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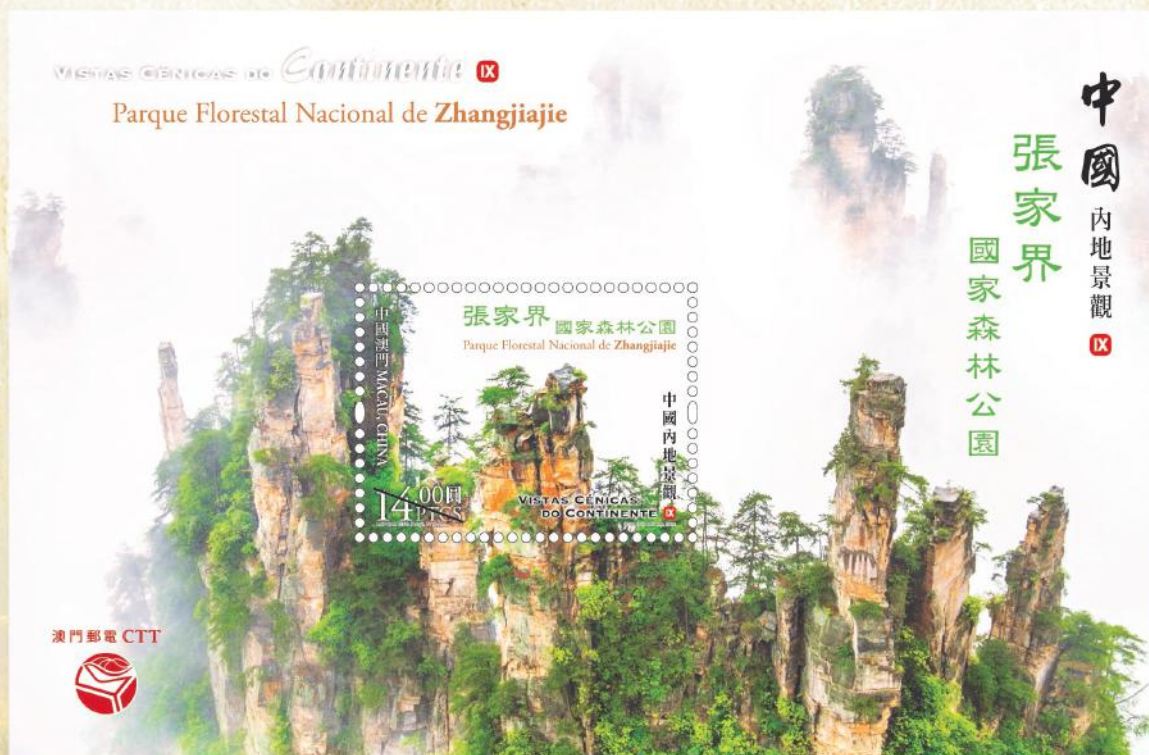
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FEPA NEWS

The Journal of European Philately

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IMPRESSUM

FEPA News is the journal of the Federation of European Philatelic Associations. It is produced by the Board of the FEPA to facilitate the sharing of information among FEPA Members and to maintain a record of their philatelic activities. The editor is the FEPA President, Bill Hedley, with assistance from other members of the FEPA Board. The Board relies on contributions from its Members and friends and offers sincere thanks to all who have contributed to this issue.

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On the front cover: Rome to host ITALIA 2026.

BRIEF GUIDE TO FEPA NEWS ISSUE 49

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PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Dear Philatelic Friends,

A very warm welcome to the latest issue of FEPA NEWS, the second to be published on-line only. With the freedom that the digital world offers, we are once again offering a wide range of articles on the latest developments and current thinking on philately from as many different angles as possible. I hope it will stimulate you to look at your collection with renewed interest. If you would like to contribute your thoughts on any of the subjects raised here, or to let us know about developments in your collecting field, please send them to the editor c.manzati@virgilio.it. Philately belongs to the collectors and we are always interested to know what you think, especially about how we should carry it forward successfully into the digital era.

Recently, I have been putting together a display of my own material and it has reminded me that philately is a study of postal services from a multitude of different angles. Postal services have existed for at least 5,000 years and are part of the much longer story of human communication. They have contributed massively to political, economic and social development. Surprisingly, their importance has not always been recognised in the wider world where understanding of philately is also extremely limited. My message today is that we must pay more attention to 'promoting' philately to the wider world as a value-adding activity. The knowledge and expertise of collectors can contribute to understanding of our world in the future as it has in the past and it must not be lost.

May I thank you all for your support and wish you much happiness and success in your collecting activities.

BILL HEDLEY

LETTRE DU PRÉSIDENT

Chers Amis Philatéliques,

Nous vous souhaitons la bienvenue dans ce nouveau numéro de FEPA NEWS, le deuxième à paraître exclusivement en ligne. Forts de la liberté qu'offre le monde numérique, nous vous proposons une nouvelle fois un large éventail d'articles consacrés aux dernières évolutions et aux réflexions actuelles sur la philatélie, abordés sous autant d'angles différents que possible. J'espère que cela vous encouragera à examiner votre collection avec un intérêt renouvelé. Si vous souhaitez partager vos réflexions sur l'un des sujets abordés ici, ou nous faire part des évolutions dans votre domaine de collection, n'hésitez pas à les envoyer à la rédaction. La philatélie appartient aux collectionneurs et nous sommes toujours intéressés de connaître votre opinion, en particulier sur la manière dont nous devrions la faire évoluer avec succès à l'ère numérique.

Récemment, j'ai mis en place une exposition de ma propre collection, ce qui m'a rappelé que la philatélie est une étude des services postaux sous de nombreuses angles différents. Les services postaux existent depuis au moins 5 000 ans et s'inscrivent dans l'histoire bien plus longue de la communication humaine. Ils ont contribué de manière considérable au développement politique, économique et social. Étonnamment, leur importance n'a pas toujours été reconnue par le grand public, dont la compréhension de la philatélie reste également extrêmement limitée. Le message que je souhaite faire passer aujourd'hui est que nous devons accorder davantage d'attention à la « promotion » de la philatélie auprès du grand public en tant qu'activité créatrice de valeur. Les connaissances et l'expertise des collectionneurs peuvent contribuer à la compréhension de notre monde à l'avenir, comme elles l'ont fait par le passé, et elles ne doivent pas se perdre.

Je tiens à vous remercier tous pour votre soutien et à vous souhaiter beaucoup de bonheur et de succès dans vos activités de collectionneurs.

BILL HEDLEY

OFFENER BRIEF DES PRÄSIDENTEN

Liebe philatelistische Freunde,

Ein herzliches Willkommen zur neuesten Ausgabe der FEPA NEWS, der zweiten, die ausschließlich online erscheint. Dank der Freiheiten, die die digitale Welt bietet, präsentieren wir Ihnen erneut ein breites Spektrum an Artikeln zu aktuellen Entwicklungen und Ansichten in der Philatelie, beleuchtet aus möglichst vielfältigen Perspektiven. Ich hoffe, diese Ausgabe regt Sie dazu an, Ihre Sammlung mit neuem Interesse zu betrachten. Wenn Sie Ihre Gedanken zu den hier angesprochenen Themen teilen oder uns über Entwicklungen in Ihrem Sammelgebiet informieren möchten, senden Sie diese bitte an die Redaktion. Die Philatelie gehört den Sammlern, und wir sind stets daran interessiert, Ihre Meinung zu erfahren – insbesondere dazu, wie wir sie erfolgreich in das digitale Zeitalter führen können.

