

1959

THE FIRST EUROPA ISSUE, 9 MARCH 1959.



The first Europa issue was designed by Oskar Spitzer to depict a part of the globe, showing a map of Europe, upon which stands a modern building in the shape of an “E” adorned with Europa flags. This 2S40gr light green stamp was engraved by Rudolf Toth and printed in recess by the Austrian State Printing Works, in an impression of three million pieces (comb perforated 14¼:13¾). It was issued to the public on 9 March 1959.

Two plate errors are known with this issue. In the first error the capital “I” in “Republik” is shortened, whilst in the second, coloured specks are visible on the building. The words “Für Europa” appear rather inconspicuously in the bottom right hand corner.

An article by Herr Breitmaul Frosch collecting together all Austria’s Europa stamp issues from 1959 to 2023 is in the “miscellaneous relevant articles” chapter.

THE TOBACCO MONOPOLY ISSUE, 8 MAY 1959.

The second issue of 1959 was produced to commemorate the 175th anniversary of the “Austrian Tobacco Monopoly”, which established in 1784 the sale of tobacco as a government organisation, restricted to the “tobacco shops”. This 2.40S light brown stamp was designed by Ernst Schrom, engraved by Georg Wimmer, and recess printed at the Austrian State Printing Works in an impression of 3 million pieces (sheets of 50); line perforated 13¾. The stamp was issued on 8 May 1959.



The design depicts the emblem of the Monopoly above a cigarette packing machine in a machine shop of the Austrian State Monopoly. The exceptional perforation was selected because of the high format of this stamp. A plate error of “damaged cigarettes” is known with this issue (position in the plate not specified)

THE ARCHDUKE JOHANN ISSUE, 11 MAY 1959.



The centenary of the death of the Archduke Johann of Austria was commemorated with a 1.50S bluish green stamp issued on 11 May. This stamp, portraying the Archduke dressed in Styrian costume against a background of the Styrian heraldic animal, a panther, was designed by Professor Robert Fuchs, engraved by George Wimmer, and recess printed at the Austrian State Printing Works in an impression of 3 million pieces (sheets of 50); comb perforated 14¼:13¾.

The Archduke Johann Baptist Joseph Fabian Sebastian was born in Florence on 20 January 1782. He was the 13th child of the then Grand Duke of Tuscany later Leopold II, and of the latter's wife Maria Louisa of Spain. In 1800 he commanded the Austrian armies fighting against the Bavarians and French; winning a victory at Ampfing but being defeated at Hohenlinden. He took a leading part in the wars against Napoleon I, and after the latter's final defeat he represented his brother the Emperor of Austria in Paris and in London. Afterwards he lived mainly in Styria, devoting himself mainly to the historical and scientific studies which he had fostered in 1811 by founding the “Johanneum” academy in Graz. From 1848 to 1849 he was the Imperial Commissioner to the Frankfurt Vor-parlament. Much to the annoyance of the Imperial Court, he married (morganatically) Anna Maria Josephine Plochl, the daughter of the postmaster at Grundlsee: they lived happily for the next 29 years until he died in Graz on 11 May 1859.

THE INTERNATIONAL HUNTING CONGRESS ISSUE, 20 MAY 1959.

The International Hunting Congress (Conseil International de la Chasse, C.I.C.) was held in Vienna from 20 to 24 May 1959. The C.I.C., with its headquarters in Paris, was founded in 1930 and by 1959 comprised over forty nations. Every third year it holds its congress meeting in the capital of one of the member states. A set of four stamps, designed by Adalbert Pilch, was therefore issued on 20 May 1959 in honour of this congress.



1S purple: Balzender Auerhahn (Capercaillie)



1S50gr deep blue: Rehbock (Roebuck)



2S40gr deep bluish green: Eber (Wild Boar)



3S50gr deep brown: Hirsch, Hirschkuh und Hirschkalb (Stag, Hind and Fawn).

The 1S and 3S50gr stamps were engraved by Rudolf Toth, the 1S50 and 2S40 stamps by Georg Wimmer. The set was printed in recess by the Austrian State Printing Works and comb perforated 14½:13¾. The 1S stamp was printed in an impression of 5 million, the other values in an impression of 3 million.

THE FRANZ JOSEF HAYDN ISSUE, 30 MAY 1959.



The 150th anniversary of the death of the famous composer Franz Josef Haydn was commemorated by the appearance of a 1S50gr brown-purple stamp on 30 May 1959. It was designed by Adalbert Pilch, engraved by Rudolf Toth, and recess printed by the Austrian State Printing Works in an impression of 3 million pieces; comb perforated 14¼:13¾. It is known with all, or only the bottom, margins imperforate.

