

THEMATICS

Nr 181: OCTOBER 2023

Newsletter of *Thematics Southern Africa*/ Nuusbrieff van *Tematika Suider-Afrika*

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ARTICLES FOR THEMNEWS

Most of the articles which appear in **Thematics** are sourced from a variety of available philatelic magazines; however, it would be wonderful to use more local articles. I have adjusted the newsletter to allow for local and longer articles. The request for articles remains as strong as ever.

FROM THE EDITOR OF THEMATICS

Dear Thematicists,

When I started working on this newsletter, I found it quite difficult to decide which articles to include ensuring they covered the necessary variety required in thematic philately. The one article I had to include in the interest of informing collectors on development of the hobby of stamp collecting was the article on Context Philately. This was a total new term to me and seems to be a relative new development in the hobby. The author of the article is a well-known philatelist and I read his epistle with great interest. Being a mariner has been edging me towards the inclusion of more articles about ships and the way they are used at sea. As 90% the world's trade is transported over the water, it is a very important part of our lives, not only during seaside holidays. Looking through the latest edition of Linn's Stamp News, the picture of the Life Magnified sheet was quite enthralling. It set my thoughts going on what possibilities a thematic collector would find based on this theme. The article on Antarctic postal history showed that postal history and thematic philately are not mutual exclusive. The article showed the variety created by the change of hands of an Antarctic base from one country to another country, as well as the bases being serviced by different ships. It always surprises me to see the many possibilities thematic philately and the innovation of thematic collectors can come up with. **Editor**

THEMATIC MEETINGS / TEMATIESE BYEENKOMSTE

***First Saturday of the month** – *The Pretoria Chapter* meets at **10:00** in Greek Orthodox Church Hall, corner of Lynwood Road and Roper Street, (opposite UP main gate).

Contact: Helena Snyman 012-803-8922, 083-990-8953 or helena.snyman@gauteng.gov.za.

***First Saturday of the month** – *The Western Cape Chapter* meets at **09:30** in the Church Hall of the DR Church Bellville-Vallei, c/o Postma and St Andrews Street, Oakdale, Bellville.

Contact: Reanie de Villiers at 082-567-0353 or Reanie.devilliers@gmail.com.

STAMP FAIRS

***First Saturday of the month** – *The Cape Stamp Fair* @ DR Church Bellville-Vallei, c/o Postma and St Andrews Streets, Oakdale, Bellville, Cape Town. **Contacts:** Ken Joseph 072-597-1287 ken@philatelicfriends.co.za Robbie Harm 082 925 7103, robertharm9@gmail.com, from 08:30 until 12:30. Please confirm the date of the next Stamp Fair, although reminders are sent via SMS/E-mail.

***First Saturday of the month – Pretoria Stamp Fair** @ Pretoria, Greek Orthodox Church, corner Lynwood Road and Roper Street, (opposite UP main gate) **Contact:** Paul van Zeyl at 012-329-2464 or randstamps@gmail.com. From 09:00, auction at 11:00.

***Last Saturday of the month – Edenvale Stamp Fair** @ Edenvale Bowling Club, 6th Avenue, Edenvale. **Contact:** Kenny Napier Kenny.napier@mweb.co.za. From 09:00, auction at 11:00.

***Last Sunday of the month – Sunbird Stamp Auction** @ 1st Hillcrest Scout Hall, 16 Shortlands Road, Hillcrest from 09:00 until 13:00. **Contacts:** Kim Breytenbach sunbird.stampauctions@gmail.com.

THEMATICS AROUND THE COUNTRY

Pretoria Chapter – 2 September 2023

Our Saturday meeting kicked off with a surprise from Ina to Petra – a stack of Antarctica envelopes, that kept us busy discussing all the thematic possibilities. We also again realised that each one of us look at the envelopes and see either our interests or possibilities and perspectives. We saw sea birds, satellite stamps, transport themes as well as Union Castle postal service. What a nice treasure trove to kick-start our meeting! We were five persons with 4 apologies in our meeting. John Kollen showed ***Islands of the World*** and plotted the Union Castle shipping route from UK to Cape Town. He showed philatelic items from Madeira, Las Palmas, Ascension Island, St Helena and of course Cape Town. These items included postcards, boarding passes, excursion pamphlets and stamps. Petra firstly showed the ***Women's March of 22 June 1940***, her story starting with Jan Smuts as prime minister, to Pretoria Meisies Hoërskool (School slogan: “*Ek sien haar wen*” (I will see her win) originates from the March) to the about 6 000 women protesting against South Africa's participation in the Second World War. Included in her story are stamps, the pamphlet of that day, a newspaper photo and the booklet of the Women's March. Secondly she showed her St Helena pages from her Anglo-Boer War exhibition, also showing how she handles the extra material in a separate file with corresponding title and page numbers e.g., top of page: Anglo Boere Oorlog; Page title ST HELENA p. 68 (p.68 corresponds with her 5 frame ABO exhibition). Marge showed some incoming mail from Germany, Dar es Salaam, Spain with interesting ways of addressing, e.g., no persons' name, only an address. We discussed some topics on exhibitions and then came to the conclusion: for us Open Class was a ‘*lekker*’ (enjoyable) exhibition class, but it is now spoiled with all the rules!!

Helena Snyman

WC Chapter – 2 September 2023

No report was received.

Reanie de Villiers

FACTS AND FEATS: THE POSTAL SERVICES

The greatest number of people involved in the design of a single stamp happened in 1839-



40 when the world's first stamps were being planned. Apart from the 2600 entrants in the Treasury Design Competition, the actual stamps were based on an idea by Rowland Hill, using a profile of Queen Victoria sculptured by William Wyon and adapted by Henry Corbould for engraving by Charles and Frederick Heath on a background engine-turned by



Jacob Perkins. The Canadian Christmas stamp of 1898, often credited to the Postmaster General, William Mulock (who conceived it) was in fact designed by R. Weir Crouch, Gustave Hahn, A.H. Howard and R. Holmes.

Unusual stamp designers.



The Prince of Wales (later King George V) and J.A. Tilleard, Secretary of the Royal Philatelic Society of London, designed the Canadian definitive series of 1903-12. Franklin D. Roosevelt, President of the United States, designed the 16c. Airmail Special Delivery stamp of 1934. Jean Cocteau, the French artist, writer



and philosopher designed the Marianne 20 centime definitive stamp of France of 1961. A nun, Sister Frances Randal, designed the stamps for the Papal Visit to Kenya in 1980, and a priest, Father Francis Welch, designed the Sierra Leone centenary series of 1933. Sir David Lindsay designed Australia's 3½d UPU stamp of 1949, Sir Harry Johnston designed the armorial series of British Central Africa



of 1895, Sir Leslie Probyn, Governor of Jamaica, designed the 10/- stamp for Jamaica of 1920, and General Sir James Willcocks, Governor of Bermuda, designed the Tercentenary stamps for Bermuda of 1920. The list is ongoing, and designers include engineers, politicians and some of their wives, writers, the editor of the magazine *Gibbons Stamp Monthly*, military people (including sergeants), and even includes a prisoner of war. The latter was a Japanese prisoner of war, W.E. Jones, who designed the Victory pair stamps of Hong Kong in 1946.



