



Editorial

Inspiration across the Borders

“Inspiration across borders” was the main concept of the second FEPA–organized Zoom meeting with member–Federations to discuss common challenges in European Organised Philately – together with sharing successful experiences and exploring solutions.

This FEPA initiative is a committed, well–organized effort to put critical issues of Organized Philately on the table, issues that have been for long time known but kept under the carpet.

The exchange of ideas between FEPA and the member–federations for the key issue of “The Future of Stamp Exhibitions” was initiated by a comprehensive questionnaire sent to the National Federations in order to hold constructive zoom meetings coordinated by Vice President Lars Engelbrecht and members of the FEPA Board.

Questions asked to the Federations to express their views, practices and experiences were : on the number of past exhibitions organized since 2022 to nowadays, what are today the main challenges (e.g., declining attendance, aging audience, volunteers, exhibition costs), about new exhibition formats, such as: Micro–exhibitions, Museum collaborations, Travelling exhibitions etc. The issue of Marketing, Promotion, Sponsorship of Philatelic Exhibitions was put on the table as well as the ongoing unwillingness of most National Postal Authorities to sponsor Exhibitions.

This dialogue of the critical issues do not just refer to the future of stamp exhibitions, it refers to the future of Philately within the current demographic, financial and digital world we are living. If all these issues related the existing, current environment are not dealt at once in an innovative and daring approach, I am afraid soon –even within the next decade– we shall not be talking on the Future of Philately but about Philately’s Glorious Past.

A detailed report on this subject will be written by FEPA and presented in the next –no 12– BALKANFILA Newsletter.

Between September 17-21, 2025, I had the honor of being an apprentice jury member for the second qualification as an FIP juror, at the World Stamp Exhibition PHILAKOREA 2025. The exhibition took place in the capital of the Republic of South Korea, Seoul, in an exhibition complex built extremely recently in just one year, Mercure Seoul Magok. A 13-story hotel complex, with three more levels underground with food facilities and four more underground for parking, with direct access to the exhibition halls and the metro. A modern complex with three levels for all kinds of conferences and events that could be held simultaneously. The exhibition space is enormous, airy and well located on the first street level. Nearby is a huge park and a botanical garden with many facilities for relaxing and spending free time.



...Magok Complex



...metro, regular line opposite being the fast line

Knowing that the exhibition schedule would be very busy, I booked a day in advance so that I could visit, with my wife and youngest son, at least one historical palace and a little bit of the city. The bad luck was that only one palace was open, the rest being like ours, closed on Mondays and Tuesdays. The history and culture of this people is admirable, and already being familiar with their history from the series presented to us in recent years, I managed to understand why everything is usefully arranged, with facilities of all kinds at every step, with exemplary cleanliness and quality services. It's all due to RESPECT. Respect imposed through culture for more than 1000 years. Respect imposed by force and then cultivated, led to a high level of civilization. That inclination of the upper body towards the interlocutor, displays respect for oneself. You respect others, you respect yourself. You provide quality service, and others do the same.



...Gyeonghuigung Palace



...Gyeongbokgung Palace



...Gyeongbokgung



...Gyeonghuigung Palace

Over time, Seoul has been known as Wirye-seong (위례성; 慰禮城, during the Baekje era), Hanju (한주; 漢州, during the Silla era), Namgyeong (남경; 南京, during the Goryeo era), Hanyang (한양; 漢陽, during the Joseon dynasty), and Gyeongseong (경성; 京城, during the Japanese occupation). Its current name has its origins in the Korean word for capital, which is believed to be a derivative of the word Seorabeol (서라벌; 徐羅伐), which originally referred to Gyeongju, the capital of the Silla kingdom. Seoul is considered a global city, ranking ninth in the 2008 Global Cities Index.

My family had time to visit a few more places full of history and some modern attractions. I present just a few images while inviting you to visit this extraordinary city that has approximately 10 million inhabitants.



...development of the riverbed for the promenade



... SEA LIFE COEX, Seoul Aquar-



... SEA LIFE COEX, Seoul Aquarium



...SEA LIFE COEX, Seoul Aquarium



...automated facilities



...the city view from Seoul SKY

The exhibition was organized into 13 competitive classes spread over 2000 frames.

Organized by : The Philatelic Federation of Korea, Korea Postal Service Agency

Supported by : Fédération Internationale de Philatélie, Federation of Inter-Asian Philately, Seoul Metropolitan Government, Ministry of Education.

68 national commissioners and 48 jury members were present.



...the installation is complete



.....waiting for access to the exhibition





... the opening ceremony

2000 frames, Naturally, the results show many high scores: 32 Large Golds and 86 Golds.

Participants from Balkan countries:

- Bulgaria (2 lit)
- Croatia: (4 exhibits + 3 lit)
- Cyprus: 1 G (3 exhibits)
- North Macedonia: (2 exhibits)
- Romania: 2 LG si 1 G (2 exhibits + 2 lit)
- Serbia: 1 G (2 exhibits + 1 lit)
- Slovenia: 1 G (3 exhibits)
- Turkiye: 1G (3 exhibits)

The Grand Prix International went to Japan's Saito Toru (齋 亨) with his 1873–74 Classic Stationery.

The World Stamp Champion went to Charnchai Karnasuta, President of the Thai Philatelic Association, for his exhibit on the Early Postal History of Siam, 1880–1900, defeating Alfred Schmidt of Germany and Knut Heister of Venezuela.



... national commissioners



... jury



... a few images from the exhibition in the little time I had available



From my point of view, the exhibition was a real success. Thousands of visitors daily, hours-long queues at the post office stand. Many visitors at the traders' stands. Fewer people visiting the exhibits, but every time I passed through the rows, there were people interested in the exhibits. During the breaks in the program, I managed to visit a few exhibits from other classes. And in the two classes where I judged and was examined, I was pleasantly surprised by the quality and improvisations in some of the exhibits. In the Revenues class where I fully judged all 8 exhibits, there were three Asian exhibits of a very good level and it is clear that in their working manner, they respected almost all the exhibition rules.

And in the Modern Philately class where I participated in judging with the team, I saw an increase in the level of the exhibitors. I was able to make a difference because they participated in exhibits that I judged in Thailand 2023.

Being interested in the Pictures Postcards class because I am also preparing an exhibit, I was very surprised by the innovations of some Asian exhibitors. They went from a classic presentation of memories in illustrations, to detailed studies on the clichés used by different publishers, the types of cardboard and printing, simply, scientific studies that distanced themselves from what I have seen so far in other exhibitions in this class.

I also visited the Postal History class, because I am familiar with it and we had an exhibit in our team that was a candidate for GPI. Truly, the fight was serious and tough. However, I was happy to know the impressions of many visitors and jurors about our exhibit and I am glad that we are in the top of world-class exhibitors, even if we were not favored in the votes. I also had the honor of presenting the exhibit candidate for GPI in front of all the jurors, an honor that the Team Leader of the class granted me with the approval of the presidium.

My only disappointment was that I was unable to buy the exhibition materials at the post office stand. I did not have the opportunity to stand in line for 3-4 hours and my attempt to 'bribe' the post office representatives with advance payment of stamps and postal units was unsuccessful. I replied that I also have an intensive schedule and cannot stand in line, even the commissioner general intervened, but the answer was invariable. We have the rule. So apart from the materials that I personally received, I was unable to donate other materials intended for the FIP Exhibition section to the museum.



The jury room and my team. Lee Bok-Kyu - Jury president, John Hotchner - Team Leader, Jenwit Apichainunt - Expert, and me Cross Accreditation



Alone at Revenues and together with the team at Modern Philately Class



PPC class, Sam Chiu juror and Zhongwei Zhao exhibitor



...PH class, In front of the GPI candidate exhibit, with Yuki Itabashi, Japan, a Romanian philately lover.



REV class, with Gold medal exhibitor Yonghong Li, China

I was particularly happy to participate in the seminar organized by UPU representatives, and among the three actions, there was also the presentation of a philatelic material executed by the Romanian Post and Romfilatelia, a presentation held by Mr. Director Gabriel Bulumac.



Gabriel Bulumac, Director of Romfilatelia, Ion Chirescu, President of FFR, and me in front of the GPI candidate exhibit, owner Mr. Chirescu



Gabriel Bulumac and Ion Chirescu next to UPU representatives Mr. Benjamin Combes

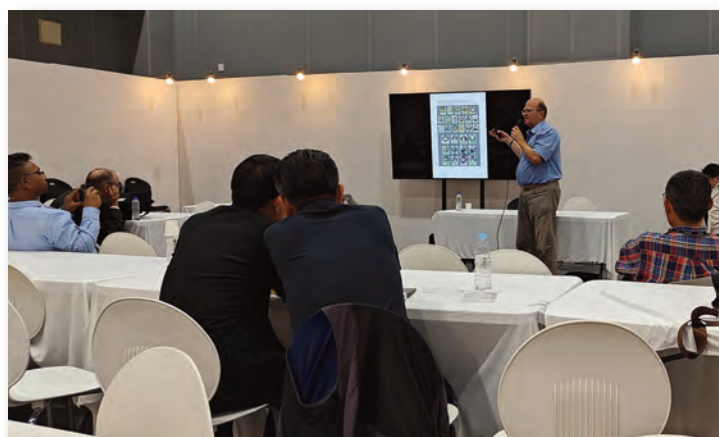
Due to the overlapping of specialized seminars in the program, I was unable to attend all of them, settling for the qualification seminar for Traditional Philately, Postal History, Stationery, and Revenues only in passing because it overlapped with Postal History. However, even though I have attended such seminars before, there are always new things to learn and my advice is to try to be present whenever possible.



Postal Stationery seminar - Sam Chiu



Traditional Philately seminar - Andrew Cheung



Revenue seminar - Karoly Szucs



Postal History seminar - Henrik Mouritsen

And now let me justify why the schedule was so busy. During the three days of judging, the schedule started at 9 am, then after lunch there was a roll call and until 5:30 pm when there was another roll call, we had work or had to stay in the jury room for various communications and votes. Every evening from 6 pm there was a reception given by the exhibition organizers or by the organizers of the next world exhibitions. Dubai 2026, Macao 2026 and Taipei 2026. On the penultimate day there were seminars throughout the day. On the last day we had to be present in front of the frames for feedback with the exhibitors or national commissioners. After that the exhibition closed. With such a schedule, it is hard to justify some excursions or walks. The only solution is to stay a few extra days and the costs are already becoming very high. In conclusion, it is sometimes difficult to combine pleasure with passion, and you have to give up one for the other. I have always preferred passion.

The Palmares celebration took place in the same building of the exhibition complex and hotel, and was attended by approximately 400 people.



Dubai Night, reception in honor of the exhibition in February 2026



Together with Chen Yu-An, Revenues juror and friend at the FIAP stand



The ceremony of handing over the FIP flag to the organizers of Dubai 2026



Some of the Large Gold medal winners



Grand Prix winners and candidates

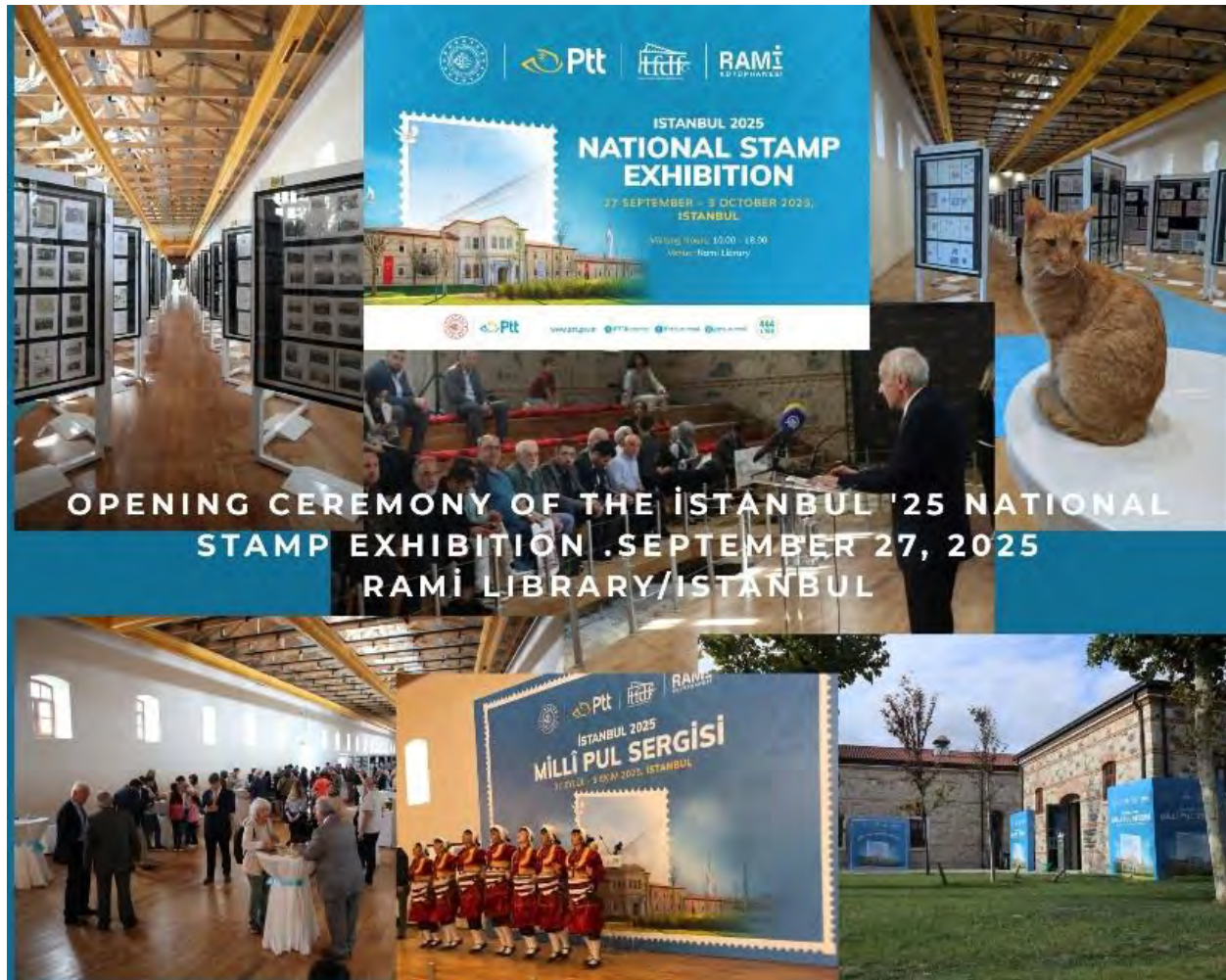


The awards ceremony Palmares Night, from left to right; Hochner family, Ambrus family, Nicolai Penev, Chiorescu family

Photos taken by Francisc Ambrus

EXHIBITIONS & EVENTS

Istanbul'25 National Stamp Exhibition (September 27 – October 5, 2025)



OPENING CEREMONY OF THE İSTANBUL '25 NATIONAL
STAMP EXHIBITION .SEPTEMBER 27, 2025
RAMİ LIBRARY/İSTANBUL

Türkiye National Exhibition was held at the **Rami Library** in the Rami district of Istanbul between **September 27** and **October 5, 2025**. Approximately 500 panels from the collection were displayed at the exhibition.