Vor einiger Zeit habe ich eine Präsentation mit meinem eigenen Material zusammengestellt, und dabei wurde mir wieder bewusst, dass die Philatelie das Studium von Postdiensten ist und diese aus einer Vielzahl unterschiedlicher Blickwinkel betrachtet. Postdienste existieren seit mindestens 5.000 Jahren und sind Teil der weitaus längeren Geschichte der menschlichen Kommunikation. Sie haben maßgeblich zur politischen, wirtschaftlichen und gesellschaftlichen Entwicklung beigetragen. Überraschenderweise wurde ihre Bedeutung in der breiten Öffentlichkeit nicht immer angemessen gewürdigt - in der das Verständnis der Philatelie ohnehin sehr beschränkt ist. Mein heutiges Anliegen ist es, darauf hinzuweisen, dass wir der „Werbung“ für die Philatelie als einer bereichernden Tätigkeit gegenüber der breiten Öffentlichkeit mehr Aufmerksamkeit schenken müssen. Das Wissen und die Expertise von Sammlern können – wie schon in der Vergangenheit – auch künftig zum Verständnis unserer Welt beitragen; dieses Wissen darf nicht verloren gehen.

Ich möchte Ihnen allen für Ihre Unterstützung danken und Ihnen viel Freude und Erfolg bei Ihren Sammelaktivitäten wünschen.

BILL HEDLEY

CARTA DEL PRESIDENTE

Estimados amigos filatélicos:

Les damos una calurosa bienvenida al último número de FEPA NEWS, el segundo que se publica exclusivamente online. Gracias a la libertad que ofrece el mundo digital, volvemos a ofrecerles una amplia gama de artículos sobre los últimos avances y las ideas actuales en filatelia, desde múltiples perspectivas. Espero que les inspire a revisar sus colecciones con renovado interés. Si desean compartir sus reflexiones sobre alguno de los temas tratados o informarnos sobre novedades en su campo de coleccionismo, envíenlas al editor. La filatelia pertenece a los coleccionistas y siempre nos interesa conocer su opinión, especialmente sobre cómo podemos impulsarla con éxito en la era digital.

Recientemente, he estado preparando una colección con mi propio material y esto me ha recordado que la filatelia es un estudio de los servicios postales desde múltiples perspectivas. Los servicios postales existen desde hace al menos 5000 años y forman parte de la larga historia de la comunicación humana. Han contribuido enormemente al desarrollo político, económico y social. Sorprendentemente, su importancia no siempre ha sido reconocida en el mundo en general, donde el conocimiento sobre la filatelia es sumamente limitado. Mi mensaje hoy es que debemos prestar más atención a la promoción de la filatelia a nivel mundial como una actividad que aporta valor. El conocimiento y la experiencia de los coleccionistas pueden contribuir a la comprensión de nuestro mundo en el futuro, como lo han hecho en el pasado, y no debemos perderlo.

Les agradezco a todos su apoyo y les deseo mucha felicidad y éxito en sus actividades de coleccionismo.

BILL HEDLEY

LETTERA DEL PRESIDENTE

Cari amici filatelici,

Un calorosissimo benvenuto al nuovo numero di FEPA NEWS, il secondo pubblicato esclusivamente online. Grazie alla libertà offerta dal mondo digitale, vi proponiamo ancora una volta un'ampia selezione di articoli sugli ultimi sviluppi e sulle riflessioni attuali in materia di filatelia, affrontati da quante più prospettive possibili. Spero che ciò vi stimoli a guardare alla vostra collezione con rinnovato interesse. Se desiderate condividere le vostre riflessioni su uno qualsiasi degli argomenti qui trattati, o segnalarci gli sviluppi nel vostro settore di collezionismo, inviatele al redattore c.manzati@virgilio.it. La filatelia appartiene ai collezionisti e siamo sempre interessati a conoscere la vostra opinione, in particolare su come dovremmo portarla avanti con successo nell'era digitale.

Di recente ho allestito un'esposizione del mio materiale personale e questo mi ha ricordato che la filatelia è lo studio dei servizi postali da una moltitudine di prospettive diverse. I servizi postali esistono da almeno 5.000 anni e fanno parte della storia, ben più lunga, della comunicazione umana. Hanno contribuito in modo massiccio allo sviluppo politico, economico e sociale. Sorprendentemente, la loro importanza non è sempre stata riconosciuta dal grande pubblico, dove la comprensione della filatelia è anch'essa estremamente limitata. Il mio messaggio oggi è che dobbiamo prestare maggiore attenzione alla "promozione" della filatelia presso il grande pubblico come attività che apporta valore aggiunto. Le conoscenze e le competenze dei collezionisti possono contribuire alla comprensione del nostro mondo in futuro, così come hanno fatto in passato, e non devono andare perdute.

Vorrei ringraziare tutti voi per il vostro sostegno e augurarvi tanta felicità e successo nelle vostre attività di collezionismo.

BILL HEDLEY

Philately Forward: Attracting New Collectors

FEPA's 2026 initiative invites the whole European philatelic community to help shape the future of our hobby – and offers a €1,000 prize for the best idea



Lars Engelbrecht writes

Philately has a proud history, a global community, and a unique ability to connect people through culture, history and storytelling. Yet, as we all know, our community is ageing. If the hobby is to remain vibrant and relevant, we must keep renewing it and welcoming new collectors. That conviction lies behind FEPA's new 2026 initiative, **Philately Forward**.

A simple question

Philately Forward starts from one simple question: ***What could inspire someone to start collecting stamps today?*** None of us holds the complete answer on our own – but together, across our federations and countless local societies, we have a great deal of experience, creativity and enthusiasm to draw on. The initiative is an invitation to pool that collective wisdom and turn it into action.

A competition – and a €1,000 prize

At the heart of the initiative is a competition, open to everyone with a passion for stamps. Whether you are a collector, an exhibitor, a society member, a federation representative, or simply someone who loves the hobby, we would like to hear your idea for attracting new collectors.

All submitted ideas will be reviewed by FEPA, and the best one will be awarded a prize of **€1,000 to expand the winner's own collection**. The deadline for participation is **31 October 2026**, and the winner will be announced in November. Selected ideas will be featured on the FEPA website and shared across the European philatelic community, so that good ideas travel from one country to the next.

Taking part could not be simpler: go to **www.fepanews.com/forward** and enter your suggestion, or scan the QR code on the Philately Forward hand-out, which links straight to the entry page.



Scan to submit

Tools ready to use

To support the initiative, we have prepared a set of ready-to-use materials: a dedicated Philately Forward logo, a digital and printed hand-out with a QR code, and a Facebook page. The first hand-outs were produced for Balkanfila and Nordia, and more will follow for other exhibitions.

Throughout the year, the project is backed by a marketing plan: posts on Facebook, shared in the major philatelic groups; articles in national journals; press releases for the philatelic media; and cooperation with dealers. An article for the members' magazines is translated to several languages and sent to the federations.

How you can help

Philately Forward will only succeed if it is truly a shared effort. I warmly invite every federation and society to take part in three practical ways: help spread the competition by sharing our posts and displaying the hand-out; help us reach beyond our usual circles by pointing us toward the museums, philatelic media and larger societies in your country; and, above all, encourage your members – and the newcomers around them – to send in their ideas.

Stamp collecting has renewed itself many times over its long history. With Philately Forward, let us renew it once more – together.