The youngest stamp designer



is Samantha Brown of Rhoose, South Glamorgan, who was aged 5 when she designed the 11½p. Christmas stamp of 1981, showing Santa Claus. This was one of the winning designs in a competition organised by BBC TV's *Blue Peter* programme. Children's drawings and



paintings were first used for stamp designs in October 1958, when three were utilised in stamps from Czechoslovakia celebrating the inauguration of the UNESCO Building in Paris.

The oldest stamp designer



was the Rev W. Keble-Martin, aged 91 when he designed four flower stamps for Britain in 1967. Runner-up was Professor Max Svabinsky whose career as a stamp designer had run from 1920 till 1962. In 1963 he designed a 1.60 koruna stamp For Czechoslovakia honouring his own 85th



birthday.

Facts and feats

from Mackay, James, *The Guinness Book of Stamps*, Guinness Publishing Ltd, Enfield, 1988

Please note that the information used for this article has in many cases been overtaken by events – Ed

TIMELINE – CROATIA BECOMES AN INDEPENDENT REPUBLIC

On 8 October 1991, the Croatian Parliament severed all remaining ties with Yugoslavia.



The new flag for an independent Republic of Croatia



The **Badinter Arbitration Committee** had to rule on the matter. Finally, Croatian independence was internationally recognized in January 1992, when both the European Economic Community and the United Nations granted Croatia diplomatic recognition, and the country was accepted into the United Nations shortly thereafter. The **independence of Croatia** was a process that started with the changes in the political system and the constitutional changes in 1990 that transformed the Socialist Republic of Croatia into the Republic of Croatia, which in turn proclaimed the Christmas Constitution, and held the 1991 Croatian independence referendum. After the country formally declared independence in June 1991 and the dissolution of its association with Yugoslavia, it introduced a three-month moratorium on the decision when urged to do so by the European Community and the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe. During that time the Croatian War of Independence started. During the World War II period from 1941 to 1945, Croatia was established as a puppet state called the Independent State of Croatia, governed by the ultranationalist, fascist Ustaše, backed by Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy within the territory of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. From 1945 it became a Socialist federal unit of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, a one-party state run by the League of Communists of Croatia created at the end of World War II in Yugoslavia.



The new coat of arms of the Republic of Croatia

Croatia enjoyed a degree of autonomy within the Yugoslav federation. In late April and early May 1990, the first multi-party elections were held in Croatia, with Franjo Tuđman's win resulting in further nationalist tensions. On 21 February 1991, Croatia declared its Constitution and laws supreme to that of the SFRY, and the Parliament enacted a formal resolution on the process of disassociation (Croatian: *razdruženje*) from SFR Yugoslavia and possible new association with other sovereign republics. In the period following the declaration of independence, the war escalated, with the sieges of Vukovar and Dubrovnik, and fighting elsewhere, until a ceasefire of 3 January 1992 led to stabilization and a significant reduction in violence.



International Society of World Wide Stamp Collectors and Wikipedia

Context philately: an introduction

The name context philately is a new philatelic term coined just recently in January for a trend or activity that has been developing within the subject in the last few years. Philately is a subject that is just what you want it to be. It can be relatively simple in collecting stamps or more complex in the study of stamps and aspects of postal (not to mention

revenue/taxation) history. It can be seen as a hobby or an academic study and interest, and all stages between. Context philately aims to extend the understanding of the aspect of philately that you have decided upon to collect or study, by setting it in a wider context. This wider context may be as broad or as focused as you please. Examples might be to see your subject as an aspect of historical development in political, economic, social, geographical, human or cultural terms, etc., and thereby gain a better understanding of its significance and ability to describe it fully. You might examine or collect historical documents, books, newspapers, maps, legislation, photographs, posters and even three-dimensional objects or artefacts: post boxes, medals, badges, handstamps, flags, etc. The key is the educational benefit from a broader understanding.

The trend within philately to this expansion of interest has been growing for some years. Some feel that context philately needs to be promoted to those who may wish to engage with philately, as collectors or students, but who want to see it within a wider historical context. The challenge to the philatelic establishment is to embrace this opportunity to develop the subject, especially in public exhibitions and the many facets of the media. The concept of context philately might be applied in any aspect of philately, including postal history, be it to a particular subject, a competitive exhibition class, a collection, an exhibit, an article, a book (printed or digital), or website, etc. The author gives five examples to illustrate what context philately can be.

EXAMPLE 1. Aden postmarks (wider context explained)

A philatelic society meeting the author attended a few years ago, sometime after the year 2000, featured a presentation about the postmarks of the Aden. The presentation was excellent in illustrating the postal markings and a little of the associated postal history but lacked the essential background information that gives the subject depth and meaning, that is the context. The presentation would have been so much more interesting and of educational value if additional data had been included. Examples include the location of Aden; how, why, and when it became a separate (Indian-administrated) territory and then a British colony; and when it ceased to be. What were the political, economic, population, currency, geographical and other historical factors, etc.? These would have set a background and need not have been extensive. **Left** is shown an example of an Aden stamp featuring a map for context.



EXAMPLE 2. Lawrence of Arabia

In 2001, the Imperial War Museum in London put its stamp collection on long-term loan to the British Library Philatelic Collections. As part of the publicity for the transfer, a press release was issued by the British Library. To make the most of this release, the realization that Thomas Edward Lawrence, Lawrence of Arabia, (1888-1935) was involved in the



design and manufacture of the first postage stamps of Hejaz in 1916 was featured;

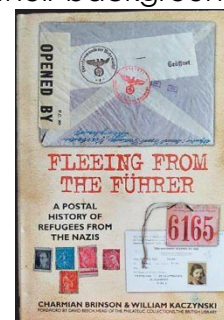
Thomas Edward Lawrence (1888-1935), Lawrence of Arabia, was involved in the design and manufacture of the first postage stamps of Hejaz in 1916.

Here is shown a picture of Lawrence and a Hejaz stamp. This resulted in much publicity and raised the question in my mind about what I knew about Lawrence and the breakup of the Ottoman Empire. This led me to a lot of reading over many years to understand the context.



EXAMPLE 3. Persecution

As a trustee of the Stuart Rossiter Trust, the author came to meet William Robert Eleazar Israel Kaczynski (1936-2019), who had fled Berlin for Britain with his parents, Martin (1896-1966) and Edith (1896-1975), and brother Edward in 1939 to escape Nazi Jewish repression. William's father, Martin, had previously spent time in the Sachsenhausen concentration camp. William had collected the papers, letters, covers, postcards, propaganda, etc., associated with his family's departure and wanted to present them and their background in a book marking the events in context. The Stuart Rossiter Trust helped fund the work, and with fellow author, Charmian Brinson, professor of German studies at Imperial College, London, the History Press published ***Fleeing From the Fuhrer A Postal History of Refugees from the Nazis*** in 2011, shown **right**. A paperback edition was to follow in 2015, a Danish language edition in 2016 and an expanded edition in the German language in 2017. The two authors' work is based on the historical facts illustrated by the various documents, including those of a philatelic nature, to tell a wider story of the departure of Jews from Germany, together with the persecution of homosexuals, gipsies and political opponents of the Nazi Party. The William Kaczynski Collection is housed at the Wiener Holocaust Library, London, where it is on permanent loan, to mark the context of these events beyond, but including, philately.



EXAMPLE 4. Perkins, Bacon and line-engraved printing

Alan Druce had been studying Great Britain line-engraved postage stamps for many years and had researched the Perkins, Bacon Archive (held at the Royal Philatelic Society London) to reassess printing and production procedures and printing numbers of the postage stamps.



