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Edited by Andy Taylor

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A Presidential Plea

Did you see it? In the newsletter. *“From the Auctioneer: My present intention is to vacate the auctioneer’s post at the 2021 AGM. It will be most helpful if a willing volunteer is in place before then, ideally taking over on 1 April 2021 when the financial year begins, so that a smooth transition can be achieved.”*

Or at the end of the on-line Maps Auction list: **“MY PRESENT INTENTION IS TO VACATE THE AUCTIONEER’S POST AT THE 2021 AGM”**

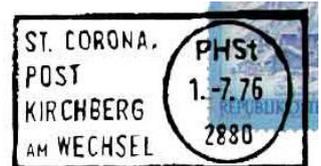
Yes, Martin is retiring, and unless someone new comes forward **THERE WILL BE NO MORE AUCTIONS.**

It’s not a trivial job: you need time and space, a reasonable general knowledge of Austrian philately, internet access, and a modicum of spreadsheet ability. You must live in Great Britain because of insurance, banking, and postal cost requirements. Existing and past Officers will offer support leading up to and (if requested) subsequent to any change over. The reward is that you are providing one of the essential services to the membership.

For preliminary discussions and more details, get in touch with Martin Brumby or Andy Taylor (addys on inside back cover).

Editorial 211

“Events, dear boy, events” ... The advent of the Covid-19 virus has had a major impact on philately. This is perhaps one of the human race’s lesser problems, but the carefully-planned devotion of the Days of Lockdown to sorting, listing and mounting was handicapped by the closure of stationery shops – some of us had no paper to mount **on!** The Committee have had to invoke Rule 27 which gives it “*power to act in all matters not covered by the foregoing Rules*” – similar to the Henry VIII Powers beloved of governments!



The Rules prescribe that Honorary Life Membership shall be awarded by the Annual General Meeting on the nomination of the committee. However 2020 is different: Corona virus precludes holding a conventional AGM, or indeed a Fest weekend. The committee have decided to make the awards forthwith. So we welcome our two latest **Honorary Life Members** – Colin Tobitt and Martin Brumby. See the next two pages!

Eminent historians have proclaimed the End Of History; philatelic pundits have stated that There Is Nothing Left To Publish. Yet the APS is still here, and has every intention of continuing. The Austrian Stamp Club of Great Britain, our predecessor, was founded on 1st January 1948, around the time some of us were starting school, so will celebrate its 75th anniversary on 1st January 2023. We plan to celebrate this with a **Festschrift**, composed mainly of single pages from as many members as wish to contribute, describing and illustrating some choice item from their collections. See page 43 for more details.

And talking of publishing, a small team is assiduously working on “**The philatelic history of pre-stamp Austria, 1490-1850**”. That’s Austria as it was then, rather larger than today. The first Postal Decree was issued by Kaiser Karl VI in 1722 when he decided to “take back control” of the postal system from the Taxis and Paar families: so 2022 is its 3rd centenary. We plan to mark it with a comprehensive illustrated study, of approaching 200 sides – so it’ll be a book, not an overweight special issue of this journal.

Earlier this year Stanley Gibbons ran an on-line competition for a single page showing “philatelic items that opened a window into a significant historical moment”. Our member Keith Brandon was named as overall winner with his entry “The Sad Story of Nurse Albine Pecha”, reproduced on page 44.

Andy Taylor

“Glücklich ist / Wer vergisst / Was doch nich zu ändern ist”.

Laureation for Colin Tobitt

Further reading:
Austria 186 pp 34-44;
Austria 196 pp 4-19;
and much more!



Colin Tobitt, member since from, Auctioneer 1999-2013, Chairman 2013 onwards, Festmeister außerordentlich.

The Committee has unanimously decided to offer Honorary Life Membership to Colin Tobitt in recognition of his decades of service to the Austrian Philatelic Society and its predecessors, and to British Philately. Colin has been Chair of the Kent Federation, and for many years worked as a volunteer ‘back room boy’ for the Expert Committee of the RPSL. He has also spent many lonely hours collecting, assembling, erecting, filling and sheeting display frames for Stampex, London Internationals, etc – and when everybody else had gone home reversing the process, finally loading several tons of aluminium and perspex into a lorry and taking them to darkest docklands.

Colin was born in March 1942, so like me is older than the NHS. After attending a technical school he served a six-year apprenticeship as a compositor in a firm of fine colour printers. After several years as a journeyman he recognised that the art of letterpress was being replaced by computers; however he retained the compositor’s ability to read documents upside-down! He changed trade to carpentry and building instead.

Like many of us, Colin’s interest in stamps began when he was 10 years old. An all-world collection was rationalised to a commonwealth and GB collection, then sold. The hobby lay dormant for a number of years. Colin reconnected with Austria during the 1960s, and found the country had a distinct beauty, which he soon discovered was manifested in its stamps. He appreciated the design and fine art work, due to his previous involvement with colour printing. Once again stamp collecting took over, and he accumulated a large Austrian collection. Colin has become our go-to-person for any trivial or obscure question regarding Postage Dues.

Andy Taylor,
President.

Laureation for Martin Brumby



See also AUSTRIA
188 (Winter 2014)
page 11 ☺

The Committee has unanimously decided to offer Honorary Life Membership to Martin Brumby in recognition of his decades of service to the Austrian Philatelic Society and its predecessors.

Born in Chatham, Kent on 13th August 1947, Martin joined the ASCGB in 1982 and was appointed secretary in 1985. He was appointed Chairman in 1995 when the late John Giblin wanted a deputy. Martin has been President, Packet Secretary, General Secretary, and Auctioneer – everything except Treasurer and Librarian, I believe. And Sheriff of York, in 2003: he held an APS meeting in the Mansion House of York!

Martin was a Civil Engineer with British Coal, and shortly before he was made redundant realized that he was the only person left in Great Britain with the qualifications and knowledge needed to sink a mine shaft. He justified the somewhat large vehicle he used to drive on the grounds that he needed to be able to get speedily to the top of every coal-mine tip in the country.

His technical background equipped him for digging into the obscurest corners of philately – his displays of revenue material are renowned, even if most of the items are inconveniently large and usually in some eastern European language which he reads fluently. Meetings in his house used to be enlivened by one of his cats, which (as they do) selected the least cat-friendly attendee for special attention.

In the 1980s Martin developed a special interest in the cancellations of Dalmatia – he had hitch-hiked in that area when younger. Müller and Klein stop at 1900, so he approached the APS librarian to borrow a book that continued the story up to 1918. The answer was, if you want it then write it. So he did, building a database of the 220 offices, and in 1997 the 189-page “Dalmatia” appeared, followed by a supplement in 2008.

Martin continues to be a welcome source of knowledge and opinion on a wide range of philatelic matters.

Andy Taylor,
President.

AFTER LEMBERG: EMBERS OF EMPIRE ¹

by Inger Kuzych

The 20th century postal history of Lemberg following the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Empire is complex and fascinating and could easily fill several volumes. Six distinct successor periods of political control may be identified, leading off with a short-lived Ukrainian period. It was at this time that the city, renamed Lviv, served as the capital of the newly proclaimed Western Ukrainian National Republic for a three week period (1-21 November 1918).

Subsequently, over the next two decades, the city was one of the largest urban centers in the Second Polish Republic, and served as the capital of a voivodeship (province) bearing its new name of Lwow (second period). On 22 September 1939, Soviet troops entered the city which they would occupy for almost two years under the Russian designation of Lvov (third period). During the German Nazi occupation (30 June 1941-27 July 1944) the city once again acquired the appellation of Lemberg, but its status was reduced to that of a provincial city within a Generalgouvernement administrative region of the Third Reich (fourth period).

The Soviets reoccupied the city during the summer of 1944 and for almost a half century Lemberg became the administrative center of Lviv Oblast in the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic within the USSR (fifth period). During this time the city officially was referred to by its Russian name of Lvov, but within the western half of the Ukrainian SSR it was always just Lviv. That name was retained after Ukraine attained independence on 24 August 1991 (sixth period).

This article will focus on the first two of the successor periods, the Western Ukrainian National Republic and the Polish Second Republic, when various elements of the Austro-Hungarian postal system – the “Embers of Empire” – can still be detected.

Establishing the Western Ukrainian National Republic

During the closing weeks of World War I (late October-early November 1918), various nationalities within the Austro-Hungarian Empire began to declare themselves independent. On 19 October, a Ukrainian National Council – consisting of Ukrainian deputies and representatives to various Austrian assemblies – formally declared the Ukrainian lands of the Empire (i.e., all of eastern Galicia, northern Bukovina, and Transcarpathia) to be a separate Ukrainian State.

Galicia, the largest crownland (province) within the Austrian half of the Dual Monarchy, was almost equally divided along ethnic lines. The western half was overwhelmingly Polish, while the eastern half was predominantly Ukrainian. The larger cities in eastern Galicia, including its capital of Lemberg, contained Polish majorities, but these were enveloped by the solidly Ukrainian countryside – a situation that has been described as Polish islands within a Ukrainian sea.

During the early morning hours of Friday, 1 November 1918, Ukrainian military units in the city of Lemberg, as well as throughout east Galicia, carried out an audacious and bloodless coup d'état, seizing all of the important governmental and municipal institutions. The action was carried out at the behest of the Ukrainian National Council, to forestall a transfer of power by Austrian authorities to the Poles as had been agreed to for that day. On 9 November the name of the new state was proclaimed as the Western Ukrainian National Republic (ZUNR); the name was formalized by the new Western Ukrainian legislature on the 13th of November. Lemberg now went by its new (ancient) Ukrainian name of Lviv. The territory of the Western Ukrainian National Republic was limited to eastern Galicia, as the other two Ukrainian-populated areas of the Austro-Hungarian Empire did not link up with it. Northern Bukovina was quickly occupied by Romania in November of 1918, while Carpathian

¹ This article serves as a companion piece to my earlier submission to *Austria* “Before Lemberg: The Development of the Mail System in Central Europe and the Beginnings of the Postal Service in Lwow (Lviv)” that appeared in issue 182 (Summer 2013). In addition, it functions as an epilog to my book, *Lemberg: Cosmopolitan Crownland Capital of the Austrian Empire* released in 2014. A few copies of the full-color, glossy book are still available at half price to Austrian Philatelic Society members and may be purchased for \$35 (postpaid to US members; overseas members, please inquire about postage costs) at: Inger Kuzych, P.O. Box 3, Springfield, VA 22150; ingert@starpower.net .

Ukraine, long under Hungarian rule, eventually joined the newly formed Czechoslovak Republic as an autonomous province (shown striped in [Figure 1](#)).



Organizing the Posts

Following the coup, a policy of ukrainianization was implemented in governmental and administrative institutions, which also included all post offices. Although the organization of the postal services remained the same as under the Austrian regime, they were now run by a ZUNR Secretariat (Ministry) of Post and Telegraph, which at the beginning of January 1919 came under the purview of the Secretariat of Railroad, Post, and Telegraph. The first State Secretary (Minister) of the Post was Aleksander Pisetsky.

The first post office to reopen in the city of Lviv was on Volova Street. (During Austrian times this post office had used the cancel and designation “LEMBERG 8 - LWOW 8”.) Ukrainianization proceeded quickly at this locale since, by fortunate coincidence, all postal workers there were Ukrainian. This post office served not only the environs of Lviv, but areas east and southeast along the rail line Lviv-Pidhaitsi.

Initially, available Austrian stamps were used for mailings. They were canceled by an oblong rubber device without a dateline and with a one-word Ukrainian inscription, “Л’ВІВ” (L’VIV), using violet ink. The dimensions of the rubber impression were 32.5 mm in length, 3 mm in height, and 5 mm between individual letters of the inscription. This marking is extremely rare – only four instances of use have been documented; a faint example may be seen in [Figure 2](#).



