took place on 2 Nov 1948, notwithstanding the fact that the special cancellation applied to the carried mail is dated 25 October. However, in spite of such initial mishaps, plus bureaucratic red tape, these balloon flights continued and have now become regular institutions. From a modest beginning, these flights have expanded to two regular flights a year, as well as a special flight whenever an occasion warrants it. Such flights as the one in co-operation with the Children's Foundation in Finland in 1959 (shown overleaf) have added an international character to these flights: so they should, since both charity and philately know no boundaries.

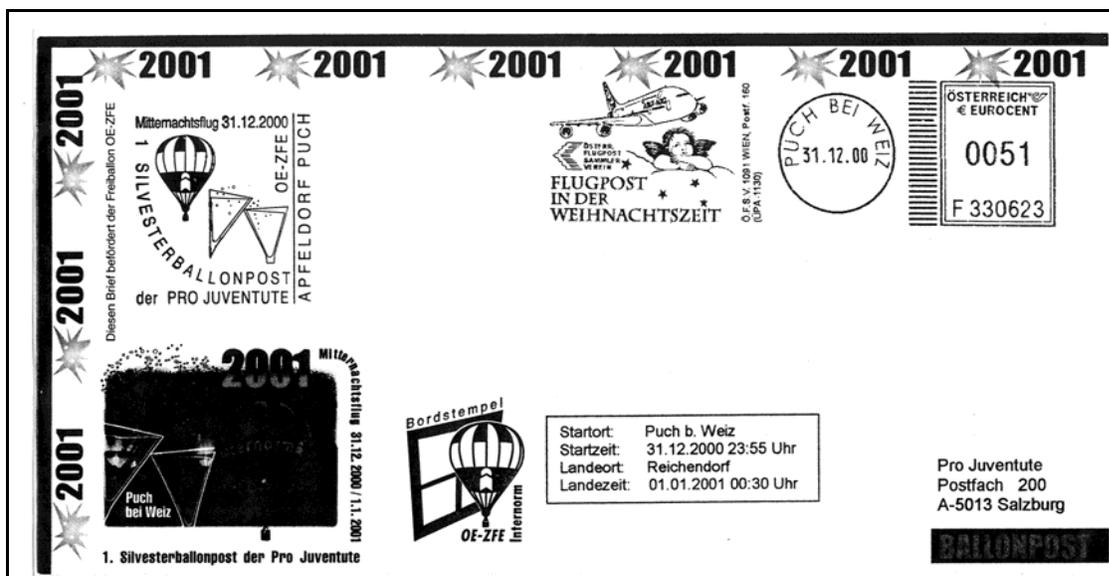
To this day the Austria Pro Juventute flight covers are popular, not only in Austria, but all over Europe - one reason being their regular nature. There are other balloon mail flights but they are infrequent and are conducted by private organizations. The Pro Juventute flights are frequent and held with the full cooperation of the Austrian Postal Administration and are the only Balloon mail flights on which the mail handling and delivery to the destination is totally controlled by a postal administration.

Another reason is that one still has a chance to assemble a complete collection of flight covers, even though some of the flights are very scarce. On the early flights, foreign postage could be used on mail forwarded from a foreign destination. From the very first flight, postal stationary items with unique

imprints and combinations were printed to private order; many will be shown below. Not all the cards and envelopes which were printed for the flights were bought by the public and used as intended. Some sold were saved in mint condition while many were unsold.



There are now several categories of Pro Juventute balloon flights, including (to end 2000) 104 regular "Kinderdorf" flights; 56 special "Sonderflug" flights; 40 "Christkindl" Christmas flights; 17 other official flights; also 29 flights for "SOS-Kinderdorf" and 13 for children's cancer charities. There are also airship flights (see later); and a "Silvesterballonpost der Pro Juventute" has begun with Flight 1 taking off at 23:55 on 31 Dec 2000 and landing at 00:30 on 1 Jan 2001! Note the meter-mark purporting to be in Eurocents only!



Thus, catering for a hobby has enabled the Kinderdorf Society to obtain thousands of euros for their noble work, and has given the philatelist a chance to combine the acquisition of fascinating items of postal and aero-philately with the knowledge that the money spent will aid some homeless and destitute child. One must thank the Austrian Postal administration, who unlike other countries of Europe allowed the official transport of mail by balloon.

The first flight

The first "Kinderdorf" balloon mail flight, as stated above, took place on 2 Nov 1948, although the special cancellation applied to the carried mail shows the intended flight date of 25 October. The Swiss Balloon "HB-BIS Helvetia" carried 25,000 pieces of mail and 6,000 postcards imprinted with the 60 groschen "Amerling" stamp (Netto 866). The starting place was Vöcklabruck in Upper Austria; the balloon carried a crew of three, led by Fred Dolder with two Swiss Army officers Oberstlts Huber & Bleuler; Dr Hertha Machold and Ing. W. Schubert making up the passengers on this historic flight. The first flight seems to have proceeded without incident, the balloon carrying its crew and passengers plus the mail as far as Gampern in Upper Austria.



From Gampern, the mail was dispatched to Salzburg, the post office nearest to the point of landing, for distribution. Only 7,000 balloon letters from this first flight were sold. The illustration above shows a registered airmail envelope of that first flight. The special cancel "VOCKLABRUCK. OSTERR. BALLON-POST- FLUG 2 XI 1948" is in blueish-purple and neatly centered on the affixed stamps. Notice the original scheduled date of the flight 25 X 48 under the illustrated balloon in the cancel. On this flight, as on all others, a postmark from the post office nearest to the landing point was affixed to the mail, "Salzburg 2" in this case, before being forwarded to its addressed destination.

The post cards from this first flight were printed to the private order of the influential Austrian stamp dealer Adolf Kosel. They come in two varieties: the first illustration shows the "Type I" card with only the first two lines of printing, just showing under the stamps; while the second shows the "Type II" card which was used by Kosel himself as a renewal notice to his new issue subscribers



BALLONPOSTKARTE
Drucksache

Abonnement-Erneuerung
Juli bis Dezember 1948
und Jänner bis Juni 1949

Nachnahme S 15.— (Fünfzehn)

Spende für österr. Kinderdorf . . . S 2.50
Portoanteil . . . S —.50
Abonnement Juli bis Dezember 1948
(Nr. 31 bis 36) . . . S 6.—
Abonnement Jänner bis Juni 1949
(Nr. 37 bis 42) . . . S 6.—

SALZBURG 72
02.11.48-22
a

ÖSTERREICH - PHILATELIST
VERLAG ADOLF KOSEL, WIEN 71

Hr. Peter Kaldarar
K 61
W i e n VII.,
Mariahilferstr.48

This envelope arrived too late for the delayed flight, nevertheless getting the special cancel - but with the date omitted.

ÖSTERREICH - BALLON - POST - FLUG

ÖSTERREICH - KINDERDORF - VEREINIGUNG

OESTERR.
KINDERDORF
VEREINIGUNG

Für Ballonflug zuspät angekommen!
Mit gewöhnlicher Post befördert

Frl.
Edith Reiner
W i e n 107
Blumbergg.23/111/25

The second flight

Less luck was experienced with the second flight, which was scheduled for 1 May 1949 at Wels in Upper Austria. However, because of bad weather, preparations did not get under way until the following day. While being filled with gas, a procedure taking several hours, the balloon bag broke loose from its weighted net and flew away, rising 15000 metres in a few minutes! Consequently, the mail was transported by its 20th century counterpart the aeroplane, and dispatched to Salzburg for distribution. All mail was marked with the inscription below, attesting to the circumstances under which it reached its destination. It is, by accident, Austria's first post-WWII civil airmail flight. Note that the 10g and 30g stamps are imprinted on the cover; the leftmost stamp is the 2S adhesive; and there is no validation printing below the imprints.

Infolge Losreiens des Ballons "Forsanose" vor dem Start wurde dieser Brief per Flugzeug am 4. Mai 1949 von Wels nach Salzburg befördert



The third flight

Bregenz, capital of the province of Vorarlberg, was to have been the site of the third flight. For the first time, the date of the cancellation used, 2 Oct 1949, seems to have coincided with the date of the flight. However, due to a lack of gas, the filling of the balloon, as well as the start of the actual flight, took place in Lindau. No more trouble occurred until the flight landed near Augsburg in Germany - the crew and passengers were immediately arrested by the U.S. military police, and not released until midnight. Later, Austrian police showed their interest in this unlucky flight by arresting dealers in these covers on the grounds that they lacked a "collecting permit" (Sammlungs Bewilligung). The illustrations show three differently-stamped items; seven are known, ignoring the infinite possibilities (OK, there were only 16,000 covers flown) for privately added adhesives. The top right stamps are imprinted; there is no validation printing.





The fourth flight



The flight was on 28.5.1950; this cover shows the 60g Hofer imprint plus a 1S adhesive. There is no "validation wording" under the imprints; this seems to have started with the 5th flight. The WEIZ cancel is from the Austrian post office nearest the landing site; it's a bridge type, and seems to have been damaged (not surprising: 18,000 items were flown!)

A further complexity is that Austria stopped imprinting to private order on September 1, 1951 - it was getting out of hand. So the Kinderdorf people simply ordered as big a supply of different patterns as they could, and orders that were approved before that date were delivered for several years afterwards! See Schneiderbauer, 1981 edition, page 44; the Austria-Philatelist reference for 'stationery imprinted to private order' on the bottom of page 252 gives further information on which envelopes were for which flights.

The fifth flight

The letter (overleaf) shows the 60g UPU imprinted for the 5th flight on 22.X.1950, cancelled Salzburg 2, landing near Rosenheim, Bavaria. The mail was taken back to Kufstein. Note the imprinted stamp with the "licence number" underneath. The lower stamp is an adhesive of the same design. This flight, unusually, had perfect weather and no technical hitches.

**MIT FLUGPOST
PAR AVION**

KUFSTEIN 2
24. X. 50
33

LANDUNG BEI ROSENHEIM
Fristfeier St. Georg
BAYERN

**ÖSTERR. KINDERDORF VEREINIGUNG
(PRO JUVENTUTE)**

MITGLIEDER 1950 · BEITRAG S 4

**SALZBURG
BALLONPOST**
22. X.
1950

ZUR ERINNERUNG AN DEN 1. FLUG ÜBER ÖSTERREICHEN

REPUBLIK ÖSTERREICH
WELTPOSTVEREIN

Unmittelbarer Wertzeichenaufdruck gem. § 17 (1) P. O. B. M. Zl. 42.060-4/1950 vom 3. August 1950

**Drucksache / Imprime
Herrn A. E. L. Zawadzki
520 Audubon Avenue
New York 33, N.Y. USA.**

MIT BALLONPOST

----- (Fifth flight above; sixth flight below) -----

*Osterreichische Kinderdorfvereinigung
PRO JUVENTUTE*

ARMOLDSTEIN
26. 3. 51

REPUBLIK ÖSTERREICH 15g
REPUBLIK ÖSTERREICH 45g

MIT BALLONPOST

**Spatenstich zum 2. Haus
FREIWILLIGE BAUEN MIT**

AUSWEIS FÜR GÖNNER.
MITGLIEDER 1951 · BEITRAG S 4

25. 3. 1951

The sixth flight

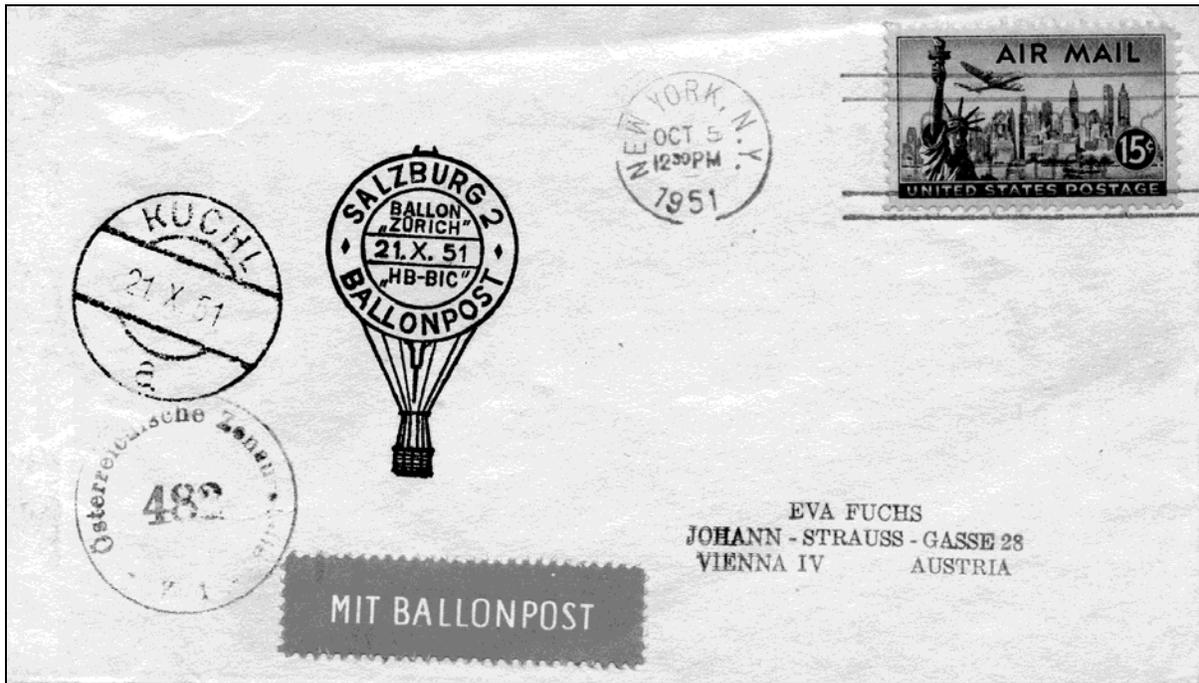
The letter (above) with 15g & 45g costumes imprints was flown on 25.3.1951, acquiring a Villach 2 cancel. The balloon landed near Arnoldstein.