VENUE: The Rami Library, which covers an area of 220,000 square meters, is among the 19 projects shortlisted for the 16th Aga Khan Award for Architecture (2023–2025). The Rami Library, which is the largest library in Europe, also hosted our National Exhibition in its exhibition hall. The venue was perfect as an exhibition space.

SPONSORS: The exhibition was part of the Ministry of Culture's **Turkey Culture Route Festival** program, sponsored by TFDF and PTT AŞ the Ministry of Transportation and Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality and District Municipalities provided support for the first time in terms of publicity. For 10 days, exhibition posters and advertisements continuously rotated on promotional screens at all Metro and Marmaray stations. We also featured on promotional billboards on main streets. This was the first time a philatelic exhibition was promoted at this level, and we were able to measure the difference that effective promotion makes.

EXHIBITION: Work on the Istanbul Exhibition began in mid-2024. To make the exhibition possible, our Board members Mehmet AKAN and Murat ÇELEBİ held numerous meetings at the PTT General Directorate. TFDF President Ziya AĞAOĞULLARI made countless phone calls to PTT. We were only able to finalize the protocol about forty days before the exhibition.



JURY: Four different Jury Groups were formed, presided by Ziya AĞAOĞULLARI, with Arman ARIKAN as Secretary General and Mehmet AKAN, Edip AĞAOĞULLARI, and Muzaffer ARDA as Team Leaders. Atadan TUNACI, Turhan TURGUT, Şükrü MELEK, Mehmet BOSTANOĞLU, and Kemal GİRAY served as jury members.

Emre UTKU in the Postal History class, and Saadettin KAYSERİLİOĞLU and Yasemin YAZGAN in the Thematic Classes successfully passed the trainee jury exam in full compliance with FIP standards.



SEMINARS

During the İSTANBUL'25 exhibition period **September 27 and October 5, 2025**), the Academy of Turkish Philately organized seven different seminars targeting various interest groups, a number that is difficult to achieve even at international exhibitions.

These seminars, which attracted a high level of general interest, covered topics ranging from the lesser-known, such as AI-Artificial Intelligence, Frama Stamps, and Crypto Stamps, to more traditional subjects like Ottoman Philately, Thematic Collections, and Encouraging Young People to Love Philately.



The 20th Philatelic Forum in Northeast China



On September 5, 2025, at 11:00 a.m. Turkey time, The 20th Northeast China Philatelic Forum, was held at the Workers' Cultural Palace in Changchun, Jilin Province. Our Academy was a guest at the forum, and a presentation titled "Philately in Turkey" was given by Mehmet AKA and our young philatelist Kaan LEONARDO.

There were around 100 physical participants at the forum. Since applications such as Zoom and WhatsApp are restricted in China, the presentation was made in .ppt format via WeChat. Kaan provided simultaneous translation into Chinese. We would also like to thank the forum coordinator, Zhongwei Zhao.

SOCIAL PROGRAMS



During the ISTANBUL'25 exhibition (29 September 2025), the Turkish Philatelic Academy hosted a dinner. Thirty-two members of our academy community gathered for a social occasion to unwind from the day's fatigue.

Online philatelic exhibition APATIN 2025

At the session of the Board of Directors of the Association of Philatelists Apatin, which was attended by 4 (four) members (one member of the Board is justifiably absent), the following DECISIONS were made:

- That the online philatelic exhibition "Apatin 2025" be held from December 15. 2025. to January 15. 2026. with the cooperation and under the auspices of the Associazione Italiana di Maximafilia (AIM) and Italian Federation of Philatelic Societies (FSFI)
- That the Association forms the Organizing Committee on the occasion of the online philatelic exhibition "APATIN 2025", Apatin Internet Philatelic Exhibition with international participation.
- Željko Popović (member of the Board of Directors of the Association of Philatelists of Serbia) was elected president of the Organizing Committee.
- The following were elected members of the Organizing Committee :
 1. Zoran Vrućan (President of the Board of Directors „Udruženja Filatelista Apatin“ (UFA)
 2. Bruno Crevato-Selvaggi (President of the Italian Federation of Philatelic Societies)
 3. Luca Lavagnino (FSFI Delegate for Exhibitions and Juries)
 4. D'Agata Rosario (President of the Italian Association of Maximafilia)
 5. Radovan Đukić (Deputy Mayor of Apatin)
 6. Nikola Vejin (member of the board of directors of the Association of Philatelists Apatin – technical person in the Organizing Committee)
 7. Boris Stupar (technical person in the Organizing Committee)

All documentation and entry form at

<https://udruzenjefilatelistaapatin.org.rs/dokumentacija-apatin-2025/>

Two PostEuropa Awards for Post of Serbia on World Post Day

The Post of Serbia has won two prestigious awards from PostEurop, the Rising Star in Innovation 2025 award and the award for the most beautiful stamp of the "Europe" issue, according to public votes. The awards were received by the Acting Director of the Post of Serbia, Zoran Anđelković, at the General Assembly of the Association of Public Postal Operators of Europe – PostEurop, which is being held in Tirana from October 8 to 9.

The Post of Serbia won the Rising Star Award for the project of a robotic system for automated sorting of postal items, which it implemented in postal centres in Belgrade, Niš, Novi Sad, Kragujevac and Kraljevo.

Director Zoran Anđelković said that the recognition is an important indicator that the Post of Serbia is at

the forefront of the most modern postal administrations in Europe and that it has come a long way in the field of digital transformation and implementation of new technologies.

"In the era of digitalization, receiving the award for new hope in the field of innovation from



the European postal organization is a great recognition and a motivation for us to be even more creative and innovative in the following year and the years to come. Digitalization, modern technologies and artificial intelligence are the engines of our further development, and we are to make the best use of them in the application of traditional and the creation of new postal services, the growth of eCommerce and for new jobs. This would not be possible without the engagement of our experts who worked on this project and

all employees who provide services every day and care about the satisfaction of our customers", said Zoran Anđelković.



The award for the most beautiful stamp of the “Europe” issue at this year’s competition on the theme of national archaeological discoveries was won by the Post of Serbia with a stamp motif featuring an anthropomorphic figurine from the Vinča site, artistically realized by the stamp designer Nadežda Skočajić. In a competition among 57 commemorative stamps from postal administrations across Europe, “Vinčanka” won the hearts of voters across Europe and the largest number of public votes in an online voting open to the public. Professional cooperation and material for the motifs of this “Europe” issue were provided by the National Museum of Serbia.



This is the second time that the PostEurop has awarded a postage stamp of the Post of Serbia and the artistic expression of the author Nadežda Skočajić in the competition for the most beautiful stamp. The previous award was won in 2014 for a stamp with a motif of Serbian bagpipes as part of the issue “Europe – National Musical Instruments”.

The recognition of PostEurop, which brings together 55 public postal operators from 53 member countries and operates under the regulations of the Universal Postal Union, arrived on World Post Day, October 9. On this day, we globally celebrate the vital role of the Post in connecting and providing essential services to everyone, everywhere, making a key contribution to building an inclusive and sustainable society.

Photo credit Pošta/Marijana Babić

Happy Birthday Mr. Bartoc, a philatelist at 85

Francisc AMBRUȘ

Who doesn't know Mr. Bartoc? From Timisoara to Constanta, from Washington to Bangkok, the whole world knows the 'young' collector who runs through exhibitions collecting exhibition materials for the collection started by his father many, many years ago.

But who is Mr. Bartoc? Alexandru Dan Bartoc, born in Bucharest on October 23, 1940, the initiator and president of the 'Bartoc Cultural Foundation', a construction engineer since 1962. His passion for philately was passed on to him by his father, Frantz Bartok, the young philatelist starting his activity as a supporter of philately since 1958 when he helped to set up the National Exhibition.



...Balkanfila 2010 ...Aeromfila 2013

Becoming more and more involved in philatelic life, in 1964 together with Mr. Nicolae Tripcovici he works on a project of the first Balkan exhibition in Europe. Unfortunately, due to delays on the part of the post office, the project was taken over by the Bulgarians and in 1965 the first Balkanfila exhibition was held in Varna. It should be mentioned that Balkanfila is the first regional philatelic exhibition in the world, followed in 1966 by Nordia.

However, philatelic life and activity did not stop with the small organizational failure. Catching the taste of initiatives and being co-opted into philatelic promotion bodies, in love with Aerophilately, in 1970 he founded the 'Romanian Aerophilately Commission', becoming its president. The aftermath, the longest-running thematic exhibition with 36 exhibitions until the pandemic, 2020, national exhibitions with international participation and some with FIP jury.



...'Incredible India' Indipex 2011



... BWG meeting Marobor 2012



...jury work Aeromfila 2016



...between friends, Bartoc, Ambrus, Spas Pancev

The tireless philatelist became the initiator and organizer since 1980 of 11 editions of bilateral philatelic exhibitions Romania - China organized every two years in two cities in the two countries. In the framework of the exhibition and works Balkanmax 1980 in Athens, the aerophilatelist Bartoc introduced the term 'aeromaxima', which is constituted between the support, the mark and the special flight cancellation.

The passionate philatelist could no longer give up this hobby and published articles and books as a co-author, became an exhibitor, was nominated as a national commissioner at regional and FIP exhibitions, and later, in 1993, became a member of the FIP jury. Since then and until now, he has been a judge at 11 FIP world exhibitions and several national, regional and FEPA exhibitions.

The activity of juror would have been more intense but due to some divergences related to the administration of the budget of the EFIRO 2008 exhibition, being Deputy Commissioner General and member of the Organizing Committee, he was marginalized for 10 years by an arrogant president obsessed with his own power. In the last three years, things got back on track, in 2024 he also became a FIP Jury Fellow after graduating from the FIP Philatelic Academy in Bucharest.



...together with FIP Consultant Yigal Nathaniel, FIP Vice-President and Ion Chirescu, FFR President, at preliminary discussions for the organization of EFIRO 2024



...presenting the FIP collections to Aldo Samamé y Samamé, FIP Vice-President, George Thomareis and Gian Marco Caruso.



...at the FIP Jury Academy, 2024, hosted by the Museum of Romanian Records



...presenting the FIP collections to Ebbe Eldrup and Peter Suhadolc FIP Director

Let's go back a little to his activities and contributions in philately and beyond. In 1999 he became a member of the American Air Mail Society, in 2004 a member of the European Academy of Philately, in 2005 a member of the World Academy of Philately, in 2008 a Fellow of the Royal Philatelic Society London.

Awards received: 2007 "George W. Angers Award" awarded by the AMERICAN Air Mail Society for services to philately internationally; Knight of the Order of "Virtutea Aeronautica" medal; "Emblem of Honor of the Romanian Army" medal; "2018 – Commemorative Year of the Builders of the Great Union" medal; "2020 – Commemorative Year of Orthodox Philanthropists in the Romanian Patriarchate" medal. All of these were received as a result of the intense cultural promotion activity.



...with the 'Edelweiss' collection



...diploma awarded by the 'Remarkable Romanian Records' foundation for the 'Crucea Caraiman' collection



...son to father. Terrific work

In 2013, after 18 years of accepted or rejected initiatives, he managed to enter the 'Cross of the Heroes of the Nation' in the Bucegi Mountains, Caraiman peak, in the Guinness Book of Records as the highest cross of 39.30 m at an altitude of over 2291 m.

Among his most famous initiatives, it is worth mentioning the "Edelweiss (Cornflower)" collection, started by his father in 1928 with 495 objects and continued by Alexandru Bartoc since 1994, the collection reaching the Guinness Book of World Records in 2017 with 2,710 pieces. Today, the collection, donated and hosted in the Museum of Romanian Records, contains almost 6,000 objects.



...presenting the Balkanfila collections to his son



...presenting the FIP collections

Another important project started by his father at WIPA 1933 with the collection of promotional items of FIP exhibitions, was continued by Mr. Bartoc today being the largest collection in the world with promotional items of FIP exhibitions and congresses, currently approximately 13,000 objects being exhibited in 100 showcases in the collections of the Museum of Romanian Records.

Two years ago, he published a catalog with the most important items from this collection, the work being a true historian of FIP exhibitions and congresses.

I cannot conclude the article without mentioning Mr. Bartoc's son, Dr. Cristian Bartoc, who over the years has financially supported his father in difficult times for trips to exhibitions or in purchasing items for the collections currently in the museum.