Production of the Lviv Issue

In order to prepare distinct Western Ukrainian stamps, Deputy State Secretary of the Post, Volodymyr Holovatsky, authorized the overprinting of Austrian stamps. The Ministry ordered a single-impression metal handstamp made at an Appel firm in Lviv. The image consisted of the Ukrainian words “ЗАХ. УКР. НАРОДНА РЕПУБЛИКА” (ZAKHIDNO UKR. NARODNA REPUBLIKA; Western Ukr[ainian] National Republic) and a crowned rearing lion inside an eight-sided frame. The outer shape was used to conform to the octagonal frame design then found on most Austrian stamps (**Figure 3**).



Stamps selected for overprinting were the 3-, 5-, and 10-heller values of the 1916 Austrian definitive issues featuring the imperial crown, and the 20-heller Emperor Karl Issue of 1917; the original values were retained (**Figure 4**). Overprint impressions were made with black ink. Red and violet overprints are also known, but these are considered to be essays (trials). Impressions in violet black ink are most likely transitional color impressions.



The quantities produced for the four stamps were as follows: 3 heller (purple) - 2,200 copies; 5 heller (yellow green) - 3,400 copies; 10 heller (magenta) - 6,700 copies; and 20 heller (green) - 8,000 copies. In addition to the normal slate green 20-heller type, a small quantity of a light green variety was also overprinted. The total number of stamps amounts to 20,300 on 812 panes, each of 25 stamps; the total value was 250,600 heller, or 2,506 kronen.

During the first couple of weeks in November of 1918, Polish resistance to the Ukrainian takeover of Lviv intensified dramatically. Battles raged in different parts of the city. Particularly targeted were transportation and communication centers, so the railroad station and Main Post Office became areas of extremely heavy fighting. At one point the Main Post Office was even set on fire. **Figure 5** shows the bullet-scarred façade of the Post Office, while **Figure 6** depicts interior damage to the telegraph section of the Post Office.



By the middle of the month a firmly established line, secured with barbed wire, divided the city. Both sides were exhausted and a three-day (18-20 November) cease fire was agreed upon. It was apparently during this time that the Lviv Issue stamps were created. It was on Wednesday the 20th of November that the newly overprinted stamps reportedly were delivered for postal dissemination, but no postally used items are known from Lviv.

During this time the Poles were able to receive substantial reinforcements via rail when a relief detachment – consisting of over 1,200 men, 140 officers, and 8 field guns – broke through the Ukrainian encirclement of Lviv on the 20th. The Ukrainians also augmented their manpower but not to as great an extent. When fighting resumed in the city on the 21st, the Poles were able to make progress in certain areas, but Ukrainian resistance proved very

stiff. Nevertheless, the Ukrainian High Command ordered a withdrawal from the city during the night of 21-22 November.

So, even though reports state that the Lviv Issue stamps were available for sale for two days (the 20th and the 21st), in all likelihood, no attempts could even be made to put the stamps into circulation. Conditions in the city were simply far too dangerous. Following its withdrawal from the city, the ZUNR Government transferred to Ternopil, about 120 km (70 miles) east southeast of Lviv, while the postal employees evacuated to the town of Khodoriv, some 50 km (30 miles) south of Lviv, taking with them the entire unused supply of overprinted stamps. Subsequently the postal Secretariat moved to the city of Stanyslaviv, another 70 km (45 miles) further south. Although Lviv Issue stamps are reported to have been used in Khodoriv, Stanyslaviv, and Kolomyia (20 km or 12 miles south of Stanyslaviv), only Stanyslaviv-canceled covers have been recorded in the literature and use in the other locales is considered highly doubtful.

The earliest mailing date found on items bearing Lviv Issue stamps is 8 December 1918. This date may have been the real “First Day of Issue” for the Lviv Issue (see [Figure 7](#)). It may not have been until this day, a Sunday, that postal workers had a chance to reestablish the Western Ukrainian post and tackle the mails brought from Lviv and/or Khodoriv. Of course, the possibility also exists that Lviv Issue stamps were first used in Khodoriv, but this potential alternate scenario will not be known until a Khodoriv cover turns up.



An Authentication of the Lviv Issue

Der Universal-Anzeiger, a bimonthly Viennese philatelic newspaper, published the following official declaration by Alexander Pisetsky about the Lviv Issue in its 15 November 1919 edition. (This statement was probably conveyed to the publication following a request seeking more information about the stamp issue.)

Ukrainian Post in Lemberg

We have received the following letter concerning these postage stamps:

To the respected Editors of the *Briefmarken-Universal-Anzeiger* in Vienna.

I certify herewith that during my absence from Lviv on 20 November 1918 my deputy Mr. Wladimir Glowackyj [Volodymyr Holovatsky], taking into consideration the frequently expressed wish for the creation of our own Ukrainian postage stamps, ordered the overprinting of Austrian postage stamps bearing the values of 3, 5, 10, and 20 hellers to the total face value of about 2,000 kronen with a handstamp specially made for this purpose (a frame, the image of a lion in the center, and the Ukrainian inscription (ЗАХ. УКР. НАРОДНА РЕПУБЛІКА) and released them into circulation.

On the night of 22 November 1918, the Ukrainian authorities left the city of Lviv and from then on during my tenure of office the Austrian postage stamps without any overprint were in use in the Western Ukrainian Republic.

Vienna, 6 September 1919.

(signed) Aleksander Piseckyj [Pisetsky]

State Secretary

The following certification was enclosed with this letter:

On behalf of the Legation of the Western Ukrainian National Republic, it is certified that in the month of November 1918, Mr. Aleksander Piseckyj functioned as State Secretary for Post and Telegraph Affairs in Lviv.

Vienna, 6 September 1919.

(signed) Dr. Zaleszczyckyj [Zaleshchysky]

Councilor of the Legation

Collecting the Lviv Issue

Although not inexpensive at about \$50 each, the Lviv Issue stamps fall among some of the less pricey Western Ukrainian issues (some rare-overprint values can go for hundreds or thousands of dollars apiece!).

It is a challenge to find these stamps in multiples, but pairs and blocks of four may be obtained. Stamps with inverted overprints are also known; pairs of such stamps go for about \$200 (Figure 8). Several tete-beche pairs (two attached stamps with the overprint on one stamp upright, but the overprint on the other inverted) of the three-heller value are known and may fetch \$300 per pair (Figure 9), but only one complete set of all four values tete-beche is known to have been assembled.



Only one complete Lviv Issue pane of 25 stamps has been reported in the literature; it is of the first, 3-heller value (Figure 10). Examining the pane it is possible to observe that the overprinter was fairly conscientious in his/her job. The overprint design falls on the colored portion of the stamp most of the time. The only poorly-centered overstrikes are in positions 13, 19, and 25; only in position 5 is the image slanting more pronounced. (Figure 11 is a digital photo with the stamp color removed to show overprint details).



Even though more than 20,000 Lviv Issue stamps were originally created, the turmoil of the Polish-Ukrainian War did not allow for many of these stamps and covers to survive. Most of the available Lviv Issue stamps may have been used up by the end of December since no properly franked covers dated after 29 December 1918 have yet been located. Because of their scarcity, these postally used items can fetch up to \$1,000 apiece.

The Fighting for Lviv Remembered

The Polish-Ukrainian War, which lasted from November 1918 to July 1919, is truly a sad chapter in the history of both countries. In all about 25,000 men lost their lives fighting: roughly 40% of this number Polish and the remainder Ukrainian. The Poles of western Galicia, as well as the Polish residents within Lviv, were determined to claim *all* of Galicia for the newly reconstituted Polish state.

The fierce opening phase of the war, which included the three-week struggle to take Galicia's capital city, was commemorated and romanticized in subsequent years on images produced by both sides. Figure 12 is a postcard showing four Ukrainian soldiers at a kiosk in Lviv on which the Proclamation of Independence has been affixed. These posters were mounted throughout the city in the early morning hours of 1 November 1918 and presumably this scene is at sunrise and shows the first casualty of the inter-ethnic struggle.

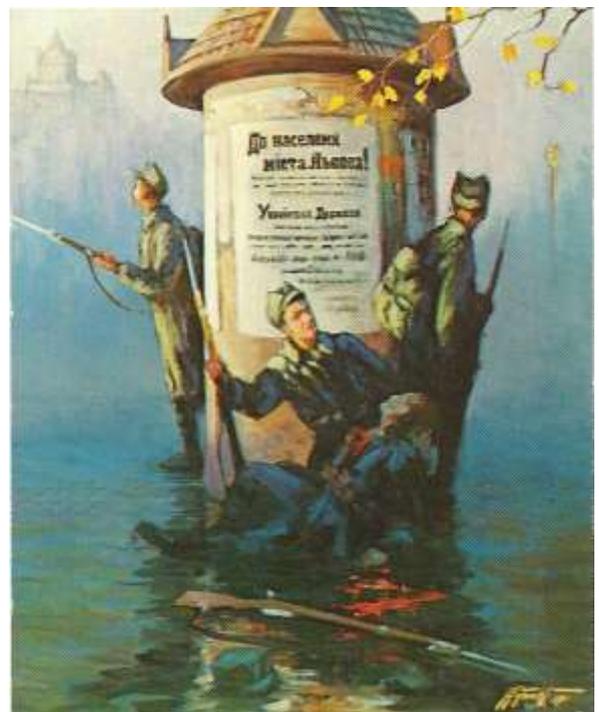




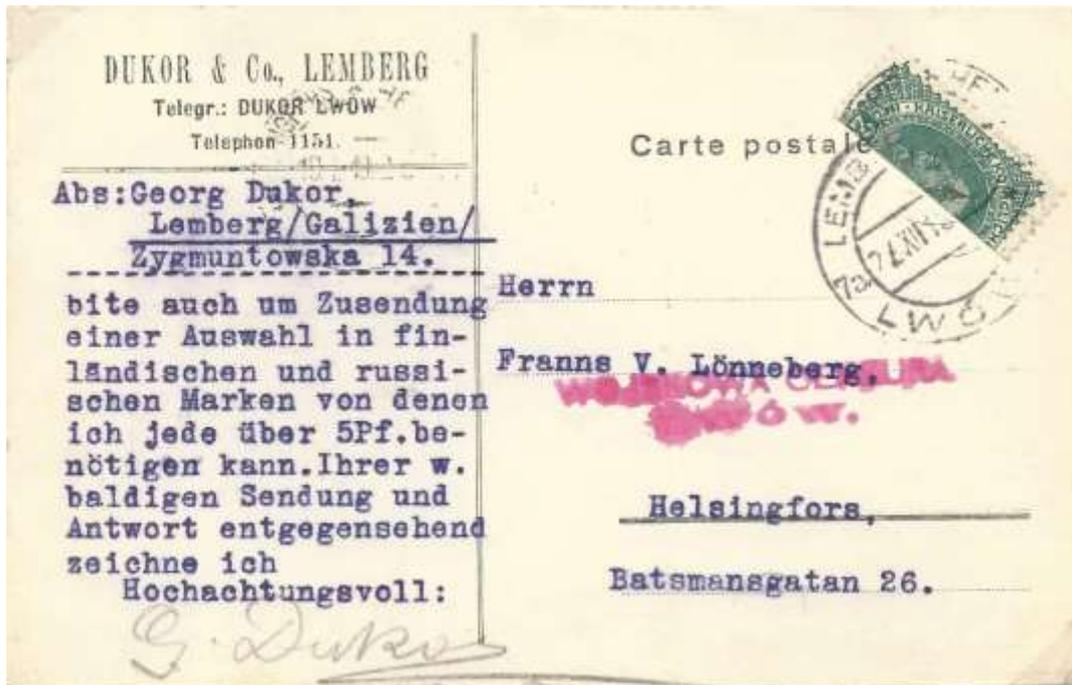
Figure 13 shows members of the *Orleńscy Lwowski* (Lwow Eaglets), Polish teenagers who fought with and assisted the majority population in retaining possession of the city. The 1926 oil painting, by Wojciech Kossak, is entitled “Lwow Eaglets: Defenders of the [Łyczakowski (Lychakiv)] Cemetery.”