Left is shown a photograph of a Perkins D cylinder printing press used by Perkins, Bacon. His work included aspects of the management by the Office of Stamps and Taxes and of the printer Perkins, Bacon. The product of Druce's research work was to be published as a printed book. I was asked to read the manuscript and soon realized that by extending its scope it could become of greater value by giving more context information. Further archival records were examined at the National Archives (London), the National Art Library at the Victoria and Albert Museum, the British Library, and the Postal Museum (London), and these greatly added to the scholarship of the work.

Druce's book, ***Perkins Bacon Great Britain Line-Engraved Postage Stamp Printing 1840-1846***, was published in 2018 to much critical acclaim.

EXAMPLE 5. Clash of the Empires Exhibition

The exhibition "***Clash of Empires: the 1879 Anglo-Zulu War***" was held in July at the Royal Philatelic Society London. A photograph of the exhibition is shown **right**. As an example of context philately, this exhibit may be described as an extreme example, but no less relevant, where the philatelic objects are in a minority to other exhibits. It is an excellent example of philately and philatelic objects being seen as a part of history; they have been used to illustrate the historical story as written records that are often important



key evidence.

Conclusion

These five examples of presentations, books and exhibitions show that by adding the essential background information and context the subjects are more informative and rounded, and, as a result, they are more interesting and educational, helping to engage with other groups and wider interests. Some may say that added context information is nothing new, and they would be right. Others may point out that social philately and open philately already exist; however, context philately may be applied to all philatelic endeavours and not just to competitive philately or one exhibiting class. The emerging open philately class of competitive philately opens up possibilities for telling a story using a wide variety of material. One must guard against open philately, in its competitive form, becoming one where merit is gained by items that are impressive by monetary value or provenience, or used to gain marks but which may be tenuous with little or no link to the subject. Such material may be described as beyond context or irrelevant, which may increase the possibility of losing exhibition marks.

Many realize that stamp collecting and philately have a poor reputation in the non-philatelic world, where it is often seen as being a small-minded hobby undertaken by eccentrics. Those who know stamp collecting and philately do understand that this is sometimes true, but these same people also understand its serious and worthwhile nature. Thus, philately has an image problem. By seeing a philatelic subject in a wider context, as part of history, it is hoped that this image problem may be improved over time. This may lead to the encouragement of people to become philatelists. Apart from those who may become interested as individuals, philately in a wider context has a further prime audience: the academic world. Here, the contribution philately and postal history can make to research in a variety of non-postal areas could, and has been in a few instances so far, be of much value.

Philatelic research in non-postal areas is growing. As an example, patents of inventions have much to offer the understanding of paper manufacture, printing methods and production factors, postal mechanization, etc. Research in general in many areas has been much enhanced in recent years by the realization that a cross-discipline approach has distinct advantages. Philately may have much to gain by such collaboration. This will undoubtedly take time and depend on the quality of written work to high standards. This article may be taken as a preliminary view with much discussion to follow.

After becoming secretary of his school stamp club at the age of 12, David Beech joined the expert department of the philatelic auctioneers H.R. Harmer Ltd. in 1970 before becoming curator of the British Library Philatelic Collections from 1983 to 2013. He was head of the Philatelic Collections from 1991 to 2013. He is a Fellow of the Royal Philatelic Society London and was president from 2003 to 2005. He was invested as a Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE) for services to philately in 2012. In 2013, he was the recipient of the Smithsonian Philatelic Achievement Award for outstanding lifetime accomplishments in the field of philately. He has served as a trustee of the Stuart Rossiter Trust, the Revenue Philately Trust and the Friends of the British Library. He is currently a member of the Advisory Council of the British Library Collections Trust.

Acknowledgments - Bill Hedley and Barrie Wright.

Endnotes - Selected bibliography of the five examples.

Example 1. Aden postmarks

Lea, Ruth. *Stamps as Witness of History A Guide to Political Philately*, Croydon: Filament Publishing Ltd., 2018, pages 212-217.

[Lowe, Robson]. *The Encyclopaedia of British Empire Postage Stamps 1775 – 1950 Volume III The Empire in Asia*, London:

Robson Lowe Ltd., 1951, pages 43-59. Plus Supplement, Part 1.

Pratt, Richard W. and Proud, Edward B. *The Postal History of British Aden 1839-1967*, with additions from M A M Graham and L R Dearlove, Proud-Bailey Co. Ltd., 1985.

Rossiter, Stuart, and Flower, John. *The Stamp Atlas*, London and Sydney: Macdonald & Co (Publishers) Ltd., 1986, pages 223-225.

Example 2. Lawrence of Arabia.

Beech, David R. "Hejaz: The First Postage Stamps of 1916 and T. E. Lawrence," the *London Philatelist*, Vol. 114, pages 323-327, November 2005.

Beech, David R. "Hejaz: The First Postage Stamps of 1916 and T. E. Lawrence: Additional Information," the *London Philatelist*, Vol. 116, pages 38-40, March 2007.

Beech, David R. "Hejaz: The First Postage Stamps of 1916 and T. E. Lawrence: Further Additional Information," the *London Philatelist*, Vol. 117, page 72, March 2008

Fromkin, David. *A Peace to End All Peace, The Fall of the Ottoman Empire and the Creation of the Modern Middle East*, Andre Deutsch Ltd., 1989.

Lawrence, T. E., *Seven Pillars of Wisdom A Triumph*, London: Jonathan Cape, 1935. Several versions and many later editions

Rogan, Eugene. *The Fall of the Ottomans, The Great War in the Middle East, 1914-1920*, Basic Books, 2015.

Wilson, Jeremy. *Lawrence of Arabia The Authorised Biography of T E Lawrence*, London: William Heinemann Ltd., 1989.

Example 3. Persecution.

Brinson, Charmian and Kaczynski, William. *Fleeing from the Fuhrer: A Postal History of Refugees from the Nazis*, Stroud: The History Press, 2011, hardcover edition.

Example 4. Perkins, Bacon and Line-Engraved Printing.

Beech, David R. "Perkins Bacon Line-Engraved Stamp Printing: A case study in the use of Archives for philatelic research," *FEPA News*, II series, No. 40, pages 68-70, January 2022.

Druce, Alan G. *Perkins Bacon Great Britain Line-Engraved Postage Stamp Printing 1840-1846*, Vol. 1, London: the Royal Philatelic Society London, 2018.

Druce, Alan G. *Perkins Bacon Great Britain Line-Engraved Postage Stamp Printing 1840-1846*, Vol. 2, London: the Royal Philatelic Society London, 2018.

Example 5. Clash of the Empires Exhibition.

"Clash of Empires: the 1879 Anglo-Zulu War Exhibition." A special exhibition at the Royal Philatelic Society London, July 2023, London: the Royal Philatelic Society London, 2023, exhibition catalogue.

An article by David R. Beech in Scott Stamp Monthly of September 2023

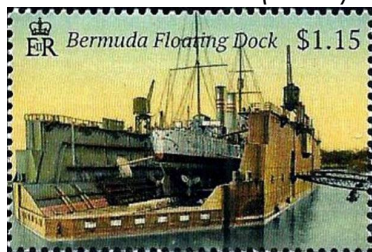
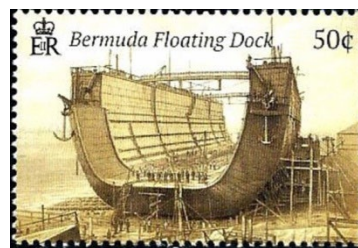
WORLD'S LARGEST FLOATING DOCK REMEMBERED

In 2019, Bermuda celebrated the history of its famous floating dock. Quite a number of stamps have been issued through the years recognizing this iconic landmark. In the early 1800s the idea of constructing a dock of stone was seriously considered, however, because of the porous nature of Bermuda stone, this scheme was abandoned. Instead, ships were tilted to one side, allowing the scraping of the underwater section to clear it from barnacles, etc., and make minor repairs.