**Have an idea to bring new collectors to philately?
Submit it at www.fepanews.com/forward before 31 October 2026.**



World Stamp Exhibition



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Agenda for the 2026 FEPA Congress

Hotel Villa Euro Parco dei Pini, Piazzale M. Champagnat 2,

Rome, Italy

10.00 am, Sunday 18th October 2026

1. Welcome.
2. Roll Call and choice of tellers.

PRESENTATIONS

3. FEPA Gold Pin to the Presidents of Members present who have not previously received it.
4. FEPA Awards.

FEPA BUSINESS

5. Approval of the record of the 2025 FEPA Congress.
6. Receipt of reports of Board Members.
7. Receipt of the Financial Statement and Auditor's Report for 2025.
8. Presentation by the President on FEPA's future plans.
9. Report by the Treasurer on the financial forecast for 2026 and the budget for 2027.
10. Presentation by FEPA Director Costas Chazapis on the development of FEPA's website and presence on social media.
11. Presentation by the Vice-President on the project: 'Philately Forward: Attracting New Collectors.'
12. Approval of proposed revisions to the FREGEX to incorporate FEPA Specialised Patronage.
13. Receipt of reports on forthcoming exhibitions
14. Consideration of motions from Members (if any).
15. Confirmation of date and venue for the 2027 FEPA Congress [Bratislava, 4th July 2027].

Igor Pirc
Secretary General
5th September 2026

The Romanian Federation Renews its Executive Board for 2026–2030

Ion Chirescu writes

The General Assembly of the Romanian Philatelic Federation was held in Bucharest on **18 July 2026**, during which elections took place for the new Board of the Federation.

Following the elections, the Board of the Romanian Philatelic Federation for the **2026–2030 term** is composed as follows:

President:	Arch. Ion Chirescu
Vice-President:	Mircea-Cornel Mureșan
Secretary General:	Romeo-Radu-Cristian Mincă
Board Members:	George Grigore Silviu-Dan Roșu Marius-Vasile Muntean Gheorghe Vasiliu

All members of the new Board were elected unanimously by the representatives present at the General Assembly.



Apatin – Eight Decades of Organized Philately

Željko Popović writes

Philately in Apatin has a tradition longer than a century. The beginnings of collecting postage stamps go back to the beginning of the 20th century, when the first private collections were created. Already during the twenties of the 20th century, the Philatelic Agency operated in Apatin, which supplied collectors with postage stamps, philatelic accessories and professional literature, and published a philatelic bulletin. This type of activity testifies to the developed philatelic activity in Apatin already in the first half of the 20th century.

Organized philately began in 1933, when fourteen Apatin philatelists joined the Society of Novi Sad Philatelists. After the Second World War, on December 24, 1945, the Apatin Philatelist Club was founded, which has been a member of the Union of Serbian Philatelists since January 1, 1949. In the following decades, the club developed its philatelic activity, and in 2011 it continued its work as the „Udruženje Filatelista Apatin“ Apatin, maintaining continuity of work, membership and goals.

The first philatelic exhibition in Apatin (Serbia) was held from September 26 to 29, 1965 as part of the Apatin fisherman's evening event. Apatin fishermen's evenings represent one of the oldest and most visited tourist and gastronomic events in Vojvodina and are traditionally held in the first week of July in Apatin. The central event of the four-day event is the competition in preparing the famous Apatina fish stew. Since the first exhibition held in 1965, philately has been an integral part of this traditional manifestation.



Setting up the exhibition frames ahead of the opening



Visitors touring the halls during the opening

The international activity of the Association began in 2012 with the organization of the first International Philatelic Exhibition „Fishermen's Evenings 2012.“ This exhibition was recorded as the first in Serbia where a complete collection of personalized postage stamps of the Republic of Serbia was presented in one exhibit. The author of that unique exhibit was the prominent Serbian philatelist Jovan Ristić „Rico.“

From 2012 until today, the „Udruženje Filatelista Apatin“ Apatin has organized thirteen international philatelic exhibitions. After the eighth international exhibition held in 2019, the organization of the exhibition was temporarily interrupted due to the COVID-19 pandemic. International exhibitions continued in 2022 with the ninth exhibition in a row. Exhibitors from Serbia, Slovenia, Croatia,

Bosnia and Herzegovina – Republika Srpska, Italy, Portugal, Albania, Romania, Russia, Bulgaria, North Macedonia and Slovakia participated in the Apatina international exhibitions. During all these years, almost all the most important Serbian philatelists exhibited in Apatin, which made this manifestation a significant place in the calendar of philatelic events in Serbia.

This year's 13th International Philatelic Exhibition was held as part of the 62nd Apatina Fisherman's Evening and brought together exhibitors from Serbia, Italy and Slovakia. The exhibition was set up in 27 exhibition showcases, which represent its maximum exhibition capacity, and the exhibits were presented in different competition classes.

The traditional part of the event is the Collectors' Meeting, which gathers collectors from Apatin, Novi Sad, Sombor, Subotica, Belgrade and other cities of Serbia, as well as guests from the Republic of Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina – Republika Srpska. The meeting contributes to the exchange of experiences, the presentation of new collections and the development of international cooperation among collectors.



The Collectors' Meeting in full swing.



Exchanging albums and material among members.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, when international travel and the holding of classic philatelic exhibitions were not possible, the Apatin Philatelic Association launched the International Online Philatelic Exhibition in 2021 to enable philatelists to continue exhibiting their exhibits and international exchange of experiences. In this way, it was possible for the exhibitors to continue their international exhibition even in the period when classic exhibitions could not be held due to travel restrictions. The online exhibition has been held every year since then and has become a regular part of the Association's program. Preparations are currently underway for the 6th International Online Philatelic Exhibition APATIN 2026, which will be held according to international exhibition rules in all competition classes. The organizers of the exhibition are the „Udruženje Filatelista Apatin“ Apatin, the Associazione Italiana di Maximafilia (AIM) and the Federation of Italian Philatelic Societies (FSFI), with the patronage of the Municipality of Apatin.

In addition to organizing exhibitions, the Association also carries out significant publishing activities. To date, it has issued 12 personalized postage stamps, 12 commemorative envelopes and 21 maximum cards, thereby contributing to the promotion of Apatin, the preservation of cultural heritage and the development of Serbian philately.



Presenting acknowledgements and certificates to the youngest participants.

Today, with a tradition of organized work spanning more than eight decades, continuous organization of international and online exhibitions, developed international cooperation and rich publishing activities, the „Udruženje Filatelista Apatin“ Apatin occupies an important place in Serbian philately.



Socializing over the traditional Apatin fishstew.

BALKANFILA XXI

A tradition that continues to bring philatelists together

Georgi Dechev writes:

A philatelic exhibition is much more than the arrangement of collections in exhibition frames. It is a meeting – between history and the present, between the collector and the public, and between philatelists from different generations and different countries. And when a country has a long-standing tradition of hosting major international events, every new exhibition becomes a continuation of that tradition.

Bulgaria has much to be proud of in this respect. Over the past six decades, the Union of Bulgarian Philatelists has repeatedly demonstrated its ability to host events of the highest international rank. Our country has hosted three World and three European Philatelic Exhibitions, as well as youth exhibitions of the highest category. All these exhibition events remain among the most significant pages in the history of Bulgarian philatelic exhibition activity, while the experience accumulated over the decades has created a tradition that continues to this day.