Besieged Lwow

Although Ukrainian forces were forced to withdraw from Lviv proper – during the night of 21-22 November 1918 – they never forsook their claim to the capital and quickly set up a cordon around the city. The

Poles only lifeline to the west was through a tenuous railway connection. Once the siege took hold and fighting subsided, remaining Austrian stamps continued to be employed by the Poles in the city but supplies soon dwindled – necessitating creative usages as seen below.

The censored post card in Figure 14 – dispatched from the railroad station post office on 26 December 1918, about one month after the Polish capture of Lviv (renamed Lwow) – displays a red, two-line “MILITARY CENSOR / LWOW” marking. Former Austrian postal rates continued in use; the 10-halerzy post card rate was paid by the bisected 20-heller Austrian stamp.



The card, sent to Helsinki, Finland by a stamp dealer in Lwow, gives some details as to the postal situation in the city. Its typewritten German message begins on the reverse and reads as follows:

Lemberg 26 December 1918

Dear Sir!

I only received your card of 18 November yesterday, on 25 December! Because presently no registered mailings to Finland are permitted (according to notifications from postal officials, however, this directive, is only temporary) I cannot offer [you] any selections. This card is franked with a half 20-heller stamp which will be used here until the arrival of Polish or overprinted Austrian stamps. Owing to its provisional character and its restricted use only in Lemberg, I would value this card very highly. When new overprinted stamps appear, I am prepared to obtain certain quantities of sets or values against the same value of Finish stamps. Should registered mailings be accepted here, please send a consignment of Finish and Russian stamps (I can use any [values] over 5 pf[ennigs]). I look forward to your early shipment and response. Sincerely: G. Dukor

So, the siege hindered mails from entering the city and it took more than five weeks for the card writer to receive a missive from abroad. Because of the unreliability of the mails, registration service could not be established. Certain stamp values were becoming scarce, necessitating bisection, and new stamps were on order (these might be new Polish stamps or overprinted old Austrian stamps).

Three weeks later, the situation was not much changed. Sending mail abroad was still an iffy prospect and



franking was carried out with whatever stamps could be located. The letter in **Figure 15** was mailed on 17 January 1919 from Lwow to Pozsony, Hungary. That city is present-day Bratislava, the capital of Slovakia, but in early 1919 its status was not yet clearly established – it would soon go to the newly independent Czechoslovakia – so the address is made out to its old Hungarian designation.

The 50-halerzy franking paid letter postage (rate raised from 20 to 25 halerzy on 6 December 1918) and registration (25 halerzy). Since regular definitives were becoming scarce in the city, field post stamps were conscripted into use, including one for

the Austrian occupation of Romania (25 bani). Censoring is indicated by the pencil notation and the red, two-line marking.

Toward the end of January 1919, the besieged in Lwow were able to obtain supplies of Poland's first definitive postage stamps, which they quickly put to use. The cover in **Figure 16**, mailed 25 January 1919 to Vienna, Austria, displays what is now recognized as **the earliest recorded use of these stamps**: previously the "first day of issue" was thought to be 27 January 1919. This letter was sent from Lwow during one of the periods that communications with Poland and the west had been reestablished.



The stamps and three military censor markings (in pencil and violet ink) indicate that the item was dispatched through the Polish mails, yet the German-language address, the Lemberg cancellation, and the registration etiquette all add an “Austrian” flavor. The cover is underfranked by 2 halerzy; it should have carried 50 halerzy (25 h. letter rate and 25 h. registration).

By March 1919, the situation around Lwow had become a bit more stable. Western Ukrainian forces had been pushed back in a few areas around the city and the daily shelling had abated somewhat. Postal authorities had by now polonized remaining Austrian postal cards by overprinting them “POCZTA POLSKA” and with a new 15-halerzy value. **Figure 17** (below left) shows a converted 15/8-halerzy card sent registered on 30 March 1919 from Lwow to Mährischer Neustadt in newly created Czechoslovakia (today Uničov in Czechia). The franking of 55-halerzy covers the 30-halerzy foreign card rate and 25-halerzy registration fee; it displays a modified Lwow 6 Austrian cancellation (the Krakauergasse post office was apparently one of the first to remove the “Lemberg” name), an old Austrian Lemberg 6 etiquette, and a “K 1” (Krakow) censor mark.



Figure 18 (above right) displays a 15/10-halerzy postal card sent on 25 April 1919 from the Lwow 2 (train station) post office to Brünn (Brno), in Czechoslovakia. In this case the “Lemberg” name still appears on the cancellation; so too does a red, boxed, two-line “Wojkowa cenzura/Lwow” (Military Censor/Lwow) marking. Despite the card being sent to a foreign destination, the sender was only charged the 15-halerzy domestic card rate! The siege of Lwow was lifted on 30 April 1919, just days after this card was mailed.

The map in **Figure 19** shows Western Ukraine (light blue) in relation to the rest of emergent Poland (buff) in March-April 1919, as well as what would become Poland’s eastern inter-war border. Over the next few months, fighting would escalate and territory would see-saw between the two sides. By early summer, however, the Poles had occupied all of Western Ukraine.



Transforming the Main Post Office: *Postamt* to *Poczta*

About the Building

Lemberg's Main Post and Telegraph Office, constructed between 1887 and 1889, was designated as Lemberg 1 and referred to as the *Postamt* (German), *Poczta* (Polish), or *Poshtamt* (Ukrainian). The edifice went up along Slowacky (Slovak) Street (which runs approximately north-south), between east-west running Sixtus (now Doroshenko) and Kopernikus (Kopernyk) Streets, and takes up the entire block. The architect of this imposing structure was not an Austrian or a Pole, but a Ukrainian, Sylvestyr Havryshkevych.



Figure A is a pastel painting of the Post Office that depicts the left corner of the building at Kopernikus Street and its long facade along Slowacky Street. In designing the building, the architect decided to incorporate elements of Beaux-Arts architecture so popular during the second half of the 19th century. To break up the long rows of windows in this massive structure, he had the central portion of the façade, as well as the corner sections, extend outward slightly. These three areas were crowned by mansard roofs, which are a type of tower element in a building, displaying a flat-topped, four-sided dome, along whose crest a low railing or grill-like decoration would usually run.

Architectural Changes

It wasn't long after the Poles captured Lemberg in November of 1918 that they set about repairing buildings and facilities damaged during the fighting including, of course, the Main Post Office. **Figure B** is a Polish postcard from the 1920s displaying some very significant changes made to the outside of the renovated post office building. The terribly scarred rusticated (dressed or squared off) stones would have cost too much to repair or replace so they were plastered over and painted. The mansard roofs were eliminated and the entire roofline was raised. As well, the sloping (peaked) cornices running along the entire second floor were removed and only the level element retained.



The corner sections were simplified with the two, third-floor windows combined into one, the cornices of the second-floor window rounded, and the first-floor window widened and made into an arched window.

Additionally, the two pilasters that flanked each of the corner windows on the second and third floors were simplified and reduced to one on either side of the windows.

Polish Lwow

The first weeks in the summer of 1919 saw the Polish-Ukrainian War draw to a close. In July 1919, the Western Ukrainian army was pushed across the Zbruch River into Eastern (Greater) Ukraine where it then lent its assistance to its compatriots engaged in fighting the Bolsheviks.



Polish postal officials in Lwow (and throughout Galicia) set about reestablishing all facets of the disrupted postal service and integrating it with the postal apparatus of Congress Poland (i.e., newly freed Polish lands that had been part of the Russian Empire). The postal money order in **Figure 20**, mailed on 11 June 1919 from Lwow to Andrychowie near Wadowice, attests to the fact that money transfer services were again functioning. A remaining

Austrian postal money order card was used to transfer the maximum amount of 1,000 Polish koronas. The cancellation of the Lemberg/Lwow No. 7 post office (Kasimergasse) as well as the boxed Austrian tarnstempel (control handstamp) display no modification seven months after the Polish takeover of the city.



The interesting registered cover in **Figure 21** (next page), sent 18 November 1919 from the Engineering Bureau of the Ganz Electrical Company² in Lwow to the Austrian Electrical Corporation in Vienna, originally weighed **more than 40 grams**. It bears 165 halerzy in franking (50h. letter rate plus 50h. for registration plus 30h. for each additional 20 grams, which would have been 30h. + 30h., totaling 160 h.; the item is therefore 5h. overfranked). The letter displays two Austrian postal relics: an old registration

and a registration stamp.

² Ganz Works was an industrial manufacturing group of companies headquartered in Budapest that played an important role in building the infrastructure of the Hungarian Kingdom, as well as the entire Austro-Hungarian Empire. Ganz not only built many forms of transportation – automobiles, tram cars, ocean liners, battleships, submarines, and fighter aircraft – but also many types of heavy duty electrical equipment such as power plants, generator turbines, and transformers. The correspondence in this letter likely dealt with renovating and/or upgrading Lwow’s electrical infrastructure following more than five years of conflict.

etiquette and an altered date cancel sans German "Lemberg." The circled "K" is the Krakow censor mark. Eastern Galicia remained under military occupation, with mails subject to censorship, until 1921.



By 1920, it was mostly just modified imperial-era cancellation devices that were still being used in post offices; stamps, postal stationery, registration indicia, etc. were all Polish. Examples may be seen at the Lemberg Rail Station (Bahnhof, No. 2) post office. **Figure 22** (below) is a letter dispatched on 25 September 1920 from Lwow to Lynn, Massachusetts. The letter has a distinct Polish flavor and displays Polish registration and censor markings along with an unusual bi-lingual (Polish-English) slogan cachet, but the Polish 5-Mark stamp is cancelled with an Austrian circular handstamp that now simply reads "LWOW 2". The slogan states "HELP RECONSTRUCTION OF POLAND BUY POLISH GOVERNMENT BONDS" and was applied to mail going to English-speaking countries. Postage was calculated at 2.5 Marks letter rate and 2.5 Marks registration. [Poland converted its postal rates from Korona/halerzy to Marka/fenigi on 15 April 1920. Severe inflation, particularly in 1923, necessitated another currency introduction; postal rates in a new Zloty/groszy currency took effect on 1 May 1924.]