Left alone for decades, Mr. Alexandru Dan Bartoc, found a family for more than 12 years in the collective of the Museum of Romanian Records, a collective that wanted to pay tribute to him on his beautiful 85th birthday. In addition to friends and new family, Mr. Bartoc's son, who came from New York to celebrate him and also to help him with his physical recovery due to age-related ailments, also joined him.



...extended family, museologists, collectors, enthusiasts



...Alexandru Dan Bartoc with the personalized medal received from the owner of the Museum of Romanian Records, Ion Chirescu



...Cristian Bartoc, Alexandru Dan Bartoc with the diploma received from the owner of the Museum of Romanian Records, Ion Chirescu and the Director of the 'Romanian Remarkable Records' Foundation Victor Bota.



... Alexandru Dan Bartoc with the personalized cake, Edelweiss and Happy 85th Birthday



However, the 'young pensioner' Bartoc has a motto that he always keeps alive, **'we don't give up'.**

Happy Birthday, Mr. Bartoc.

Photos taken by Francisc Ambruş

L. Koning's time on the Salonica Front, 1916-1918

Prof. Dr. Milan Radovanović, Peter Portfleet

Nurse Koning was in Salonica after Kragujevac, and then in Bitola until mid-1917. According to her statement (*De Telegraaf*, 15.07.1935): "I went again in 1916. First, I worked in the malaria camps near Salonica, and then for four months I experienced the bombing of Bitola. We were given helmets and gas masks. On that occasion, a colonel presented me with the Medal for Bravery on behalf of the crown prince and gave me a Serbian name: Jelena Henriković... Later, the Dutch envoy in Paris called on us to return."

As before, her stay and work are attested to by postal items.



Fig.21 A letter sent on April 19, 1917, from Amsterdam to "Nurse Koning" at Colonel Zondermayer's, with the Serbian Supreme Command, in Salonica, Greece.

Fig. 22 The back of the previous letter with a Serbian Supreme Command stamp—"MILITARY POST NO. 999" from May 12, 1917, and a bilingual, framed information stamp—"DEPARTED WITHOUT LEAVING HIS ADDRESS / PARTI SANS AVOIR LAISSE SON ADRESSE".



Fig. 23 A letter from Bloemendaal sent on April 21, 1917, to Miss Koning, a Dutch nurse, with the address also mentioning Colonel Dr. Zondermayer at the Serbian Supreme Command in Salonica via France (censorship stamps "OUVERT par l'AUTORITÉ MILITAIRE 0" and "OUVERT par l'AUTORITÉ MILITAIRE 20" on the back of the letter).

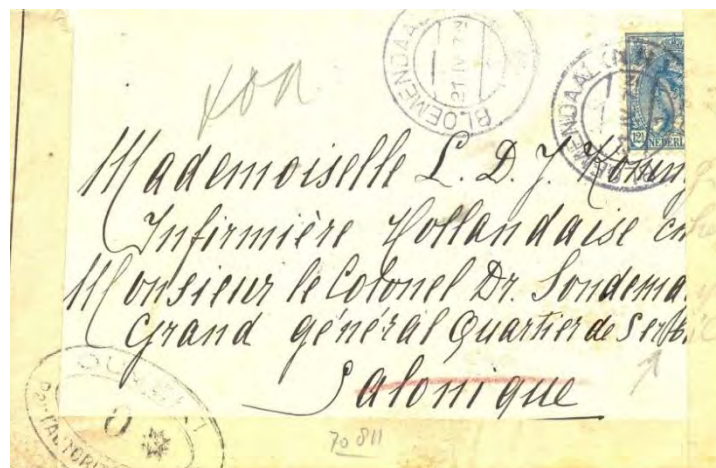


Fig. 24 The back of the letter, sealed after inspection with three French "CONTROLE POSTAL MILITAIRE" banderoles, a French censorship stamp, and two Serbian Supreme Command postal stamps from 4.10.1917, as well as with the stamp "DEPARTED WITHOUT LEAVING HIS ADDRESS / PARTI SANS AVOIR LAISSE SON ADRESSE".

Fig. 25 A printed matter wrapper ("Imprimé") for newspapers sent to Nurse Koning ("Infirmierie Hollandaise") on the Salonica Front, with the same markings as in the previous letter when the address mentions the Serbian Red Cross and Colonel Dr. Zondermayer.

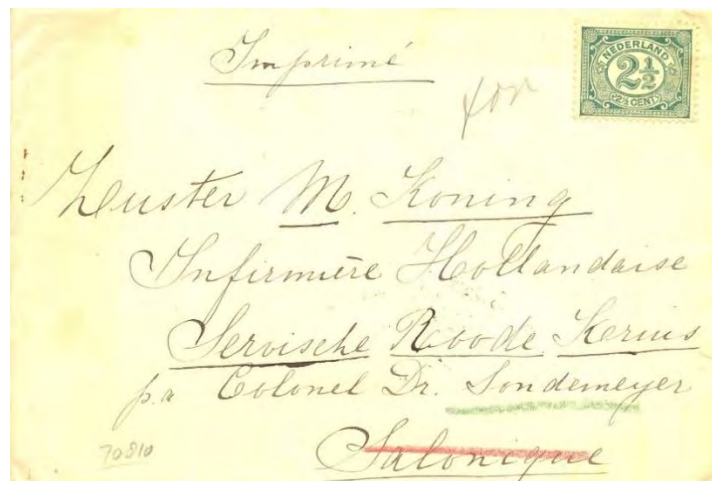




Fig.26 The back of the previous wrapper, where in addition to the Supreme Command stamp (14.10.1917), there is the same notation that she is no longer on the Salonica Front: "DEPARTED WITHOUT LEAVING HIS ADDRESS / PARTI SANS AVOIR LAISSE SON ADRESSE".

L. Koning's stay in Serbia in 1919

A series of facts have been clarified by the work of Fabian Fendrig from 2018, who states:



"In the well-known Dutch newspaper 'Telegraaf' on February 23, 1919, an article was found about Ludovica Dominica Jeannette Koning, a nurse who participated in multiple Dutch Red Cross missions in the Balkans. In July 1913, she worked as a nurse during the Second Balkan War, and from July 1915, she worked again in Serbia during the First World War, most likely in Kragujevac. In 1916, she worked in Salonica and Bitola until the summer of 1917, where she once again helped wounded Serbian soldiers. In January 1919, she was an active member of the Committee that helped Serbian prisoners of war in the Netherlands." After her charitable work for the Committee for Serbian soldiers in the Netherlands, she continued her

Fig. 27 Nurse L. Koning

working for a civilian mission in Serbia and the American Relief Service for Victims in April

1919. Unfortunately, it is not known what she did exactly. The only thing that is known is that in November 1921 she returned from Belgrade to Amsterdam. She died in Amsterdam in a home for the elderly in 1955 at the age of 81.

The next postal item—a newspaper wrapper to which L. Koning was subscribed—was sent directly to Belgrade, then from the Dutch consulate in Belgrade to Kladovo. An oval stamp from the Dutch consulate is visible on the package: "CONSULAT GENERAL DES PAYS BAS POUR LA SERBIE A BELGRADE".



Fig. 28 A newspaper wrapper sent on May 30, 1919, to nurse Koning, a subscriber to these newspapers, via Italy, where it was inspected ("BOLOGNA POSTA ESTERA / CENSURA MILITARE"), to the Dutch consulate in Belgrade, and then redirected to Kladovo (a separate stamp of the Dutch consulate in Serbia is visible).

The next postal item was sent from Amsterdam to Belgrade in June 1919.



Fig. 29 A letter (front and back) sent from Amsterdam on June 17, 1919, to Miss Koning, a "Dutch nurse," via Italy ("BOLOGNA POSTA ESTERA / CENSURA MILITARE") to the address of the Dutch Consulate in Belgrade (with an incoming Belgrade postal stamp from July 19, 1919), and then redirected to Kladovo. The stamp of the Dutch Consulate in Belgrade is also visible.

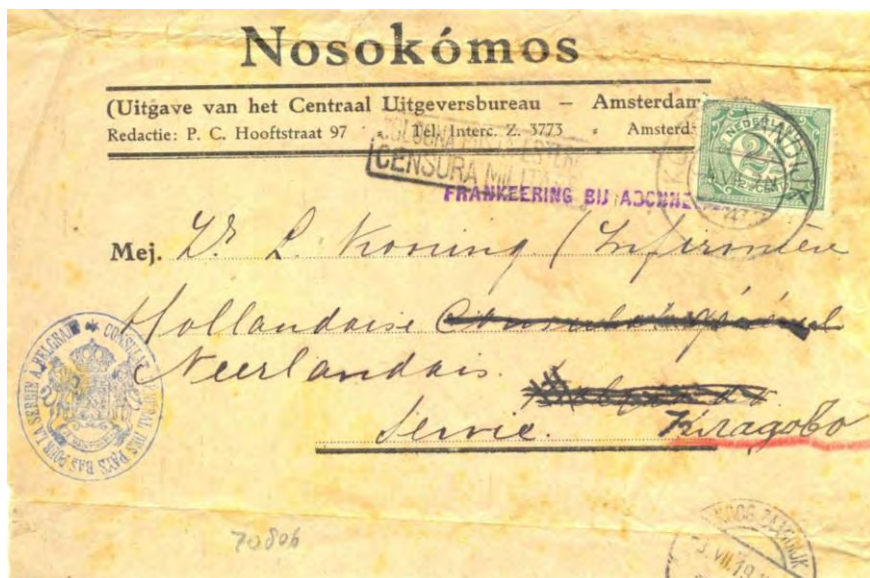


Fig. 30 A newspaper wrapper sent on 3.07.1919 addressed to L. Koning via Italy, where it was inspected ("BOLOGNA POSTA ESTERA / CENSURA MILITARE"), to the Dutch consulate in Belgrade, and then redirected to Kladovo. The stamp of the Dutch consulate in Belgrade is also visible.

Fig. 31 A Dutch postal stationery, correctly franked for international postal traffic with 5 cents (3+2), was sent from Amsterdam via Italy, where it was inspected ("BOLOGNA POSTA ESTERA / CENSURA MILITARE"), to the Dutch consulate in Belgrade. It was then readdressed with a handwritten label "Kladovo, Dutch

5 Jac. Oostplein
Amsterdam

Lieve Luster Koning
Lieve Luster Koning
We zitten hier met mijn hessen,
Heel gezellig te kessen,
En drinken wijn van bessen.
Muziek wordt a gemaakt
Terwijl de kikkeroroch
En de aardbeitaart ons
heerlijk maakt.

Ach, waart gy maar hier
We hadden nog meer plezier.
De gospodine kaka stee
Wij allen stemmen hierin mee!!!

Jeannie Post
Rieckel Luetjens
Christine Koning
Anna Huise



Mission" for Kladovo. A stamp of the Dutch consulate in Belgrade is also present.

This Dutch postcard, which exudes friendship and good cheer, was probably written by the nurses who were previously with the Dutch medical mission in Belgrade, together with Nurse Koning.

Fig. 32 The back of the previous postcard.

Translation of the Dutch text from the back: "We are drinking blueberry wine. We are listening to music... There are also strawberries that we are enjoying. It's a shame you're not with us. We are having a great time. And now 'How are you, sir?'. We all get along well." This is followed by the signatures of six nurses who were obviously already in Serbia with Nurse Koning and quoted "Kako ste gospodine" in Serbian.

The next postal item is a Dutch postal stationery sent from the Serbian consulate in Amsterdam directly to Kladovo.

Figs. 33, 34

A Dutch postal stationery sent from Amsterdam on 28.07.1919 by the Serbian consulate (circular label "CONSULAT GENERAL DE SERBIE aux PAYS-BAS") via Italy



("CENSURA MILITARE / TRIESTE. 39") to "the merciful nurse" Koning in Kladovo. A separate label of the Serbian consulate in the Netherlands ("Consulate General Royal de Serbie aux Pays Bas") is highlighted.

On the back of the card, there is an extensive text which is translated from the original:

"Dear Nurse Koning, you must have received my long registered letter that I sent a few days ago. In the newspaper '**De Telegraaf**', I wrote a little something about Serbia, to which I had a lot of reactions asking for more information... Yesterday, I spoke in Zandvoort... On Saturday, I was at the minister's... where I read the letter, which he found interesting. I also acquainted Colonel **Popović** with the contents when I traveled with him and his wife to The Hague. Do you know where Dr. **Nienaber** is? His father-in-law, Judge **Carstens**, was asking about him, wanting to know what could be the reason why nothing has been heard from him... He was on the Montenegrin border. Greetings to you also from Mrs. **Mebelerkamp**. M. Mereus, Amsterdam, July 28, 1919."



Another letter sent by the Serbian consulate is shown in the following image.



Fig. 35 An official registered letter from the Serbian Consulate ("LEGATION ROYALE DE SERBIE") sent from Scheveningen (R label 391) to Miss Koning in Kladovo, "hospital," via Niš and Zaječar (the back with the postal stamps is not shown).

Следеће званично писмо Српског конзулата је из децембра 1919 године, али за разлику од претходно приказаних упућено за Крагујевац.

Fig. 36, 37

A letter sent from the Serbian Consulate in the Netherlands on 27.12.1919 to Miss Koning via the Dutch Consulate in Serbia, and then readdressed to Kragujevac – "City Hospital." In addition to the already-shown



reception stamp of the Dutch Consulate in Belgrade, the letter was also censored by Serbian military authorities—a black "18 REVIEWED / MILITARY CENSORSHIP" stamp. On the back of the letter is the Belgrade postal stamp and also the already-shown sticker of the Serbian Consulate in the Netherlands.

The next letter, sent from Amsterdam on June 30, 1920, was addressed to Kruševac, unlike the previous ones.