Franz Josef Haydn was born at Rohrau on 31 March 1732 and died at Gumpendorf bei Wien on 31 May 1809. His musical life started as a choir-boy at St. Stephens Cathedral in Vienna and it was not until 1756 that his fame as a composer grew. From 1766 to 1790 he was the conductor of the orchestra of Prince Esterhazy and in 1791 the University of Oxford conferred an Honorary Doctorate of Music upon him. After 1795 he lived in Vienna, devoting himself to even further compositional work, but from 1802 his health declined.

THE TIROLESE RISING ISSUE, 13 JUNE 1959

The 150th anniversary of the Tirolese Rising of 1809 was commemorated with a 1S50gr red stamp depicting the Tirolean Eagle and bearing the inscription "Tirol 1809-1959". It was designed by Robert Fuchs, engraved by Georg Wimmer, recess-printed in an impression of 5 million stamps; comb perforation 14¼:13¾; issued on 13 June 1959.

Andreas Hofer (1769-1810) led the Tirolese in their constant fight to remain Austrian after the Treaty of Pressburg in 1805 had forced Austria to cede Tirol to Bavaria. The Archduke Johann invited Hofer to Vienna early in 1809 and plans were laid which resulted in two heavy defeats for the Bavarians, after which Hofer entered Innsbruck as Governor of the Tirol which he ruled in the name of the Emperor. However, by the Armistice of Znaim in July 1809, Austria had to cede the Tirol but Hofer defeated the 40,000 French and Bavarian troops that invaded that province. In October 1809, by the Treaty of Schönbrunn, Austria had to confirm this cession, but Hofer after hearing false reports of Austrian victories elsewhere, rose again in revolt on 12 November 1809. This time his enemies were too powerful and he was betrayed to the French who executed him on 20 February 1810 in Mantua.



INAUGURATION OF MICROWAVE NETWORK ISSUE, 19 JUNE 1959



A 2S40gr deep turquoise blue stamp was issued on 19 June 1959 to commemorate the initial commissioning of the official Austrian microwave network. The stamp was designed by Professor Robert Fuchs, engraved by Academic Painter Rudolf Toth and printed in recess by the Austrian State Printing Works in an impression of three million stamps, comb perforated 14½:13½.

At the Stockholm Radio Conference in 1952 Austria had selected suitable places for the transmission of VHF and television programmes to the Tirol and the Vorarlberg. After constructing the aerial railways, the relay stations were built on the Zugspitze (9725ft), the highest mountain in Germany, and in the Arlberg region at the Ulmer Hütte (Valluga).

By June 1959 the preparation of the radio stations and the antennae bridges, as well as the commissioning of a 4000 MHz range, had been completed between the Gaisberg and the Pfänder locations. This was considered as a very important stage in the development of the transmission of radio and television in the Federal Republic. The stamp depicts the aerial of the relay station on the Zugspitze.

THE SPORTS ISSUES OF 20 JUNE AND 17 JULY 1959



For no very obvious reason, two Sports Stamps were next issued as the lowest values of a Sports Set. A 1S50gr deep bluish green stamp depicting a handball player appeared on 20 June; and a 1S reddish violet stamp depicting a runner appeared on 17 July. They were both designed by Adalbert Pilch; the 1S50gr stamp was engraved by Georg Wimmer and the 1S stamp by Rudolf Toth, and recess printed by the Austrian State Printing Works in an impression of 3 million pieces each; comb perforated 14½:13¾. The 1S50gr stamp is known imperforate on the bottom edge.



THE VIENNA PHILHARMONIC ISSUE, 19 AUGUST 1959



Upon the occasion of a World Tour of the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, which took place during October and November of 1959, a 2S40gr black and light slate-blue stamp was issued on 19 August. It was designed by Professor Hans Ranzoni d.J. who also engraved it into steel so that it could be recess-printed, with the background lithographed, in an impression of 3 million pieces, comb perforated 14¼:13¾. An error is known on stamp 27 where the H is without a cross-stroke, and various mini-splodges around the S on stamps 10, 11, and 18.

The design was intended to symbolise the cultural importance of the tour and its mission in bringing the nations together in music. It shows orchestral instruments in the positions they occupy during the playing of the musicians but without any musicians visible. A harp occupies the whole stamp picture and by its side are two violins. Behind these instruments are outlines of trumpets and trombones. The first day of issue was chosen to coincide with the first Karajan-Concert at the Salzburg Concert that year. The World Tour of the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra was a great success

THE 10th STAMP DAY ISSUE, 5 DECEMBER 1959

As usual, the last issue of 1959 was the annual "Day of the Postage Stamp" issue. This year a 2S40gr+60gr black and pale mauve stamp was issued on 5 December to depict a Roman travelling wagon according to a marble grave relief on the southern side of the Church of Maria-Saal, at Zollfeld in Carinthia. This relief has been dated at about 100 AD and portrays a very early stage of postal history.

The stamp was designed by Adalbert Pilch, engraved by Rudolf Toth, and printed in recess, with the background lithographed, by the Austrian State Printing Works in an impression of 1.2 million pieces; comb perforated 14:14¼.