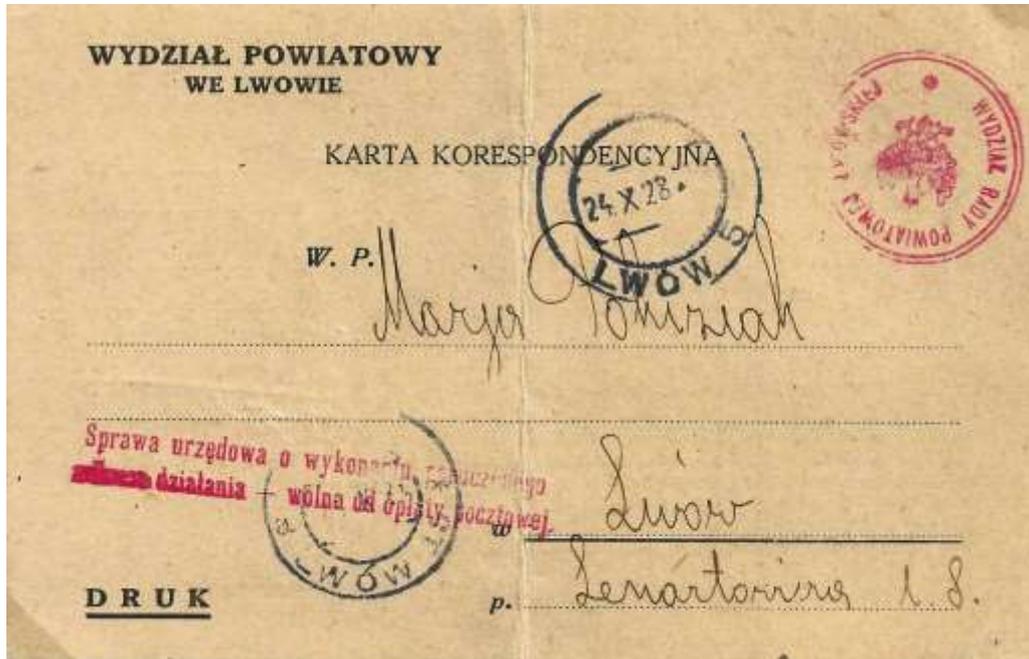
Similarly, the stamps on the Polish postal card forwarded from Lwów to Vienna on 21 March 1921 (Figure 23) were cancelled with a “polonized” Krag machine roller cancel dating back to Austrian times that simply read “LWOW 2”. The two-line, black censor mark states: “CENZURA WOJSKOWA/ LWOW” (Military Censor/Lwów).

The unusual registered letter in Figure 24, sent from Lwów to Vienna on 26 January 1921, was created by an audacious postal patron who initially tried to mail the item with a non-valid 80-heller Austrian stamp (crossed out) and subsequently applied a Polish 20-mark stamp to cover the 10-Mark letter rate and 10 Marks for registration. The Kasimiergasse (Lwów 7) post office continued to use a modified Austrian “b” cancel; Lwów military censoring is still evident.



That same post office was still using modified old circular cancels seven years later. Figure 25 shows a bank guarantee form sent on 22 September 1928 by registered mail (faded pink registry box in lower right and violet “POLECONO” in lower left) from Lwów to Landwarow. A faint following-day backstamp appears on reverse. The oval violet handstamp paid both postage and registration. In this instance the old “LWOW 7” cancel still in use was “3a”.

One might think that it was just the Lwow 7 post office that was being thrifty and using up old cancelling devices, but such was not the case. There were other smaller Lwow post offices still utilizing modified cancellers a decade or more after the city fell under Polish administration. The official correspondence card mailed on 24 October 1928 by the County Department in Lwow to a local resident (Figure 26) has two altered cancellations, “LWOW 5” (dispatch from the Czarneckiegasse post office) and “LWOW 15” (receiving at the Bogdanowka post office). A red circular County Department Council indicia appears in the upper right; a red “Official Matter” two-line marking in the lower left.



Finally, Figure 27 presents a locally sent letter from 15 April 1930. This is the latest instance I have come across of mail from Lwow still displaying a modified Austrian cancel, this time from the No. 4 Statthalterie Gebäude (Administration Building) post office.



I would not at all be surprised if examples of still later modified Lwow cancellations, from well into the 1930s, still exist. I invite readers to share examples if they know of such items. My email address is: ingert@starpower.net.

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Austrian visas for Post-WWI Border Crossings

By Martin Weise

“For a journey through Austria without voluntary interruption”

Many emigrants had to travel through Austria, to get to Triest or to Hamburg. The Austrian authorities were happy with this, but worried that Austria might become a haven for the unemployed of other countries. A handstamp expressing the restriction on getting off the train was usually entered by the embassies into the traveller's passport. Here we have 4 different wordings:



Left above: May 1924, still before the issue of the revenues, in red ink a 65 word detailed legal statement issued by the embassy in Zurich in a Hungarian passport

Right above: April 1925, three lines of warning. by the Austrian embassy in Ljubljana in a special SHS emigration passport. “Ein Missbrauch des Durchreiseasylums zu einem freiwilligen Aufenthalte in Österreich wird mit Geld- und Freiheitsstrafen geahndet”.

Both give the penalties for illicitly getting off – a large fine, or imprisonment for up to 14 days, or both. Presumably you would then either be sent back, or put on the next train onwards. You'd have missed your boat to America. You'd spent all your money to get the ticket. Life, already intolerable, was about to get worse.



March 1925, by the embassy in Budapest, in a Hungarian passport

August 1923, when a massive red sticker was glued to the Hungarian passport on its edge in Munich.

“For single and repeated journeys into Austria”

People with legitimate business or private reasons for travelling into Austria also required visas.



Left: yellow single-entry visa stamp from the Austrian embassy in Zagreb (then “Agram”) with blue overprint “AUSFLUG” = excursion in a Yugoslav passport. I have been told this stamp is quite rare.

Right: single entry in green, issued by the Austrian embassy in Budapest, in a Hungarian passport.



Red visa stamp for multiple entries, in a Hungarian passport, attached by the embassy in Budapest. The police cachets include Vienna’s Ostbahnhof on 18 September 1924, and Salzburg Bahnhof on 27 September.



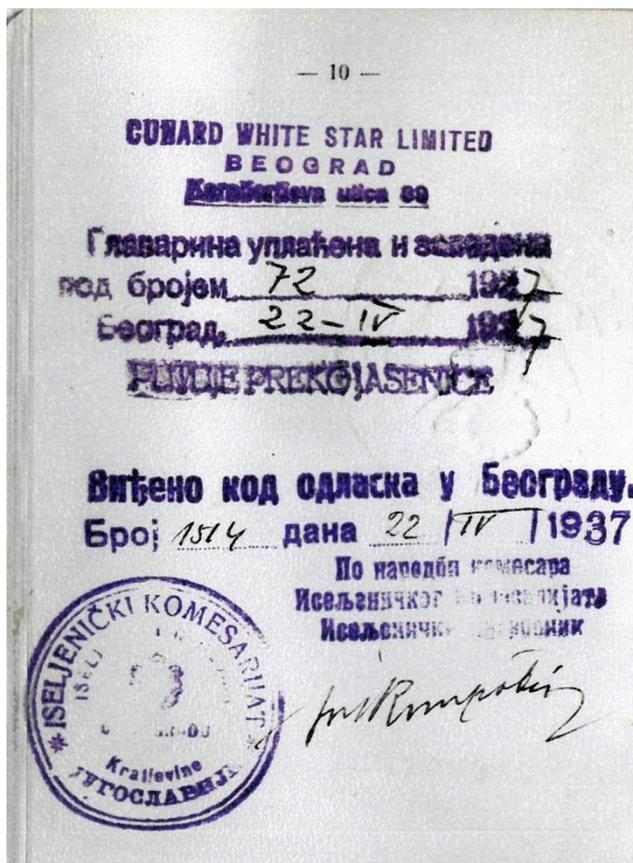
Red multiple-entry stamp in strip of 3 issued by the Austrian embassy in Berlin (red seals) in a German passport.

The design of the Austrian border visa revenues was changed in 1934 to a two-headed eagle no longer discreetly carrying the hammer and sickle in its talons .



Jugoslav passport no. 61397 issued 7.9.1934 to Marceti Jovo (49) and his wife and daughter.

Yellow double headed AUSFLUG stamp attached at the Austrian Consulate in Zagreb (then Agram) and used 27/28 June 1936



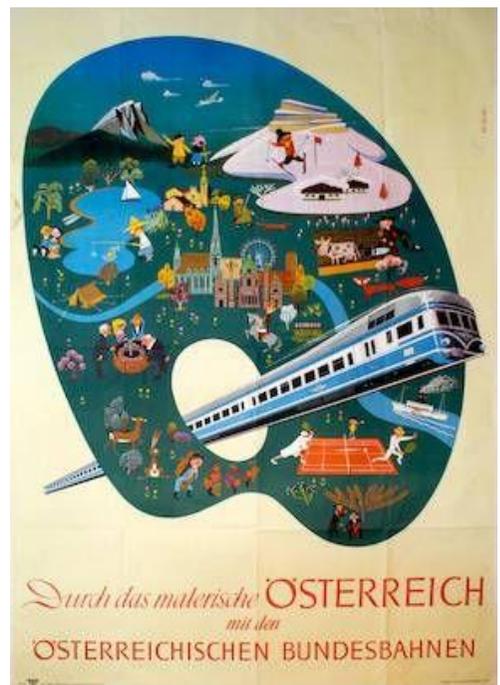
Jugoslav passport nr.37458 issued 31.12.1936 to Dj. Kosta Tassevitch (26) for the purpose of emigration to America. Come April he was on his journey. Blue double headed visa stamp issued 23/24 April 1937.



Romanian passport no. 179836 issued on 22.6.1936 to Joan Garleșteanu (40) for commercial travel in Europe. These 2 pages show the permits to travel through Hungary and Austria respectively given at the Bucarest embassies. The red double headed visa stamp was attached in Bucarest and used in July 1936



This poster, by Otto Stefferl – the subject of the next article – shows train travel through Austria as the holders of the above passes definitely didn't see it!



Otto Stefferl

By Martin Brumby

Occasionally, articles in AUSTRIA have focussed on the designers of Austrian Stamps. John Giblin certainly profiled some of the pre-war designers. More recently (Austria 204) there was a good piece on Koloman Moser. Way back in 1990, AUSTRIA 93 carried a well-deserved profile on Otto Zeiller (1913-1988), perhaps the best known post war designer / engraver. I believe Adalbert Pilch (1917-2004) still hasn't received this recognition in our pages! But today, I'd like to 'skip a generation' and write a brief note on Otto Stefferl (1931-2018).

It is true that Stefferl has a very skeletal profile on www.Wikipedia.de. Even more skeletal than Pilch & Zeiller! But I think that Stefferl's contribution to the design (and frequently also the engraving) of Austrian stamps between his first, the 1964 "Second Parliamentary and Scientific Conference" (ANK 1182) and his last, 2001's "Birth Bicentenary of Johann Nestroy" (ANK 2388) is second to none, in his technical skill, his versatility and his artistic imagination. Remarkably, after his stamp "750 Years of the City of Waidhofen" 1980, (ANK 1689) and his next Austrian stamp "Lower Austria 'Magic of Industry' Exhibition", (ANK 1985) there was a nearly nine year gap in his output, despite the awards he had already received for his work. As a member of the VBK, the collective society of fine artists and the copyright association in Austria and also Vice-President of the Professional Association of Austrian Artists, it seems there was perceived to be a conflict of interests! But it seems to have taken Ing Dr. Josef Sindelka (The Director General of Posts and Telecommunications) and perhaps some political arm twisting to resolve the problem, breaking the 'boxer's law' ("They never come back") and allowing Stefferl to design stamps again, producing some of his finest work and winning further awards.



Stefferl was also initially given a few rather mundane tasks, which unsurprisingly show competence but little imagination. I think particularly of ANK 1447, 1476, 1564, 1617 & 1650. They are exceptions which prove the rule.

There isn't a great deal about him easily to be found online, but there is an interesting webpage ^[1] featuring an interview of Stefferl "Ich bin ein Grafisches fossil" by Barbara Denscher. I have deposited my translation of this (accompanied by a complete list of all the 154 Stefferl-designed Austrian stamps that were issued) with our editor for anyone interested in further biographical details and Stefferl's parallel career as a Graphic Artist. Some will remember one of Stefferl's early creations, the "Post-Fox" that the Austrian post featured in many campaigns. He produced many other posters for clients including the Austrian Railways and companies like Semperit, Knorr, Unilever, The Austrian Tobacco Directorate. He also designed 'learn about road safety' children's colouring books featuring 'Stoppl' for the Austrian and 'Stoppli' for the Swiss governments!