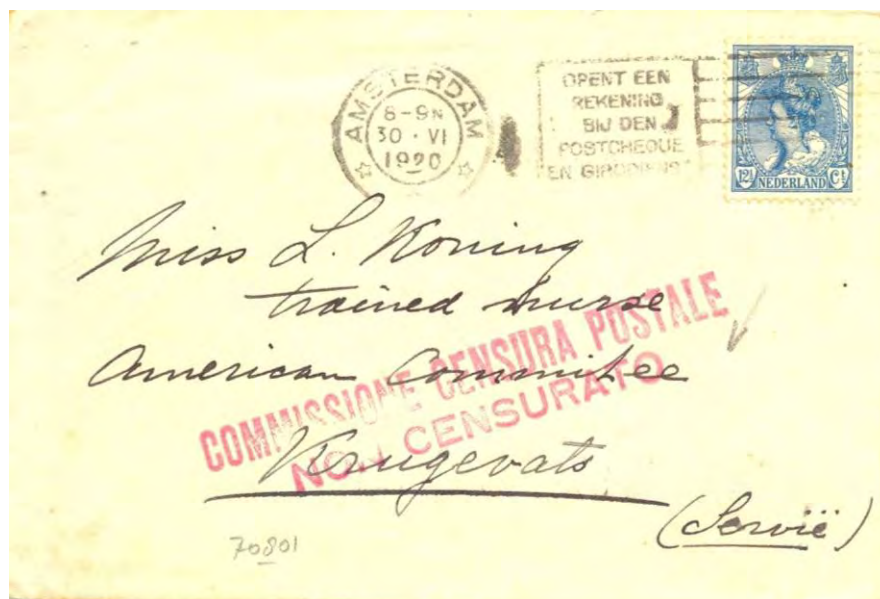


Fig.38 A letter sent from Amsterdam on 30.06.1920 to Miss L. Koning, "trained nurse," via Italy with a stamp indicating it was not censored ("COMMISSIONE CENSURA POSTALE / NON CENSURATO"), for Kruševac.

Fig. 39 The back of the previous official letter ("Doctors van Leeuwen van Maarseveen, Amsterdam") with the same "censorship stamp" and incoming postal stamps from Belgrade (illegible date) and Kruševac on 26.07.1920.



As many as nine postal items, sent from April 1919 to June 1920 and addressed to nurse Koning via the Dutch consulate in Belgrade, by the Serbian consulate in the Netherlands, and by her fellow nurses and newspaper subscriptions, indicate that she was a professional and responsible, but also beloved, nurse. Her work over a period of more than a year and a half in Serbia, not only in Kladovo but also in Kragujevac and Kruševac, was evidently significant and purposeful from the moment she arrived in the country.

The answer to several possible questions was found in the work of Professor J. Novaković-Lopušina (2), who states:

"Early in 1919, Dr. Herman Koppeschaar, one of those who had established the medical service in Montenegro during the Balkan Wars (1912-1913) and who was at that time an advisor to the Serbian embassy in The Hague, informed the press and issued a call for doctors and medical staff to apply for civilian medical service in Serbia, following an invitation from the Serbian government. According to data from the Dutch press, over 70 doctors responded.

The first group of doctors and nurses left the Netherlands on April 1, 1919, and set out for Serbia. The composition of this group was also published in the Dutch newspaper **Algemeen Handelsblad** on March 25:

'For civilian medical service in Southern Serbia, Serbia has engaged Dutch doctors, nurses, and medical assistants through Dr. Koppeschaar, an advisor to the Serbian consulate in The Hague. The first group will soon depart by ship from Rotterdam, including doctors **Van Hamel**, **Lieneman**, **Der Kinderen**, **Cohen**, **Van Mameren**, and **den Hartogh**. Accompanying them were medical staff who had already worked in Serbia during the Great War, namely Mesdames **Koning**, **Westerhof**, **Kat**, **Vermaas**, **Van der Zwan**, **Hoogeveen**, **Doornbos**, and **Demenint**, as well as two medical assistants, **Das** and **Van Halen**.

For the same purpose, doctors Mrs. **Kors** and Messrs. **Sommer** and **Roth**, along with nurse **Van der Kamp**, set off from Paris. This group traveled via Rotterdam and Paris to Toulon, and from there by ship via Bizerte and Dubrovnik to Salonica.'



By way of conclusion: For her dedicated work and the love she showed towards the Serbs, nurse Koning was awarded two silver medals—one for merit and one for bravery (**Figs 40, 41**)."

This confirms the voluntary presence and exceptional activity of Nurse Koning in Serbia during the observed period.

NOTE:

Part of the presented postal material was found at the auction house "***Mondial postzegelveiling**" from Deventer, Netherlands, and was partly sold.

All dates on Dutch mail are according to the Gregorian calendar, and on Serbian mail according to the Julian calendar.

LITERATURE:

1. Portvliet P., Radovanović M., "Holandska misija 1913 – Holandska medicinska pomoć Srbiji za vreme Balkanskih ratova" (The Dutch Mission 1913 – Dutch medical aid to Serbia during the Balkan Wars), *Philatelic Herald* No. 11, June 2015
2. Novaković-Lopušina J., "Nederlandse medische hulp aan Servië: 1919–1921 de verslagen van dr. Van Hamel en dr. J.E. Lieneman" ([\[https://journals.phil.muni.cz\]](https://journals.phil.muni.cz)(<https://journals.phil.muni.cz>))
3. Anonymous, "**Leidsche Dagblad**", July 30, 1915
4. Vendrig F., Vendrig T., John Stienen, "Srpski vojnici umrli u Holandiji 1917-1919" (Serbian soldiers who died in the Netherlands 1917-1919)
5. Radovanović M., "Holandsko milosrđe i Srbi u Velikom ratu" (Dutch Mercy and the Serbs in the Great War), Belgrade, 2019

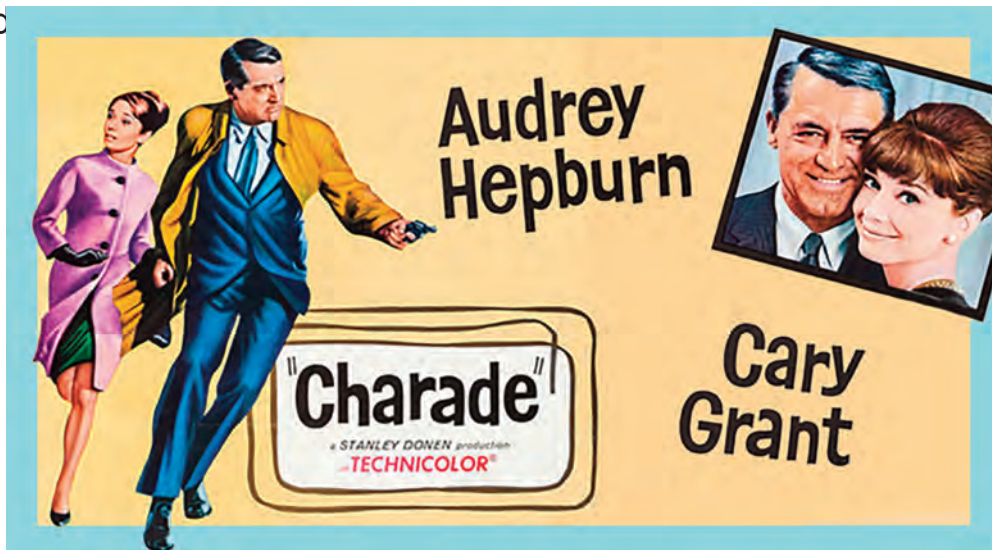
Stamps as movies plot points

by **Călin Hentea**

They are many movies with postal themes (such as “Air Mail” - 1932, “Only Angels Have Wings” - 1939, “The Postman” - 1994) and many postal services issue stamps that celebrate cinema, featuring classic movie posters, iconic film scenes, or portraits of Hollywood stars. But only a few films bring in attention stamps themselves. Here you have some of them.



“Charade” is considered the best Hitchcock style film, that Hitchcock ever did. Directed in 1963 by Stanley Donen, “Charade” is starring three great Hollywood stars: Cary Grant, Audrey Hepburn and Walter Matthau. But the big surprise is that “Charade” introduce a brand new, insolite and unsuspected “star”, the rare postage stamp as the focus of intrigue and a treasure hunt. I won't reveal the complicate and passionate plot of the film, but it is worth to say that the three main characters of this charming thriller, performed by Cary Grant, Audrey Hepburn and Walter Matthau, are fighting to find and get an important sum of dollars. But at the end of the film, we c



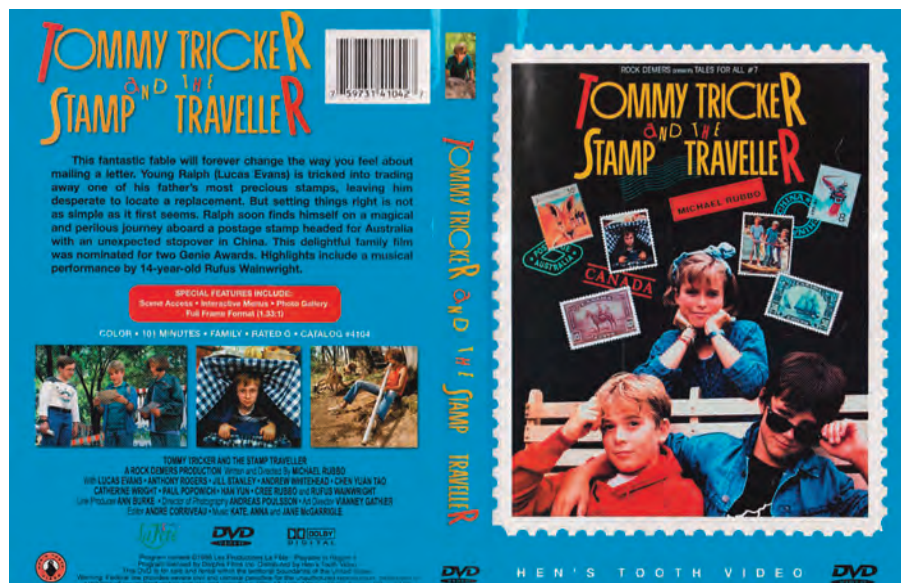
of money represents in reality three rare and valuable postage stamps: the Swedish three skilling yellow, the “Hawaiian Missionaries” two-cent blue, and the eighty-one para blue Romanian “Bullhead” (*Cap de bour*) on blue paper. Of course, it's a happy end, but the film is to be enjoyed not only by stamps collectors.

Now, let's go in 1969, when Henri Verneuil directed the famous “The Sicilian Clan”, a French-Italian gangster film, that perhaps everybody have seen. The stars are Alain Delon as the robber and murderer Roger Sartet, Jean Gabin as Vittorio, the head of the Manalese Sicilian Mafia Clan and Lino Ventura, as the policeman hunting them. Just in the beginning of the film, Sartet is helped to escape from the police custody by the Manalese Clan, and therefore he pay them with... a valuable stamp album. It is not clear

what stamps it contents, but let us presume that some of our precious “Bullheads” are among them. I won’t tell the rest of the plot, because I suppose that it is well known, and stamps are not further playing any part.



“Cap de bour” couldn’t miss in a Romanian film. Yet, in 2006, our magnificent director Lucian Pintilie wrote the script and directed the short film “Tertium non datur”. It happens on the Eastern Front, during the Second World War, where a Romanian military unit retreat before the Soviet Army. The Romanian officers are confused, hoping for help from the German Allies. Instead, the Romanians receive the visit of some German high officers who wants not to fight, but to have a party with good food and wine. In order to impress their Romanians hosts, the Germans shows them a genuine “Bullhead” stamp, explaining that is the most valuable in the world. But in this short film, Pintilie tell us a lot about the many complex ramifications about history, honor, different mentalities that are still valid in our days. Among the actors, Victor Rebengiuc, Victor Leoveanu and Tudor Istodor are to be mentioned.

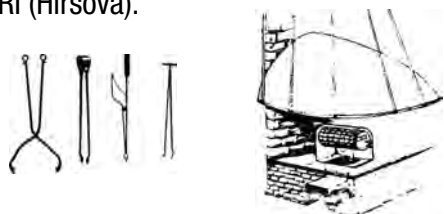


Finally , because I didn’t see him, I have to mention “Tommy Tricker and the Stamp Traveller” (also known as “Les aventuriers du timbre perdu”), a 1988 Canadian urban fantasy adventure film. The film follows a young boy named Ralph who, while trying to reobtain a stamp from the title character, discovers a method to magically travel by mail, and sets out to find the stamp collection of the mysterious Charles Merriweather. Who knows, perhaps some could find and watch the film on Internet...