The seventh flight



Flight 7 took off on 21.10.1951 from "Prossinger Gründe" at Salzburg, soon landing nearby in rough and mountainous woodland near Kuchl. Above is a letter with 30g red, 30g purple costumes imprints plus two adhesives, flown 21.X.51, also censored!

The card shown below was posted from New York for forwarding by this balloon flight, acquiring an Allied censor mark.



The eighth flight



The illustration on the card shows two young orphans arriving at the Kinderdorf in Rottmann - with their pet bird. 70g & 80g costumes imprints. The balloon landed in Germany, and the mail was taken back to Feldkirch.

The ninth flight

The letter below is from the 9th flight. It shows for the first time the flight number in the special cancel; the British stamp is cancelled FPO 754 which, says CT, was operating in Vienna by 20.8.1948, remaining until at least 9.7.1955.

The flight didn't go entirely as planned - when the balloon landed two of the passengers suddenly leapt out, and the balloon, carrying its pilot and the luckless Burgermeister of Gmunden, hurtled up to over 6,500m where it was carried away by a strong wind across the Alps; luckily, the subsequent rough landing didn't injure the fliers. Their unwilling achievement of the record height reached by an Austrian gasfilled balloon was duly marked by a cachet....



The tenth flight

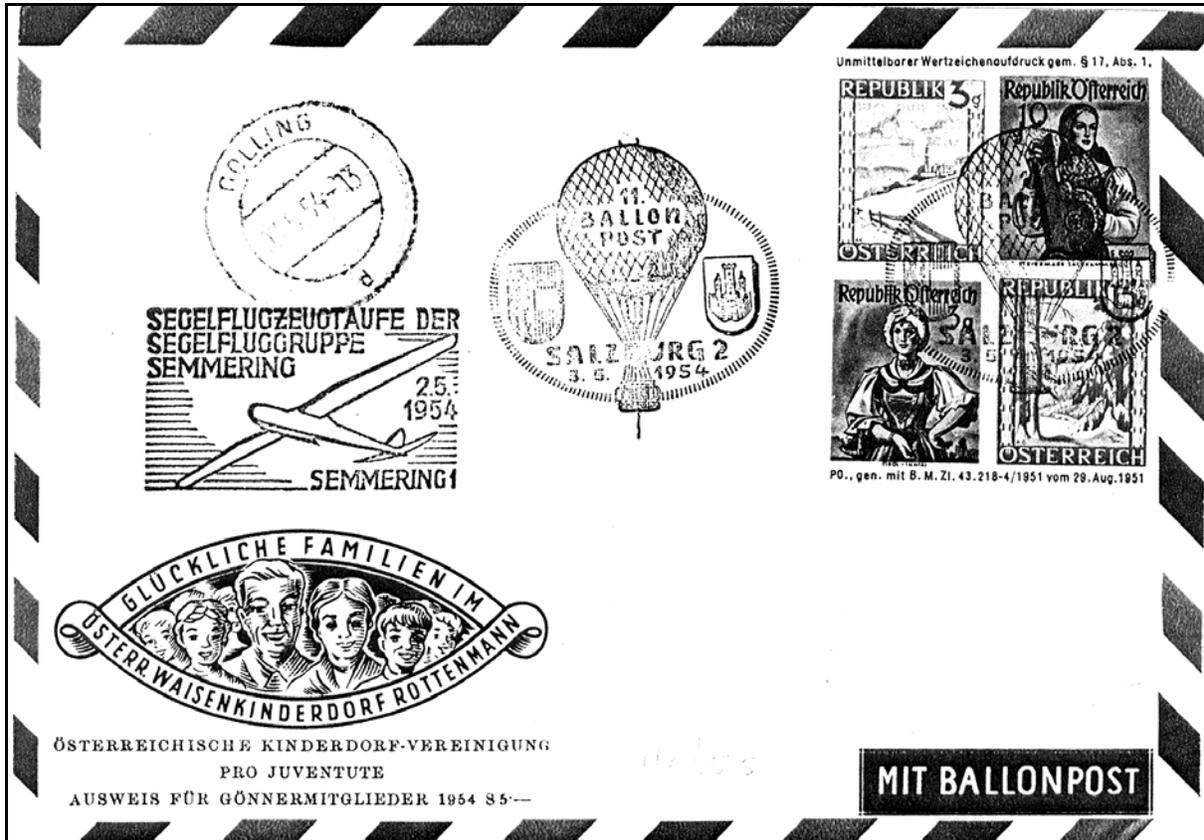
Stationery with imprinted 5g landscape, 5g costume top row, 10g costume, 10g landscape second row, 10th flight for Paracelsushaus, flown 24.5.1953, Salzburg 2 cancel, landing SE of Munich. The mail was taken back to Jenbach.

The eleventh flight

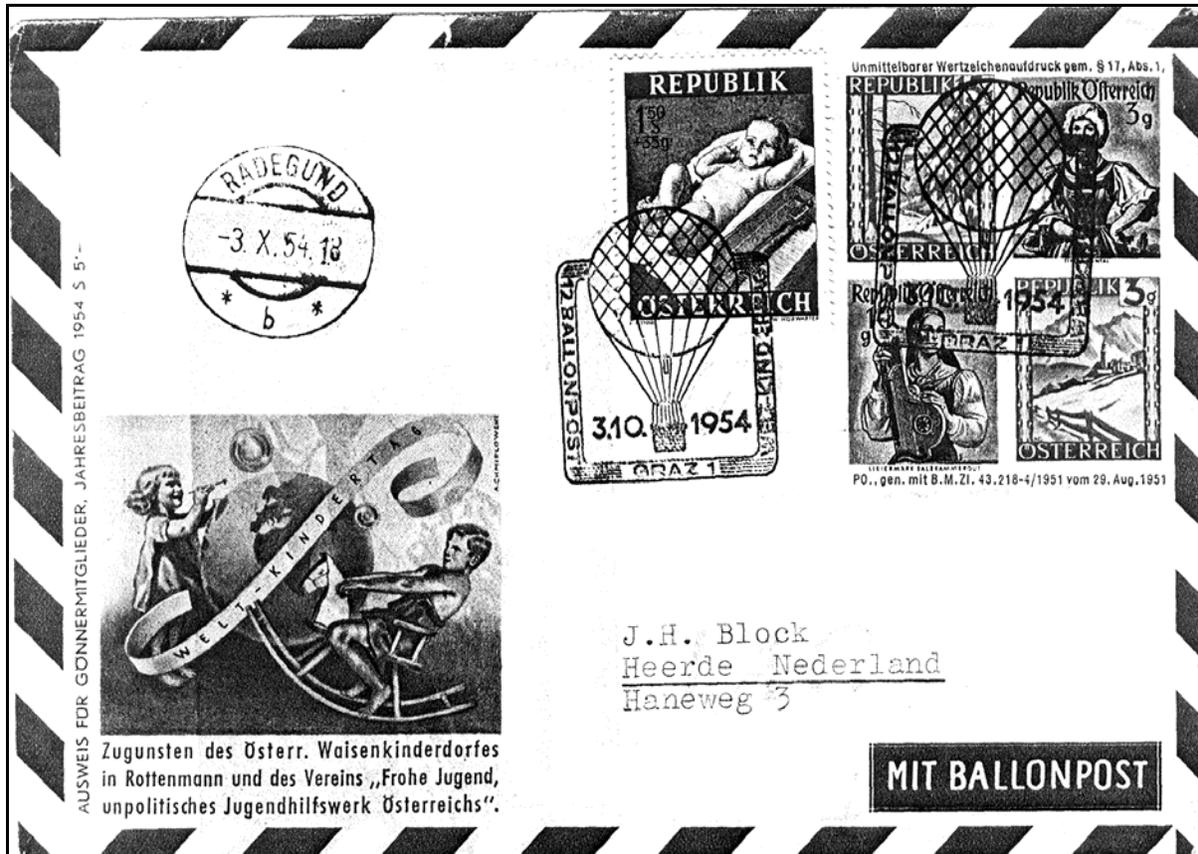
Stationery with imprinted 3g landscape, 10g costumes, second row 3g costumes, 15g landscape. The 11th flight was on 3.5.1954 from Salzburg to Scheffau.



------(tenth flight above; eleventh flight below)-----



The twelfth flight



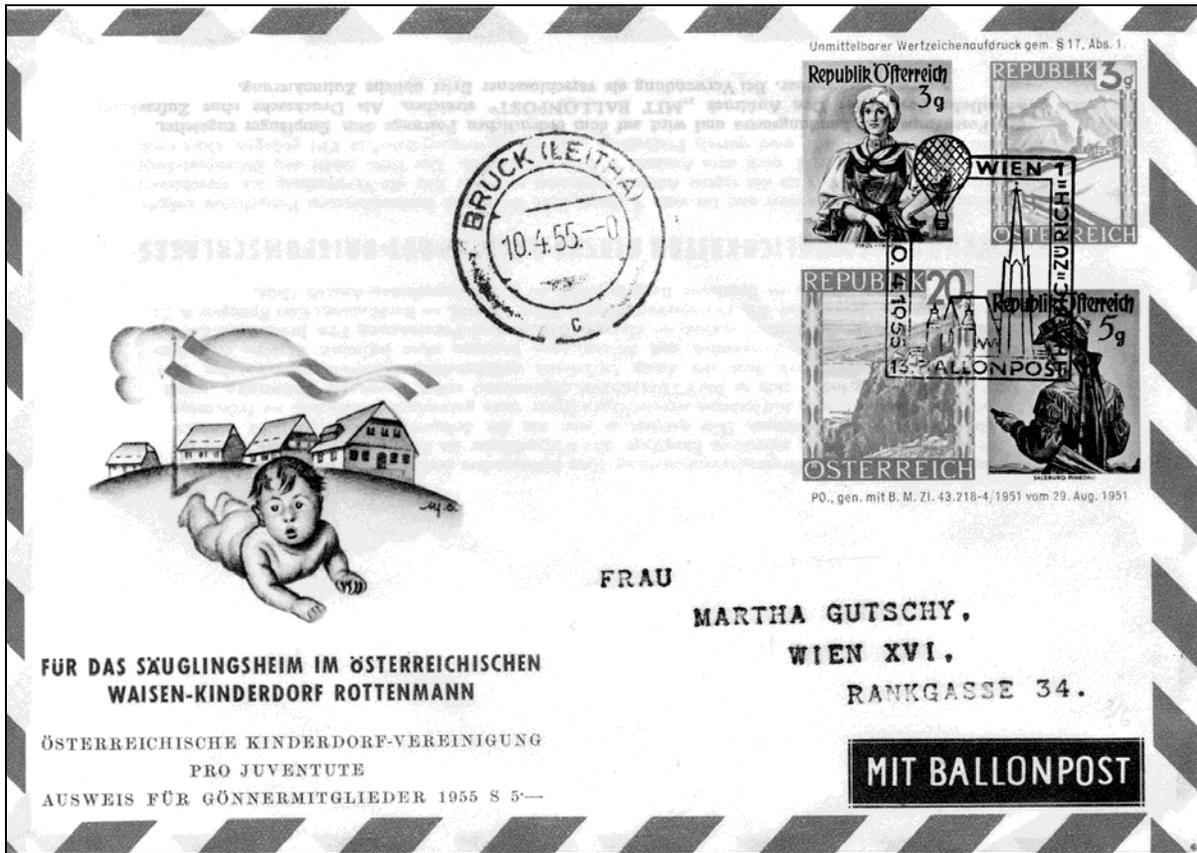
Stationery with imprinted 15g landscape, 3g costumes in the top row, 10g costumes and 3g landscape in the second row; plus a 1s adhesive. The 12th flight, 3.10.1954, was from Graz to St Radegund.