His stamp design oeuvre includes portraits to rival the pre-war charity sets (e.g. ANK 1288, 1301 (Kolo Moser), 1394, 1454 etc.); many of the most innovative "Day of the Stamp" annual issues, (e.g. ANK 1410 and the series of 10 minisheets ANK 1460, 1494, ... 2350 featuring in 10 all-different designs the letters from **BRIEFMARKE PHILATELIE**); and great sport stamps, (e.g. ANK 1407, 1518-21).

Then there were the stamps depicting buildings, (e.g. ANK 1208, 1654, Liechtenstein S.G. 677, 685, 703), stamps on musical themes – Stefferl was a keen amateur cellist, (e.g. ANK 1266, 1324-31, 2360) and historical artefacts, (e.g. ANK 1214-9, 1344-6, 1534).

Particularly striking, however, were his stamp-"Fanfare for the Common Man", starting already with his second design ANK 1202, see also 1457, 2040, 2206. But perhaps most extraordinary of all were his stamps (often photogravure rather than recess) including ANK 1384, 1441, 1547, 1626; on health, safety and human rights issues. Some of these (notably the hard hitting ANK 1441, on drug abuse), were sufficiently 'shocking' to occasion some public debate. One wonders what he might have made of Corona Virus...

[In the captions below, the ANK number is in purple to avoid confusion with a date! Ed.]

¹ <https://www.austrianposters.at/2011/02/23/otto-stefferl-ich-bin-ein-grafisches-fossil/>



The 'letter' series of Tag der Briefmarke stamps: ANK 2063, 2096, 2128, 2156, 2190, 2220, 2251, 2292, 2320, 2350. Each has a pair of letters taken from **BRIEFMARKE PHILATELIE**: the top left stamp has B above P and so on. The stamps are all the same size; the apparent differences are optical illusions caused by some designs being "full bleed" while the others have white margins!



1182: 2nd Parliamentary and Scientific Conference



1202: centenary of the Austrian Workers Movement



1266: 125 years of the Vienna Philharmonic



1374: one of the Old Clocks series



1214-1219: second issue of stamp sets for the run-up to WIPA1965 – development of the letter from hieroglyphs to the typewriter.



1384: Road safety – “watch out for children!”



1441: Do not abuse drugs!



1547: Anti-cancer campaign



1576: Emanuel Herrmann - Tag der Briefmarke 1977



1626: 30th anniversary of Declaration of Human Rights



1628: International year of the child, 1979



1649: 10th world congress of international diabetes federations, 1979



2040: Centenary of metal, mining and energy Trades Union



2360: Centenary of the Vienna Symphony Orchestra



2381: 50 years of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees



A typical advertising poster



“Patricia” in oil and egg tempera



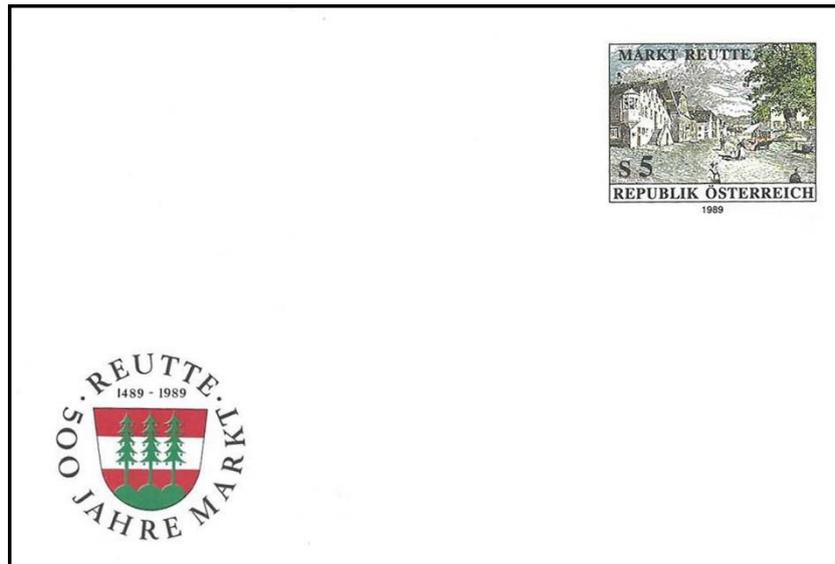
Stamps from a series showing buildings in Liechtenstein

Bonusbriefe

By Joyce Boyer

The APS website receives a number of enquiries and this article is the result of one such enquiry but unfortunately we have lost the name of the sender. He had a mystery - in the selection of ‘goodies’ received from his relative in Wels there were some postal stationery envelopes with no value. Did we know anything about them? Yes, we did.

The Austrian postal authority issued the first official postal stationery envelope for normal use [not airmail or pneumatic post] in 1861 and continued until 1901. It was decided to introduce a new envelope in 1980 to mark 80 years since the issue of the last one; and official envelopes generally with a special imprinted stamp, often associated with an event, continue to be issued. This cover was produced in 1989 to mark 500 years of the market town of Reutte, Tirol.



With the introduction of the Euro as the national currency on 1st January 2002 it was decided to introduce the ‘Bonus brief’ – a non-value envelope that would be valid for postage both before and after the change. These are flat-rate envelopes imprinted with non-denominated design, i.e. the contents are not weighed. On 1st June 2001 six envelopes were issued – three for Inland postage and three for postage to Europe. There were no envelopes for mail to other overseas countries. At this date the cost of postage for both inland and Europe was 7 Schillings [later converted into 51 eurocents]. The envelopes came in three formats each with its own designs as follows:

Inland with an orange background

<p>Small C6 size Kaffeehaustradition</p>	<p>Business DL size Wiener SeceSSION</p>	<p>Business DL size with window Futurezone</p>

[Only the imprint is shown; the envelopes are plain white.]

Europe with blue background and imprinted 'Priority / Prioritaire (white-on-matt-blue; shown on the illustration lower down this page)

<p>Small C6 size Donauwalzer, Strauss</p>	<p>Business DL size Wiener Steffel</p>	<p>Business DL size with window Futurezone</p>

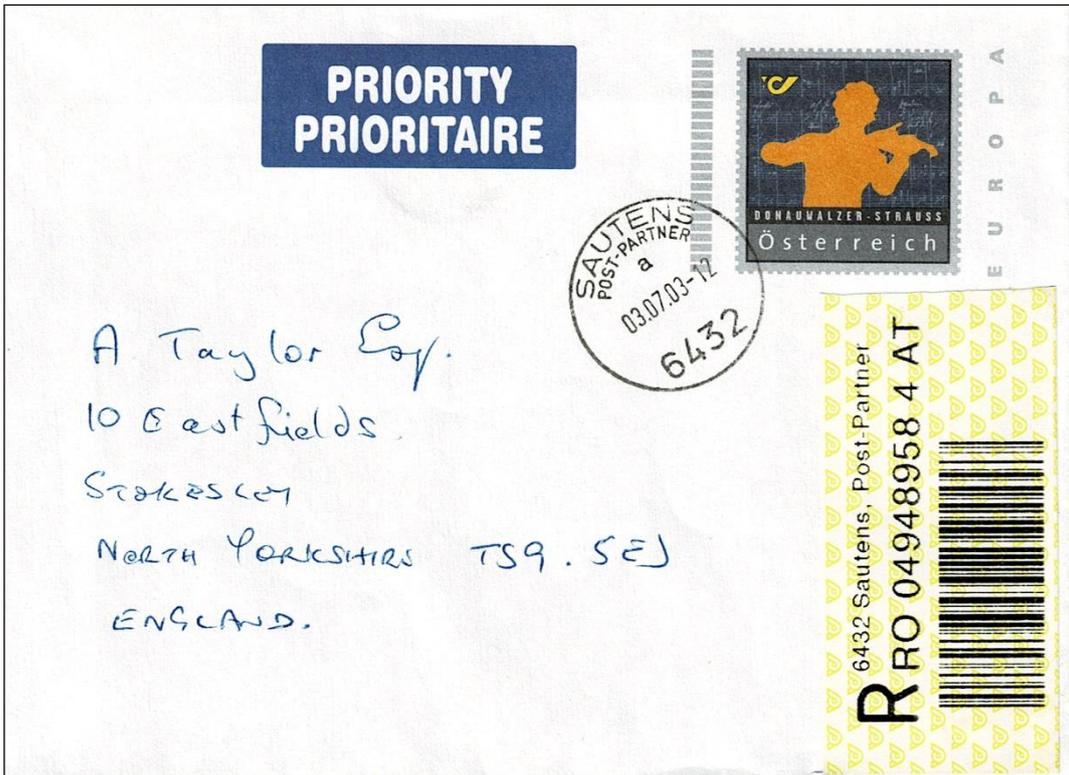
The envelopes were printed in Czechoslovakia and sold in packs of ten at a cost of 79Sch90 [€5.81] which included the cost of the envelopes. Following the increase in postage costs on 1st June 2003 the price was increased to €6.90 per pack. There were a number of re-prints for the inland envelopes and one for the Europe version with small variations.



It would appear that these envelopes were not a success and the Europe envelopes were withdrawn on 1st June 2003. The inland envelopes were withdrawn on 7th February 2005 when post offices were asked to return all unsold packets to the main office in Vienna where they were to be destroyed. However any envelopes that had been sold continued to be valid for postage as shown by the examples on the next page used in July 2003 and October 2018. There was one exception – there appears to have been a large number of the inland Futurezone envelopes left, and these were imprinted with an eagle and the word 'Justiz', in two versions, and used up in the judicial system.



Two further inland envelopes were issued on 30th November 2001 [and again in 2002] for the Christmas season. These were both business DL size without window, had imprints of an Angel or a Snowman and were sold at 49Sch90 [€3.63] for a pack of 5. The vertical "bar code" was in gold; the issue was 250,000 in packs of five.



Registered & sent on 3-7-2003



Used 25-10-2018!

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- ❖ **1910 Post Office Index.** This is the “*Verzeichnis der Post- und Telegraphen-Ämter in Österreich, Ungarn und in Bosnien-Herzegowina sowie der österreichischen Postanstalten im Fürstentum Liechtenstein und in der Levante*”, published in Vienna in 1910. It lists all the Austrian post offices open anywhere at that date; with symbols indicating the facilities available at each. The CD contains deep-cleaned pictures of the original pages, not searchable text. It is ISBN 978-0-900118-08-1.
- ❖ “**Rohrpost**” – **the pneumatic post in Vienna.** Second completely revised edition, now in web-site format in full colour with numerous added appendices. It is ISBN 978-0-900118-10-4.