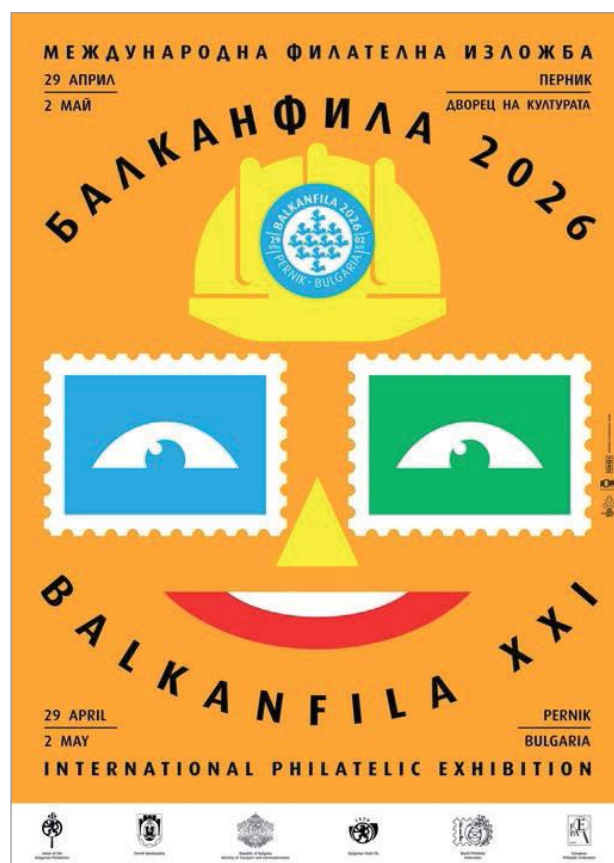
It is precisely in this context that BALKANFILA should be viewed – one of the emblematic international philatelic events in the Balkans. In 2026, Bulgaria, the initiator of these exhibitions since their beginning in Varna in the distant year of 1965, hosted the International Philatelic Exhibition of the Balkan countries – BALKANFILA – for the sixth time. The XXI edition was held from 29 April to 2 May at the Palace of Culture in Pernik, bringing together participants and collections displayed on nearly 600 exhibition frames.

But BALKANFILA should not be regarded merely as another major international exhibition on the philatelic calendar. It is part of a broader vision – for Bulgaria to have not only a national philatelic scene, but also a network of active philatelic centres where exhibition activity is continuous, visible and attractive to the public.

Over the past decade, this direction has gradually become an important part of the work of the Union of Bulgarian Philatelists. Alongside the major international events, regional centres have also been developing, demonstrating that a high-quality philatelic exhibition does not necessarily have to take place only in the capital.

The city of Dobrich has a particularly important place in this process. Since 2023, the annual philatelic exhibition **DOBRICHFILEX** has been held there – a national exhibition with international participation that is gradually establishing itself as a significant event on the Bulgarian philatelic calendar. The interest in the exhibition and the large number of visitors demonstrate something important: when philately reaches beyond the narrow circle of collectors and meets a wider audience, it has the potential to attract new friends and followers.

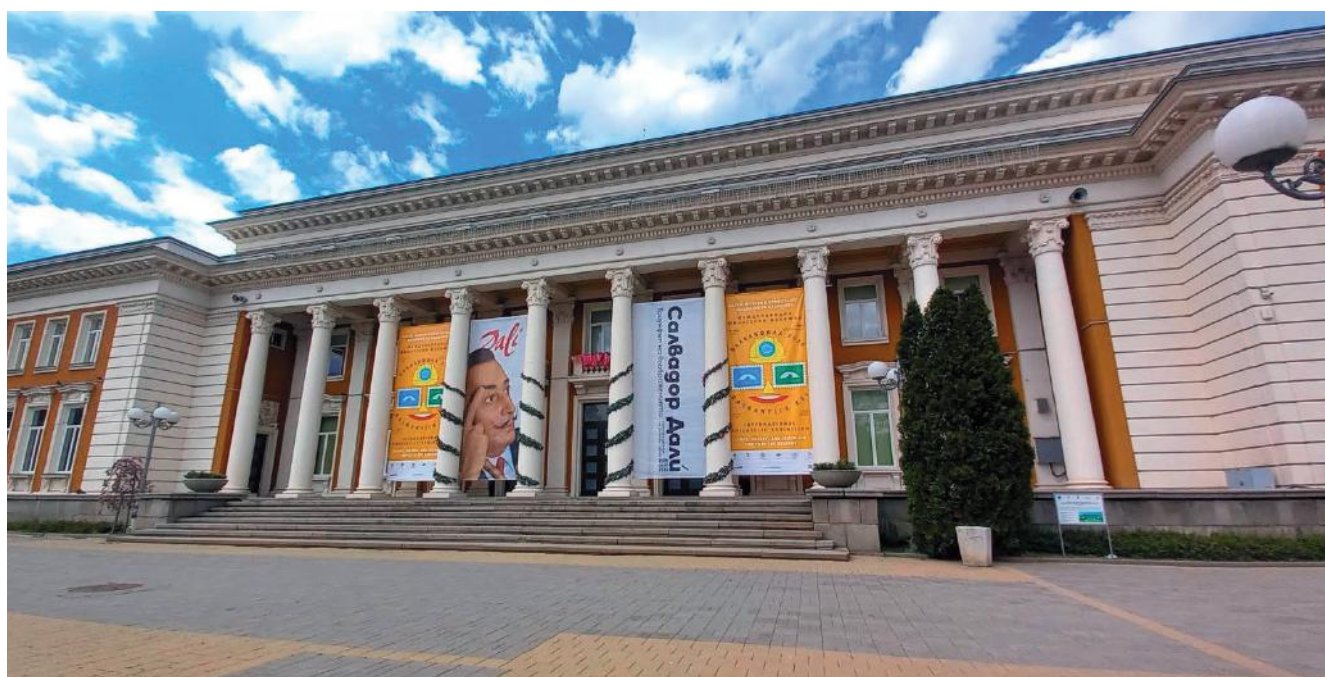
Thus, between the major international forums and the strong national exhibitions, a kind of philatelic map of Bulgaria is taking shape. BALKANFILA has its own special place on this map – as an international showcase for Bulgarian philately and as a meeting place for philatelists from the neighbouring Balkan countries.



Pernik - Capital of Balkan Philately

Pernik became a veritable capital of Balkan philately in late April and early May 2026. Ten countries from the Balkan region presented their collections, while the participation of guests from China, Israel and Moldova further enhanced the international character of the event.

The exhibition frames displayed some of the finest philatelic exhibits with which the participating countries could present themselves to the international philatelic community. The quality of the collections on display was undoubtedly one of the defining features of the XXI BALKANFILA.





The international jury, chaired by Peter Suchardoltz, had the challenging task of evaluating a total of 127 exhibits and 19 literature exhibits. The results speak for themselves: 15 Large Gold and 17 Gold medals were awarded. Such a proportion of the exhibits receiving the highest distinctions is in itself a clear indication of the exceptionally high standard of the exhibition.

Among the most significant successes was the award received by one of the leading specialists in Bulgarian classic philately, Guido Craveri. His exhibit **"Bulgaria, The 1879-1881 Lion Issues"** was awarded a Large Gold Medal and the Grand Prix of BALKANFILA XXI.

This distinction is of particular significance to the hosts. The exhibit presents one of the earliest and most important periods in the history of Bulgarian postage stamps and demonstrates how these seemingly small pieces of paper reflect an exceptionally rich history – of statehood, postal communications, printing technology and the development of society.



An Exhibition That Reached Beyond the Exhibition Frames



BALKANFILA XXI was not merely an exhibition in the traditional sense of the word. The organisers had prepared a rich programme of accompanying events, turning the occasion into a true philatelic forum and making it interesting not only for specialists and collectors, but also for the wider public. Particularly strong interest was generated by the presentation and cancellation of various postal and philatelic issues. These events became natural meeting points for philatelists, exhibition visitors and people who simply have an interest in postal history and stamps. The opportunity to present and officially cancel new issues within the framework of a major international philatelic forum added an extra dimension to the exhibition. Visitors gathered around these events, conversations took place, and knowledge and memories were exchanged – those small but important moments that transform an exhibition from a static display into a living event.