The thirteenth flight

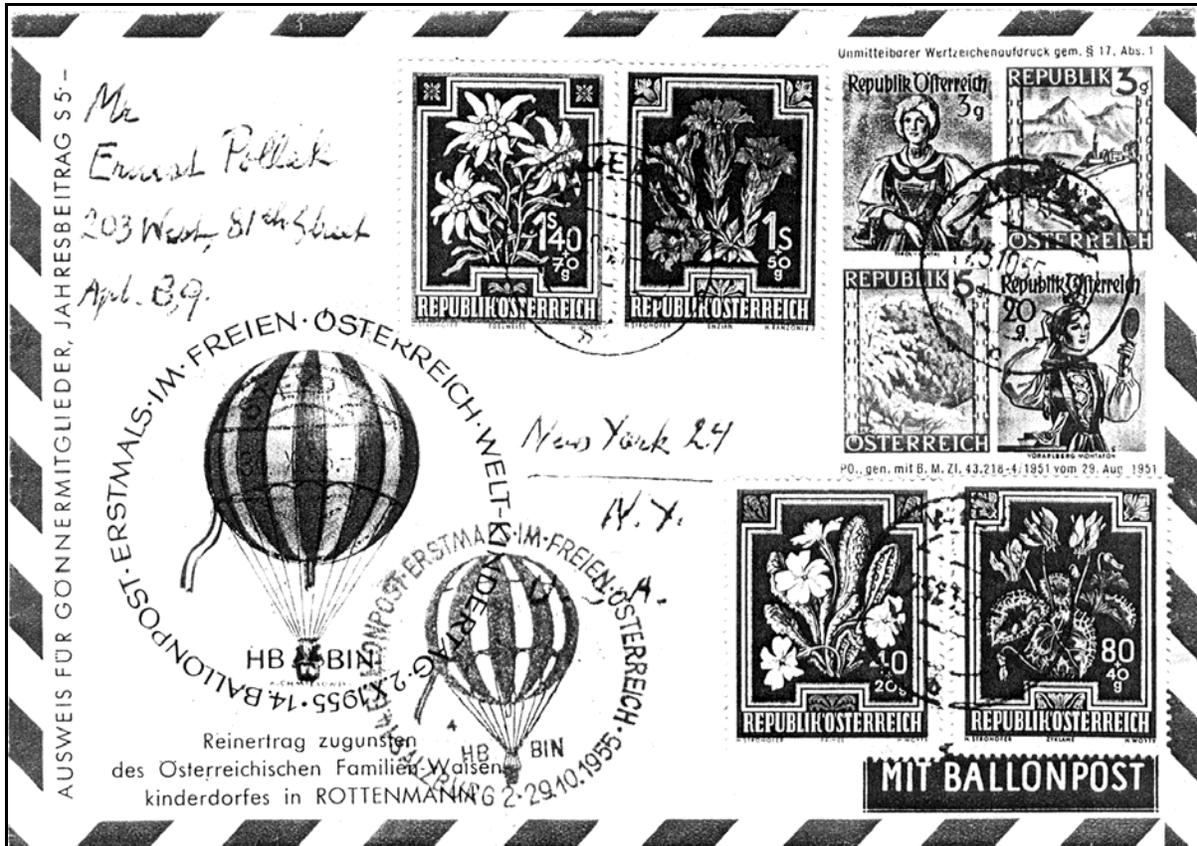
Flight 13, on April 4, 1955, had a Swiss Pilot with an Austrian Minister on board as a passenger. It started in Vienna and, due to rough weather, drifted eastward quickly toward the Hungarian border. In order not to cross that border the balloon was hastily crash-landed. The Soviet occupation forces in the area detained the crew on charges of spying! They were later released when their identity was confirmed. Again, the cover (below) has costume & landscape series imprinted stamps.

The fourteenth flight

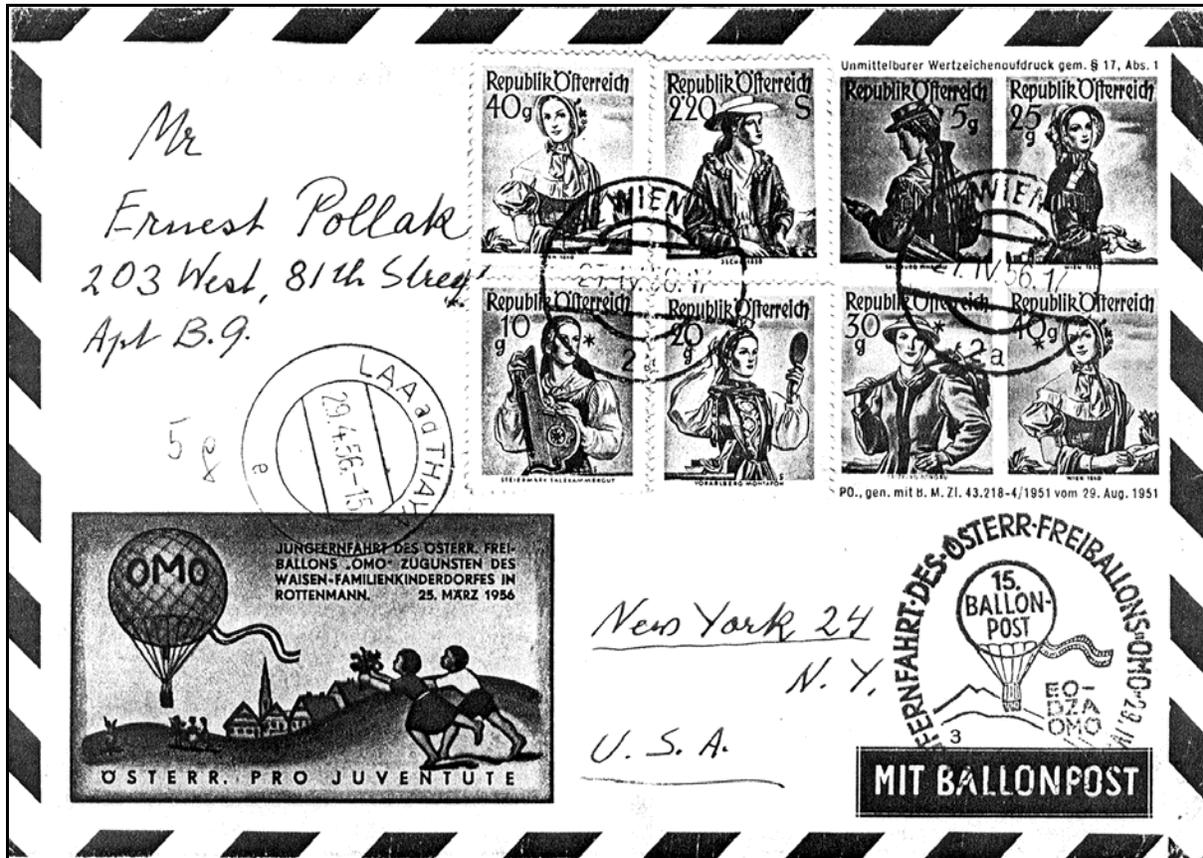
Stationery with 4 imprinted stamps, top row 3g costume, 3g landscape, second row 5g landscape, 20g costume. The 14th flight, 29.10.55, was from Salzburg to Breitenau. The cover (below) has additional adhesives of the flowers series.



----- (thirteenth flight above, fourteenth below) -----



The fifteenth flight



Stationery with on right imprinted 5g, 25g, second row 30g red, 40g, and on left 2x2 adhesives. 15th flight, 27.4.1956, Heldenplatz in Wien to Laa an der Thaya.

The seventeenth flight

Stationery with imprinted costume series: 5g, 10g first row, 25g, 60g second row. The 17th flight, 28.4.1957, was from Heldenplatz in Vienna to Hollabrunn. Illustrated on next page.

The eighteenth flight

Stationery with imprinted costume series 45g, 30g purple, second row 20g, 5g. The 18th flight, 9.XI.1957, was from Villach to Paternion. Illustrated on next page.



----- (seventeenth flight above; eighteenth below) -----



Postings from abroad

It was possible to post the special stationery with the special label "MIT BALLONPOST" from abroad, franked only with stamps from the country of postage. This soon got completely out of hand: the catalogue lists 31 European and 32 other countries from which mail was sent for free transport on the 17th flight! From the 19th flight on 27 April 1958, therefore, the postal authorities required all such mail to additionally carry appropriate Austrian stamps: eg for a card 30 groschen, the printed mater rate at that date. On all subsequent flights only Austrian postage was recognized and no directly forwarded items were accepted. In 1969, however, because of the special occasion of the moon landing, flight 42 on October 30 accepted forwarded mail with the U.S. First Man on the Moon 10 c. airmail stamp first day cover.

The nineteenth flight



The flight was from Vienna to Gerasdorf, the mail being taken to Mauerbach. The landing was exceptionally rough!

The twenty-third flight

The cover below is from flight 23, on May 29, 1960. The balloon "OE-DZA OMO" exploded and burned a few minutes after landing, as the hydrogen was being vented off. Luckily the pilot and his passengers received only minor burns

and the mail basket was untouched. Mail from this flight comes with and without an explaining hand stamp.

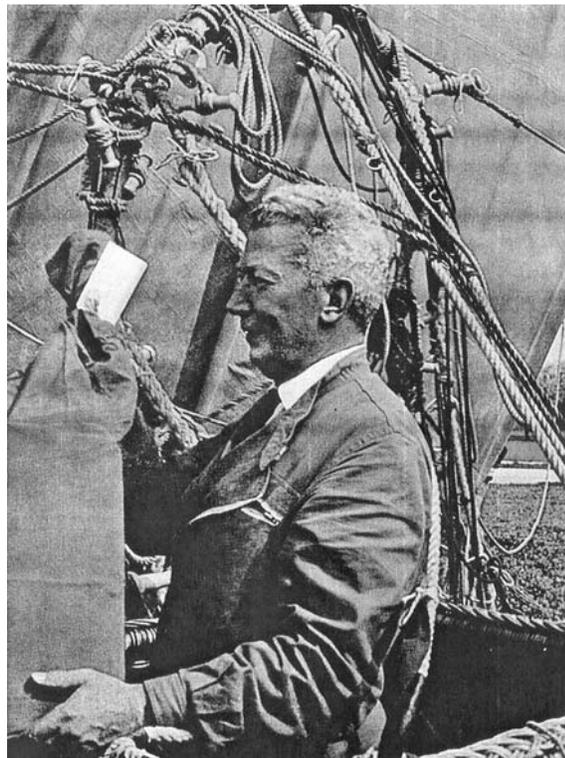


The thirty-third flight

This photograph was on the back of the cards for flight 33 on 14.3.1965 (front shown below); it is of Felix Schmidbauer, who had been the pilot on several previous flights, and was the Secretary of the Pro Juventute organisation. He had died shortly before, and the flights were dedicated to his memory.

Note the complex arrangements of ropes that hold the basket to the balloon! These provide flexibility, and are superior to a rigid system.

The photo also shows a mailbag being loaded into the basket.



Befördert mit Freiballon OE-DZB PRO JUVENTUTE AUSTRIA

R **Modern, Kleinwalsertal**
945

33. BALLONPOSTFAHRT
in memoriam
FELIX SCHMIDBAUER



Bis 10. März 1965 in Österreich
frankiert per Post aufgeben
HALBJAHRESBEITRAG S 10.-
Dieser Brief gilt als Gönner-Ausweis der
ÖSTERREICHISCHEN PRO JUVENTUTE
Nonnbergstiege 2, Salzburg
Spitalgasse 9, Wien IX



350 JAHRE
BARMHERZIGE BRÜDER
IN ÖSTERREICH



ÖSTERREICH
150 JAHRE
ÖSTERR. KUNST IN WIEN
PUBL. IN ÖSTERREICH



OE-DZB
PRO-JUVENTUTE
AUSTRIA
14.3. 1965
**RIEZLERI,
KLEIRWALSERTAL**
IN MEMORIAM
FELIX SCHMIDBAUER

MIT BALLONPOST

----- (thirty-third flight above; forty-second below) -----

VIA AIR MAIL



10c
FIRST MAN ON THE MOON
9
1969
DC



10c
FIRST MAN ON THE MOON
20
1969
USA



5c
JAHRESCHAFT 1969
1919-1969
REPUBLIK ÖSTERREICH

FIRST DAY OF ISSUE



JAHR DER MOND
LANDUNG
42c
BALLONPOST



MARIA NEUSTIFT
30.10.69-19
4443



ALPEN-BALLOSPORT-CLUB-BALLG

5163 MATTSEE
30.10.1969



JAHR DER MONDLANDUNG

Österr. Pro Juventute
Postfach 28
5021 Salzburg
AUSTRIA

MIT BALLONPOST

Diesen Brief befördert der Freiballon D-ERJEE

The forty-second flight

Above is the "moon flight" cover, exceptionally allowed as forwarded mail.

The sixty-second flight

Beginning with Flight 62, October 1979, mail forwarded from and franked with stamps of the United Nations Offices in Vienna was accepted.



The sixty-fifth flight

Filzmoos in Pinzgau has for many winters hosted "international balloon conventions" (with beautiful publicity pictures!) - lying just to the south of the Dachstein, it allows easy flights towards Italy. However the 65th flight illustrates the unpredictability of balloons: two set off together, the hot air one landing at Vogelau bei Abtenau some 20km away, the gas-filled balloon at Tittmoning in Germany, from which the mail was taken back to Ostermiething to the north of Salzburg. (Note the "small triangles" cancel!)



Above, imprinted 2S50 stamp; below, added 1S50 adhesive



The hundredth flight

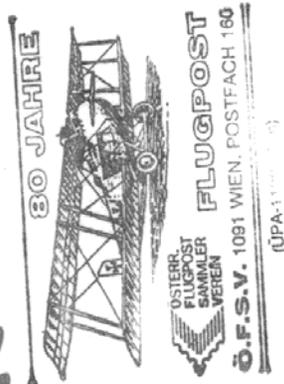
The next (and for this article the last) "normal flight" card is from the 100th flight. The franking of 8Sch is odd; as a non-rectangular card it should strictly speaking carry the full CEPT rate of 14Sch. It celebrates the 100th Pro Juventute postal balloon flight, the 50th year of these flights, and (in the sideways cancellation) 80 years of Airmail.