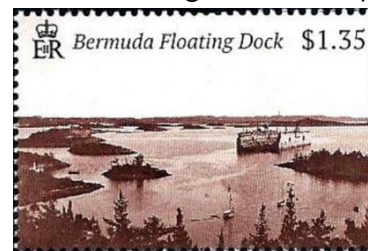
A news report from Bernews, 21 July 2021 stated: "It was Colonel Clarke, Director of Works of the Royal Navy shipyard, who suggested the construction of a floating dock according to the invention of Messrs. Campbell Johnstone and Co. and it was this shipyard that built HM Floating Dock Bermuda in North Woolwich, England. Employing as many as 1,400 workers, construction commenced in August 1866 and was completed

in May 1869. "The floating dock's overall length was 381 feet (116 m) and its over-all breadth 124 feet (38 m) and the inside dimensions were 330 feet (100 m) long by 84 feet (26 m) wide. Overall depth was 74 feet (23 m), inside depth 53 feet (16 m) and the total weight, including the caissons, was 8,600 tons. "On 24 June 1869, HM Floating Dock Bermuda began its 3,985-mile (6413 km) journey from England to Bermuda. Being towed by **HMS Northumberland** and **HMS Agincourt**, assisted by **HMS Warrior** and **HMS Black Prince**, with **HMS Terrible** guiding the stern, the epic journey took until 27

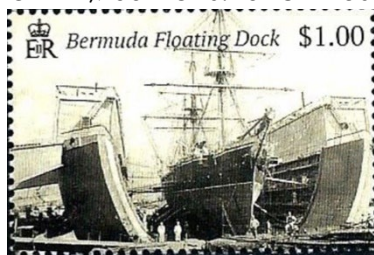
July. "In April 1870, H.M. Floating Dock Bermuda was moved into the Camber and served the Royal Navy until 1904. By then it was realized that H.M. Floating Dock Bermuda was too small for a new generation of warships and it was sold to a German company. Having been partly dismantled, the Dock broke loose in a squall while being towed away and ended up at Spanish Point.



"What remains 100 years later are just rusting iron plates and frames. Many Bermudians are unaware that this was once the largest floating dock in the world with a lifting capacity of some 10,000 tons, serving the Royal Navy well from 1870 to 1906. "With the dimensions of warships increasing substantially during this time, the British Admiralty in 1900 placed the order for a new Bermuda Dock – Admiralty Floating Dock 1 [**AFD 1**] – with the firm of Swan, Hunter, Wigham & Richardson at Wallsend. 545 feet (166 m) long and 126 (38 m) feet wide, it was to have a lifting capacity of 17,500 tons. "When **AFD 1** was launched in February 1902, it became the largest floating dock in the world. As a test, **AFD 1** had to lift the heavy battleship **HMS Sans Pareil** before being towed to Bermuda. Having successfully completed that task, **AFD 1** left Sheerness on 16 June 1902, to be towed to Bermuda by two Dutch tugs – **Zwarte Zee** and **Ocean**. "The voyage from Sheerness to the Azores took 21 days in mostly bad weather. After a four-day stop, the voyage continued on to Bermuda, which, after encountering more bad weather and heavy cross seas, took 28 days. "On reaching Bermuda, the 6,500-ton floating dock was taken to the Great Sound and moored securely in Boss's Cove. Once the extension works at H.M. Dockyard were completed, **AFD 1** was placed in position on 6 June 1905.



THE **BERMUDA DOCK** (floating dock) had the following characteristics. It was commissioned (taken in to service) in 1902 by the Royal Navy. The dock was built by Swan, Hunter, Wigham & Richardson at shipping yard No 262 in Wallsend. It measured 545.0' (166 m) in length, 99.0' (30 m) wide and had a draught of 33.0' (10 m). It had a lifting capacity of 11,700 tons. She was launched as the **BERMUDA DOCK** on 8 February 1902, and completed in June 1902. Designed by Cark & Standfield when built for the British Admiralty, she was the largest floating dry-dock in the world. The construction cost was £225,600 (ZAR 5.190 million), but the dock was not placed in service until 1906 due to delays in completion of breakwater and berth. In 1925, her name was changed with pennant No **AFD 1**. In 1944, she docked 142 ships. She was sold to Fundición del Norte Regusci & Voulminot Ingenieros, Montevideo, Uruguay, in 1946; and in 1974, was sold to Tsakos Industria Navales S.A., Montevideo. The floating dock was broken up by Gerdau, Brazil, in 1989.



Sources: <http://bernews.com/2019/07/bpo-issues-c...mp-series/>

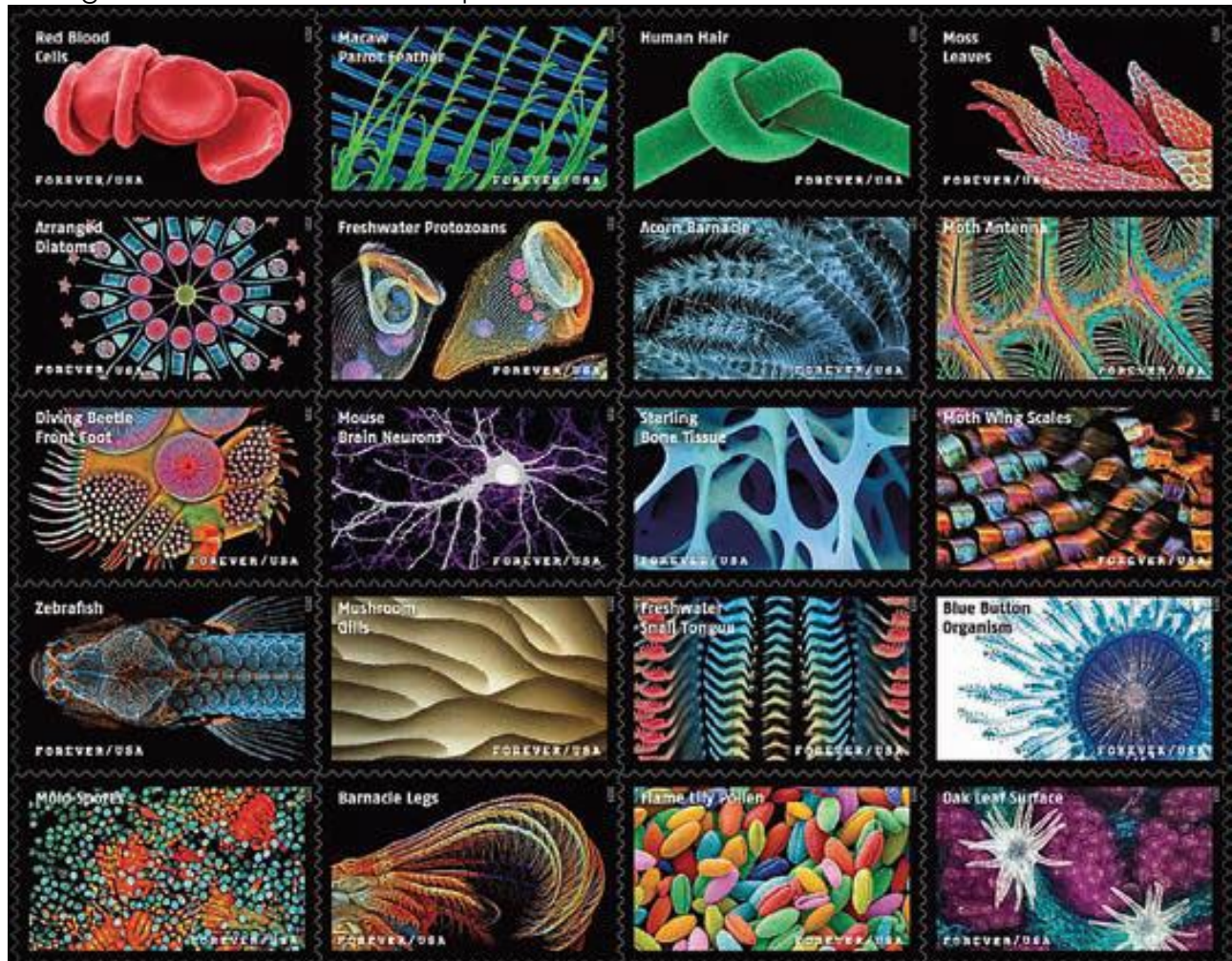
Tyne built ships; viewtop-ic.php?f=2&t=9888&p=10237&hilit=Bermuda+floating+docks#p10237