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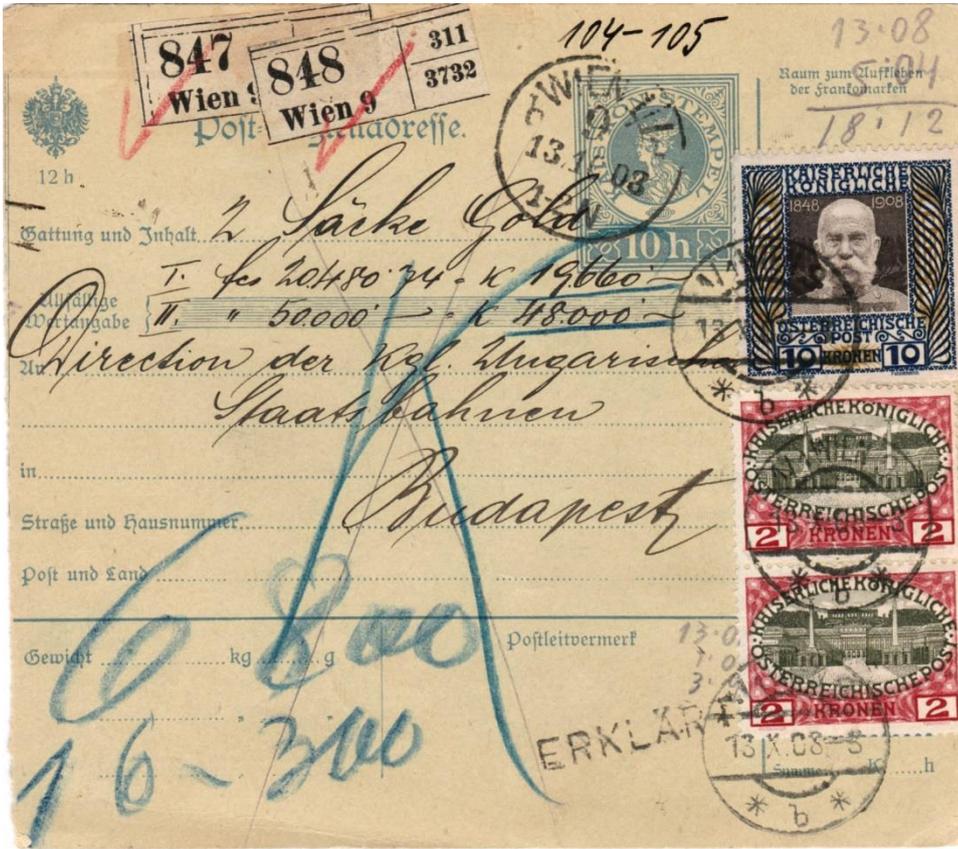
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- ❖ Some back numbers of *Austria* are available to read on the APS website. They are selected from issues 127 onwards; we do not have electronic versions of previous issues. Go to the home page <http://www.austrianphilately.com/index.htm> and select [Specimens and Indexes of the APS Journal "Austria"](#) in the left-hand box. webmaster@austrianphilately.com would welcome comments on this feature.

*Not holding a Fest deprives members of the opportunity to show off their displays. There is an alternative: put them on the APS web site as a **Guest Display**, to join the three already there. Get in touch with the Editor and between us we'll make it happen!*

A Parcel Card deciphered

An email arrived from "Melmoth" asking for an explanation of this parcel card. Martin Brumby obliged!



This is a 1905 10h ordinary Austrian Parcel Card (German) with 10h tax imprint (Warrior Lady's Head called "AUSTRIA") Schneidebauer 223.

It's cancelled with a single circle Wien 9 , 13/10/1908. Price of card 12h (10h tax + 2h for the card) shown by the coat-of-arms and 12h at top left.

It was used to accompany two parcels to the Directorate of the Royal State Railways, Budapest. These contained sacks of gold (which would be coins) C.20th French Gold coins were 10 Francs & 20 Francs from 1901, 50 Francs from 1904, 100 Francs from 1907; also some C.19th were probably still current. (They could have been Swiss, but see the last paragraph).

Parcel 1: weight 6.8 kg, declared value 20,480.74 francs = 19,660 Kronen

Parcel 2 weight 16.3 kg, declared value 50,000 fcs = 48,000 Kr.

Total 67,000 Kr. A huge amount of money in 1908!

The Great Circle Distance Wien to Budapest is 243 km.

Weight fee:

Parcel 1, weight under 7 kg, distance over 150 km and less than 375 km: fee = 60 h for 5 kg + 2 kg @ 24h/kg, = 1 Kr 8h.

Parcel 2, weight under 17 kg, distance over 150 km and less than 375 km: fee = 60 h for 5 kg + 12 kg @ 24h/kg, = 3 Kr 48h.

Declared value fees (ie insurance) were 6h to 100K or 6h per 300K (minimum 12h). Thus value fees:

Parcel 1, value 19,660 Kr, therefore 66 x 6h = 3 Kr 96h

Parcel 2, value 48,000 Kr, therefore 160 x 6h = 9 Kr 60h

Totals:

Parcel 1 = 1.08 + 3.96 = 5 Kr 4h

Parcel 2 = 3.48 + 9.60 = 13 Kr 8h

Total = 18 Kr 12h which is equal to the franking. (Aside: it would have been slightly more expensive to send all the coins in one 23.1 kg parcel instead of the two separate ones!)

Stamps cancelled 'Bridge' Wien 9 , 13/10/1908.

"Declared" at bottom.

"104 - 105" may indicate that these were but two parcels of a consignment.

Not sure what 13.0 / 1.0 / 3.0 at bottom signifies. Usually they put route instruction there (label or handstamp). They probably knew the route from Wien to Budapest!

On the reverse, handstamp of Budapest 64 B, 14/OKT/1908. Possibly the date of arrival, but more probably the date of collection from Budapest 64 post office. It is unlikely they'd leave 67,000 Kr in gold coins for long, in a post office cupboard.

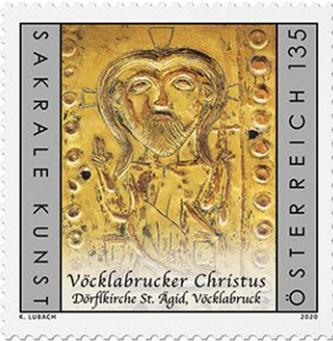
Handstamp MAGYAR KIR. ÁLLAMVASÚTAK / FŐPÉNZTÁRA = Royal Hungarian Railways / Main cash office.

I believe the expansion of the Hungarian Railways was financed partly by French Investors. This may represent a purchase of stock? Don't think it would be from a main bank, they had their own Parcel Cards. Conclusion: an excellent item!

2020 NEW ISSUES (2nd instalment)

by Andy Taylor

The information given here is face value ('c' is Euro-cents); issue date; quantity printed; designer; engraver if any; printing method; printer; and sometimes details on the design. Many issues are also available in mini-sheets, blackprints, 'Bunddrucke' (ie printed in different colours from those issued) etc. Austria Post seem to have adopted a permanently minimalist approach to both the English and the German descriptive details on their website, so I supplement some descriptions from sources including Die Briefmarke and both English and German Wikipedia.



'Vöcklabrucker Christus – St. Giles' Church, Vöcklabruck'. 1Eu35; 6.3.2020; nnnn; Kombi-print; Kirsten Lubach; Enschedé. This engraved stamp from the series "Religious art in Austria" shows a work of art of particular art-historic importance: the "Vöcklabrucker Christus" is a very old depiction of Christ on a copper sheet which was found in the village church in Vöcklabruck.

Classic Edition 8:
'Postage stamps 1891/1896' 230+85c;
 7.3.2020; 120,000 blocks of 2; Offset; Anita Kern. As included in the Classic Stamps article in the last issue; now in the correct colours.



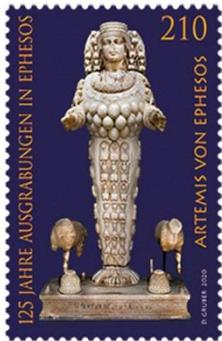
'Brigitte Kowanz - Opportunity'. 1Eu80; 17.3.2020; 180,000; Offset; Regina Simon; Enschedé. The special stamp from the "Contemporary art in Austria" series shows the work "Opportunity" by the Viennese artist Brigitte Kowanz, who deals with light as a design medium in her work.

A new series is announced: **Austria, Land of Music** (Musikland Österreich). The backgrounds of this series will be a piece of music chosen by a current performer on the instrument, illustrated wherever possible by a score contemporary with its composition. *"The first issue is dedicated to the double bass, which plays an important role in the orchestra and is a worthy introduction for this series."*

1Eu; 18.3.2020; 350,000 in sheets of 10; Offset; Kirsten Lubach; Enschedé. The background for this design is part of the score by Carl Ditters von Dittersdorf (1739-1799) for the Partita movement of his Double-bass concerto, which was written in E \flat , but is usually played in E.



'The traditional costume of the Wachau'. 85c; 3.4.2020; 350,000 in sheets of 10; Offset; Anita Kern; Enschedé. The beautiful Wachau on the banks of the Danube in Lower Austria is the subject of this year's stamp from the "Classic traditional costumes" series. The stamp shows the highly traditional costume for everyday use for women, the indigo-printed dirndl.



'125 years of excavations in Ephesus'. 2Eu10; 17.4.2020; 200,000; Offset; David Gruber; Enschedé. The Austrian Archaeological Institute has been carrying out research in the ancient city of Ephesus for more than 125 years. This commemorative stamp showing a statue of the goddess Artemis from the Temple of Ephesus, one of the wonders of the world.

'100 years of Auer' 2Eu70; 24.4.2020; 330,000; Offset; Marion Füllerer; Enschedé. For the past 100 years we have been able to enjoy "the sweet life" with AUER products. Austrian Post is congratulating the company with a commemorative stamp in the "Classical trademarks" series.



EUROPA 2020 – Historic post routes of Thurn & Taxis. 1Eu; 8.5.2020; 215,000; Offset; David Gruber; Enschedé. EUROPA stamps are special stamps issued by European postal administrations/enterprises and bears the official EUROPA logo, a PostEurop registered trademark under the aegis of PostEurop in which Europe is the central theme. EUROPA stamps underlines cooperation in the posts domain, taking into account promotion of philately. They also build awareness of the common roots, culture and history of Europe and its common goals. As such, EUROPA stamp issues are among the most collected and most popular stamps in the world. Since the first issue in 1956, EUROPA stamps have been a tangible symbol of Europe's desire for closer integration and cooperation. In 1993, PostEurop became responsible for issuing EUROPA stamps. Each year, PostEurop's Stamps & Philately Working Group selects the EUROPA stamp theme; this year it's "Ancient Postal Routes". The illustration is the Fugger Palace in Innsbruck.



In the 18th century, the Counts of Thurn and Taxis acquired the baroque palace in Innsbruck's Maria-Theresien-Strasse. It owes its name to Hans Otto Fugger, who had it built in 1679 according to plans by the court architect Johann Martin Gumpp. The design was based on Italian city palaces, especially those from Genoa. The three-storey building is lavishly decorated with cornices and stucco. Two columns frame the entrance portal in the middle, the lions lying on it support the balcony with the protruding grille directly above the portal. The classical ceiling fresco "The Judgment of Paris" by Martin Knoller from 1786 adorns the ballroom on the first floor, which is why it is also called the Paris Hall. The walls are decorated with Rococo paintings.

Soon the palace was used not only for residential purposes, but also as a post station - members of the Thurn and Taxis family were not only Innsbruck post-masters, but general post-masters of the state. For this purpose, post offices as well as stables and other buildings for the postal service were set up in the courtyard and on the ground floor of the building. Even when the State of Tirol acquired the Palais Taxis in 1905, postal operations continued until 1908. Today the building houses, among other things, the Kunsthalle Tirol for contemporary art. It has been a listed building since 2006.

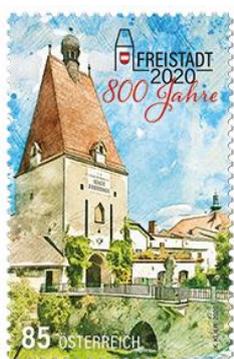


Roter Blitz - Graz-Köflacher Bahn Reihe VT 10. 2Eu30; 8.5.2020; Peter Sinaweil / Kirsten Lubach; 240,000; Kombiprint; Enschedé. This year's design for the engraved stamp in the "Railways" series is the legendary "Rote Blitz", an engine on the Graz-Köflach Railway from the 1950s.

50 years of Amnesty International Austria. 1Eu35; 15.5.2020; Marion Füllerer; 230,000; Offset; Enschedé. Amnesty International has been committed to respecting human rights in Austria for 50 years. Austrian Post is now honouring the organization with a special stamp.