Diese Karte befördert der Freiballon OE-ZPI



100. BALLONPOSTFLUG 4840 Vöcklabruck
OE-ZPI
**Pro X X X
Juventute**
26.10.1998
Pro Juventute



Herbert Abfalter
Schloßberggasse 6B/1/12
A-1130 Wien / AUSTRIA

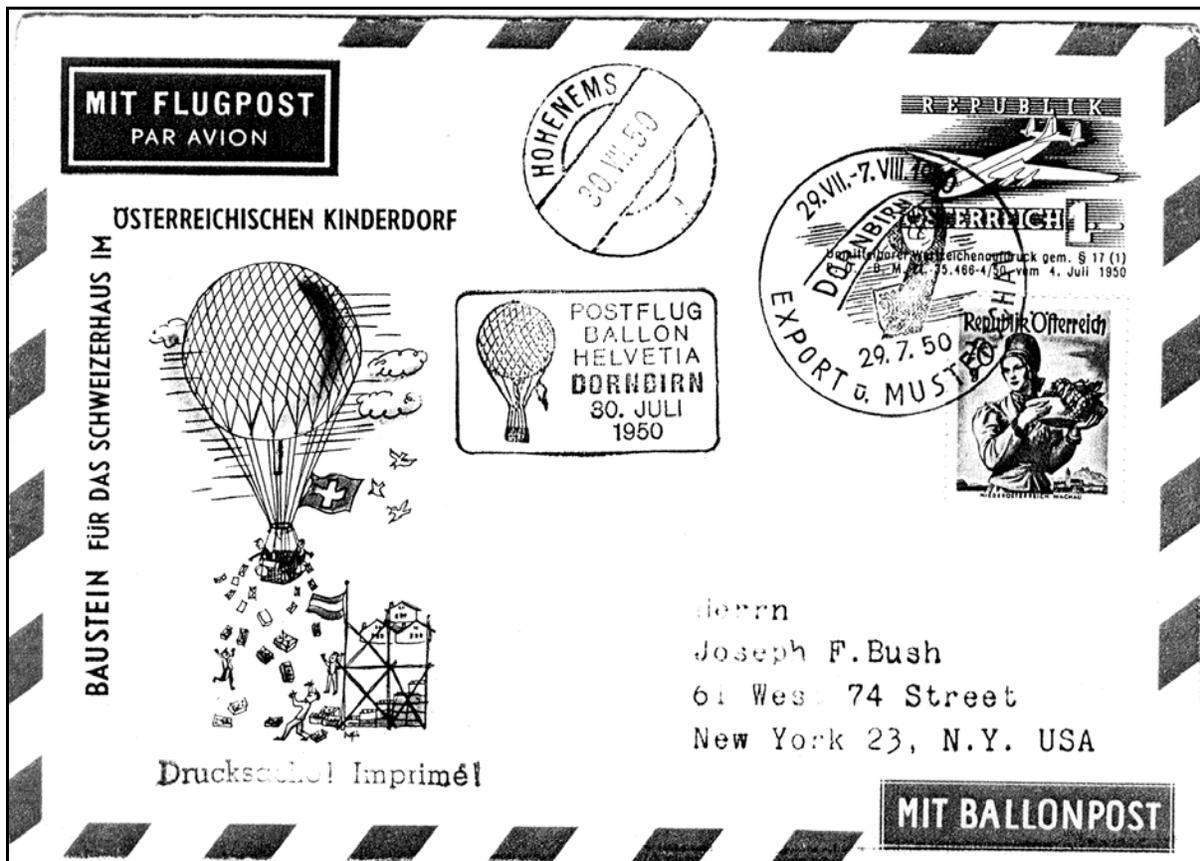
100. Ballonpost
PRO JUVENTUTE KINDERDORFVEREINIGUNG
A-5013 Salzburg, Fach 200

Diese Karte kann bei jedem österreichischen Postamt frankiert unter Umschlag bis zum 15. 10. 1998 und bei der UNO-Postverwaltung, Fach 950, 1400 Wien, bis zum 14. 10. 1998 aufgegeben werden.

BALLONPOST

The first "Sonderflug" - ie special flight

As a result of the financial success of the balloon flights, the Austria Pro Juventute started the so called "Sonderflüge" special flights on 30 July 1950. The first Sonderflug was held in Dornbirn, Vorarlberg in conjunction with an Export Fair, and was conducted for the benefit of the Austrians by the Swiss Pro Juventute. Two types of imprinted stationery were prepared for this flight and 7500 pieces of mail were carried. The Pro Juventute sold a postcard with the 1Sch postal stationery propeller aircraft imprint, and an envelope with the same aircraft imprint plus one of the Karl Renner 1Sch blue stamp (ANK939).



The second Sonderflug

The second Sonderflug was held on 1 Aug 1952 with two balloons making an ascent, "Zürich HB-BIC" and "Helvetia BC-BIS". Two varieties of mail can be found for each balloon (but not in this article!). One is found with adhesive postage only; the second is posted with the "Adreßzettel" imprinted with the 60g and 2S birds series airmail stamps (ANK967 & 969) overprinted for this flight.

The third Sonderflug



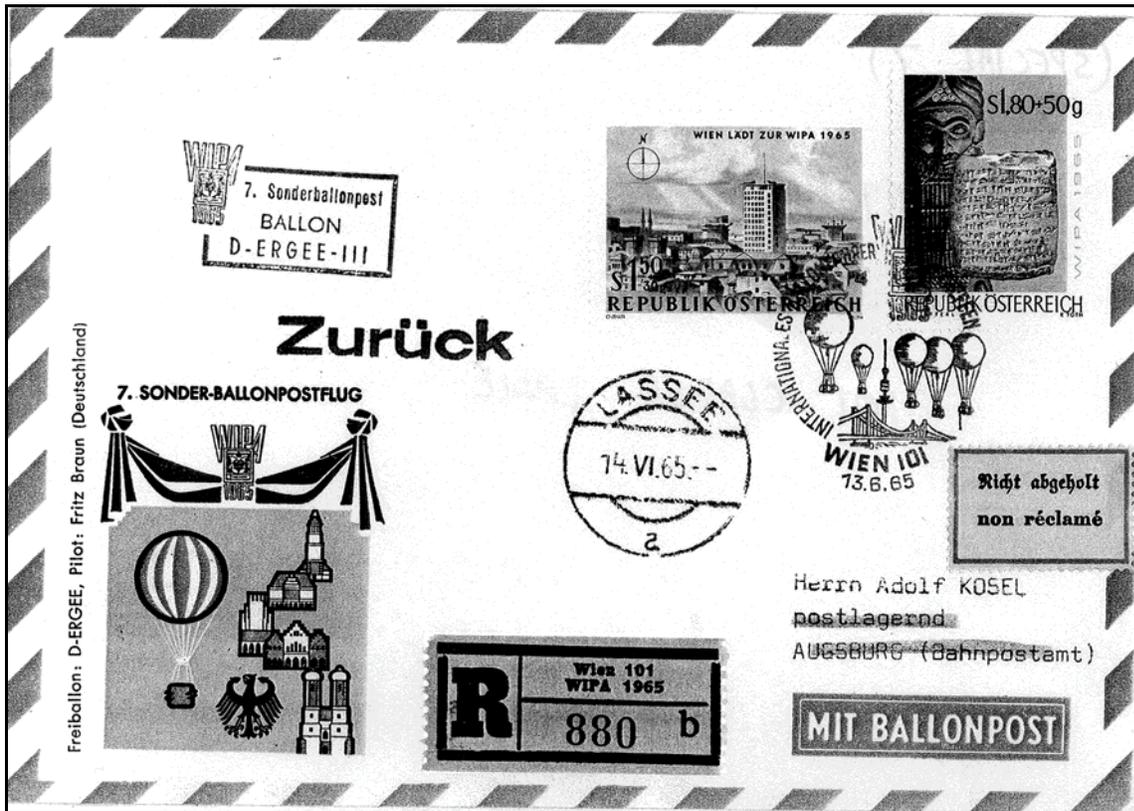
Sonderflug number 3 (above) took place on 15 May 1957 with balloon "OMO OE-DZA". Among the other items carried were "luxury envelopes" imprinted with either a gold, silver or bronze cachet and a registration number, each containing a matching thank-you card with the same number; most of these envelopes were signed by the pilot.

The seventh Sonderflug

The 7th Sonderflug (see next page) involved six balloons, starting in Vienna on 13.6.1965 and landing at various different places.

The twelfth Sonderflug

The passage of the Olympic Flame towards Munich provided the excuse for the 12th Sonderflug, which took off from Kufstein on 24.8.1972 and landed at Reith bei Kitzbuhel.



------(seventh Sonderflug, above; twelfth below)-----



The fifty-fifth Sonderflug



Above is the 55th, on the occasion of the Gmunden stamp exhibition.



Christkindl flights

In 1961 the "Christkindl" Christmas flights began. On 9 December the firm of Ergee sponsored the private flight of the balloon "D-Ergee Augusta IX", with the proceeds going to the Pro Juventute organization. These flight have become an annual event; the second and the third are illustrated below.

The third flight was arranged to take off from Linz and land at Altenberg near Christkindl, so that the special 25.11.1963 Christkindl First Day Cancel could be obtained on the Christmas stamp [ANK1173]. For some reason, a few covers were given the Stamp Day stamp, also issued on that date. And some of these - such as the example below - have a canceller error, making them appear to have been cancelled in 1993 instead of 1963!!