An article by Dan Rodlie in *Watercraft Philately* Vol 67-6 of May-June 2021

USPS ENLARGES MICROSCOPIC WORLD

On 10 August this year, the Great American Stamp Show in Cleveland, Ohio, provided a stage for the United States Postal Service's 20 new commemorative stamps featuring stunning photographs of various diminutive organisms and other biological objects as seen from a magnified perspective. Working with a philatelic canvas of just 1.2 square inches per stamp, seasoned USPS art director Derry Noyes selected a visually arresting array of 20 photos by eight photographers. Their names are listed in the technical details for the new non-denominated (66¢) Life Magnified forever commemorative stamps. An official Postal Service first-day ceremony happened at 11:00 on Thursday 10 August, the opening day of the Great American Stamp Show, at the Huntington Convention Centre in Cleveland.

"For hundreds of years, scientists have held deep fascination with making the invisible elements of our world visible," the USPS said in a 6 July media advisory announcing the stamps. "Development of more refined and precise microscopes over several centuries brought smaller and smaller components of life into focus." Banknote Corporation of America of Browns Summit, N.C., one of the Postal Service's two contract stamp printers printed a total of 32 million stamps in 1.6 million se-tenant (side-by-side) panes of 20 arranged in five rows of four stamps each.



Microorganisms and other biological features are illustrated by row in the following order:

Row 1: red blood cells, a macaw parrot feather, a human hair tied in a knot, and moss leaves;

Row 2: arranged diatoms (unicellular microalgae), freshwater protozoans (single-cell organisms), cirri (legs) of an acorn barnacle, and a moth antenna;

Row 3: front foot of a diving beetle, mouse brain neurons, starling bone tissue, and moth wing scales;

Row 4: a zebrafish, mushroom gills, the tongue of a freshwater snail, and a blue button (a small marine organism comprised of a colony of hydroids);

Row 5: mould spores, barnacle legs, flame lily pollen, and the surface of an oak leaf.

To narrow down the number of photos to be shown, Noyes turned to an excellent source of pictures captured with electron microscopy: the annual Nikon Small World Photomicrography Competition. Noyes picked the winning are shown online at www.nikonsmallworld.com/galleries/photomicrographycompetition, to appear on two of the Life Magnified stamps. The 2020 picture of a zebrafish is seen on the first stamp in the

fourth row of the pane, and the last stamp in the fifth row features the 2021 image of the surface of an oak leaf. Noyes opted to use the oak leaf photo on the decorative selvage (margin paper) that surrounds the stamps on the pane. *"I stuck with living organisms and photomicrography only from the [United States],"* Noyes told *Linn's Stamp News*. *"I also used a photographer from National Geographic."* Noyes was given free rein throughout the design process for the Life Magnified stamps. *"I was left on my own to come up with the selection of images which I presented to the [Citizens' Stamp Advisory Committee],"* Noyes said. *"Initially I included macro photography but ultimately went solely with the micro photography."* Noyes focused on bringing viewers closer to a world that goes largely unnoticed. *"I hope people will see the awe-inspiring beauty of this invisible world to the naked eye,"* she said. *"I hope the stamps spark curiosity and a bit of wow that hit me as I was working on this project."* *"My final selection [of subjects] is all about balance, incorporating a variety of subjects, with visual diversity, and legibility at stamp size,"* Noyes continued. *"Originally I thought it might have more appeal if some of the images were recognizable, as extreme close-ups that the human eye can see. "But as I delved further in, I leaned more toward the unrecognizable throughout. The surprise factor and beauty of the unknown is what makes these stamps unusual."*

Two pictorial first-day postmarks for the Life Magnified stamps are available from the Postal Service. Collector-submitted envelopes for first-day covers will receive a black postmark showing stylized renderings of five microorganisms that somewhat resemble amoebas. Full colour pictorial first-day cancels found on covers marketed by the Postal Service and others prepared by some cachet makers will illustrate the arranged diatoms featured on the first stamp in the second row of the Life Magnified pane. All orders for Life Magnified first-day cancels must be postmarked by 10 December. Technical details and first-day cancel ordering information for the Life Magnified commemorative forever stamps are presented in the box on this page.

An article by Charles Snee in Linn's Stamp News Weekly of 28 August 2023

FROM THE UK TO THE UKRAINE: THE JOURNEY OF AN ANTARCTIC BASE

The author takes us to the Antarctic Peninsula to highlight the postal history of a remote polar base with a very interesting story to tell. Three owners, just as many names, and a long list of postmarks and cachets to explore, makes this is one of the most interesting Antarctic bases to study.

In December of 1996 the author found himself aboard the venerable Russian survey ship, cum tourist hauler, **Professor Khromov**, venturing south along the coast of the Antarctic Peninsula (**right**). Our target was the new Ukrainian Antarctic base, **Vernadsky**. We reached Petermann Island, but could penetrate the ice no further. However, on landing at the island, we found to our amazement three Ukrainian scientists, complete with rowboat (**left**). Therefore, the author can't claim to have actually seen



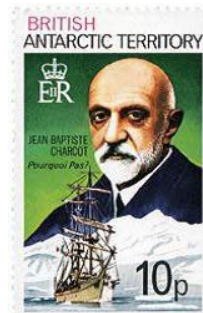
this site. But he can say that he has made an acquaintance over many years of its many aspects of postal history. They make it one of the most interesting Antarctic bases to study. After all, few places in the Antarctic have a more complicated history. It has had three names, Argentine Islands, Faraday and Vernadsky. There's a long list of postmarks and, in addition, there are numerous examples of base cachets. There have even been some 'local' issues, not to mention a possible bogus release.