800th anniversary of Freistadt. 85c; 23.5.2020; Karin Klier; 235,000; Offset; Enschedé. In 2020 the town of Freistadt in the Upper Austrian Mühlviertel region is celebrating its 800th anniversary.



Trouble over the Brexit stamp

By Prof R Zimmerl and A Taylor

The special stamp for Brexit on January 31, 2020 sparked fierce discussions among collectors because it was announced only one day in advance. Although such a procedure had not existed in Austria for decades, the Post handled this quite well with the motto “Austrian Post surprises with an overprinted stamp”.



The problem was the political turmoil surrounding the British exit, which was repeatedly delayed. Austrian Post had already prepared a special stamp with the originally planned exit date of March 29, 2019 in the design. When this became January 31, 2020, this stamp could of course not be issued in 2019!

When Brexit was completed on January 31, 2020, Austrian Post had the date “January 31, 2020” overprinted on the existing 140,000 stamps at Print Alliance, a printing chain in the south of Vienna. This didn’t take long - with a print run of 140,000 stamps in sheets of 50, this is just 28,000 sheets, very little for modern printing machines.

The collectors are therefore right to ask why this stamp was not previously announced. If Brexit had taken place on schedule in March 2019, the stamp would have been ready by then. Nothing was revealed to the collectors. There is apparently nothing noticeable in Austrian Post about the “transparency” that is currently so strongly emphasized in politics.

Irrespective of this, collectors are wondering why Austrian Post issued a stamp for the British withdrawal. The British leaving is not pleasant, but less so than losing a member of a Society. It would have been much more important to welcome the entry of a new member (into a club as well as into the EU).

Printing errors on the Brexit stamp

As well as annoyance at the need for the Brexit stamp, collectors find numerous philatelic features that can be attributed to the poor work of the printers:

In the northern part of the map of Finland, for example, there are numerous stamps with “hidden ornaments”. The error apparently occurs regularly on the 39th stamp of a sheet, at least in a large part of the edition. Despite the imaginative description in the catalogues as “ornaments”, it’s really only a sloppy print.



For the collectors, the frequently asked question is, why after so many mistakes Austrian Post still commissions the Dutch print shop, when an Austrian print shop with a worldwide reputation is available: Österreichischen Staatsdruckerei, the Austrian state printers.



Not everything went smoothly with the overprinting, which had to be done quickly. Copies of the overprinted Brexit stamp were reported, for which the original date “29.3.2019” was crossed out with a slightly higher offset. As a result, the new date “31.1.2020” will run in to the original date.

All things considered, it’s not exciting. Nonetheless, this issue is reason to deal with the new issues again. Like the classic editions, they provide opportunities for philatelic research.

1st April – new rates – new definitive series.

As has become a tradition, a new table of rates was introduced on 1st April, and with it a new range of definitives. Several denominations appear on more than one stamp, doubtless for good political reasons. The stamps come in rolls and on cards; the special sets for philatelists are singles cut out from the cards (as you can tell from the printing on the back!).



The stamps were designed by Anita Kern and printed in Offset by Enschedé. Each is 25mm square, self-adhesive. The designs are accessories and accoutrements that might accompany a traditional costume.

“Because of Covid-19” some of the usual presentations are not available, but special cancels were available until the end of June from the Rochusplatz office. [This is only stated in the German version of the OPost web site.] All the denominations except three are available on cards; three only come on rolls – eg the 85c Bridal Wreath can be bought as 5, 100, or 2000. Order with care!



Here are three of the cards, front and back. Above the actual stamps is an explanation of what that value is intended for.

There is also a large (16 items) range of Postal Stationery with the appropriate new stamps as imprints.

On the next pages are a list of the new rates; and another of all the stamps.



The rates.

Inland letter

Priority letter	Small letter	85
	Medium letter	135
	Small packet	275
	Medium packet	430
Eco letter	Small letter	74
	Medium letter	130
	Small packet	255
	Medium packet	410
Eco business letter	Small letter	70
	Medium letter	115
	Small packet	230

It is not possible to apply a franking of 74 cents with the new stamps! However, small and medium Eco letters are only valid if put into post boxes using the pre-paid postal stationery envelopes, or taken into a post office where a special Eco cancellation will be applied. See the article in Austria 206 p42ff on ECO Post. As you cannot use adhesive stamps to pay for Eco post there is no need for a 74 cent stamp (nor for a 130, which can be made up: 100 + 3 x 10).

International (Foreign) letter

	EU & rest of Europe		Rest of the world	
	Priority	Economy	Priority	Economy
Small letter	100	n/a	180	n/a
Medium letter	210	175	275	255
Large letter	700	560	1235	1025
Extra-large letter	n/a	990	n/a	2180

International Plus letter

	EU & rest of Europe				Rest of the world			
	Priority		Economy		Priority		Economy	
	Item	Kilo	Item	Kilo	Item	Kilo	Item	Kilo
P75	60	1000	57	800	85	1250	82	1100
P100	63	1000	60	800	88	1250	85	1100
B	170	260	160	220	230	540	220	430
N	290	495	260	360	390	900	300	830

The stamps

cents	Design & whence	Description
5	Astrachankappe – Seewinkel	Die warme Kappe wird aus dem Fell des Karakullamms gefertigt. The warm cap is made from the fur of the Karakul lamb.
10	Bodensee-Radhaube – Bodensee	Die prachtvollen Hauben aus Lamespitze werden händisch erzeugt. The magnificent bonnets made of lamé lace are hand-made.
85	Fiaker-Melone – Wien	Die typische Melone der Wiener Fiaker hat ihren Ursprung in London. The typical bowler hat of the Viennese Fiaker has its origin in London.
85	Hut mit Gamsradl – Ausseerland	Das goldbestickte Gamsradl ist ein beliebter Schmuck für den Ausseer Hut. The gold-embroidered chamois radl is a popular ornament for the Ausseer hat (<i>it's made from the dark hairs along the spine of the animal's back</i>).
85	Schuberkette mit Taschenuhr – Montafon	Die silberne Uhrkette ergänzt die Montafoner Festtagstracht der Frauen. The silver watch chain complements the Montafon festive costume for women.
85	Stinatzter Festtagskranz – Stinatz	Der Brautkranz wird mit Blumen, Perlen und Bändern geschmückt. The bridal wreath is decorated with flowers, pearls and ribbons.
100	Köchertasche – Salzburg	Die kunstvollen Ledertaschen werden mithilfe einer Holzform gefertigt. The artistic leather bags are made using a wooden mould.
100	Kropfkette – Innviertel	Die Halskette besteht aus enganliegenden Silberketten und einer großen Schließe. The necklace consists of tight-fitting silver chains and a large clasp.
135	Schnürstiefel – Gailtal	Die geschnürten, wadenhohen Trachtenstiefel sind kunstvoll bestickt. The laced, calf-high traditional boots are artistically embroidered.
135	Taschenfeitl – Ybbstal	Das kleine klappbare Taschenmesser hat einen Griff aus Rehgeweih. The small foldable pocket knife has a deer antler handle.
175	Federkielstickerei – Osttirol	Nur wenige beherrschen die hohe Kunst der Stickerei mit Pfauenfedern. Few can master the fine art of peacock feather embroidery.
180	Modelstutzen – Ennstal	Die aufwendigen Muster der Stutzen dienen auch der Kommunikation. The elaborate patterns of the socks are also a means of communication (<i>possibly of marital status?</i>)
210	Tiroler Schützenhut – Pitztal	Die weißen Hahnenfedern symbolisieren den Wagemut der Schützen. The white feathers of the blackcock symbolize the daring of the marksmen.
275	"Ischler" Rocktasche – Salzkammergut	Das Eichenlaub wird in Hellgrün auf Taschen und Revers aufgesteppt. The oak leaves are quilted in light green on pockets and lapels.
275	Waidmesser – Innergebirg	Die Griffe des kunstvollen Jagdmessers bestehen aus Hirschhorn. The artistic handles of the hunting knife are made of stag horn.
430	Scheibenbart – Ausseerland	Der große Hutschmuck wird heute noch bei Trachtenumzügen getragen. The large hat decoration is still worn as part of the traditional costume in parades.

Comprehensive information (from Austrian Post) about the “Accessories” series

The definitive stamps that were issued on 1 April 2020 are dedicated to a traditional subject that plays a major role in Austrian culture: traditional dress. Back in the 1930s and 1940s, we had two traditional dress series dedicated to the regional particularities of different types of traditional dress. This time around, accessories, which add a special touch to traditional dress, will grace our stamps. Sixteen definitive stamps and two postal stationery items will highlight the existing variety of traditional dress and put special emphasis on regional differences.

While all Austrian provinces will be presented, not every stamp is dedicated exclusively to a specific region or province. The Salzkammergut region, for example, is a historical cultural area that covers three provinces: Upper Austria, Styria and Salzburg. The so-called “Ausseerland” and the capital of traditional dress, Bad Aussee, is located in the Styrian Salzkammergut region.

Some techniques are present across regions, such as hunting knives and quill embroidery. The production of accessories relies on traditional artisan expertise. Only a few people still master these tried-and-trusted techniques, which makes hand-made accessories very valuable. Often, they are passed down from one generation to the next, thereby preserving the tradition.

Our traditional dress journey through Austria will take us from Burgenland and its Stinatz festive wreath and Astrachan cap to Styria and its Ennstal knee socks, the hat with the chamois beard, the disk beard and the Koppelschloss belt buckle. The journey continues to Carinthia and its Gailtail laced boots, the Gurktal hat and then to Tirol with quill embroidery and the Tirol hunting hat. Vorarlberg has contributed its Montafon Schuberkette chain and the Bodensee Radhaube bonnet. Our journey continues to the Salzburg Köchertasche bag and the hunting knife used in Innergebirg, on to Upper Austria and its skirt pocket from Bad Ischl and the Kropfkette chain from the Innviertel region. Our last stops are Lower Austria with the pocketknife from Ybbstal and the typical bowler hat worn by horse carriage drivers in Vienna.

AND NOW FOR SOMETHING COMPLETELY DIFFERENT

“Take the FUTURE IN YOUR HANDS”, it says on the outside of a mysterious plastic envelope. A large Austrian Post yellow-with-black-edges logo hints at the contents. A card folder ... For your eyes only: **CRYPTO STAMP 2.0 MOTIFS**. A loose ‘supplementary sheet’ with a thermochromic black square. I am to take it in my hand, and my inner warmth will reveal the four new motifs of **Crypto stamp 2.0**. Oh dear: I appear to be clinically dead. Oh well, try a spotlight. Ah. The motifs are revealed on the Post Office Shop web site: Panda, described as already sold out; Honey-Badger; Doge – nothing to do with Venice but a Japanese canine - already sold out; and Llama. We are informed: The crypto stamp is the first ever stamp to exist in the Blockchain as a digital collectible. On the one hand, it consists of a physical stamp that can be used as a regular postage stamp. The stamp has an adhesive backing and is easy to apply. On the other hand, a code to access your virtual collectible can be found under the security sticker on the back of the stamp block – visit crypto.post.at to find out more. Further details are on the card.

“In 2019 the Crypto stamp caused something of a sensation among collectors. There was huge interest in this world first and it was quickly sold out.

“This success opened a new category for stamps. In addition to our classic stamp issues (commemorative, special-issue, postage & vending machine stamps), Austrian Post now has an additional digital issue: the Crypto stamps.

“It is an honour for us to announce the second series of the Crypto stamp! Presale begins on 20 May 2020 at 13:00 CET. This stamp will not be classed as a special-issue block and so it won't be available as part of any subscription.