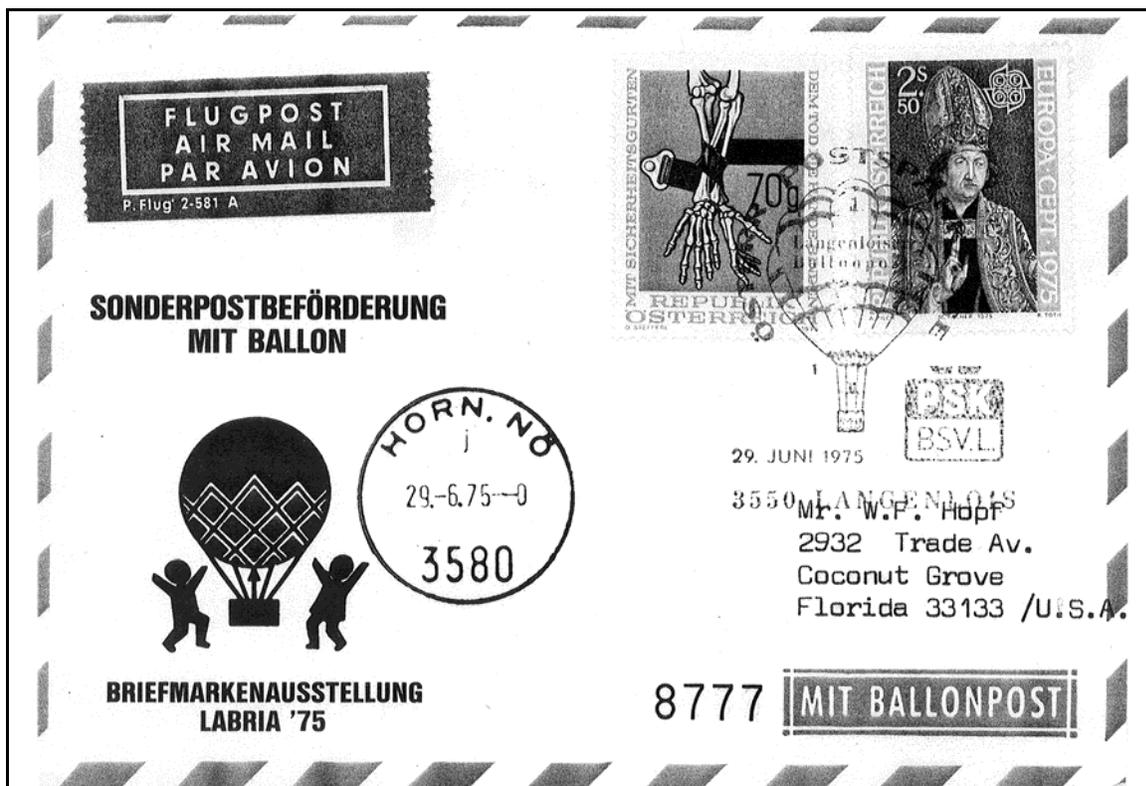


----- (second and third Christkindl flights) -----



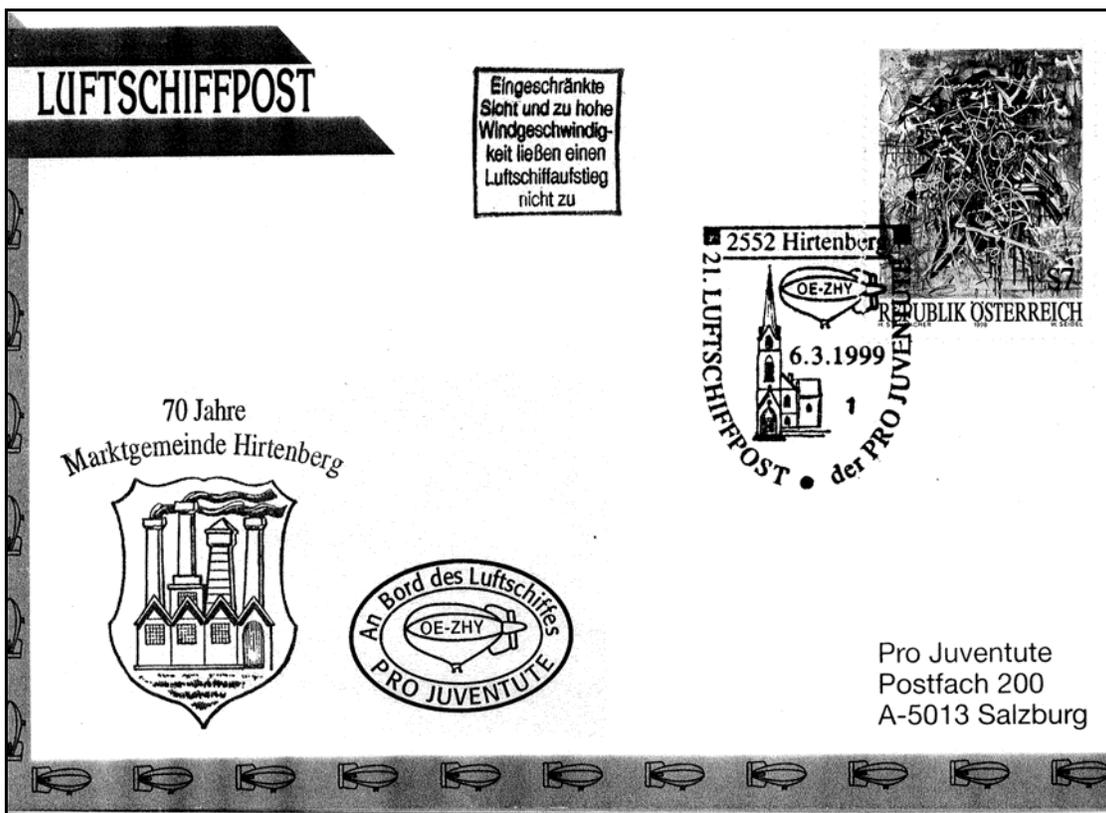
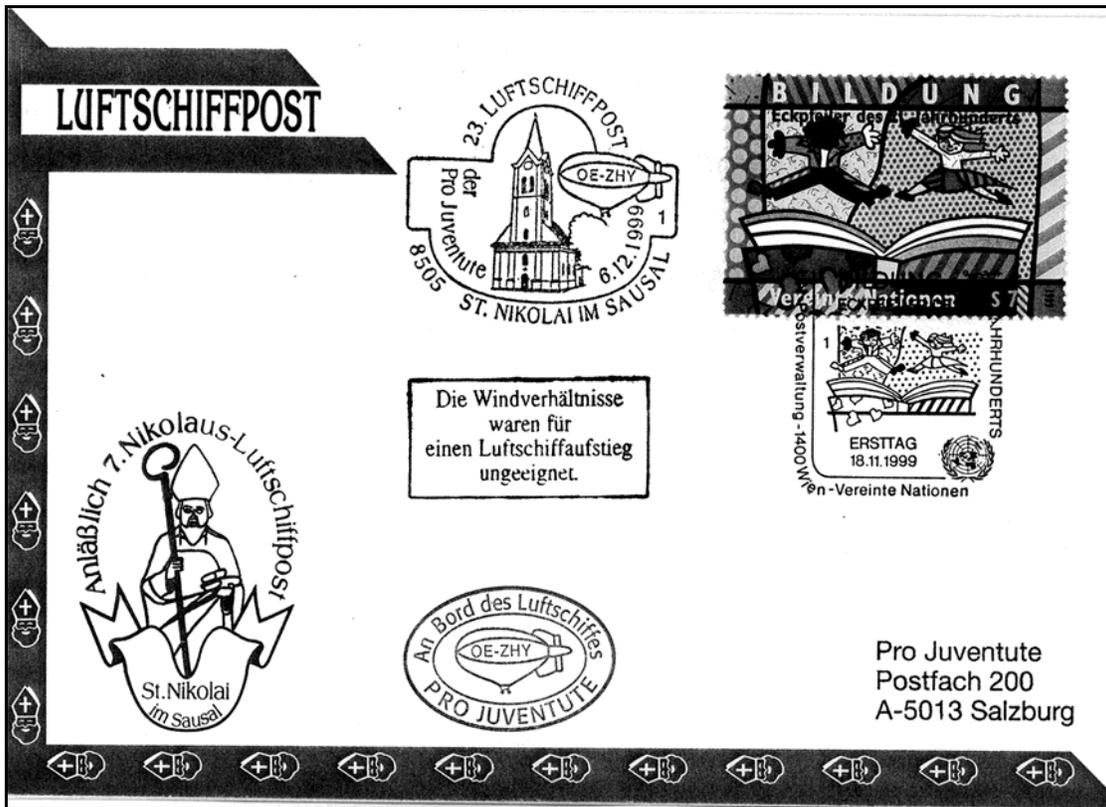
Other official flights

Other official flights began in 1975 with two ascents scheduled in conjunction with philatelic expositions. Below are a card from the flight held during "Wien 75" on 31 May and another from "Labria 75" on 29 June.



Airship flights

There are also 'Pro Juventute' airship flights - these seem, judging by the cachets, even more at the mercy of the weather than are balloons!





SOS Kinderdorf

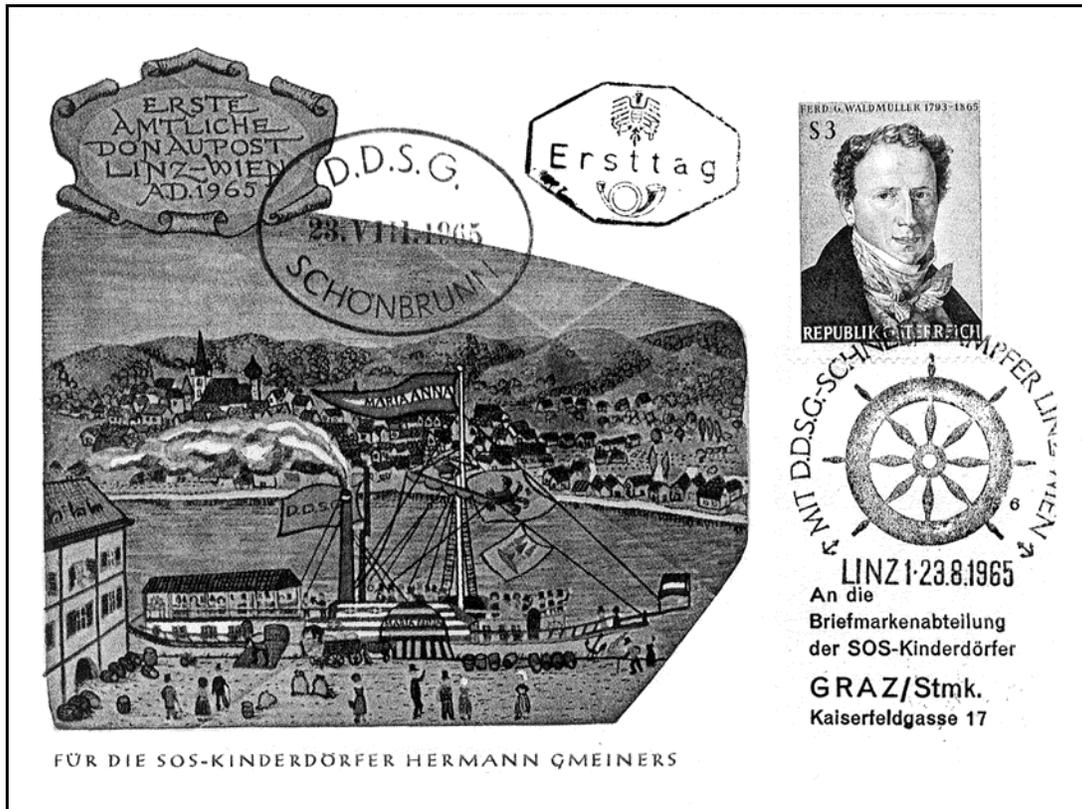
As the "Pro Juventute" seem to have established a monopoly on balloon and airship flights, SOS-K have issued several attractive covers transported by rail, light rail (see page 65!), helicopter or Danube steamship.





An die
 Briefmarkenabteilung
 der SOS-Kinderdörfer
 8 0 1 1 G R A Z





They also instigate souvenir covers and cards: the first example below was sent through Christkindl, the others mark their 15th, 25th and 40th anniversaries.



Ersttag

REPUBLIC ÖSTERREICH
10. ANNIVERSÄRE
3 EUROPA S

6
15 JAHRE SOS-KINDERDÖRFER
HERMANN GMEINER'S IN EUROPA
WIEN 101 • 14.9.1964

**1949-1964
15 JAHRE SOS-KINDERDÖRFER
HERMANN GMEINER'S IN EUROPA**

MIT LUFTPOST
BY AIRMAIL

WIEN-FRANKFURT/M
AUA
BEZUGEN MIT AUSTRIAN AIRLINES OVER EUROPE

FRANKFURT/M-
NEWYORK
AUFTRAGS
USA

A. Fabianek
WORLD'S FAIR/N.Y.
POSTE RESTANTE USA

Ziegeleiende für ein „Briefmarkenhaus“

20 g
FREISTADT
KONIGSTUHL
OBERÖSTERREICH
REPUBLIC ÖSTERREICH

20 g
FREISTADT
KONIGSTUHL
OBERÖSTERREICH
REPUBLIC ÖSTERREICH

**25 JAHRE
SOS-KINDERDORF
OBERÖSTERREICH
4813 ALTMÜNSTER
31. 5. 1981**

INTERNATIONALES JAHR
DES KINDES 1979
s 2.50
REPUBLIC ÖSTERREICH

**40
JAHRE**

2
6460 IMST
24. 6. 1989

SOS-KINDERDORF

Glückwunschbriefe

From the point of view of the imprinted stamps and the stationery, THE place to look is Schneiderbauer [APS library 56]. Envelopes imprinted to private order from the post-WWII period are on pages 42 - 44 of the 1981 second edition, and envelopes imprinted to private order for "airmail" purposes, which includes balloons, on pages 245 and 246. Explanations of the official envelopes and the rates for them are on page 241.

As stated above, Austria ceased imprinting to private order on September 1, 1951, but orders placed by Kinderdorf and approved before that date were delivered for several years afterwards! One of the "prettier" productions is the so-called Glückwunschbriefe. There were seven envelopes, listed on pp 42-43. Later, nos 249 & 252 were "embellished" with an additional cachet and a balloon post label, and they were used for later flights. Glückwunsch letters and cards for an increasing number of other organisations occupy several pages at the back of the ANK catalogue!

Sch	Imprint detail	Illustration
246a	30, 10, 5, 15 Gr Costumes series imprints: brown printing	Butterfly
246b	10, 15, 30, 5 Gr Costumes series imprints: blue-green printing	Rose
247	5, 10, 25, 60 Gr Costumes series imprints	?
248	5, 15, 20, 60 Gr Costumes series imprints	Carnation
249	5, 20, 30, 45 Gr Costumes series imprints	?
250	5, 25, 30, 40 Gr Costumes series imprints	?
252	3, 5 Gr Costumes and 3, 20 Gr Landscape series imprints	?

The first envelope shown below is creamy, with 10g, 15g, 30g, & 5g imprints. The picture is a red rose, and the wording under it is blue-green - this is Sch 246b. Above the imprints is "**Unmittelbarer Wertzeichenaufdruck gem. § 17 Abs 1**" and below "**P.O. gen mit B M ZI 17.811-4/15 vom 25 April 1951**"

The second is much the same but has the 15g, 5g, 20g, & 60g costumes imprints. The words above are the same; below it has "**P.O. gen mit B M ZI 43.218-4/51 vom 29 Aug 1951**". The flower is a red carnation; it is Sch 248. It was used on 11 Feb 1954 from St Martin b Lofer to Holland, and has 1S and 1S45 adhesives added, making a total of 3S45. The letter rate then was 2S40 up to 20 gram, 1S45 for each subsequent 20 gram - had the imprints been invalidated by then?



(The 'crescents' are the visible part of the Dutch postal round delivery mark)

Pro Juventute Baustein

BAUSTEIN
 FÜR EIN PRO JUVENTUTE KINDERDORFHAUS
 »HAUS DER POST«



Mit Genehmigung des Generaldirektors für die
 Post- und Telegraphenverwaltung, Sektionschef Dr. Alfred Schlegel
 BMZl. G 868/1978 – Wien, im Dezember 1978

Druck: Österr. Staatsdruckerei

These are official reproductions of stamps on a special sheet: the one shown above is a copy of the 1978 Christmas stamp and was printed at the State Printing Works in Vienna.

Licht ins Dunkel



This charity also produces flown covers - so far two by balloon (this is the second) and one by helicopter.

And finally..



This Gedenkblatt was issued to commemorate 30 years of the children's village movement using the 'happy childhood' designs of the 13th April 1949 issue [ANK941-944]

NOTES from publications en route to the Library.

by Andy Taylor

The Editor would welcome fuller reviews of any item mentioned here, especially the books, and also of any other item relevant to Austrian Philately. All items below, apart from Czechout & the APS(US) journal, are in German. One transient advantage of the invalidation of nearly all Schilling stamps at the end of 2001 is the interesting range of recent commemoratives used on the journals I receive!

Die Briefmarke

All issues have special cancels; new stamp issues (Austria in detail & European listings); UNO & Germany reports; closures and (rarely) openings of post offices, TPOs, postablages; philatelic gossip etc.

Issue 2/2001: New First Day Cancel design; three changes to 2001 issue programme; Postverordnungsblatt to be discontinued following privatisation (the information now most easily available on the website www.post.at); CV of the special post office "1063 Wien-VÖPh"; 5 of the new Euro definitives to have thematically-appropriate aromatic gum; Schiffspost vs Seepost; The Post In Pinzgau; Blue Mercury; the "Feldpost 4" marking in 1854; new catalogue of 1945 Posthorn series plate faults; index for 2000; photos of Nick's left ear and of MinRat Erich Oberlechner & Christine Steyrer admiring "Austria".

Issue 3/2001: Results of readers vote on "most beautiful" and "most unnecessary" stamp issues in 2000; the overprinted Bat card; decreased printing of two commemorative stamps (because they'll be invalidated when Euro stamps come in); **March Vienna "Numiphil" cancelled, December's planned for the 8th;** philatelic overview of Leibnitz; Austria's oldest fireman?; the 1920 "Spielfeld is free" overprint; Straß in Steiermark; Mureck and Europe's last floating watermill; "Feldpost 4" continued; review of "Brief-& Fahrpost" by P Kainbacher (APS Lib 326A & B) etc

Issue 4/2001: (the 500th issue!) 2001's Tag der Briefmarke minisheet to have 5 stamps and 5 labels; latest instalment of Schilling-Euro changeover confusions; "ZUSTELLBASIS" cancels; new seasonal office opened at Stuben am Arlberg; 50 years of St Gabriel; Gerhart Schmirl (engraver); forged FDC cachet on ANK1026 [the posthorn's coil is 2 concentric unshaded circles]; Austria Post is learning from Britain (Manchester, to be specific) how to cancel horribly.