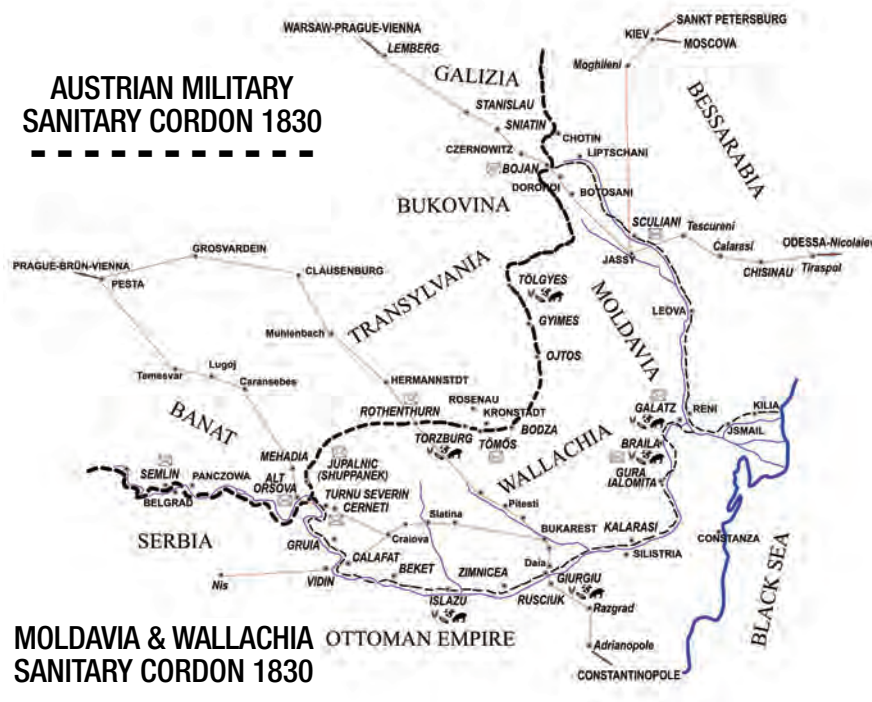
Quarantine cordon in the Danubian Principates Wallachia and Moldova

Francisc Ambrus

Wallachia autochthonous quarantine. Following the peace treaty between Russia and Turkey, 1829, the first step to stop the spread of infectious disease in Wallachia was to sent up quarantine stations along the Danube River, supervised directly by Bucharest administration. On January 1, 1830, a number of 12 quarantine stations were established in Wallachia in contingency with the quarantine localities on the right bank of the Danube: BRAILA (Macin), CALAFAT (Vidin), CALARASI (Siliistra), CERNETI (Kladovo), GIURGIU (Rusciuc), IZVOARELE (Prahovo-Negotin) and ZIMNICEA (Sistov). Disinfection is carried out by border guards under the guidance of a doctor. All quarantine points, Moldova/Wallachia, were subordinated to the headquarters in Bucharest. Exchange fairs: BECHET (Rahova), IZLAZ (Samovit), TURNU (Nicopole), OLTENITA (Turtucaia), and PIUA PETRI (Hirsova).



AUSTRIAN MILITARY
SANITARY CORDON 1830



'The village Cerneti was founded in 1475, near the Dabube River, approximately 1,5 km to the north. The quarantine was built in July 1830, seven km. from the opposite Serbian quarantine station at Kladovo. A year and half after the quarantine was open, the village was put on fire by the Ottoman Army. On April 22, 1838 a decree issued by the Ruler of Wallachia announced the beginning of build for the new city Turnu-Severin instead of the burned Cerneti.' Text taken from Dr. Hedy Feibel.

MOLDAVIA & WALLACHIA
SANITARY CORDON 1830

CERNETI quarantine

1830 Official letter send ... to the Great Ban (governor of Oltenia) and Knight Mihail ... the obstinate inspector of the Quarantines of the Danube line from both Principates ... right to the Cerneti Quarantine. Disinfected letter and applied **KARANTINA DE: UN: 2 le KLAS CERNETI 1830 red wax seal. First quarantine seal at the entrance of the Danube into the country. Unique letter recorded until now / only one fragment with seal in Dr. Feibel coll.**



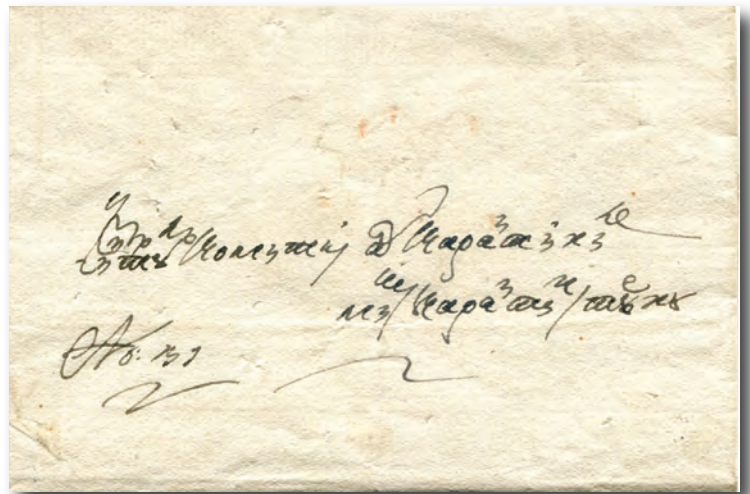
**Danubian route, the first
Wallachian entry points
on the Danube**



1831 red wax seal, Quarantine Inspectorate
of Moldova and Wallachia.
"INSPECTORATUL CARANTINELOR DIN
PRINTIP. MOLDOVEI ~ VALAHIEI"

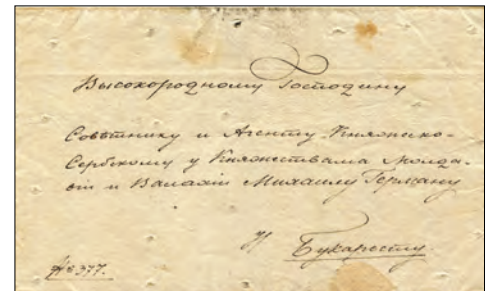


Red wax seal
Cerneti Quarantine
"KARANTINA CERNETI"
Single seal known



1835 Disinfected letter sent to the the direction of quarantines Turnu. On the back applied **KARANTINA CERNETI** red wax seal. **Only known with red wax seal and used after the period reported by researchers.**

CERNETI quarantine



Reduced copy of front side



1836 (October 1) Disinfected letter sent to the Honorable lord Council and agent of Serbian Principality in the Principality of Moldavia and Wallachia, Michail German in Bucharest. On the back mentioned 'They smoked' and has punch holes at Cerneti quarantine and applied **KARANTINA CERNETI** black seal. **Only known with black seal and used after the period reported by researchers.**

'Between 1828-1834 the Danubian Principalities, Wallachia and Moldavia were under Russian occupation. Under General Kiseleff (Commander-in-Chief of the Russian Army in the principality) important laws were issued, under his supervision, known as the Organic Regulations (1832). Concerned on cholera propagation he ordered establish the Danubian quarantine cordon facing the Ottoman Empire. Everything coming across the Danube had be fumigated and airy.' Text taken from Dr. Hedy Feibel.

On April 22, 1838 a decree issued by the Ruler of Wallachia announced the beginning of build for the new city Turnu-Severin instead of the burned Cerneti.' Text taken from Dr. Hedy Feibel.

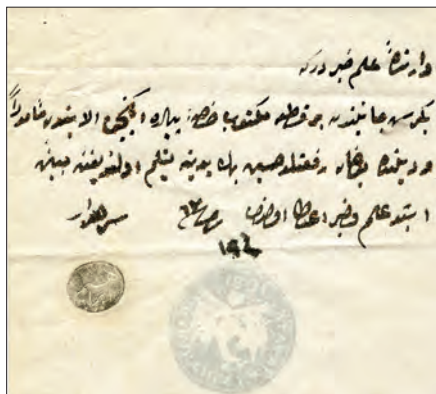


Reproduction of the
black carbon seal
"KARANTINA TURNU
SEVERINU 1838"

TURNU SEVERIN quarantine



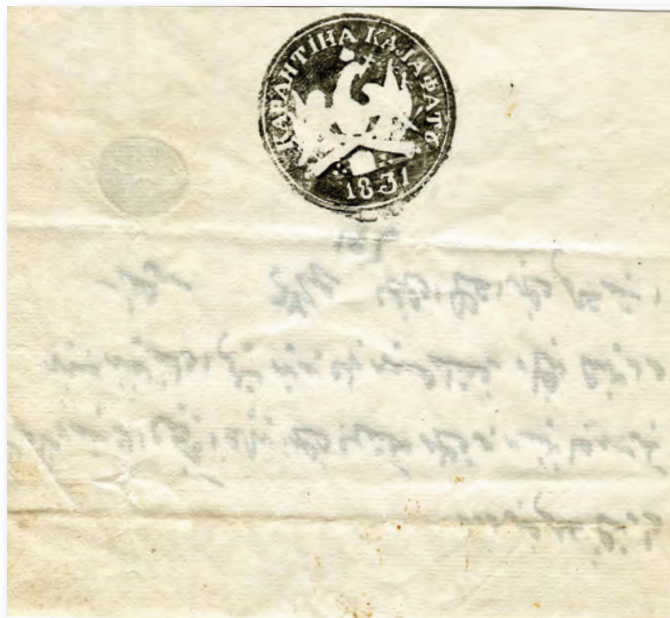
1842 (August 11) Disinfected letter from Serbia, adressed to the Serbian embassy in Bucharest. On the back applied 1838 **KARANTINA TURNU SEVERIN** negative black seal together with remarks 'They smoked to Severin's quarantine' date and signature of the Director of station, Ion Strambeanu. On the same side red wax seal of the Kladovo Customs/Quarantine station in Serbia. **Only six reported**



Reduced copy of front side

KALAFATU quarantine

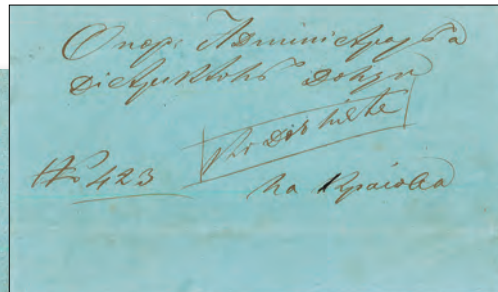
1831 (??) Small fragment of letter written in Arabic, bearing on reverse negative black carbon seal KARANTINA KALAFATU 1831.



BECHETU quarantine

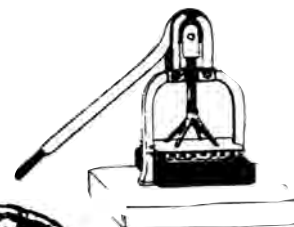
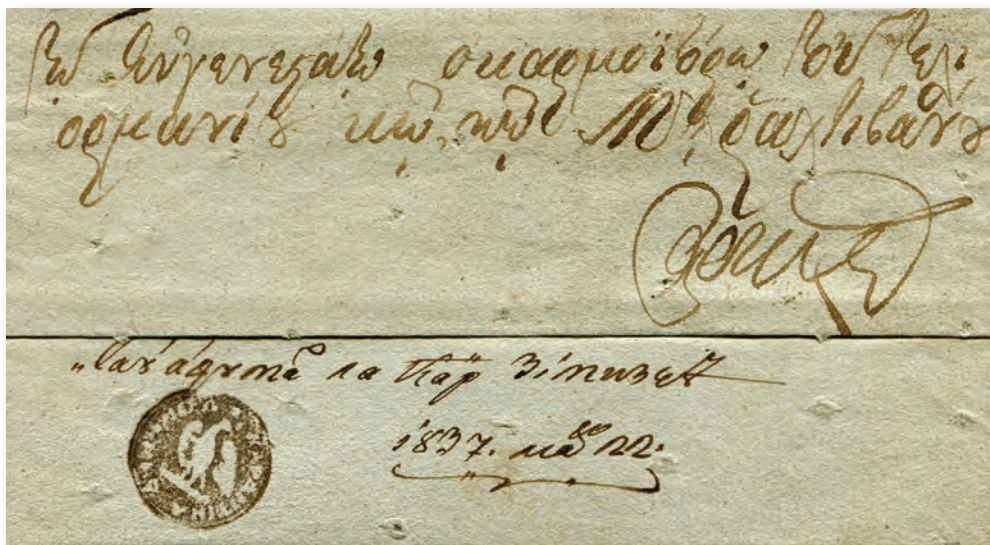
1859 Letter sent to The Honorary Administration of Dolju County, to Craiova. On the back applied quarantine seal "PUNCTUL BECHETU ROATA 4a DIN BATALIONU 1 DE GRANICERI" in Cyrillic script.

Reduced copy of front side



"PUNCTUL BECHETU
ROATA 4a DIN BATALIONU
1 DE GRANICERI"
Bechetu Point, 4th round
of the 1st Border Guard
Battalion

ZIMNICEA quarantine



Reproduction of
the black carbon
seal "KARANTINA
ZIMNICEA"

1837 (May 22) Disinfected letter sent from SALONIK to Bucharest. On the back mentioned 'They cleaned the Zimnicea quarantine and has pounce holes and applied KARANTINA ZIMNICEA black seal.

ZIMNICEA quarantine

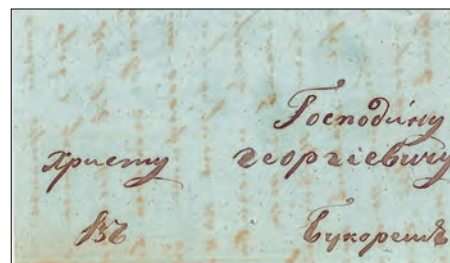


1848 (April 22) Entire letter from SVISTOV (today Bulgaria) to Bucharest with, on reverse, fine negative disinfection DIRECTIA CARANTINELOR ZIMNIZI station seal.

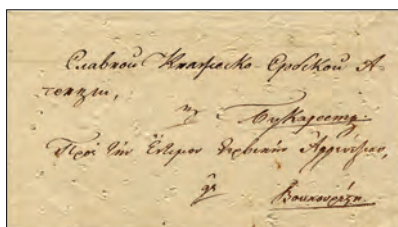
Postmark reproduction
Black carbon seal
The direction of
Zimnica's quarantines
"DIRECTIA KARANTINI
ZIMNICI 1831"



Reduced copy of front side



Reduced copy
of front side



1838 (Nov. 6) Letter addressed (chirilic handwritten 'Ofio' from Exoffo - official) to the Serbian Embassy in Bucharest. It bares on reverse 1830 type negative black seal of the DIRECTIA KARANTINII GIURGIU 1830 (Giurgiu quarantine direction), together with remarks, date and signature of the quarantine station. Letter have rastel holes. **Two known with black carbon seal from Giurgiu Quarantine, one on fragment.**

GIURGIU quarantine



**Danubian route, the last
Wallachian exit points on
the Danube**

Reduced copy of back side of fragment



Red wax seal "Braila Quarantine 1830"
"KARANTINA BRAILA 1830"

Copy of cancel 'They were cleaned
the Braila quarantine' "SAU CURATIT
KARANTINA BRAILA"



BRAILA quarantine



1850 (May 5) Entire letter from Svishtov (today Bulgaria) to Braila, rastel punched, showing extremely rare framed disinfection cachet SAU.KURATIT.LA - KARANTINA BRAILA handstamp on front. **Only six reported** carried by DDSG vesels.