To the Argentine Islands

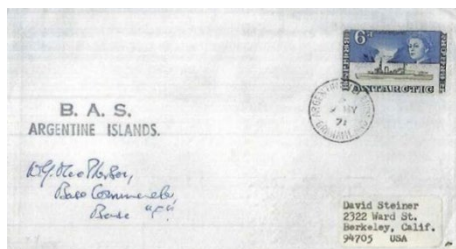
You might not be able to find the location on a small scale map, except in general terms. You have to look along the coast of Graham Land (today it's the Antarctic Peninsula). This is not the usual place of endless ice caps and polar blizzards. The coast is very mountainous with a few harbours. It wasn't well known, if at all, until the French Charcot expedition of 1903-4. The explorer and his ship are found on BAT 74 (**right**).



Voyaging along the peninsula coast, south of the large Anvers Island, they came across an archipelago of tiny islands and islets. Compared to some places these were really insignificant. However, Charcot named them the Argentine Islands in honour of that government support of his expedition. The next appearance these islands make is during the Rymill Graham Land expedition in the 1930s. The explorer and his vessel, **Penola**, are seen on BAT 58 (**left**), while the ship is seen on FID G30 (**right**). A hut was built on one of the islets which no longer exists. Unfortunately, postal history from this expedition is very rare, only a few pieces being known.



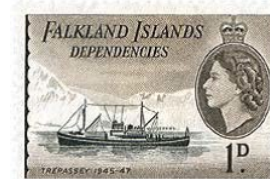
Argentine Islands base



On 7 January 1947 the Falkland Islands Dependencies Survey established Base F on the islands. The base originally consisted of four men. The main building was named



Wordie House, it is still standing and is considered an historic site. You can see it on BAT 380 (**above right**). The vessel **Trepassey** was used to transport the crew. This ship is seen on FID G27 (**below right**) and BAT 221. In 1954 the base was moved to larger quarters on ½ square mile Galindez Island. It was visited by Prince Philip in 1957.



Six major postmark varieties and one minor one are known. The first is a variation on the 'FALKLAND ISLANDS DEPENDENCIES/Graham Land' generic cancel. This can be differentiated from other base uses by the smaller size of the canceller and the smaller space between the two words. Another cancel was later adopted, with different typeface and the date on two lines rather than one. The commonest cancel reads

simply 'ARGENTINE ISLANDS GRAHAMLAND'. This is known from 1954 to 1980 (**left**). Three

more cancels are known –

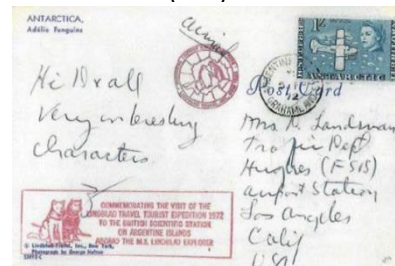


a large rather scarce one simply reading '**ARGENTINE ISLANDS GRAHAM LAND**'. Note the space between the words '**GRAHAM**' and '**LAND**' (*left*). The simplest one reads only '**ARGENTINE ISLANDS**' (*right*).

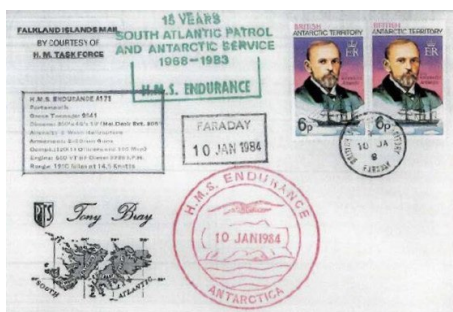


A very rare cancel was only applied on 8 December 1981. This one reads '**ARGENTINE ISLANDS GRAHAMLAND**'. It is believed only about 75 letters received it (*left*). In addition to the cancels there are a number of cachets. These range from single-line marks, boxed examples, and more complex usages.

You can also find covers posted from the famous polar tourist vessel **Lindblad Explorer** (*right*) as well as one of the many BAT supply ships such as **Endurance** (*below left*).



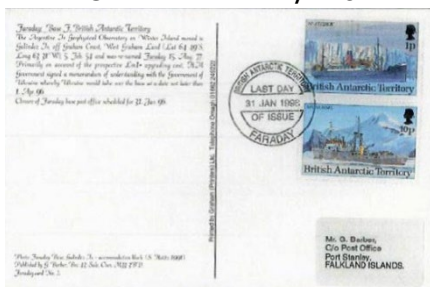
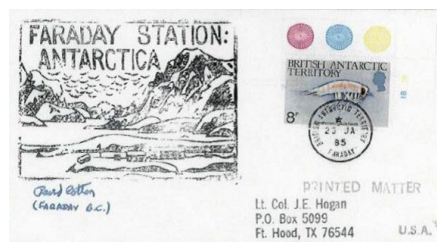
Faraday



In 1987 the name of the base was changed to Faraday. This was in honour of the famous British scientist. (the author cannot prove this but he suspects the change might also reflect the animosity towards the country whose name is found on the base). Faraday had three cancels and one variety. All the cancels are of the same single-ring design, with the wording '**BRITISH ANTARCTIC TERRITORY FARADAY**' (*left*). One of these has the base name in a slightly larger size. That is important because it

is one of the rarest Antarctic cancels. Only ten examples are believed to have been struck. The date was 3 March 1993. The base also had a number of different cachets. These range from boxed markings to a generic circular one with an Antarctic map.

A most unusual cachet is a large rectangular example with a carved depiction of the scenery around the base (*right*). There is one more cancel associated with Faraday. One dated 31 January 1996 when the **Endurance** boarded the base personnel and covers received a double-ring cancel reading '**BRITISH ANTARCTIC TERRITORY FARADAY/LAST DAY/OF ISSUE**'. The base had



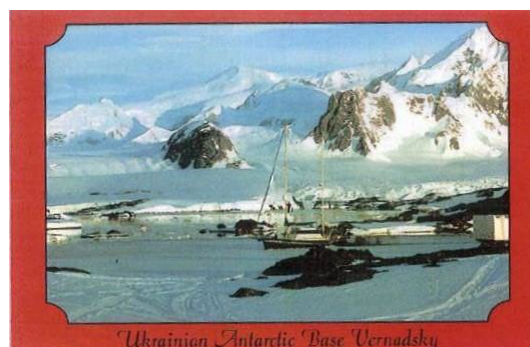
been sold to the new republic of Ukraine (*left*). Through the efforts of the FID and British Antarctic Surveys, there have been 18 base locations with post offices (and several without). Most of these have been abandoned. A few have been removed, while others have been restored as museums by the Antarctic Heritage Trust. Most of these bases consisted of one hut, usually with a few outbuildings. In the early days of the survey scientists were not overly

concerned with trash or possible site contamination. However, some bases became much larger. Faraday, for example, was expanded to accommodate several dozen scientists

during the southern summer. During the early 1990s it was determined that Faraday was surplus to the needs of the Survey. However, there was a large cost involved in removing the base. Luckily, the new republic of the Ukraine was eager to join the polar club. Unable to obtain the use of any of the old Soviet bases a deal was proposed; the Ukraine could take over the running of the old British base – for the princely sum of £1.