Arbeitsgemeinschaft Militaria Austriaca Philatelia.

Issue 192: locations of some FPOs as WWI ended; NATO; general air of despondency.

Arbeitsgemeinschaft Feld- und Zensurpost 1914-18

Issue 64: Obituary of Horst Thielk; members wants lists; what's a "Malaria-Marschkompagnie"?; Knockaloe (Isle of Man) POW Camp mail; Territorial-Truppen (6pp); revenue stamps on Fieldpost packet cards (5pp); etc

Arbeitsgemeinschaft Österreich e.V.

Issue 53: Arrival (Bestellt) stamps and their valuation; answers to queries; more horrible cancels from various countries; book reviews; etc

Wiener Ganzsachen F u P-Verein.

Issue 1/2001: FDC of Currency Reform 10 Dec 1947 from Wien 69; Swiss Post International special fast service from selected Italian hotels.

Czechout

Issue 1/2001: many interesting post-1918 articles etc

Interessengemeinschaft Bosnien-Herzegowina

Issue 90: 1871-75 mail to & from Bihać; the assassination in Sarajevo; postal forms to Sandschak; 3Kr first B&H issue with perf 10.

Austria Philatelic Society (US)

Vol 1 No 2: the Vienna-Kiev airmail service continued; Austrian Post Office in Crete; 1890 issue translated from Ferch.2000; disputed colour variations on ANK844, the 1.9.1947 75gr-on-38gr & 140gr-on-16gr overprints; thimble cancels (all with colour illustrations); an Auction to be begun.

Südost-Philatelie

A complete set of back numbers of this, the journal of the Arbeitsgemeinschaft Jugoslawien und Nachfolgestaaten e.V., has arrived (4Kg!) and will join the Journals section of our library. A list of the most interesting topics will appear in a later issue.

Issue 72/2001: classic Montenegro etc

Book reviews.

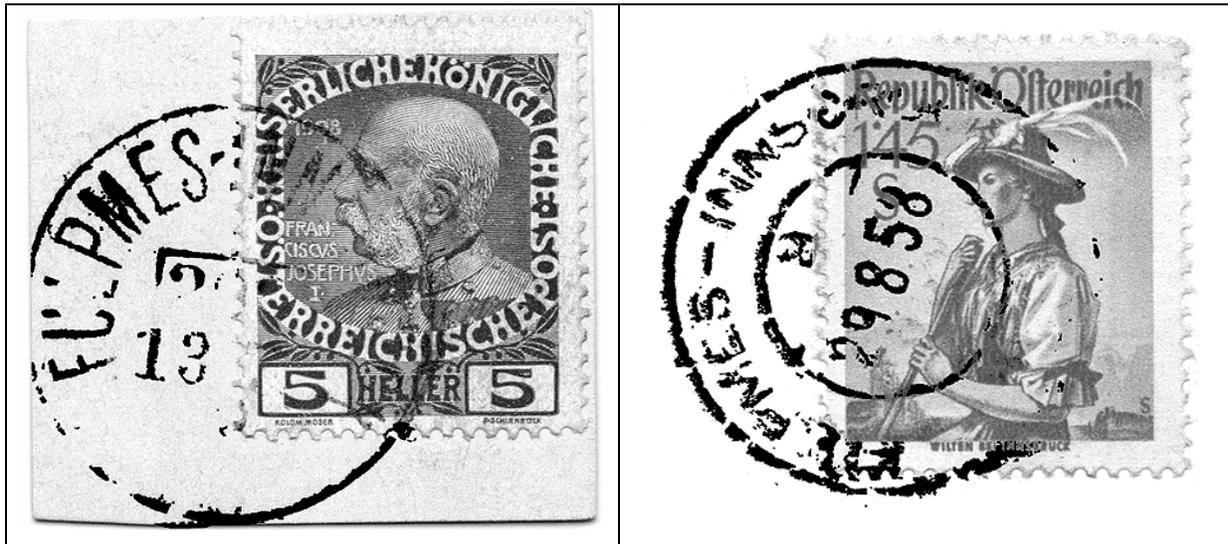
by Andy Taylor

VÖPh-informativ April 2001

Eurochunterings; Special FRAMA labels for Ovebria exhibition?; review of "Austria 1945" by Fritz Sturzeis; meetings reports; Austrian Archive of Postal Treaties is moving to Schenkenstrasse; etc

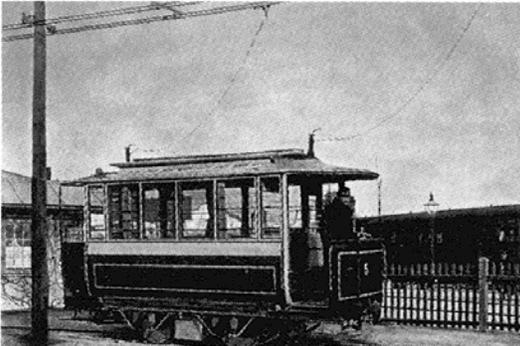
Post und Tram

This 384pp book by Günter H Köhler (written in German with occasional translations from Austrian!) discusses and illustrates the use of "trams" for postal purposes, both for transport of bulk mail by service or special vehicles, and by providing post boxes on the last (eg in Liverpool) or every (eg Huddersfield) tram. His definition of "tram" will displease the purists, as it seems to include all railed vehicles except heavy rail. The coverage of German-speaking countries is substantial, of others more summarised. There are track plans; illustrations both b/w & colour of postboxes on trams; specifically-postal trams; "posted on tram" cancels; and stamps showing trams - a mine of information for the discerning few!



[old and new Stubaitalbahn cancels]

In Austria, I was surprised to see, 42 places or companies provided some postal service, 10 having post boxes on the vehicles. (There were more in 'former Austria' eg Teplitz.) The book discusses the agreements (and the frequent disagreements!) between the postal and the transport authorities. The cancels of the Stubaital line (which is legally a Light Railway) are shown, & a few special cancels (eg Mariazell), but the conclusion reached in Austrias 90/7, 93/9, & 94/27 that "no marking exists which would prove that an item was posted in a box on an Austrian tram" still seems valid for the strict definition of "tram".



LERNT ÖSTERREICH KENNEN!
2340 MÖDLING
 Die alte Babenbergerstadt vor den Toren Wiens war Ausgangspunkt der 1883 in Betrieb genommenen 1. Elektrischen Straßenbahn Österreichs, die im Jahre 1932 eingestellt wurde (Abbildung: Triebwagen 5 – verkehrte von 1883–1903)
 Foto: Museum d. Stadt Mödling 174. Auflage/7

Absender:

Postleitzahl

Postkarte



ERSTTAG

3s

ERSTE ELEKTRISCHE BAHN ÖSTERREICHS

MÖDLING - HINTERBRÜHL 1883

REPUBLIK ÖSTERREICH

MÖDLING - HINTERBRÜHL

BRIEFMARKEN-WERBESCHAU
 Phil. V. Mödling
 VPÖE

2340 MÖDLING - 21.10.1983

Straße, Hausnummer, Stiege und Türnummer oder Postfachnummer

Postleitzahl

Bestimmungsort

Above: commemorative cancel; below: carried on a Light Railway.



**Mit Jubiläumzug
 Salzburg – Lamprechtshausen**



ERSTTAG

REPUBLIK ÖSTERREICH

100-Jahr-Jubiläum der Salzburger Lokalbahn

100 JAHRE SALZBURGER LOKALBAHN

1886 1986

5010 Salzburg
 8. 8. 1986

Mit Jubiläumzug befördert

LAMPRECHTSHAUSEN
 b
 -8.-8.86-17
 5112

An
SOS-Kinderdorf
 8011 Graz

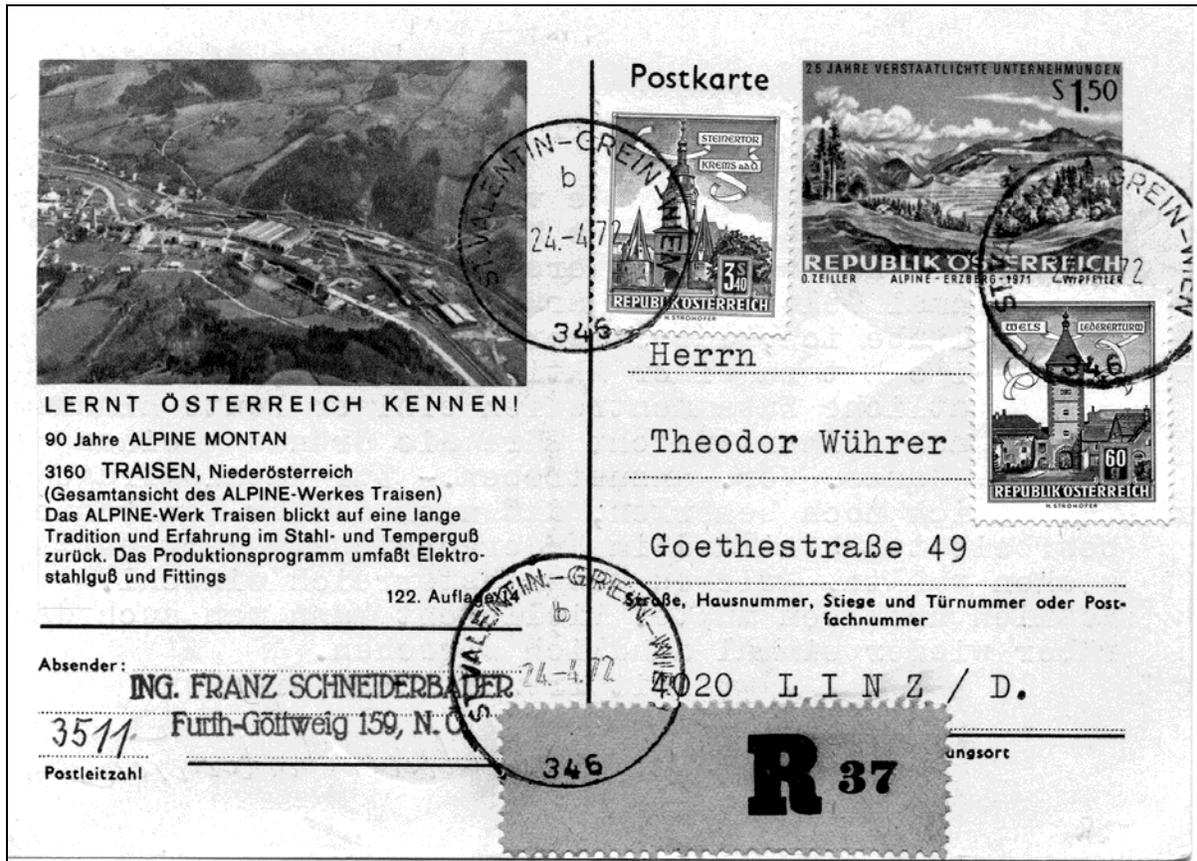
TPO Registration Labels

By Andy Taylor

In "Austria" 132, pages 19-21, I showed examples of the first provisional issue of registration labels in 1945, and commented that "the design reached back

to one which had already been used in the Monarchy and the First Republic for the Railway Post". Four examples of recent TPO labels of exactly the same pattern have been found. The cutting (from a cover of Nick's) has an orange-yellow label and is

dated 19.2.1990; the rest are from Colin Tobitt. The card is "St Valentin - Grein - Wien 346" dated 24.4.72 with a brownish-yellow label; the first letter is "Klagenfurt - Salzburg 900" dated 26.7.68 with a lemon-yellow label; and the second is "Wels - Schärding 470" dated 11.10.66 with a slightly darker lemon yellow label. All the labels are tied to their card/cover with the same CDS as is used to cancel the stamps. None, whether to Austria, Germany or Britain, have any arrival marks on the front or the back.





Questions, Answers, Letters..

A filly miftake

U f g a b s = R e c e p i s s e.



Several kind readers have pointed out that my article on "The Ausgabs-Recepisse form" (Austria 133 pp61-63), although good in parts, suffers from one minor deficiency: the form is actually called the **Aufgabs-Recepisse**.

The third letter is an F in this script, the third-last and second-last are the S. It's clearer if I enlarge them: on the left is the F with a double-sided cross-bar; on the right the S with a single-sided cross-bar.

Forry!

Andy Taylor



And while I'm in *mea culpa* mode.. Austria 132 page 30: "UNRRA" is the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration

Another dumb (cancel) question..

Does anybody know what town or city KLEIN type 689 comes from? It's a Roman IV inside a four leaf clover inside a circle. Known on the 1883 issue.



Forgery or unrecorded overprint?