This is where one of the most important roles of the modern philatelic exhibition becomes apparent. It should not only display the most valuable and rare exhibits, but also create an environment in which philately can be seen, experienced and shared.

For several days, the exhibition halls of the Palace of Culture in Pernik were not simply a place for displaying exhibits. They became a space for meetings, conversations, the exchange of knowledge and ideas and, last but not least, a place where philately could meet its public.

Tradition with an Eye to the Future

BALKANFILA XXI demonstrated something else as well – that tradition has meaning only when it leads towards the future.

For the Union of Bulgarian Philatelists, the rich history of international exhibitions is not merely a source of pride. It is a foundation upon which a modern and active philatelic life can be built. Major international events such as BALKANFILA can be a natural high point of this activity, but it must also have solid foundations in different cities throughout the country.

That is why the development of philatelic centres such as Dobrich and the establishment of exhibitions such as **DOBRICHFILEX** are so important. They create a permanent environment for philately, provide collectors with opportunities to present their exhibits, attract visitors and help build an environment in which young people, too, can discover the beauty of this hobby.

When international contacts, the high quality of the exhibits and the opportunity for Bulgaria to host events of the stature of BALKANFILA are added to this, a complete picture emerges – a philately that has a history, but does not live only in the past.

BALKANFILA XXI came to an end, the exhibition frames were gradually cleared, the exhibits returned to their owners, and Pernik once again resumed its usual rhythm. But the meetings, friendships, knowledge and impressions created during those few days remain.

Because a philatelic exhibition ends when the last frames are taken down, but philately continues wherever interest remains after the exhibition. And BALKANFILA XXI showed that this interest is very much alive in Bulgaria.



World Stamp Exhibition Dubai 2026

Veselko Guštin writes:

The Emirates Philatelic Association (EPA) organized Dubai 2026 World Stamp Exhibition

- To celebrate 30 Years of the Emirates Philatelic Association.
- To celebrate 100 Years of the Fédération Internationale De Philatélie (F.I.P.).
- To promote friendly relations and maintain close co-operation amongst the philatelists and stamp collectors throughout the world.
- To promote philately and stamp collecting at the highest international level.

The Exhibition was held 4-8 February 2026 at the Sheikh Maktoum Hall, World Trade Centre, Dubai, United Arab Emirates.

DUBAI 2026 was a “FIP Specialised World Stamp” Exhibition with the Patronage of the Federation Internationale de Philatelie (FIP) provisionally granted by the FIP Board on 5 November, 2024 at the 177th FIP Board meeting and approved by the 77th FIP Congress in Shanghai on 3 December.

DUBAI 2026 was also held under the Auspices of the Federation of Inter-Asia Philately (FIAP).

Message of Prakob Chirakiti, President of F.I.P.

“On behalf of the FIP Board, I would like to congratulate the Organizing Committee of DUBAI 2026 for holding this FIP Specialised World Stamp Exhibition for the first time in the United Arab Emirates, from February 4 -8, 2026.

The Emirates Philatelic Association had been very active in organising national, regional and international exhibitions over the last few years, and as the FIP Consultant for this exhibition, general commissioner Ali Abdulrahman Ahmad Ali. I am very confident that with their wealth of accumulated experience, DUBAI 2026 will be a very successful world-level exhibition. This exhibition shall also be the first FIP exhibition in 2026 to celebrate FIP’s Centenary.

We believe that everyone who attend and support this exhibition shall not just be able to see close to 2,000 frames of philatelic gems. All 74 countries (29 from Europe) were represented across 12 categories. The FIP does not impose sanctions, so both Russians and Israelis were present. Visitors will be left with the memory of a memorable visit to Dubai, which is well-known globally for its myriad cuisines, luxury shopping, ultramodern architecture and a lively nightlife scene.

May I thank in advance all the National Commissioners who carry the exhibits to the show; jurors; dealers, supporters and visitors, as well as all volunteers who help to make the exhibition possible in one way or another. May I also thank FIP Vice-President Richard Tan, the deputy Consultant for DUBAI 2026 who helped make my job as Consultant for DUBAI 2026 much easier”; he finished. (<https://dubai2026wse.com/>)

A lot could be written about the organization itself. The installation of the collections was scheduled for February 3, 2026, at 2:00 PM. Of course, at that time they were still setting up the frames, and it wasn’t until around 6:00 PM that to commissioners were possible to mount some collections. Only after the last and second-to-last rows (around midnight) of frames were finally in place could we mount our postcard collections. There were no frames left, even though we still had some single-frame collections to mount. Their excuse was that the frames had broken during transport from Thailand! The plan was to get this done before the official opening, but it wasn’t until the next day by 10:00 AM—when they managed to get a few more Thai display frames and some older ones “from somewhere”—that



we could proceed. Finally, by 10:00 PM the following day, we managed to mount the rest of collections. We placed the youth exhibit in the empty frames where the other collections hadn't arrived! In short: a lively and entertaining experience!

The official entrance led to the display frames. Near the entrance were presentations by postal administrations (including Slovenia's), dealers and traditional exhibits; further along to the right, the rows continued with postal history and postal stationery, followed by picture postcards at the end. Collections related to the OF were arranged towards the back right, while children's collections occupied the remaining empty frames.

I must mention that this was a rare instance where the hotel (Novotel), the exhibition, and the awards ceremony (WTC – World Trade Center) were all located in virtually the same building—which was truly convenient.

The organizers also set up a children's corner, though it was mostly frequented by „children“ over the age of 50. Quite a few dealers were present, although they offered little European material. Some Postal administration displayed its stamps from the previous year in a single frames, while Emirates Post exhibited historical postal equipment, such as mailboxes, date post marks, and mailbags.

At the UAE post office stand, five commemorative souvenir sheets and five postal stationery items were on sale; visitors could hand-cancel these with special commemorative postmarks corresponding to each day of the exhibition.

The organizers pleasantly surprised us with a desert safari, located about 20–30 km from the hotel. It is worth noting that Dubai grew out of the desert, originating as a Portuguese fortress in 1717; the British later took control.



The postal service was also largely in British hands, and it was not until after 1967 that Dubai assumed full control over the issuance of stamps.

The Palmares for the [Dubai 2026 World Stamp Exhibition](#) was announced on Saturday, February 7, 2026, at the Al Multaqa Ballroom in the Dubai World Trade Centre.

The international jury awarded 44 Large Gold and 101 Gold medals. Ch. Prakob, the President of FIP, also delivered a speech, and we were served distinctive Arab dishes: an appetizer, a main course (rice, lamb, and various sauces), and dessert. A few more introductory speeches followed. There was no special cultural program.



The event concluded with the awards ceremony.

Grand Prix International:

Tarık Alireza (Turkey) for "Forerunners of Saudi Arabia (1916-1925):

Postage stamps of the Kingdom of Hijaz, the Sultanate of Najd and the Kingdom of Hijaz & Najd"

Grand Prix National:

Abdulla Khoory (UAE) for "Abu Dhabi: From Trucial States to U.A.E."

(<https://dubai2026wse.com/wp-content/uploads/2026/02/Dubai-2026-Palmares.pdf>)

The commissioners collected the awards, catalogs, palmares, and medals on behalf of all the exhibitors.

Just as there had been some awkwardness during the setup and the placement of items into the display frames (there were too few of them), complications arose during the dismounting of the exhibition as well. It was scheduled to begin on Sunday from 4:00 PM onwards. My son and I „armed“ ourselves with a screwdriver and handled the opening of the cases ourselves. We finished in less than an hour, even finding time to help others. Screwdrivers were in such high demand that the store—located a ten-minute walk away—ran out of them!