Vernadsky base

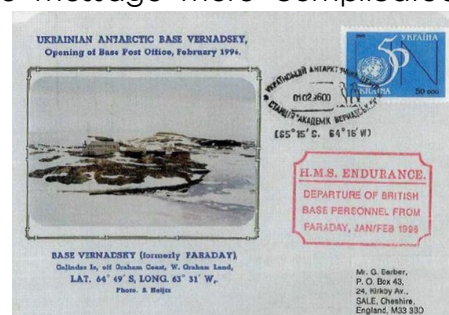
In February 1996 the first group of Ukrainian scientists arrived. The base was named for Akademik Vladimir Vernadsky (1863–1945). He was the first president of the National Academy of Sciences of the Ukraine. Scientific activities are under the control of the National Antarctic Science Centre, which is part of the Ministry of Education and Sciences (*right*). The base is occupied all year. One of its aspects is the operation of a post office, which is utilised by tourist visitors (who can also buy shots of the local hooch as well as postcards).



The author can only report items he has seen, but there seem to have been a number of interesting cancels plus some local labels. The postmarks have had some unusual shapes, and most are in Cyrillic lettering. This makes deciphering the message more complicated (*left*).

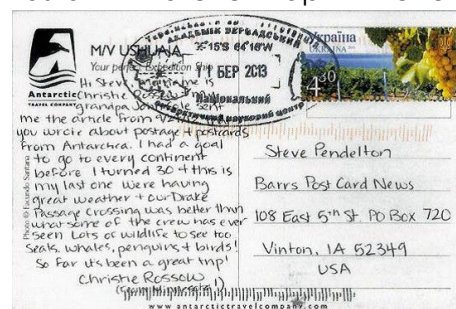
The first postmark is an elongated borderless oval with the wording

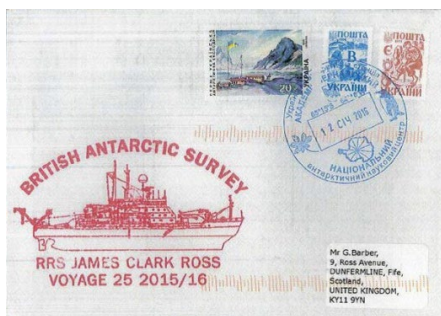
translated to 'UKRAINIAN ANTARCTIC EXPEDITION AKADEMIK VERNADSKY'. There are two penguins and the Longitude/Latitude position of the base at bottom (*right*). There are a number of varieties of this mark, mainly having to do with the size of the letters. These were used through the 1990s. It measures about 40mm.



In and around the year 2000 there was a rectangular cancel in use with the words 'AKADEMIK VERNADSKY', a map, penguin and the base position. It appears to be about 46mm by 44mm (*left*). From 2009 to 2013 a very large bordered oval was in use. This had the base name and other words. There was an Antarctic map in the left middle and a penguin on the right - which appears to be holding

a flower in his beak! It is about 70mm in length. I received a very nice card with this cancel from a surprising source. For many years the author had written articles for an American periodical concerning postcards. One of my loyal readers sent this very welcome memento (*right*).





In 2016 the author obtained a cover with a large circular bordered mark. This one has a flower, map, penguin and the base name plus other wording (**left**). The most recent cancel seen is from 2020, it is an unbordered circular mark. This one is unique so far, in that some of it is in English. There are penguins on either side of the date plus a map at bottom, with the base name also at bottom. A number of cachets exist. One is a large oval with the base name in English and a map with a depiction of the

base.

There are also covers with ship markings – the Ukrainians use the **Ernest Krenkel** and **Akademik Boris Petrov**. There are visits from **RRS Shackleton** and **RRS James Clark Ross** (see **illustration above**) as well as various other ship visitors. The author has also seen cards described as 'Ukrainian Antarctic Post' with pictures of gentoo penguins and one showing a Russian nobleman. There are at least two printed labels with this name showing a penguin chick and adult. There are also pieces of postal stationery which have photos of various wildlife. Cachets from the old British occupation must still exist, as I have seen several covers with Argentine Islands cachets with Ukrainian postmarks.

From 1996 comes a crudely printed label in blue with a penguin posing against a map. The author cannot vouch for the authenticity of this item. Also in 1996, Ukraine issued one stamp showing the base (**right**). It is a fitting starting point for your collection of items from this most unusual site.



An article by Steve Pendleton in Gibbons Stamp Monthly of September 2023

UKRAINE'S SNAKE ISLAND STAMP WINS ASIAGO TOP PRIZE FOR PHILATELIC ART



It's a Ukrainian stamp that best represents the 2022 philatelic issues of a troubled humanity. That was the decision of the panel of judges of the 53rd Asiago international awards for philatelic art, who awarded the top prize to Ukraine's derisive postage stamp celebrating the defiant response to the Russian invasion of Snake Island. The awards for stamps issued in 2022 were presented 23 July in Asiago, Italy. The jury included Sophie Bastide, Raul Berzosa, Giancarlo Bortoli, Ferdinando Camon, Franco Filanci, Giovanni Luigi Fontana, Valter Forte, Daniela Fusco, Carlo Amedeo Giovanardi, Riccardo Guasco, Gianni Letta, Thomas Matha, Giorgio Migliavacca, Flavio Rodeghiero, Orietta Rossi and Gaetano Thiene.

Their choices were decidedly innovative, such as the Asiago philatelic Oscar going to Ukraine's civilized and unprecedented postal reaction to the Russian aggression, as illustrated by Boris Groh.

Roberto Rigoni Stern (right), the mayor of Asiago, Italy, presented the Asiago award to Andrii Kartysh (left), the consul general of Ukraine in Milan.

The winning stamp was one of two issued by Ukraine 12 April 2022, featuring Groh's design. At the awards ceremony, Asiago's mayor, Roberto Rigoni Stern, presented Andrii Kartysh, consul general of Ukraine in Milan, the top award plaque created by Italian sculptor Gio Pomodoro. Kartysh described



the jury's decision as "a gesture of friendship and solidarity." "It's a stamp that has impressed me," Stern said. He also said that the Asiago prize of philatelic art has reached "the plateau of excellence" and that in its 53 editions the prize has been "able to exalt the values of philately in combination with art, highlighting the most important social, economic and environmental issues of our times."

The Sovereign Military Order of Malta, which was participating in the awards for the first time, received the prize for the best environment issue of 2022 for its World Environment Day souvenir sheet issued 23 March 2022. The judges appreciated this souvenir sheet for its harmonious and incisive composition of realistic elements (animals, plants and flowers) and symbolic (the terrestrial globe that provides them the basis for living) with the presence of man evoked only by the grey colour of some of the images, as if to represent an environment that man compromises. This design was the brainchild of Tosi Comunicazione of Milan. The award was presented to Nicola Burdiat, director of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta's Post.



[Editor's note: A lay Roman Catholic Order based in Rome, the Sovereign Military Order of Malta is recognized as sovereign by more than 100 nations, including Italy. The order, which does humanitarian work, has issued postage stamps since 1966 and has bilateral postal agreements with almost 60 countries, but not the United States. Although its stamps are listed in some catalogues, they are not listed in the Scott Standard Postage Stamp Catalogue].

The Asiago award for the best stamp promoting tourism went to Croatia for a non-denominated stamp featuring a dalmatian dog wearing sunglasses.

The Croatia Children's Games stamp depicting a dalmatian wearing sunglasses and sailing in a paper boat was awarded the Asiago tourism prize.

Part of Croatia's Children's Games series, this stamp was issued 21 February 2022, in a se-tenant (side-by-side) block of four (1257) showing different breeds of dogs. Katarina Loncar's design for the winning stamp is a playful and direct reference to the origin of this ancient breed of dog. Tourism is symbolized by a paper boat in the clear and quiet sea of the Dalmatian coast.