A reader has lent me a cover with another of the 5Rpf imprints already featured in these pages, but with a Russian (?) overprint. The cancel is dated 24.11.45 and the address is smudged but appears to be Herrn M A Rillen, z.z. Fleischmarkt 11, Wien 1. Is this an unrecorded Russian marking invalidating the stamp, or is it perhaps a

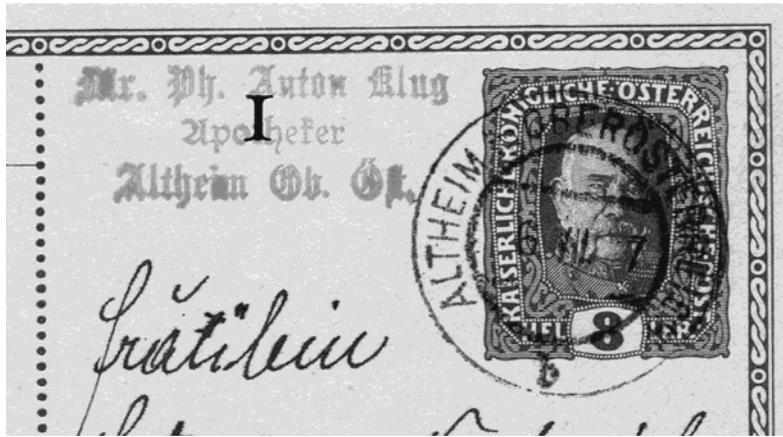
forgery or a propaganda slogan? The enclosed message sheds no light on it.

Postcard queries

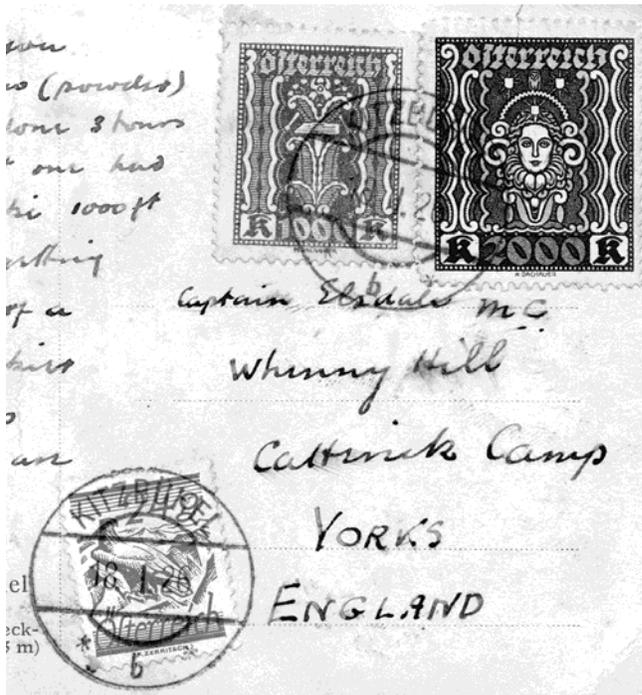
This card is similar to many I have, with a 2H Newspaper Express stamp used to uprate an 8H when the rate changed to 10H. The cancel is KARLSBAD 3 <2a> dated 12.11.19, the stamp is perf 12½, with the St Andrew's Cross an added bonus. It is no doubt philatelic, as there is nothing at all on the card, apart from the seemingly inevitable pencilled packet number



on the rear. ☺ But, **what is the significance of the big II in the same green as the imprinted stamp?** I have only one other like it: it has a Franz Josef imprint,



again in dark green, and the number I; the ring cancel is ALTHEIM # OBEROSTERREICH 6.VII.17. [the '#' may be 'in'] and there are no less than three philatelic scribblings. Is the number a Kaiser-Counter?



My eyes briefly opened wide when I unearthed the next card - an incredibly rare mixed franking? Indeed, it is impossibly rare, as both the cancels are KITZBÜHEL 18.1.26, a date when the foreign postcard rate was 24groschen as paid by the stamp at the bottom, while the Kronen stamps were invalidated on 30.9.1925. The message begins "this is not to make you envious.." but goes on about the excellent ski season. I suspect a philatelist at work (or on holiday)...

Comet overprints on Austrian stamps

From 'somewhere out there' a plaintive email arrives: "Can anyone tell me what the relationship is between Austrian stamps of probably 1919, possibly the early occupation, KuKs I guess and Albanian stamps of 1919 numbers 98-104 with the comet overprint. What is their significance to a comprehensive collection of Austrian/Hungary occupation?"

An Expert replies:

There are two issues of Austro-Hungarian stamps which were overprinted with comets in Albania. These are the issues of August 1916 (13 values; large, wide eagle) and September 1918 (15 values; smaller taller eagle) of fiscal stamps

prepared for use during the Austro Hungarian occupation. (There were also various overprints on Turkish revenues!)

The Comet overprints were handstamped on these in Shkodr (Scutari) and used variously as postage or postage dues during the period of inter-allied occupation Nov 1918 - 11 March 1920. The overprints are discussed (exhaustively) at pages 190 - 202 of "The Stamps and Posts of Albania and Epirus 1878 to 1945" by John S. Phipps (ISBN 0 9527177 2 7) published by the Stuart Rossiter Trust in 1996. This includes plating studies etc etc. The "basic" fiscal stamps are listed (apparently) in the "Alnis Guide to Albanian Revenues" 1987 and in "Illustriertes Handbuch und Preis-Katalog der Stempelmarken von Oesterreich-Ungarn" by Ig. Mayr and L. Hanus, Wien 1929.

Calling our older members..

An example of an Allied Occupation note has come into a member's possession. It's the colour of the old 10/- note, and has a watermark of 4 wavy lines repeated 3½ times on the note. Does anyone know more about these notes - did any of you actually use them?



Dear Editor,

AUSTRIA 133 has arrived & I have as usual some comments - though only three this time.

p.2 It is good to know that the new consumer friendly commercial postal service is making things easier and simpler for the customer by cutting out confusing reduced rates. The old government owned service would never have had enough imagination to appreciate the advantages.

Airmail matters

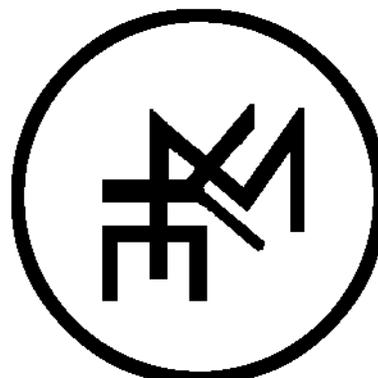
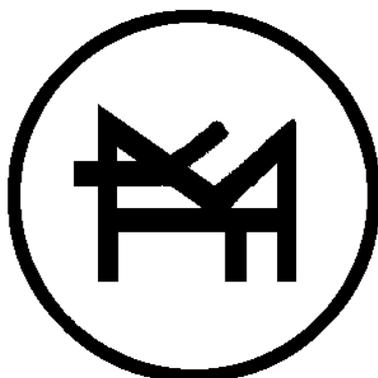
By Andy Taylor

A Greek marking on Austrian mail

During a display of something else, I spotted a strange marking on a cover as we handed the sheets round the table. What was it? Nobody really knew!



Soon afterwards, John Cottrell produced another one, shown here on the right. It is similar, but different in details.



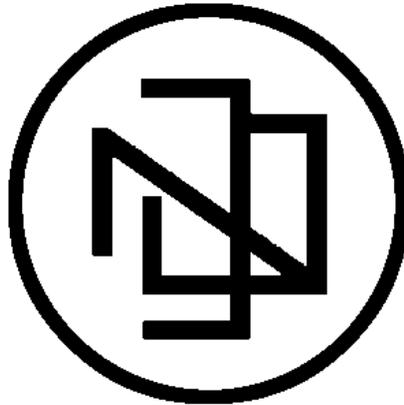
These marks turn out to be **Greek currency control marks!** In the later 1930s, letters from Austria to the British Empire were transferred at Athens to Imperial Airways (see Kohl [APS Library 311] for flight details). On rare occasions, they were mis-sorted and got into the internal Greek system; the control office sometimes added an Athens backstamp "ATHINAI". They are also known on incoming mail. They are rare - at least, only some 24 are recorded, although there must be many others lurking in collections on other themes.

For example, the cover that heads this piece is in an Anschluss collection. It is also (I am reliably told) a textbook example of rates in what has been called period II. The total franking is 108 groschen. In period II, the basic rates were German, but the supplementary rates still Austrian. The basic rate for a foreign letter was 25 pfennig, which is 38 groschen. The airmail surcharge to Southern Rhodesia was 70 groschen. Total (fanfare, please!): 108 groschen. For a cover that at first glance looks philatelic, WOW!



Above is the statutory example from Kitzbühel... This began its travels in Southern Rhodesia, and flew to Athens, where it acquired a currency control mark on the front. The stamps on the front are cancelled "MARANDELLAS / 21 FEB 1938 / S. RHODESIA". On the back (illustrated below) is an Athens

transit cancel "ATHINAI / I.III.1938 19"; a faint Vienna segment cancel "1 WIEN 1 / b 2.3.38.19 * / FLUGPOST"; a heavier ditto with the clear but improbable date 32.3.1938; and a Kitzbühel bridge arrival cancel "KITZBÜHEL / 3.III.38-8 / *b*". Here is the control mark, enlarged.



And the rear of the cover:



That Europe - South America Air Mail cachet

In Austria 133 (page 67), I described the special red cachet **DEUTSCHE LUFTPOST / EUROPA-SÜDAMERIKA** depicting a Dornier Wal seaplane and a Zeppelin airship appearing from a cloud over the sea. This was used on the "Magic Carpet" service to South America. I added that the lower case 'b' after Südamerika signified that the cover went via Berlin. Mag. W Falter of the Wiener Ganzsachen Frei- und Poststempelsammlerverein writes to point out that this isn't accurate. My reading of Kohl on Zeppelin flights is that the letters do distinguish the cancelling office, but the rules changed between 1934-5 and 1936-7; for aeroplanes it's less clear. Scope for a further article!

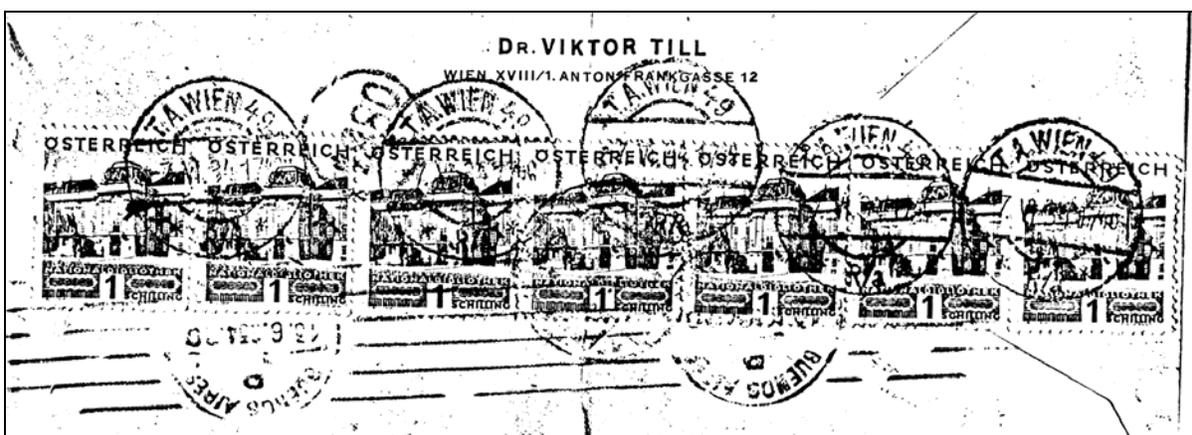
Mag. Falter also sends a mouthwatering selection of copies of relevant covers, with explanations of the rates, which I reproduce below - my thanks! The first is Salzburg to Montevideo, Uruguay, on 17 Aug 1937, registered, die letter '*'. It weighed 40 gram (handwritten at the top); the rate was 3S50 per 5 gram = 28S. In addition there was a surcharge for a foreign letter of 0.6S plus a surcharge on the surcharge of 0.35S because it was over 20 grams. The registration fee was 0.7S. Total 29S65. It carries 10+5+5+5+2+2+0.6+0.05 makes 29S65! Lets see.. commercially used 10S Dolfuss on registered cover.. Gulp!



Next is Wien to Argentina, 10 gram; die letter 'b'; rate 3S80 per 5gm = 7S60, plus 0.6S foreign letter and 0.7S foreign registration makes 8S90. It carries 5+3+0.5+0.2+0.2=8S90.



The next cover is Wien to Argentina via Friedrichshaven; this time the die letter is 'b'. Rate 15 grams at 3S80 per 5 grams = 11S40 plus 0.6S Foreign Letter fee makes 12S. This is paid with seven 1-Schilling stamps on the back..



...and 2+2+1 on the front!



The next went via Friedrichshafen; the cachet has the die letter 'c'. The postage calculation is written under the leftmost cancel, and is 3S80 for up to 5 gram plus 0.6S for a foreign letter, making 4S40. It carries 1+1+2+0.5=4S50, probably because it was posted on the St Polten - Leobersdorf - Wien TPO.