Boston 2026 World Expo

Yamil H. Kouri Jr. RDP writes:

Boston 2026 World Expo, the 12th decennial exhibition in the United States, took place at the Boston Convention and Exhibition Center from 23 to 30 May 2026. The exhibition floor consisted of a contiguous space of 32,700 sq meters, possibly the largest area ever covered by any previous philatelic exhibition. In addition, there was an ample registration and information lobby overlooking the exhibition halls, 38 spacious meeting rooms and a large ballroom where the opening ceremony and the Palmares dinner were held. The main exhibit floor housed a massive United States Postal Service (USPS) installation and service desk, a stage for ceremonies with seats for several hundred attendees, a commercial bourse with 115 dealers and auctioneers, over a dozen booths for large societies and organizations, the Court of Honor, the Minuteman Club Lounge, a youth section, an adult beginners area, a theater for films, classes and presentations, four walled pavilions for philatelic exhibits, postal administrations and specialized societies, other large open areas for exhibits, a bin room and a volunteer room, and a sizable literature area. The youth section had organized activities and gave away millions of free stamps. The adult area, with the latest technology, was staffed by trained docents who covered a wide range of basic collecting topics.

There were several simultaneous philatelic competitions at Boston 2026. The largest one was the FIP exhibition with all its classes, but the American Philatelic Society (APS) annual Champion of Champions competition and the largest exhibition of polar area philately ever assembled (Polar Salon) also had a substantial presence.

More than half of the exhibition area was occupied by nearly 3,750 exhibit frames mainly contained within four large hard wall pavilions organized geographically. Traditional and Postal History competitive exhibits from each region were respectively placed in the Americas, Europe and the Asia, Africa & Oceania pavilions. The Polar Salon pavilion had its own related exhibits. The outside walls of the pavilions were decorated with attractive enlarged stamp images.

The other FIP classes were put in a separate large area on the open floor, including the Championship Class and a well represented section of experimental First Day Cover exhibits. Picture Postcard exhibits were displayed in one of the meeting rooms. There were separate sections for the APS Champion of Champion exhibits and the Universal Postal Union display frames for member countries on the open floor. Specialized society display frames were located in their respective geographic pavilions. Altogether there were 719 framed exhibits.

There was also a parallel picture postcard commercial bourse taking place at one of the meeting rooms for three days during the show.



Entrance to the Americas pavilion - by Thomas Fortunato



Part of the USPS superbooth - by Thomas Fortunato

Boston 2026 is the only General World Exhibition with FIP patronage this year, and it also had recognition from the FIAF and the FEPA, as well as being the location of the annual meeting and exhibition of the APS, which except for this year is typically held in August.

Meeting rooms with audiovisual equipment were provided free of charge to any philatelic group which requested it. There were an incredible 364 formal meetings and presentations in the 38 rooms available on the second floor of the convention center.

The USPS had first day of issue ceremonies at the large stage on the show floor on seven of the eight days of the exhibition. Several other countries' postal administrations also released commemorative stamps during the show.

Scott Stamp LLC donated several thousand international stamp passports which proved to be very popular. There were 31 postal administrations, mainly located in their respective geographic pavilions, selling stamps and applying special cancelations on covers and passports.

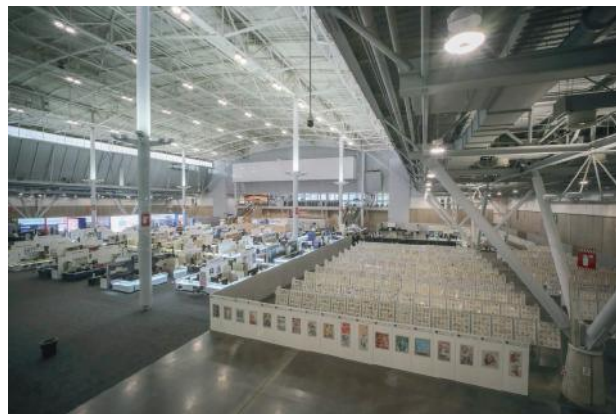
Boston 2026 welcomed the participation of every specialized philatelic society which solicited it by subsidizing the cost of their booth, if necessary. A total of 118 societies were present with booths within their appropriate continental pavilions.

The popular practice of postcrossing turned 25 years old this year. The USPS issued a stamp during Boston 2026 to commemorate this milestone. There were seven daily postcrossing meetings. The postcrossing founder came to the exhibition and at one of those meetings a new attendance record was set with more than 200 participants.

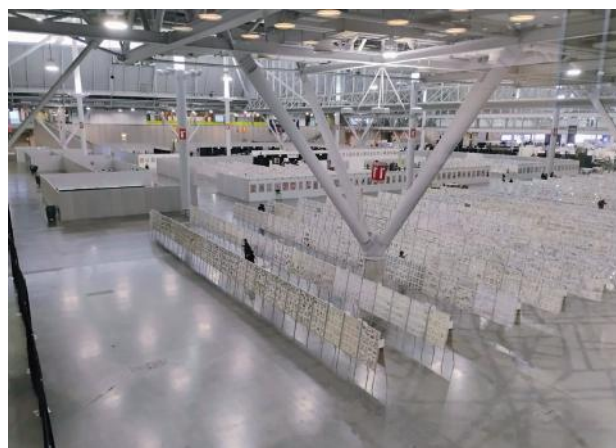
An effort was made to increase the turnout and expose the general public to stamps and postal history by showcasing non philatelic displays and events. A fantastic exhibit of UK's Queen Elizabeth II to commemorate the centenary of her birth included a Rolls Royce she once owned and travelled in with extensive related philatelic and historical material. This is part of a relatively new discipline known as context philately. The New England LEGO group had an interactive display on half a dozen large tables that attracted many youngsters.

To engage the parallel universe of collectors who do not take part in traditional organized philately, there was a booth from which numerous daily YouTube channel transmissions were posted from the show floor.

Boston 2026 recognized the importance of partnering with other collecting groups whose members may have overlapping interests. The Ephemera Society of America held a meeting and had presentations during the show. The Manuscript Society and the American Numismatic Association also had booths at the exhibition.



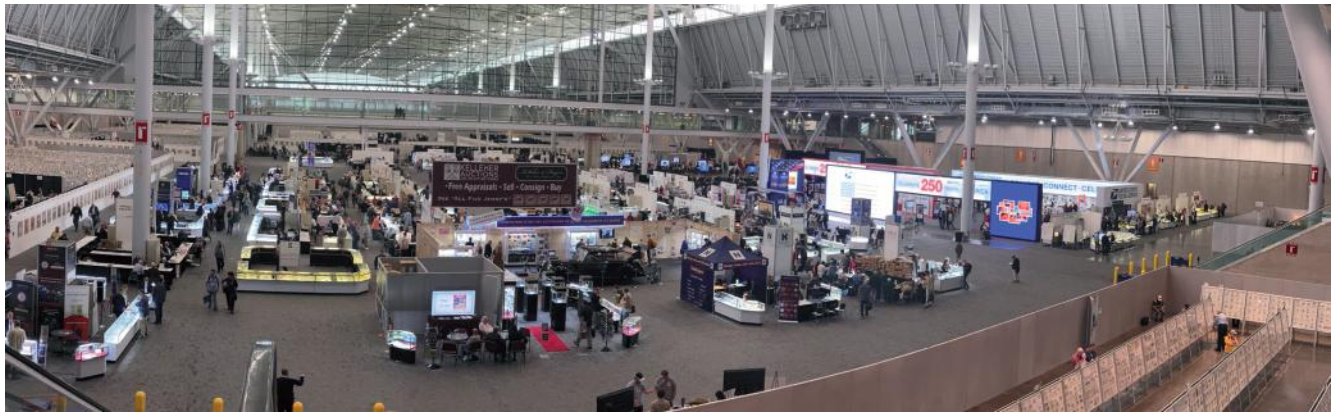
Europe pavilion and dealer bourse - by Carlos Vergara



Frames in the open area - by Carlos Vergara



Literature room - by Carlos Vergara



Overview of the dealer bourse and USPS stand - by Julie Denehy



Postcrossing meeting - by Carlos Vergara

Two American auction houses held live in-person auctions at the convention center on four consecutive days.