The two academies, the Olympic Academy and the Italian Academy of Philately and Postal History, conferred their Asiago awards to stamps from Italy and Great Britain, respectively. For its special prize, the Olympic Academy chose the stamp issued 7 May 2022, by Italy commemorating the 100th birth anniversary of Gastone Rizzo, a teacher who used postage stamps in the classroom to explain subjects such as history, geography, civics, science and religion. He also founded the Franco Bollino Stamp Club. Fontana, an Asiago judge, president of the Olympic Academy and president of the Asiago awards, compared Rizzo to another legendary Italian teacher, Alberto Manzi (1924-97). Marco Ventura designed the stamp, which is part of a series called Civic Sense.

The Italian Academy of Philately and Postal History spotlighted Great Britain's 1 July 2022, issue marking the 50th anniversary of the United Kingdom's first gay pride rally.

The special award from the Italian Academy of Philately and Postal History went to Great Britain's set of eight stamps and a souvenir sheet commemorating the 50th anniversary of the first gay pride rally in the United Kingdom.

The eight stamps (four first-class and four £1.85) and the souvenir sheet were designed by NB Studio and Sofie Birkin. The issue received the special



award for its creative, comprehensive and bold presentation of the LGBTQ world over the past 50 years, with a mix of slogans, rainbow flags and people proudly marching.

Poste Italiane (the Italian Post) celebrated the Asiago awards with a special postmark designed by Roberta Barolo, who was inspired by the kestrel (*Falco tinnunculus*). The postmark of the Republic of San Marino featured a captivating view of Asiago signed by Riccardo Guasco, the graphic artist who last year with stamps commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Doctors without Borders won for San Marino the Asiago Oscar for philately. Guasco was also a judge this year.

An article by Danilo Bogoni in Linn's Stamp News Weekly of 18 September 2023

Compiled by Robert Harm 29 August 2023

PHILATELIC TERMS: O-3

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O.A.

Before the introduction of stamps overprinted **O.S.** in 1874 for general Official use, the British colony of South Australia used several different overprints to indicate use by specific government departments. **O.A.** stood for Official Assignee.



OAS

The inscription **O.A.S.** is often seen at the top of a letter from a British serviceman during wartime. It means *On Active Service* and was applied to the letters of servicemen writing from a war zone.



Oaxaca

During the Mexican Civil War of 1913-16, Oaxaca, the capital city of the Mexican state with the same name, issued a set of stamps printed on the backs of post office receipt forms. The design of the stamps features the Oaxaca coat of arms.

O.B.



The overprinted **O.B.** on stamps of the Philippines stands for *Official Business*, and stamps so overprinted were released at the beginning of 1926. Before that, from 1906, the letters were applied to manuscripts, by typewriter, or by use of a rubber stamp. Stamps of the US 1899-1901 and 1903-06 issues are also known with this overprint.

Obligatory stamps

This is also known as Compulsory Postage Stamps. They are charity stamps issued by some countries for compulsory use on mail posted on certain days. Portugal pioneered them from 1911 until 1928, but they were also issued by Greece (1914-56), Romania (1915-36), Colombia (1935-70) and Ecuador (1920-61). Many British colonies issued such stamps during WW1 to denote a



special wartime tax on mail. In more recent years special stamps were issued by West Germany (for the Berlin airlift, 1949), Iraq and Bahrain (Palestinian relief) and India (Bangladesh refugee relief, 1971). Cyprus has issued refugee relief stamps annually since 1974 differing mainly in the date.

Obliteration de Complaisance

This is a French expression for *favour cancellation* or *Cancelled to order*.

Obliteration Postale

This is a French expression for *postmark*.

Obliteration a Plume

This is a French expression for *pen cancellation*.

Obock



This is probably one of the world's least-known towns ever to have had its own stamps. The town lies on the west coast of the Gulf of Aden, on the coast of the Gulf of Tadjoura. This forms part of the area previously (until 26 June 1977) known as the French Territory of the Afars and Issas. The town also used to be the capital city and the port of entry into the French colony of French Somaliland, later the French Somali Coast. Stamps inscribed **Obock** were in use from 1892 to 1901 and at first comprised hand-stamped overprints and surcharges on the French general issues for the colonies. In 1892 a set of 13 stamps in the Commerce and Navigation key type was released, followed in 1893-94 by a long series of stamps depicting Somali warriors and camels. These stamps were unusual in that they bore a frame of simulated perforations and were printed in two colours on paper that had quadrille lines printed upon it. They were eye-catching due to their large size and, in the case of the higher denominations, their triangular shape. A set of postage-due labels of the general French Colonies issue was hand-stamped for use in Obock, and released in 1892. Eventually, the capital city was moved to Djibouti and became part of the Republic of Djibouti, reducing Obock to a small village.



Obsolescent.

The correct philatelic meaning of the word **obsolescent** can best be illustrated by reference to stamps picturing a recently deceased ruler. Such stamps are about to become obsolete but are in use until new stamps can be prepared. Thus, they are known as *obsolescent stamps*.

Oceanic Settlements

These settlements were initially called in French *Etablissements de l'Océanie*. They were thereafter known as French Polynesia.

OCP

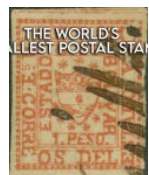
The term is the abbreviation for describing a type of paper known as **Original Coated Paper**.

Odd-shaped stamps

Since the issue of the first adhesive postage stamp, Britain's Penny Black of 1840, the shape proved to be suited for its



purpose and has been in general use since then. However, there has been a wide variety of shapes utilised over the years for both postage and revenue stamps. There have been large stamps, small stamps, round



hexagons, trapezoids, and rhomboids, in long format and short, and all kinds of free-form shapes. The vast majority of stamps in strange formats have been produced to increase their appeal to collectors by making them different. The first triangular stamps are the famous Cape of Good Hope issues of the 1850-60 period. For sheer size, the largest stamp in the world can be claimed by the Chinese special delivery stamp of a 1905-12 issue, which measures 203 mm x 63 mm. The stamp is divided into four parts. Although not claimed as the smallest stamp, honours for the smallest stamp are claimed by the tiny first stamp of Bolivar, issued in 1853. The stamp measures 9.5 mm x 127 mm, illustrated left. What makes its size even more important is that



one stamp is known as bisected. Bolivar became part of Colombia in 17873. Other claimants for the smallest stamps are the 1856 issue of Mecklenburg-Schwerin and the 1857 stamp of Brunswick. They could be further subdivided into four parts, and each part could be used as a stamp. The longest stamp is claimed by Kyrgyzstan, which issued a stamp of 184 mm wide. The stamp celebrated the International Year of Sustainable Mountain Development. The stamp depicted a wide swath of the swath of the Chaar-Tash range, the Toguz-Toro tract and Kazarman village.

Odontometre

This is the French term for perforation gauge. Its inventor, Dr. Le Grand of Paris, gave it this name in 1886 when he devised the method still used today to determine the gauge of a stamp's perforations for comparison purposes. Dr Le Grand used the number of perforations in the space of two centimetres as the gauge.

O.F./CASTELLORISO

Stamps of France's 1900-07 issue were overprinted **O.F./CASTELLORISO** for use in the French-occupied island of Castellorizo, taken from the Turks in 1915. Castellorizo is an island of Asia Minor, a few miles east of Rhodes.



OFICIAL

This is an overprint and inscription found on the stamps of Spain and Portugal to indicate Official status.

Compiled by Robert Harm 6 Sep 2023