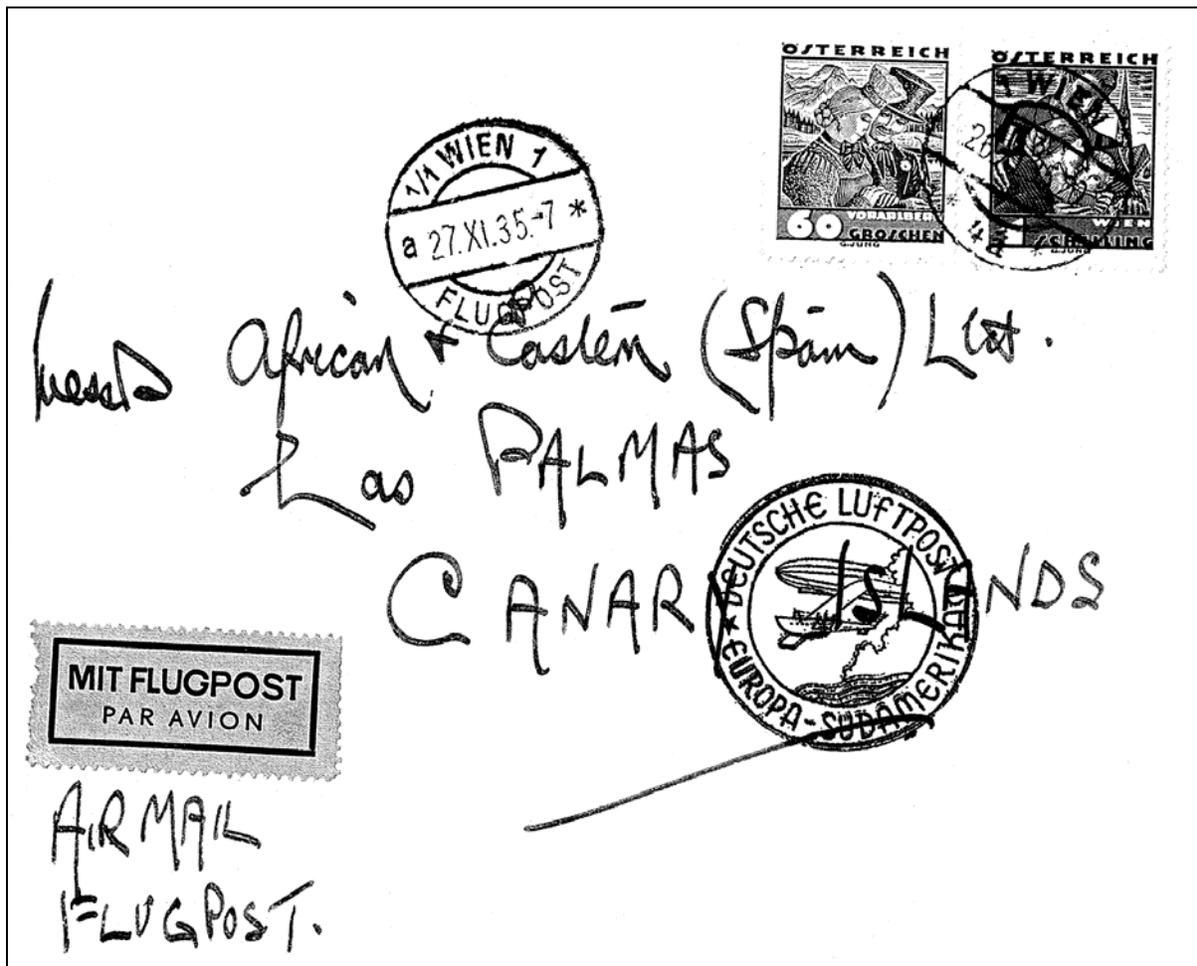
Finally from Mag. Falter, a 25 gram letter from Wien to Buenos Aires in Argentina on 14 July 1937. Rate 5 x 5gr at 3S50 = 17S50 plus foreign letter at 0.6S and heavy item surcharge at 0.35S: total 18S45. It carries 1+2+5+10+0.3+0.15 = 18S45. Die letter '*'. There's a rather nice Wien Flugpost cancel in the centre!



This example from Gerry Roberts is cancelled BADGASTEIN 1 1.V.37, with 2x2Sch ANK609 and BUENOS AIRES 9.5.1937 VIA AEREA arrivals on the back; the Deutsche Luftpost is red with a star.



And this from John Janaway - a cover from Wien to, unusually, the Canaries; the Deutsche Luftpost is red with an 'e'. This was a stop on the Stuttgart - Natal aeroplane route, which began operations on 28.4.1934.



Yet another unusual marking

A couple of probably-philatelic covers have been sent to me, with assorted cancels indicating that they travelled from Wien to Africa in 1932. They have a blue crayon mark like a division sign on both sides (converted into a heavy black in the illustrations), are addressed to the same person (T S Davis?), and have the violet name-&-address stamp of Inspektor Georg Sobetzky. There is 4x30=120 groschen on the front and 2x5=10 on the back. They also have Sudan Air Mail stamps on three of the sides, but not the fourth; these have been carefully ignored by the Austrian Post - indeed, I cannot tell if they were originally present, or were added in transit or on arrival.

The main question is, **what is the blue mark?** Registration? 'Please return' (but there's no signs of return cancels)? A transit mark? Something else? Kohl has three such marks, on illustrations of items to Rome (27.14c, p52: a Graz-Rome

flight on 6.9.1927; not registered), to Tunis (34.103A1, p70: Wien-Rome-Tunis on 1.5.1934; not registered; but the envelope is stamped INCONNU and RETOUR A L'ENVOYER) and to Capetown (32.101A1, p66: this is a third example of the two Sobetzky covers shown below!), but Kohl does not discuss what they are. My informant says this mark does not appear on covers (philatelic or otherwise) to India, Asia, the Antipodes or the USA. I have the Strong Suspicion that the items are entirely philatelic, the addressees fictitious, and the division sign a pre-arranged code for their immediate return.

The first is routed Brindisi-Khartoum-Windhoek [which is in South West Africa]; it was cancelled in Wien 51 on 19.1.1932, Wien Flugpost 20.1.1932, Alexandria on 23.1.1932, Kimberly on 2.2.1932, and Windhoek on 9.2.1932. That's 21 days! According to my reading of Kohl (page 66) this mail was "unofficial" (not announced in the Postverordnungsblatt), and it connected somehow with a flight originating in London (mail coming back went by train from Brindisi to Wien) and going Brindisi-Athens-Alexandria-Cairo-Nairobi-Broken Hill-Salisbury-Johannisburg-Kimberly-Cape Town but not Khartoum.

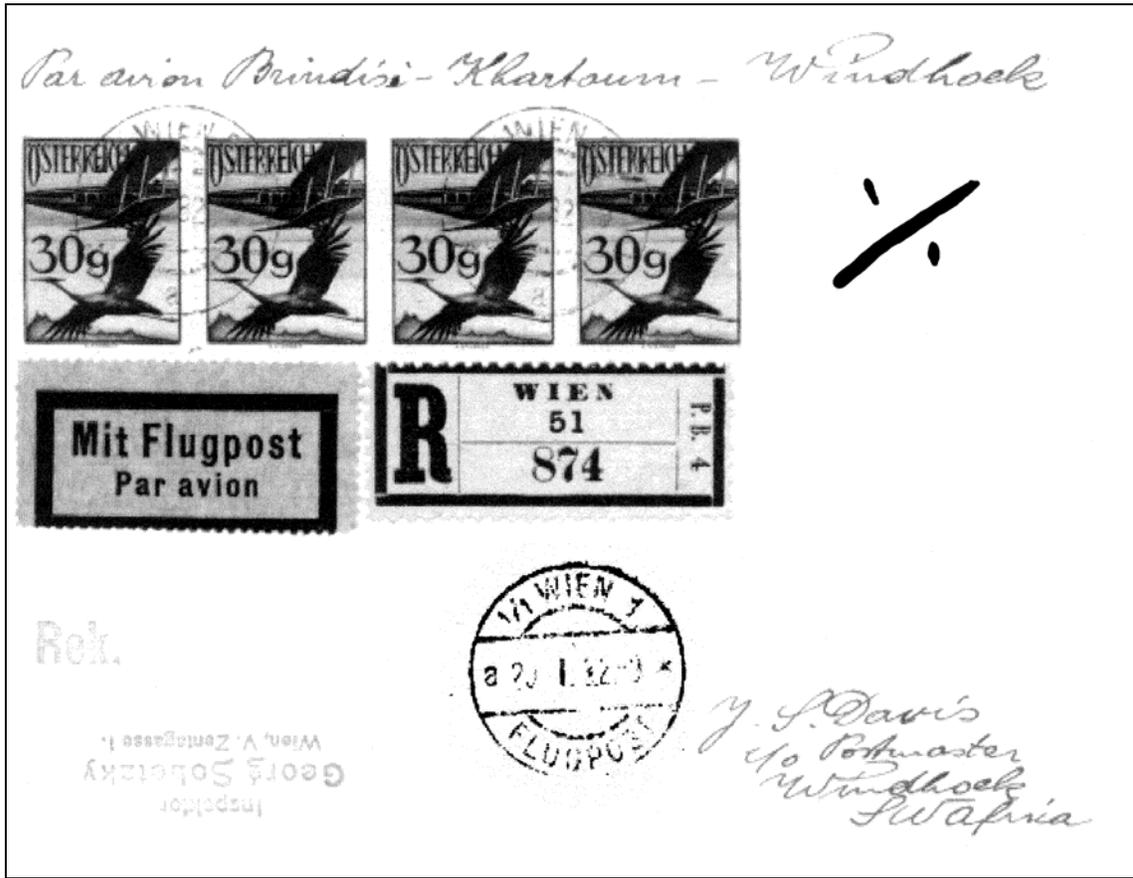
The second is routed Brindisi-Khartoum-Dodoma [in Tanganyika]; presumably it went on the same plane. It was cancelled in Wien 51 on 19.1.1932, Wien Flugpost 20.1.1932, Alexandria on 23.1.1932, and Dodoma on 28.1.1932. That's only 9 days!

Philatelic Mail Rules OK!

As I was writing this article, two issues of "Neues für Philatelisten" arrived, with information on the First Flight Cancel for Wien-Toronto on 28.4.2001 and a special Grußflugpost for NAPSTA 2001. Both have complex and detailed instructions on how to prepare an envelope, with delivery addresses of 'Herr Bloggs, Poste Restante



Restante, GPO, Toronto, Ontario, Canada' and 'Herr Bloggs, Poste Restante, D-42103 Wuppertal 1, Deutschland'. You are to write your own name & address on the reverse at the top - there's even a diagram of an envelope for those who cannot find the top. Letters from outside Austria need additional stamps from their country of origin. "Erstflug Wien-Toronto der Austrian Airlines" must appear at the top left of the front. The system then takes over, and your envelope, with the special cancellation, will eventually reach you - hopefully without biro cancellations, "Not Known Here", Great Green Labels and similar intrusions as happened to some of the WIPA covers!

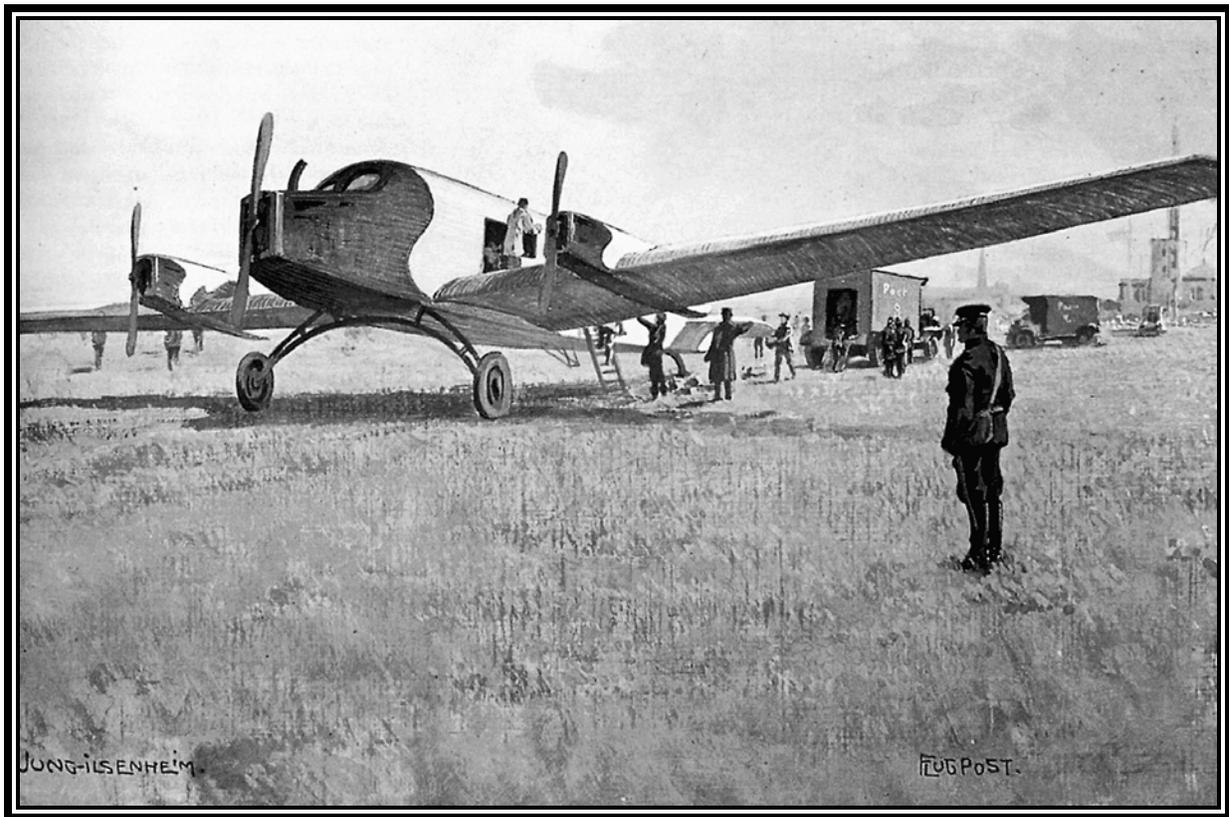


Cover 1 - front (above) and back (below)



Memories of Aspern..

This is available (in colour) from the "Bildarchiv" section of the Post.at web site, and shows mail being loaded on to a plane at Aspern.



And to conclude this article, here's the stamp just issued by Austria on 20 April 2001 for the 75th anniversary of Salzburg airport (it has been updated since!)