Boston 2026 hosted a summit of philatelic academies, the first time that this has ever been done. Participating academies were well represented and made individual presentations.

The literature area had 192 FIP competitive entries displayed in a spacious reading room with tables, chairs and computers on the main show floor. There were several book releases, presentations and signing sessions.

There was an intense schedule of social events that were held every night of the show. In addition to the many smaller specialized societies that hosted their

own dinners and receptions, the following larger organizations had fairly large galas: Collectors Club of New York (Liechtenstein Awards), U.S. Philatelic Classics Society, Smithsonian National Postal Museum (Philatelic Achievement Awards), Club de Monte Carlo, APS (annual Stamp Soiree), Royal Philatelic Society - London, Roll of Distinguished Philatelists (signing ceremony, reception and dinner) and Boston 2026 Palmares dinner.

An award ceremony was held on Friday so that every exhibitor, regardless of medal level, could be publicly recognized and be photographed receiving a medal from the show president. I do not recall seeing this at any previous international exhibition. Also, every exhibitor received a show medal, no matter the exhibit class, number of frames or medal level.

The exhibition was well attended at all times. More than 20,000 individual visitors were counted based on the number of preregistered attendees who picked up their badges and the people who registered at the show. We probably did not capture everyone since family groups often registered only one person.

The support from a large number of donors and volunteers was outstanding, without whom the show could not have taken place. They contributed financially and with thousands of hours of work, which ensured the show's success.

These raw figures alone cannot paint a complete picture of the exhibition which has received an overwhelming number of favorable reviews. There was a general atmosphere of enthusiasm and excitement. Despite the seemingly never-ending geopolitical tensions of the last couple of years, Boston 2026 has proven that stamp collecting can transcend these conflicts and continue to bring people together from across the world.

PICTURE POSTCARDS – The Future

Birthe King RDP FRPSL writes:

Since picture postcards were invented and popularized in the 1890s, it has been a popular interest to collect such cards. The very early ones from 1890s up to World War I are very sought after, and both during the war and after the production continued, and collection was a popular pastime. In more recent times many philatelists have also discovered that postcards can provide interesting stories, not purely as illustrations in other kinds of displays or exhibits, but also in their own right.

With increased co-operation between the federations at bi-lateral and regional exhibitions FEPA decided that it would be appropriate to introduce European rules. The aim was to regularise the judging and thus to help judges and exhibitors to work to the same standards. Also, the Guidelines should be kept to four pages, to keep them as simple as possible, to encourage Picture Postcard exhibitors, and not to be restrictive. So, in 2015 FEPA presented the first European 'Guidelines', Special Regulations for the Evaluation of Picture Postcards Exhibits at FEPA Exhibitions, in Athens 15 November 2015, where they were accepted. These Guidelines have been used successfully at exhibitions in Europe, e.g. at Finlandia in 2017. By 2018, the then president of FIP, Bernie Beston, introduced picture postcards as an experimental class at international level with 'Guidelines for Judging Picture Postcard Exhibits', closely resembling



the FEPA Guidelines. Since then, some amazing exhibits have been shown at all competitive levels, creating more displays and exhibits across the world.

However, at the international Boston 2026 World Expo in May something extraordinary happened. The 14 picture postcards exhibits were not shown in the large exhibition hall, but in a small upstairs meeting room shared with postcard dealers. Maybe it was thought that this would be a good idea, but there was ample space on the ground floor to have a decent sized section, shared by the postcard exhibits and the Trade.

The Boston 2026 GWSE Individual Regulations (IREX) obviously referred to by the exhibitors, were changed, apparently during the exhibition. The appointed jurors for the Picture Postcard class were handed judging schedules that included a change to the marking system under Knowledge and Research. Nowhere in the IREX was this mentioned. The total of 35 points were split into two components, with a new Philatelic Knowledge component being introduced at 20 points.

On the contrary, the extracts from the Boston IREX listed at the end make it clear that we, the exhibitors, have no rights or redress, and neither do the jurors, despite the Guidelines on the FIP website being superseded at the exhibition. The result was that most exhibits lost points and dropped at least one medal level, some even two. This procedure was repeated at the international World Exhibition in Macao in June.

But what about the exhibitors, who had prepared their exhibits and paid their frame fees? What could they do? Nothing, because we all sign our rights away on the exhibition application form. Neither the Boston Organising Committee nor the FIP have explained anything. *Fait accompli*. Picture postcards have nothing to do with routes and rates, it is in the name PICTURE Postcards.

So, what will we do in FEPA? FEPA shows with Patronage or Recognition could offer exhibitors to enter their Picture Postcard exhibits under the 'present' FEPA Guidelines and disregard what the FIP might or might not do in the future. The wording on the FIP website is still 'FIP Picture Postcards Special Regulations 2018' and 'FIP Picture Postcard Guidelines 2018's (2026.08.24).

I would encourage all Picture Postcard exhibitors to continue to enjoy their displays and exhibits and to enter these at national or regional shows in Europe and at FEPA shows. It might, however, cause problems at exhibitions with FIP Patronage or Recognition.

Please FEPA, stand firm for the sake of Picture Postcard collectors, displayers, and exhibitors and maintain the present FEPA Guidelines.

Extract from Boston 2026 IREX

Article 6 – JUDGING OF EXHIBITS AND AWARDS

6.1 Exhibits in the Competitive Classes will be judged by the appointed and/or accredited FIP judges in accordance with the principles in the GREV and SREVs. Any deviation in the judging system must have the prior approval of the FIP Board.

Article 15 – RIGHTS OF ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

- 15.1 Every exhibitor applying to exhibit at BOSTON 2026 GWSE is deemed to have accepted the stipulations of the IREX.
- 15.2 The Organizing Committee shall have the right to adjudicate any matters arising that are not covered by FIP Regulations or by this IREX, and its decisions shall be final.
- 15.3 The Organizing Committee shall have the right to revise the IREX after consultation with the FIP Consultant. In such case, exhibitors shall be promptly notified of any such revision either directly or through the National Commissioner.

Article 16 – ACCEPTANCE OF THESE REGULATIONS

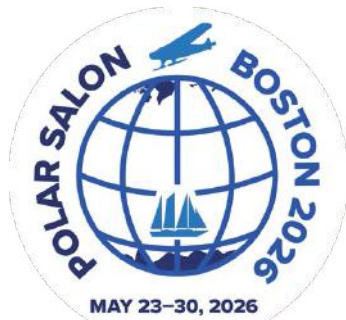
- 16.1 By signing the Exhibit Application Form, the exhibitor shall be deemed to accept the stipulations of the IREX, GREX, GREV and SREVs.



BOSTON 2026

The Polar Salon, a Landmark Event for Polar Philately

Serge Kahn writes:



The March 2026 issue of *The American Philatelist*, the monthly magazine of the American Philatelic Society (APS), was dedicated to polar philately. Susanna Mills, editor-in-chief of APS Publications, wrote in her editorial: «There's no denying that the field of polar philately brushes up against stories of danger, tragedy, heroism, science, invention, and, above all, that great human motivator, curiosity.»