Moldavia autochthonous quarantine. The quarantine department provided for a single 1st class quarantine for Moldova, in Galati. Its establishment was decided on February 27 / March 11, 1830, in the extraordinary meeting of the Divan of Moldavia. Following the Organic Regulation (Principality Rules) elaborated in 1830 and implemented, the one from Moldova on 1/13 January 1832, the sanitary service of Moldova was reorganized.

GALATI quarantine

Danubian route, the first Moldavian entry point on the Danube

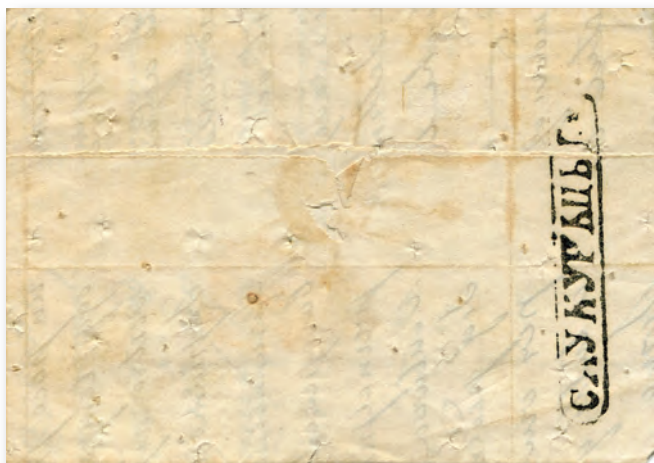
Outline of seal 'The quarantine seal in Galati "PECETE KARANTINI IN GALATIU 1831"



1831 (??) Letter from quarantine Managing of GALATI to Commission of Quarantine of Iasi. Rate: 200 Lei/ month (Due by the Ministri of Finance to Post House for official correspondence). **PECETE KARANTINI IN GALATIU 1831.** First and unique quarantine seal in Cyrillic script "PECETE KARANTINI GALATIU - 1831" known until now



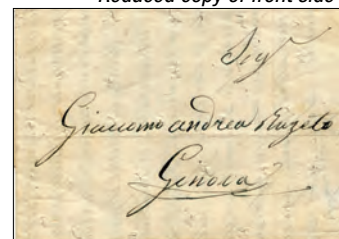
GALATI quarantine



САУКУРЦЬТ.

Copy of cancel
'They were cleaned'
"SAU CURATIT"

Reduced copy of front side



1846 (April 15) Prepaid letter $\frac{1}{2}$ Loth sent from GALATI with DDSG steamers to Genova 27/10. Letter was disinfected prior departing (punches holes and RN 85 written on the back side) and applied quarantine cancel **SAU CURATIT CAPITANIA PORTULUI GALATI.** Only four known until now with this quarantine seal



Copy of cancel
'They were cleaned, the captaincy of the port of Galati'
"SAU CURATIT CAPITANIA PORTULUI GALATI"

1846 (Oct. 18) Prepaid letter $\frac{1}{2}$ Loth sent from GALATI with DDSG steamers to Genova 27/10. Letter was disinfected prior departing (punches holes and RN 85 written on the back side) and applied quarantine cancel **SAU CURATIT CAPITANIA PORTULUI GALATI.** Only six reported



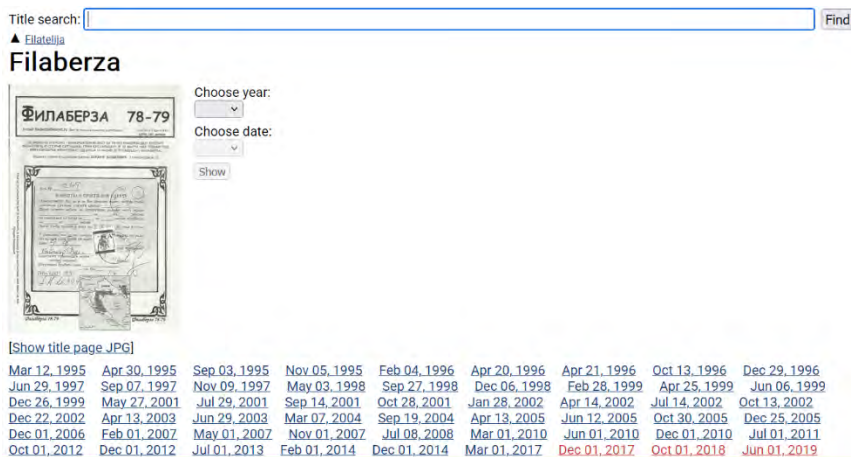
The images and descriptive texts were obtained with the consent of the owner of the Museum of Romanian Records.
<https://museumofromanianrecords.com>



In the Digital Era, Serbian Philatelists preserve Legacy through Full Journal Digitization

Embracing the momentum of digital transformation, the *Union of Philatelists of Serbia*, in continued collaboration with the *National Searchable Library*, has successfully digitized the complete archive of the philatelic journal *FILABERZA*, which was published from March 1995 to June 2019.

This initiative marks a significant milestone in the preservation and accessibility of Serbia's philatelic heritage. By converting all issues into a searchable digital format, the Union ensures that decades of research, commentary, and collector insights remain available to future generations—both locally and internationally.



The digitization project reflects a broader commitment to modernization within the philatelic community, aligning traditional values with contemporary tools. It allows researchers, enthusiasts, and institutions to explore the evolution of Serbian philately through a user-friendly digital interface, while safeguarding the original printed editions as cultural artifacts.

This achievement not only honors the editorial legacy of *FILABERZA* but also reinforces the Union's role as a forward-looking custodian of postal history in the digital age.

This digital version of the journal can be found on:

<https://pretraziva.rs/browse/filaberza>

A “Thematic” Encounter of Philately with Tourism

by Christos Gikas

The earliest use of the word “Thematic”, according to Oxford English Dictionary, is in the late 17th century.

In the early 1900’s collectors had started to collect stamps not only by issuing country but also by subject. Due to its significant popularity of Thematic Philately was formally recognized by F.I.P as a philatelic class and on March 29 to April 8, 1952 the first international Thematic Exhibition “IMOSA 1952” was held in Saarbrücken.



Nowadays, Postal Authorities direct their postage stamp issuing programmes towards thematic collectors with a wide variety of subjects such as flora, fauna, art and a multitude of other topics appealing not only to thematic collectors but to formal and/or informal groups that are sharing a common interest, forming international communities similar to the philatelists.

Wine Tourism, a specific type of Thematic Tourism, is not just an excursion to vineyards, it is an entire experience that combines gastronomy, history, nature, and tradition. It combines visits to wine-producing regions with the experience of wine and local culture and sight-seeing is globally a dynamic and growing type of tourism, and many countries emphasize its importance through several philatelic items. Wine Tourism is a travel trend that developed rapidly in a systematic way since the late 1970s initially in California.



Two early “Wine Tourists”

Historically two of the most prominent late 18th and early 19th century wine travelers were Thomas Jefferson, before he was elected as the Third President of the USA, and the Romantic poet Lord Byron respectively.



Thomas Jefferson –an initiated wine lover by his Italian friend Philip Mazzei– visited Bordeaux in May 1787 and, tasting the most important wines of the region, selected four as the finest: Chateaux Margaux, Chateau Lafite, Chateau Latour, and Haut Brion. These four wines, 75 years later during the official evaluation, were classified in the top category of "Grand Crus."

In October 1809, Lord Byron with his travelling companion and friend John Cam Hobhouse were hosted at the monastery of Prophet Elias in Zitsa, at the time being an Ottoman-occupied wine region of Northwestern Greece. The natural environment enchanted the poet so much that he had written his lengthy poem "Childe Harold's Pilgrimage, Canto the Second" in which Lord Byron mentioned the vineyards of Zitsa where the white Debina wine-grape variety had been cultivated.



Nowadays, Wine Tourism is a travel sector attracting native and foreign visitors to the wine-regions, with substantial financial contribution. In 2024, according to a research published in Vinetur, the value of global Wine Tourism reached 45.6 billion euros.

https://www.vinetur.com/documentos/article/87683/Enotourism%20in%20the%20Local%20Economy_%20Global%20Analysis%202024.pdf

A recent issue of four commemorative postage stamps on “Wine Tourism” by the Hellenic Post was dedicated to Wine aficionados and culture travellers as a proof that Philately refers and relates to every single aspect of human activity.

In the SPOTLIGHT

From the current BALKANFILA NEWSLETTER issue, a new section is introduced. In this section member philatelic societies and groups affiliated to the National Federations will be presented to our readers. This brilliant idea came from Mehmet Akan and it was enthusiastically “embraced” by the BALKANFILA National Delegates.

The first philatelic group presented is the Türkiye Thematic Philately Commission.

THEMATIC PHILATELY COMMISSION



The Thematic Philatelic Commission is a group established under the Turkish Philatelic Societies to promote thematic philately in Türkiye, bringing together dedicated philatelists under one roof to develop collaborative projects. It also aims to provide up-to-date information on the constantly evolving thematic field through organising training programmes.

It originally started as the "Olympic and Sports Stamps Commission" under the auspices of the Turkish National Olympic Committee (TMOK).

In 2017, two significant decisions were made and implemented:

1. The name was changed to "Thematic Philatelic Commission" because the term "Olympic and Sports Stamps" was considered too narrow.
2. After an application to the Board of Directors of the Federation of Turkish Philatelic Societies, it was decided that the Commission would continue under the umbrella of the TFDF. This decision was approved by the TFDF, and the Commission formally became a body operating within the TFDF.

The new name, the Thematic Philatelic Commission, was adopted in 2017, and its first meeting took place on 6 January 2018 at the Istanbul Philatelists Association's Nişantaşı office, Istanbul, with a large attendance.

During this meeting, the Commission's Board of Directors was elected, with Edip Ağaoğulları selected as President and Muzaffer Arda as Secretary-General.

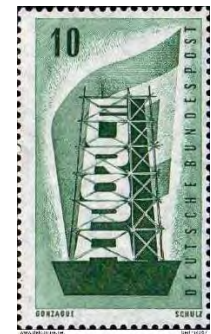
Since then, the Commission has convened regularly every month –excluding the summer months– organised seminars, and continued efforts to reach a broader audience with Thematic Philatelists. It has also aimed to increase representation within the Thematic category at international exhibitions and to achieve more successful outcomes.

Recently, initiatives have been made to include members abroad by broadcasting meetings online. A logo was created and finalised for 2025, following consultations with Commission members.

While the Thematic Philatelic Commission is not an official association, it comprises enthusiasts who come together voluntarily basis.

PostEurop 2025 Awards

The first EUROPA stamp issue was released, four years after the establishment of the European Coal and Steel Community, in 1956. The Postal Administrations of Belgium, France, West Germany, Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands agreed on a common design : a tower constructed by capital letters "EUROPA" surrounded by scaffolding.

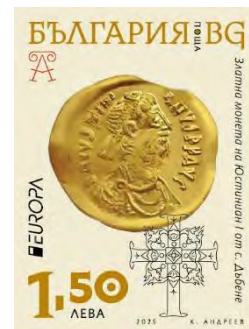


In 1959, the European Conference of Postal and Telecommunications Administrations (CEPT) was established. EUROPA between 1956 and 1973 –except for 1957– stamps shared a common theme and design. Since 1974 there was a common theme but each postal administration could decide on their own designs. For EUROPA stamp anniversaries, the original system of a common design has been reintroduced. In 1993 EUROPA CEPT became PostEurop.

This year PostEurop's common theme was "National Archaeological Discoveries". In this competition there were 57 entries that presented with creative designs of their archaeological heritage.

The voting procedure included the General Public, the issuing Postal Authorities as well as the Expert Jury and the top 3 winners were **Posten Bring, Norway** (1st place), **PostNL, The Netherlands** (2nd) and the **Hellenic Post –EL.TA** (3rd).





All the above stamp images were taken for this presentation from the following website where all the PostEurop stamp issues can be seen : <https://europastamps.eu/collection>

Finally, PostEurop announced that the common themes for the next two years :

2026 : “70th Anniversary of EUROPA stamp motif”

2027 : “Street Art”

“175th Birth Anniversary of Angel Kuntchev and Zakhari Stoyanov”

On 12.09.2025 the Ministry of Transport and Communications launches a set of two postage stamps “Bulgarian Revolutionaries – 175th Birth Anniversary of Angel Kuntchev and Zakhari Stoyanov”.



1.50 Lv. **Angel Kuntchev** was a Bulgarian revolutionary and freedom fighter. While studying in Belgrade, he established direct contact with the Bulgarian revolutionary emigration and joined the Second Bulgarian Legion (1868).

After its dissolution, he moved to Romania and published an appeal to the Bulgarian people in the newspaper "Dunavska Zora," calling them to fight against the Ottoman invaders. He actively participated in the national revolutionary movement and, in 1871, was appointed assistant to the apostle of freedom, Vassil Levski, in the Bulgarian Revolutionary Army by the Bulgarian Revolutionary Central Committee in Bucharest.

1.65 Lv. **Zachari Stojanov** was a Bulgarian revolutionary, politician, journalist, and writer. He was an assistant apostle in the April Uprising (1876) and its first historian with his book "Chronicle of the Bulgarian Uprisings."