“We anticipate high demand and so it is especially important to us that you have the chance to reserve the number of stamps you need in advance. Crypto stamp 2.0 will have a print run of 240,000. In general, you can pre-order your stamps by 10 June 2020 in the online shop of Austrian Post AG or in the on-chain store at crypto.post.at/presale.” The nominal value is 7Eu.

PS: according to the on-line-shop, by 7th July stocks had run out, although “a few may still be available in our branches”.



NOTES FROM OTHER JOURNALS

Note that most of the items described are not retained long-term by the Society, although copies may be available for a short period.

Die Briefmarke

2019/10: Övebria2019; Niki Lauda; Rembrandt; 150 years of Japan-Austria relations; new issues; society news; etc etc.

2019/11: Christkindl's 70th season; overprinted cards in Südtirol after WWI; new issues; special-Numiphil-items; society news including Christmas happenings; etc etc.

2019/12: Metternich's machinations and letters from the Levant; aid for POWs during WWII; the never-issued 1948 'School' series; the "three countries corner" of Austria, Italy and Switzerland; problems in storage of paper stamps and envelopes; event reports; new issues; society news; etc etc.

2020/1: Schleicherlaufen in Telfs; thematic: austrian motor vehicles; writing in 1600; letters from 1945; zero-Euro-notes (costing 5Eu90!); post-WWI-Notgeld; new issues; society news; etc etc.

2020/2: Carnival season; philatelic curiosities (eg Tonga's self-adhesive banana-shaped stamp); fieldpost as WWII ended; new definitive series announced; Levant post in 1909; Grado (some 30km west of Trieste), favoured seaside resort of the Empire; new issues; society news; Youth; etc etc.

2020/3: Ukraine as guest at VÖPh; writing in 1650; the double-bass; recovery of cultural buildings as WWII ended; 1920 Carinthia Plebiscite Propaganda Stamps; inconsistencies in post-office opening dates; Prof Pfeiler; new issues; society news; obit: Hans Stohl; future exhibitions etc list; etc.

2020/4: VÖPh's Flugpost stamp; BSV St. Pölten centenary; "The Russians are coming" – the liberation (?) of Austria in 1945; 1920 Carinthia Plebiscite Propaganda Stamps ii; new issues esp. definitives and tariff; ancient Ephesus; society news; lists and details of corona-cancelled events; Youth; etc.

2020/5: the Taxis postmasters; 75th anniversary of liberation of Mauthausen; war's end and days of change; 1920 Carinthia Plebiscite Propaganda Stamps iii; German-empire registration labels on Austrian 1870s postcards; social philately: a letter from the naval airmen school at Fasana near Pola; new issues; the post and epidemics: cleansing by piercing and smoking; Saint Florian; society news; Youth; etc etc.

2020/6: Thoughts on quarantine; 170th anniversary of the German-Austrian Postal Union and of the first Austrian postage stamp; smuggling mail in 1945; 1920 Carinthia Plebiscite Propaganda Stamps iv; (some of) the motifs of the new definitives; the telecomms exhibition in Innsbruck; 'Postcrossing'; a modern approach to thematic collections; events and cancellations; society news; etc etc.

Germania

Vol 55 Nr 4: Mail to Gdansk, formerly Danzig, 1945; Official mail in German-occupied Poland; & much else.

Vol 56 Nr 1: Marienwerder coffin stamps; West Berlin parcel permit stamps; Official mail in German-occupied Poland (ii); lots of meetings reports; new issues; etc etc.

Vol 56 Nr 2: automated mail registration; COD in the German Empire; First Day Covers but not the usual type; Official mail in German-occupied Poland (iii); the SS Tehade - a ship that never sailed; new issues; etc etc.

Stamps of Hungary

No 219 Dec 2019: Timeline to Trianon, Part 4: 1 October 1919 to 31 December 1919; Mixing German and Hungarian in cancellers; The Phenomenon of the dateless 'P.U. – rectangular postmark'; The 1882 postal stationery card; Clarification of the rules for free postage by official bodies; etc

No 220 Mar 2020: Timeline to Trianon, Part 5: 1 January 1920 to 31 March 1920; Erase or not? - pencil markings of German censorship on Hungarian civilian post 1939-1945; Identity cards issued by the National Child Protection League; etc

No. 221 June 2020: Timeline to Trianon, Part 6: 1 April 1920 to 30 June 1920; Postage due calculation during the Hungarian hyper-inflation of 1945-1946 - the single deficiency; On the trail of the 1919 overprints Part 17: Forgers of the Cluj and Oradea issues; The 1963 'Transport and Communication' issue low values; etc

Czechout

See www.czechout.org where you can read (but not copy or print) every issue including the latest.

Vol 37/4 (Dec 2019): Cancelled Czech: The Re-Germanisation of Six Town Cancellers in Inter-War Czechoslovakia; 'commercial advertising'; book reviews, obituaries, new issues, news etc.

ARGE Feldpost Österreich-Ungarn

#135, March 2019: report of Italia2018; Bergführer and Hochgebirgskompanie; new information on Feldpost cancels (G. Matthijssen, 20 pages!); marine fieldpost from torpedo boat LIKA; POW mail from east Siberia, 1918-20; the censor office in New York, 1917-23; exchange of injured POWs at Sassnitz; etc.

#136, July 2019: date-faults in kuk Kriegsmarine cancels; American censoring of POW mail 1919-20; marine fieldpost from Telegraphist Oberlerchner; Bos.-Herz. first postcard; designs for Italian-occupation overprints; exchange-at-Sassnitz (ii); WWI welfare arrangements, table comparing prewar 1915 and 1918 blackmarket prices, pictures of scrap and donations collection; etc etc.

#137, '3' 2019: Qs, As; Bos.-Herz. Nachnahme-Postanweisungen; the Manöverpost in 1913; the occupation of Belgrade, Dec 1914; Sanitätstruppe in Turkey, 1916; the end of the KuK Airforce on the S.W. Front, Oct-Nov 1918; "Why Italy must have her frontier on the Brenner" – a superb piece of special pleading written by Anonimo in November 1918 and discovered more recently by Henry Pollak; the Innsbruck Unzulässig / Zurück cachet; WWI refugees lavishly illustrated with posters, postcards etc.

ARGE Österreich

#126, 1/2020: Bahnhof Brünn cancel on the first issue; a much-travelled letter of 1855; the Krueger Collection at Innsbruck, lavishly illustrated; book reviews; history of telecommunication in the Innsbruck museum; plate faults of the Graz Provisional, equally lavishly illustrated; questions; etc etc.

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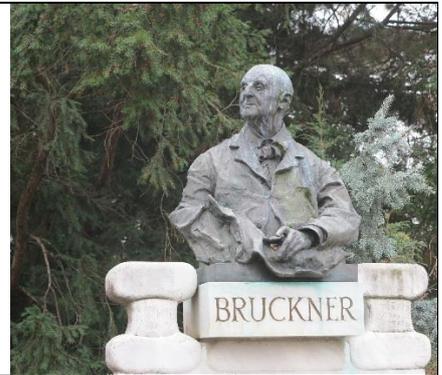
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Robert Avery

It is with deep regret that we announce that Robert Avery, who founded Habsburg Heritage Cultural Tours in 1990, died from Covid-19 in Kings College Hospital London on 10 April. Music, art, architecture and culture were the overriding passions of Robert's life; to share these with others was his enormous pleasure and privilege. Many APS members were introduced by Robert's Tours to bits of Vienna (and Prague) we never imagined still existed, or arranging things we'd hadn't thought possible. As Robert was the heart and soul of Habsburg Heritage and it was his knowledge, passion and personality which drove it, his widow Jane has reluctantly decided to close the company at the end of this year. We will miss it, and him.



Robert joins **Raoul Feld** on the short list of APS members who have had their obituary in the Guardian.

“FESTSCHRIFT 75”

The ASCGB, the predecessor of the APS, was founded on 1 January 1948, so if I've got my sums right the 75th anniversary happens on 1 Jan 2023. I suggest that we mark this by producing a **Commemorative Festschrift**. I envisage this as containing introductions and brief history-of-the-APS notes followed by a large number of 1-or 2-page articles contributed by **you**, the members (see specimens below, presented sideways to get 2 on the page). This would be an A4 full-colour work and published in mid-2022. That isn't actually all that far away in book-publishing terms, especially since the publishing subcommittee is currently embroiled with a book on the pre-stamp philatelic history of Austria, a topic that covers most of Europe between 1722 and 1850! I'd welcome preliminary offerings of “I could do a page on XXX and another on YYY”. There may need to be some editorial selection, and conversely some arm-twisting, so that we get a reasonably broad coverage of topics and dates; but at present it's **All Contributions Gratefully Received!** Please email or write to me. Pictures need to be 300DPI, uncompressed JPG; or lend me it and I'll scan it for you.

Andy Taylor

President

Presented by Keith Brandon

THE SAD STORY OF NURSE ALBINE PECHA
A PARABLE FOR TODAY



The inscription on the picture-side of this privately-illustrated postal-stationery card reads: "Andenken der Wienerin Pechsträgerin, die Wärterin Albinen Pecha, 1898." (In memory of the Viennese plague-victim, nurse Albine Pecha, 1898).

Albine Pecha (4 May 1877 to 31 October 1898) worked as a nurse at the Kaiser Franz Joseph Hospital in Vienna where she assisted the scientist Hermann Nothnagel. A member of his staff, Franz Barisch, contracted what was thought to be pneumonia but turned out to be plague. Nurse Pecha and a colleague, who were assigned to his treatment, both caught the plague and were hermetically isolated within the hospital, where they both died. Nurse Albine Pecha was the last person to die of the plague in Vienna.

The 2 kreuzer stationery-card was mailed from Vienna to nearby Mödling three days before her death. The story of the pretty young nurse suffering a lingering death had featured in the newspapers for several days, and had captured the public imagination. The postcard had been published in sympathy for her plight. (Scan of reverse below).



Submitted by Keith Brandon

Presented by Andy Taylor
Austria – the land of music.

Austria has produced some of the most sublime achievements in the fine arts, the theatre, literature, architecture, medicine, and science. The culture is part of the mainstream of Germanic culture. All of this produces numerous opportunities and excuses for well-designed commemorative stamps – and the Austrian Post Office takes full advantage of this.

Austria is famed for its contributions to music, especially during the Classical and Romantic periods. Names like Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Schumann, Brahms, Mahler and Bruckner spring to mind – and there were many many more. The Viennese operetta reached its peak about 1900. One thinks of the Strauss family, Franz Lehár and Zierer; and of the Vienna Philharmonic and the Vienna State Opera. There's also a strong folk music tradition. All of this produces numerous opportunities and excuses for well-designed commemorative stamps and special cancellations.



Examples of one-sheet-items suited to the Festschrift layout.

The Vienna Opera House centenary celebrations

The opera house on the Ring was opened on 25 May 1869, so the centenary was duly celebrated on 25 May 1969 with an exhibition in the Hofburg. The Austrian Post Office rose to the occasion, producing a sheet of 8 stamps plus a vignette, accompanied by a magnificent 44-page booklet containing a blackprint, essays on the history of Viennese opera, discussions on the building, dissertations on the musical directors, and descriptions of each stamp. There is even an 8-page supplement in English.

The block, issued on 23 May 1969, consists of 8 stamps and a vignette. The stamps depict Don Giovanni by Mozart; Magic Flute by Mozart; Fidelio by Beethoven; Lohengrin by Wagner; Don Carlos by Verdi; Carmen by Bizet; Der Rosenkavalier by R. Strauss; and Swan Lake by Tchaikovsky. The printing sheet consists of 4 blocks, each with a border of stamp-sized blanks: so it's 10x10 'stamps' plus a 10mm margin and extremely difficult to display!