He was a chairman of the Bulgarian Secret Central Revolutionary Committee and the main organizer of the unification of the Principality of Bulgaria and Eastern Rumelia (1885). He was an activist of the People's Liberal Party and a prominent Freemason.

“200 Years of Public Railway Transport”

On 29.09.2025 the Ministry of Transport and communications launches a souvenir sheet of one postage stamp “200 Years of Public Railway Transport”.



George Stephenson (1781–1848) was an English inventor who laid the foundation for the steam railway. He is world-famous for his invention of the steam locomotive. He is considered one of the "fathers" of the railway.

Stephenson proposed the use of iron rails (instead of cast iron) and wooden sleepers, which later became sleepers. The gauge chosen by Stephenson, 1435 mm, is the most widely used in Europe and is still considered the standard for railways in many countries around the world.

Design of the stamp and the souvenir sheet:

The stamp features a steam locomotive. The souvenir sheet depicts a portrait of George Stephenson and the emblem of Phila Korea 2025.

"Bulgarian Culture and Art – 100th Birth Anniversary of Georgi Kaloyantchev"

On 30.09.2025 the Ministry of Transport and Communications launches a postage stamp "Bulgarian Culture and Art – 100th Birth Anniversary of Georgi Kaloyantchev".



Georgi Todorov Kaloyantchev (1925–2012) was a Bulgarian actor. He played numerous roles in film, theater, and TV. Kaloyantchev received many awards throughout his career, including the Dimitrov Prize in 1959.

He also received the title of Honored Artist of the People's Republic of Bulgaria in 1962, and the title of People's Artist of the People's Republic of Bulgaria in 1967. He was selected by Velikite Balgari (The Famous Bulgarians) in 2007 as one of the 100 greatest Bulgarians in history. His autobiography, "I Live, I Belong to Them!", was published in 2003.

“Membership of the Republic of Bulgaria in the United Nations”

On October 10th a postage stamp titled “Membership of the Republic of Bulgaria in the United Nations” was circulated. In 2025, Bulgaria celebrates its 70th anniversary as a UN member. The celebrations take place during the 80th session of the UN General Assembly. During these events in September, Bulgarian Prime Minister Rossen Zhelyazkov officially introduced Bulgaria's new Permanent Representative to the United



FAIRY TALES

On October 15th was launched into postal circulation a souvenir sheet of one postage stamp “Bulgarian “Fairy Tales”.

A fairy tale is a narrative style based on fictional characters and events. Fairy tales can be folk or literary. Fairy tales are closely linked to folklore. Bulgarian and foreign fairy tales describe people's lives, their adventures, and often serve as lessons. Their goal is to entertain people, but also to draw a lesson from each event.

Design of the postage stamp and the souvenir sheet: The block depicts a moment from the fairy tale "The Three Brothers and the Golden Apple." The youngest brother kills the llama and saves the golden apple and the eagles. In gratitude, the eagle takes the man to the Highlands, where he marries the beautiful girl.



There is an official first day cover with special cancellation of the issue.

“100th Birth Anniversary of Manol Manolov – Simoliyata”

On October 16th was launched into postal circulation a souvenir sheet of one postage stamp “100th Birth Anniversary of Manol Manolov – Simoliyata”.



Manol Manolov (1925–2008), known as Simoliata, was a Bulgarian footballer and coach. He made 239 appearances in the First Group. His appearances for the national team are 57 with one scored goal. He holds the record for the most Bulgarian titles as a footballer – twelve – and is a four-time winner of the Bulgarian Cup. He won a bronze medal at the 16th Summer Olympics in Melbourne in 1956, and also participated in the Olympic Games in 1952 and 1960. He is a three-time Bulgarian champion as a coach of CSKA and a three-time winner of the Bulgarian Cup as a coach of CSKA.

“Fauna – the Eurasian Beaver”

On 17.10.2025 the Ministry of Transport and Communications launched into circulation a souvenir sheet of one postage stamp “Fauna – the Eurasian Beaver”.



The European beaver (*Castor fiber*), also known as the Eurasian beaver, is the largest rodent in Europe. It reaches a head-body length of 80 to 102 cm and a tail length of up to 35 cm. Adult European beaver weighs between 23 and 30 kg. They are distributed throughout southern Siberia and Europe, with the exception of the southern parts. At the beginning of the 20th century, the species was critically endangered, and its population was estimated at around 1,200 individuals. Today, it is fully stabilized at over 600,000 animals, and its numbers and range are increasing.

CROATIA – Mostar

50th Anniversary of the Croatian Ethnic Institute in Chicago

The mission of the Croatian Ethnic Institute in Chicago, the central institution of Croats in North America, is to preserve the memory of the past and to serve as a source of inspiration for the future. Since its founding in 1975, it has safeguarded the history of Croatian emigration. It is located in the monastery of the Croatian Franciscans, who provide pastoral care for Croats in North America. In 1926, the Croatian Franciscan Custody of the *Holy Family* for America and Canada was established. Although far from their homeland, emigrant Croats remained deeply rooted in their nation, building communities in their new countries where they preserved and nurtured their identity.



For five decades, the Croatian Ethnic Institute has been engaged in collecting, organizing, and preserving historical materials. It holds numerous valuable objects, records, photographs, and memories of Croatian emigrants. It preserves original works by Ivan Meštrović – *Fra Dominik Mandić*, *Cardinal Stepinac*, and the drawing *Stigmata* (1942) – as well as a crucifix carved from a single piece of wood. The collection also includes personal belongings of Bruno Bušić, prison letters of Zvonko Bušić, part of the personal effects of former Chicago Mayor Michael Bilandic, an original New Jersey Nets jersey worn by Dražen Petrović, as well as the rich publishing history developed within the diaspora. Of particular importance are items belonging to Blessed Alojzije Stepinac, including the triptych *Our Lady and Three Angels*, a gift from Pope Pius XII to the Archbishop of Zagreb upon his elevation to the cardinalate, which Cardinal Stepinac kept on his desk.

Thanks to the Franciscans, the history of Croatian emigration has been preserved in the Croatian Ethnic Institute in the best possible manner.

Ethnological Heritage 2025

Motive: 100 years of the Croatian Cultural and Artistic Society *Seljačka sloga* Trebižat – Čapljina (*HKUD Seljačka sloga*)

The Croatian Cultural and Artistic Society *Seljačka sloga* Trebižat – Čapljina, through its sections – Brass Band, Folk Dance Group, Female Vocal Ensemble *Lira*, Male Vocal Ensemble *Trebižat*, and Carnival Group *Pokladari* – has continuously promoted the cultural heritage of Bosnia and Herzegovina for 100 years. In addition to the aforementioned sections, the Society also operates a music school and a folk dance school.



The Society organizes a series of traditional international events and regularly participates in all events of significance for the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the wider region. The year 2025 is especially festive, as it marks the 100th anniversary of the Society's work and existence. In a century-long tradition, it is difficult to enumerate all activities and events from the Society's past, but on this occasion, the verses of the song "*Trumpeter from Trebižat*" echo in our ears:

*I hear,
how an unrestrained trumpeter, an unknown player,
at the close of day when the sun loses its last traces,
by the whimsical river, plays unknown melodies.
I listen to you, trumpeter, and carefully follow your sounds.
They flow abundantly and twist like a storm, like when full clouds meet.
Generously pour your sounds into my ears, play the song of love.
Play, trumpeter, play!
Song, do not run dry!*

The motif on the postage stamp depicts a trumpeter in traditional Herzegovinian folk costume, performing with the brass band and folk dance ensemble of HKUD Seljačka sloga. (Trpimir Grgić)

Croatian post Ltd. Mostar issued a definitive postage stamp in a sheet of 20 stamps, a postmark and first day cover (FDC). The stamps and accompanying materials can be purchased at HP Mostar post offices and online at www.epostshop.ba

50th Anniversary of the Death of Sister Bogoljuba Jazvo

Sister Bogoljuba (Lucija) Jazvo was born on 24 December 1897 in Livno. She left her family home and elementary school in Livno to continue her education in Zagreb, where she completed the Teachers' School of the Sisters of Mercy and became a member of the Congregation after taking her religious vows on 15 August 1918. Following further studies in Zagreb and Innsbruck, she worked until 1940 as a teacher and principal of the Real Gymnasium of the Sisters of Mercy on Varšavska Street in Zagreb.



In 1940, she assumed the position of director at the Hospital of the Sisters of Mercy on Vinogradska Road in Zagreb during the very difficult historical period of the Second World War. In cooperation with Sister Blanda Stipetić, Cardinal Alojzije Stepinac, and the hospital staff, she heroically saved Jews from inhumane persecution and certain death by hiding them in the hospital, primarily in the infectious diseases department. According to research conducted by Marko Danon, whose father was saved in that hospital, the number of Jews saved exceeds three hundred.

In 1945, Sister Bogoljuba Jazvo was taken to prison. After her release, she had to leave the hospital, and subsequently Croatia. She passed away on 26 October 1975 in Argentina. (Željka Šaravanja)

Croatian Posta Ltd. Mostar has issued a commemorative postage stamp in a sheet of 10 stamps, a postmark and a first day cover (FDC). The stamps and accompanying materials can be purchased at HP Mostar post offices and online at www.epostshop.ba

"Urban Architectural Routes"

Hellenic Post issued on September 17, 2025, the Commemorative Stamp Series titled "Urban Architectural Routes", which includes four stamps.

Nestled in the heart of Athens, just south of the Sacred Rock of the Acropolis and along the pedestrian promenade of Dionysiou Areopagitou, four distinct buildings from different periods and purposes form a rare architectural ensemble.



The Weiler Building, designed by Bavarian military engineer Wilhelm von Weiler, stands as one of the first public buildings constructed after Athens became the Capital of Greece.

The New Acropolis Museum, inaugurated in 2009, is the result of an international architectural competition and was designed by Bernard Tschumi and Michalis Fotiadis.

The Small Apartment Building, a refined example of Athenian modernism from the 1930s, was designed by Vassilios Kouremenos, a graduate of the École des Beaux-Arts.

Saint Demetrios Loumbardiaris, a 16th-century chapel perched on the central path of Philopappos Hill, was restored by Dimitris Pikionis during his landscaping of the Acropolis surroundings (1954–1957).

Though born of different eras and aesthetics, these four structures engage in a silent dialogue. Together, they trace the evolution of Athens from its 19th-century rebirth as a Capital to its present-day identity as a vibrant Mediterranean metropolis.

" 50 Years since the Foundation of the War Museum"

Hellenic Post circulated on September 22, 2025, the Commemorative Set of Stamps " 50 Years since the Foundation of the War Museum", which includes five stamps.



- B (Second Class) domestic rate up to 20 gr. depicting the Greek Flag,
- 0,50 €, Evzone Soldier (oil painting by Georgios Roilos, 1867–1928, War Museum)
- 1,20 € Kolokotronis Praying (watercolor painting by Apostolos Geralis, 1886–1983, War Museum)
- 1,70 € Unknown Heroes (oil painting by Alexandros Alexandrakis, 1913–1968, War Museum)
- 2 € Corinthian Helmet from the 8th – 6th century BC (War Museum)

«110th anniversary of the founding of KYKNOS S.A.»

Hellenic Post, on the occasion of the 110th anniversary of the founding of KYKNOS S.A., has released the following philatelic products, which were available from Wednesday, September 24, 2025, and were accompanied by a Special Commemorative Postmark.

Mini sheet of 4 self-adhesive personalized stamps 110 Years KYKNOS»

Numbered commemorative envelopes «110 Years KYKNOS».



«Wine Tourism»

Hellenic Post with its set on “Wine Tourism” (Oinotourismos) invites you on a unique journey of taste and culture !

On October 8, 2025, the new Commemorative Stamp Series “Wine Tourism” was released, celebrating four distinctive wine regions of Greece: Mesogeia, Rapsani, Samos, and Zitsa.

Each stamp captures the aromas, stories, and magic of Greek wine, inviting you to discover the tradition, the land, and the people behind every drop.



DENOMINATIONS

DESIGNS

QUANTITY

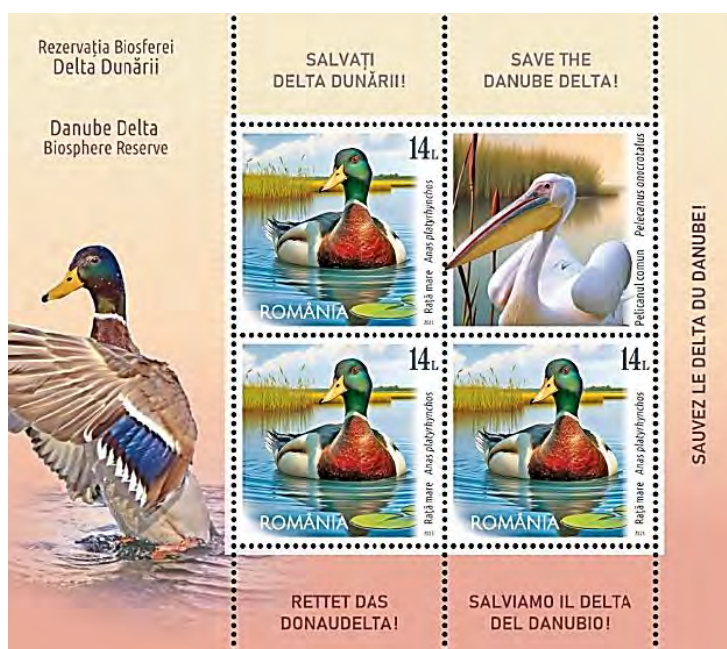
0,50 €	Mesogeia, Attica – Cape Sounion	25.000 pieces
1,20 €	Rapsani – Mount Olympus	25.000 pieces
1,70 €	Samos Island	25.000 pieces
2,00 €	Zitsa – Epirus	25.000 pieces

The design of this postage set stamp set was created by Dr. Myrsini Vardopoulou.

DANUBE DELTA BIOSPHERE RESERVE

Romfilatelia introduced into circulation on September 2nd the postage stamp issue entitled **Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve**, dedicated to ‘the youngest Romanian land’ – the Danube Delta, which is constantly changing, having a special ecological, scientific and touristic value. The issue consists of four stamps and a First Day Cover.

The Danube Delta is a true sanctuary of European biodiversity, home to over 5,000 species of flora and fauna. Estimated to be more than 12,000 years old, it continues to expand, known for the largest reed-bed area in Europe, the Letea subtropical forest – the northernmost of its kind – and the presence of beluga sturgeon, the world’s largest freshwater fish.



In 1990, the Delta was included in the ‘Man and the Biosphere’ (MAB) program, and a year later, in 1991, it was designated a Ramsar site – a wetland of international importance – and included in the UNESCO World Heritage List. It is also part of Europe’s Natura 2000 ecological network.

Romania is the only country in the world to have almost an entire delta declared a biosphere reserve with international recognition and status and September 1st was declared as the **Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve Day**.

The four postage stamps of the issue feature emblematic species of the Danube Delta, with an important role in maintaining the ecological balance of this unique habitat.

Great White Egret (*Ardea alba*), is illustrated on the postage stamp of Lei 3, **Kingfisher** (*Alcedo atthis*) on the stamp of Lei 6.50, **Otter** (*Lutra lutra*), on the stamp of Lei 8 and **Mallard** (*Anas platyrhynchos*) on the stamp of Lei 14. The graphic of the First Day Cover features a specimen of the family *Ciconiidae*, the white stork, a migratory bird.

FAMOUS COMPOSERS : GEORGE ENESCU

"What is important in art is to vibrate oneself and make others vibrate" George Enescu.

The National Company Romanian Post and Romfilatelie introduced into circulation on September 10th this year the issue entitled **Famous Composers. George Enescu**, on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the passing into eternity of the Romanian musical genius. The issue consists of a postage stamp with the face value of Lei 25 and First Day Cover.

Composer, violinist, pianist, conductor and teacher, an undisputed personality of Romanian culture, included in the gallery of the great figures of humanity, George Enescu is, without a doubt, a country brand.



Born in 1881 in the village of Liveni-Vârnav, near the Moldavian town of Dorohoi, and at barely twelve years of age, Enescu was already part of Vienna's musical life, his concerts stirring the admiration of both public and press alike, his manner of interpreting the compositions of Johannes Brahms, Felix Mendelssohn and Pablo Sarasate approaching perfection.

George Enescu will go down in history as one of the most outstanding men of culture of the 20th century; he took on the role of ambassador of music both in Romania and around the world, contributing to the international recognition of Romanian composers, conductors and performers.

The postage stamp of the issue reproduces a portrait-photograph of the composer taken at the end of his studies in Paris, associated with the image of the façade of the Romanian Athenaeum, the emblematic monument of the capital, where Enescu often performed and whose organ was purchased with the direct support of the musician.

EXPO OSAKA 1970 – 2025

Romfilatelia and Romanian Post introduced into circulation on September 15th, a souvenir sheet entitled *“EXPO OSAKA 1970 – 2025”*, consisting of a souvenir sheet and a First Day Cover, to mark an event of world exhibition importance and an anniversary in the chronology of Romanian philately: 55 years since the first thematic issue of *EXPO’70 – OSAKA*, in 1970. The philatelic issue consists of two postage stamps and a perforated souvenir sheet was put into circulation on March 24th, 1970 (the stamps) and on December 1st 1970 (the perforated souvenir sheet).

The World Exhibition organized in Japan marked the 3rd World Exhibition event after the end of the World War in 1945, was themed ‘Progress and Harmony for Mankind’ and marked a major achievement for post-war Japan, which was reflected in the showcasing of major advances in the country’s fields of technology and economics, exploring solutions to global problems such as poverty and environmental degradation. The exhibition saw a record number of more than 64 million visitors from 77 countries; this number was surpassed only at EXPO SHANGHAI 2010.



The souvenir sheet of the issue entitled *EXPO OSAKA 1970 – 2025*, has an overprint with the face value of Lei 55 printed on the postage stamp, a perforated star shape (as a safety element) and elements of a thematic drawing made by the well-known designer and painter Mircea Cantor. The First Day Cover reproduces a stylized drawing of the Romanian Exhibition Pavilion at Expo Osaka 2025, having the postage stamp of the overprinted souvenir sheet and the bicolored First Day postmark, symbolizing the flag of Japan.

STEAM LOCOMOTIVES

Romfilatelia and Romanian Post introduce into circulation on Wednesday, September 24th, this year, an issue with the collectible theme **STEAM LOCOMOTIVES**, consisting of four postage stamps, a First Day Cover, 4 maxicards for maximaphily enthusiasts and a philatelic folder with a special product in a limited edition.

The history of railways in Romania begins in 1854 when the Oravița – Baziaș route was inaugurated in the Banat under Austro–Hungarian administration, with a length of 62 km. The steam locomotives used were made in Austria.

On the territory of the Kingdom of Romania, under the reign of King Carol I, the first railway built by the English John Trevor–Barkley Company, inaugurated in 1869, was Bucharest Filaret – Giurgiu.



The four postage stamps of the postage stamp issue depict steam locomotives in service between 1872 and 1977. The '**Resicza 2**' locomotive (postage stamp of Lei 4) was manufactured in Reșița for the first time in 1872, the **CFR 1493** locomotive was manufactured at the Henschel & Sohn Works in Kassel in 1894 (the face value of Lei 6.50), the company, founded in 1810, built more than 30,000 locomotives between 1849 and 1961. **Locomotive manufactured in Bucharest in 1949** at the 23 August Plant (of Lei 7) was part of a batch of 10 locomotives that were intended to haul trains on the narrow-gauge railways operated by CFR and the **231.065 locomotive from the famous CFR 'Pacific' series** (of Lei 14).

The First Day Cover depicts a panoramic view of a submontane area crossed by a train pulled by a steam locomotive. The philatelic folder circulated in a limited run printing of 271 pieces, containing the special philatelic block of four imperforated stamps of the issue. The special philatelic block is numbered from 001 to 271.

SQUIRRELS

Romfilatelia and the Romanian Post introduce into circulation on *Wednesday, October 1st, this year* a postage stamp issue belonging to the *Fauna* theme, under the generic title **SQUIRRELS**.

The issue consists of four postage stamps, a First Day Cover, for maximaphily enthusiasts and a philatelic folder with special product in a limited edition.



Rodent mammals, squirrels are widespread on almost every continent and are known for their agility and climbing ability. They are easily identified by their bushy tails.

They belong to the *Sciuridae* family, which includes marmots, gophers and flying squirrels. They are omnivorous, their food consisting of nuts, acorns, hazelnuts, seeds, mushrooms, fruit, as well as the eggs of birds, insects and small animals.

The usual habitat of Eurasian squirrels is coniferous and deciduous forests, but they have also adapted to the conditions found in urban parks and gardens. They play a beneficial role in the ecosystem by spreading seeds and eating small invertebrates, reducing the use of pesticides to control them. In the wild, squirrels live for 3 to 6 years, and if raised and cared for in specially designed habitats, up to 10 and even 20 years.

The images of the four postage stamps depict the following squirrel species:

The **Northern Amazon Red Squirrel** – *Sciurus (Hadroskiurus) igniventris* (of Lei 6.50), the **Arizona Gray Squirrel** – *Sciurus (Parasciurus) arizonensis* (Lei 7), the **Brazilian Squirrel** – *Sciurus (Guerlinguetus) aestuans* (of Lei 9) and the **Fox Squirrel** – *Sciurus (Parasciurus) niger* (of Lei 11), also called the Eastern fox squirrel.

The First Day Cover illustrates an evocative moment of squirrels in a deciduous forest environment.

THE CENTENARY OF THE PALACE OF CULTURE IN IAȘI

The anniversary issue titled “*The Centenary of the Palace of Culture in Iași*” was circulated on October 10th consisting of four postage stamps and a First Day Cover.

The palace is partially built over the ruins of the medieval princely courts documented in historical records from 1434, while also partially using the foundations of the old neoclassical palace from the reign of Alexandru Moruzi (1806–1812).

After the proclamation of the Kingdom of Romania, during a visit to Iași, King Carol I promised the city’s inhabitants direct support for the construction of a new Administrative and Justice Palace and on October 11, 1925, the Palace of Justice and Administration in Iași was inaugurated in the presence of King Ferdinand I and Queen Marie.



The building, a historical and architectural monument, was used for administrative functions until 1955, when it was decided that the Palace would host various cultural institutions.

Currently, it provides exhibition space for four museums: the Art Museum, the Ethnographic Museum of Moldova, the Museum of History of Moldova, the ‘Ștefan Procopiu’ Museum of Science and Technology united – together with the Center for Research and Conservation – Restoration of Cultural Heritage under the title of the ‘Moldova’ National Museum Complex Iași.

- The four postage stamps depict in their graphics the following images:

the watercolor, depicting the **façade of the Palace of Culture**, was created in 1924 by the architect I.D. Berindei. Associated with the watercolor is a **portrait of the great architect** (of Lei 3); a **perspective of the Palace of Culture building** in association with the **equestrian statue of Prince Stephen the Great**, by the French sculptor Emmanuel Frémiet, realized in 1882–1883 (of Lei 4); a **representative interior of the Palace of Culture** (Hall of Honor), associated with the relief of a symbolic coat of arms placed in the Hall of Honor space (of Lei 5,50) and a **nocturnal image of the façade architecture of the Palace of Culture** in association with a detail of the Central Tower: the clock with a diameter of 3.25 m, announcing the exact time with the melodic chords of the *Hora of the Union (Hora Unirii)* (of Lei 25). The First Day Cover associates in its graphics a fragment of the Central Tower (55 m high), the equestrian statue of the ruler Stephen the Great and the emblem of the ‘Moldova’ National Museum Complex in Iași.

FISH Species

A postage stamp issue on the theme **Fauna**, under the generic title **FISH Species**, was introduced into circulation on October 17th. The issue consists of four postage stamps and a First Day Cover.



Well-known living creatures, fish are vertebrate, craniate animals that live in aquatic environments, breathing oxygen dissolved in the water through their gills. The science of studying fish is called *Ichthyology*.

The coloration of fish is determined by *chromatophores*, cells under the skin that contain granules of pigment whilst the eyes of fish have a complete globular structure.

It is worth noting that the postage stamps illustrate species of freshwater fish such as the **Perch** – *Perca fluviatilis* (Lei 5), the **Pumpkinseed** – *Lepomis gibbosus* (Lei 6.50), the **European grayling** – *Thymallus thymallus* (Lei 8) and the **Sculpin-pearch** – *Romanichthys valsanicola* (Lei 14).

The First Day Cover depicts a suggestive underwater environment with various species of freshwater fish, in a setting where water and plants provide a defining image of the subject of the postage stamp issue.

THE CONSECRATION OF THE NATIONAL CATHEDRAL

The Consecration of the National Cathedral, was introduced into circulation on October 24th. The issue consists of a postage stamp, a perforated souvenir sheet, two First Day Covers and a maxicard for maximaphily enthusiasts.

The National Cathedral in Bucharest is one of the most important and imposing monuments of the history and faith of our ancestors. His Beatitude Patriarch Daniel officiated the groundbreaking and consecration ceremony for the site designated for the construction of the Cathedral on November 29th, 2007.

On October 26th this year, the feast day of Saint Demetrius the Great Martyr, the Myrrh-Gusher of Thessaloniki, the National Cathedral was consecrated by Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I of Constantinople and Patriarch Daniel of the Romanian Orthodox Church.

Following the consecration, the largest Orthodox cathedral in the world, with the largest Orthodox iconostasis, unique in the world in terms of size and mosaic technique, will be open to the public, with the faithful having permanent access to liturgical services.



The postage stamp of Lei 5, depicts the image of an icon from the mosaic of the National Cathedral's iconostasis with the image of Saint Andrew 'the patron saint of all Romanians'. The postage stamp (252×36 mm sizes) of the Lei 30 souvenir sheet depicts a large panorama of the Cathedral's built-up area, flanked by two images of icons representing Jesus Christ and the Virgin and Child. The grandeur of the Cathedral, the largest Orthodox Cathedral in the world, is symbolically reflected by the postage stamp, whose dimensions exceed those of the previous philatelic record published by Guinness World Records.



The invention of the train profoundly changed human societies,
simply said : **No Train, No Industrial Revolution.**



For Suggestions, Comments and Inquiries, kindly contact the National Delegates

Albania : **Julian Demeti** julian.demeti@gmail.com

BiH Kanton : **Danijel Potocki** tockipo@gmail.com

BiH Repubika Srpska : **Radenko Radanović** radenkoradanovic@gmail.com

Bulgaria : **Boncho Bonev** bnb11@abv.bg

Croatia : **Capt. Slavoljub Katancevic** katem-sjeme@pu.t-com.hr

Croatia : **Julije Maras** julije@maras-filatelia.com.hr

Greece : **Christos Gikas** (editor) xgikas@gmail.com

Moldova : **Andrei Adam** ufrm@mail.com

Montenegro : **Tomo Katuric** tomokaturic@t-com.me

North Macedonia : **Sinisha Pavleski** unionofphilatelists.mk@gmail.com

Romania : **Francisc Ambrus** franambrus@yahoo.com

Serbia : **Svetislav D. Jelic** svetislav.jelic@gmail.com

Slovenia : **Igor Pirc** ipirc711@gmail.com

Turkiye : **Mehmet Akan** studiotasarim@gmail.com