Philatelists from across the Atlantic, as well as the organizers of Boston 2026 World Expo, have clearly recognized the value of this discipline in its own right, because following a series of five Polar Salons held in Europe (in France in 2009, in Germany in 2012, in Monaco in 2015, in Denmark in 2017, and in the Czech Republic in 2022), Boston 2026 – the 12th international exhibition in the United States – hosted the first Polar Salon on the American continent. The exhibition was held at the Boston Convention and Exhibition Center – a modern facility located in Boston's Seaport district – from May 23 to 30, 2026.

In its own pavilion (the Polar pavilion), 200 display frames provided visitors with a glimpse of the richness that polar philately has to offer: an exceptional international showcase.

The displayed material was related to the Arctic, sub-Arctic, Antarctic, and sub-Antarctic regions. In addition to the polar regions proper, certain territories commonly featured in polar philately include the Falkland Islands and Tristan da Cunha.

Ten countries participated, with the number of polar exhibits on display broken down as follows: France (15), the United States (14), the Czech Republic (6), Canada (3), Australia (2), Belgium (2), Ireland (2), Norway (2), the United Kingdom (2), and Germany (1).

Some frames from the Polar Salon before the arrival of visitors.



One of the goals of this Polar Salon was to demonstrate to an international attendance how polar philately is a distinct field as such, even though the material is recognized within other areas of organized philately. Because its very nature – what it documents and the peculiar environment with which it is associated – make it different enough to qualify for a philatelic subject area of their own.

Polar philately is based on five pillars, all of which were represented at Boston:

1. **Expeditions** (for geographic and scientific exploration, political and social reasons, commercial or economic purposes, adventure and tourism). This really is the spiritual heart and character of polar philately.
2. **Polar aerophilately** (record and ordinary actual, anticipated or aborted flights, with at least one actual or intended polar leg).
3. **Military and conflicts** (war, readiness or civil disturbance) in relation to either or both of the earth's polar regions (Arctic and Antarctic).
4. **Thematics** (flora, fauna, dogs, polar explorers, events, and many more).
5. **Geographics** (stamps, postmarks and postal history of polar entities).

Lectures and meetings on polar topics were part of the extensive program offered to visitors throughout the eight days of the Boston 2026 World Expo, which was free to the public.

A four-member expert jury awarded prizes to all participating polar exhibitors. All of the judges were experienced exhibitors.

The **Single-Frame Polar Grand Prix** was awarded to Chip Gliedman for *Mail Routes of Rupert's Land, British North America*.

The **Multi-Frame Polar Grand Prix** was awarded to Jiří Kraus for *Finding Antarctica - Then Finding More of It*.



Jiří Kraus is awarded the Polar Grand Prix from chief polar judge David Ball. Photo Carlos Vergara.



The Boston 2026 World Expo medal.

All polar exhibitors and members of the polar jury received a glass penguin, a certificate specially designed for them, and the Boston 2026 World Expo medal.

A special polar Court of Honor paid a heartfelt tribute to the late Hal Vogel, the world's leading authority on polar philately, who passed away in November 2025. Several of his collections on display allowed visitors to discover the treasures of polar philately, which are often hidden behind seemingly ordinary covers.

The Polar Salon also housed the Tusass Greenland Post Office booth. The artist behind Tusass Greenland's Boston 2026 stamp issue, the legendary Norwegian-Swedish Martin Mörck, was also in attendance at Boston 2026, where he signed his stamp issues at Tusass Greenland booth. These stamps celebrated the historical ties between North America, Greenland, and the Nordic region.



Souvenir sheet featuring the two stamps from Greenland.



Lawson Brigham (left) and Alan Warren (right) at the American Society of Polar Philatelists table. On the left, the roll-up banner announcing the upcoming Polar Salon in Prague in 2028.

Society tables in the Polar Salon included the American Society of Polar Philatelists (ASPP), the Falklands Islands Philatelic Study Group, the Pitcairn Islands Study Group, and the St. Helena, Ascension and Tristan da Cunha Philatelic Society.

Beyond the competition itself, the Polar Salon served as a prime venue for exchanging research, encouraging new exhibitors, and strengthening relationships among collectors who share a common interest in polar philately, this field that continues to inspire them through its unique combination of exploration, history, science, and postal heritage.

But the adventure isn't over yet: polar philately enthusiasts will gather in March 2028 for the 7th Polar Salon, which will be held as part of the PRAGA 2028 World Stamp Exhibition. <https://praga2028.cz/en/>

Philatelic Belarus

Vladimir Kachan, Vice-Chairman of the Byelorussian Union of Philatelists, writes:

Kamenets, one of the oldest cities in Belarus, became a magnet for philatelists and history buffs from around the world from July 22 to 27, 2026. A large-scale philatelic exhibition was held here in the city's House of Culture, dedicated to the 750th anniversary of the city of Kamenets. The exhibition featured over 100 unique philatelic collections from 12 countries. Collections from Armenia, Belarus, Brazil, Germany, Israel, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Morocco, Moldova, Russia, Serbia, and Slovakia were on display. The international philatelic exhibition, organized by the Byelorussian Union of Philatelists, the Ministry of Communications and Informatization of the Republic of Belarus, the Republican Unitary Enterprise "Belpost" and the Kamenets District Executive Committee, became an important event in the history of the city. Kamenets became the first regional center of Belarus to host an international philatelic exhibition.

The exhibition featured philatelic exhibits in the following classes:

1. Official Class

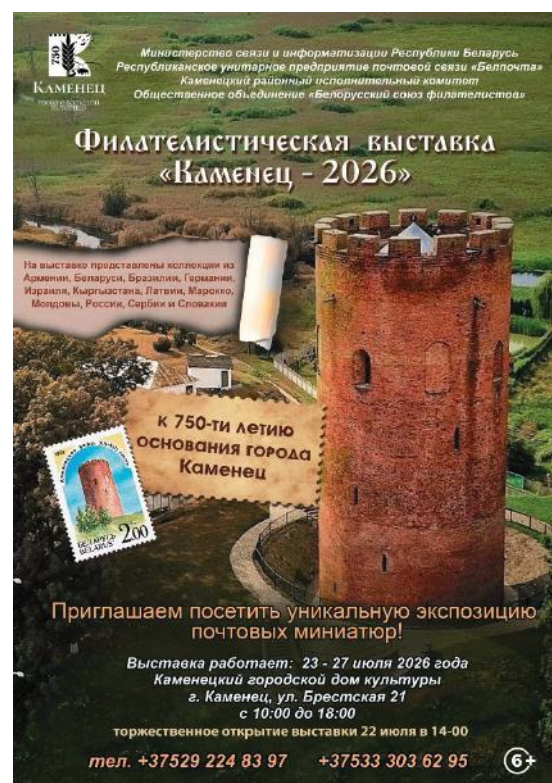
(for postal administrations and museums).

2. Non-competition Class

(for exhibits by jury members and invited guests).

3. Competition Class:

Traditional philately, Postal history, Thematic philately, Open philately, Picture postcards, Youth philately and philatelic literature.



Advertising poster for the Kamenets-2026 philatelic exhibition



The ribbon-cutting ceremony at the opening of the Kamenets-2026 philatelic exhibition



Ceremony of the special cancellation of the 'Kamenets-2026 Philatelic Exhibition' stationery envelope dedicated to the 750th anniversary of the city of Kamenets



Numerous visitors at the exhibition stands



Jury chairman Valery Andreyuk explains a philatelic exhibit



Award ceremony for young participants of the exhibition

All participants of the exhibition were awarded with medals and diplomas of the corresponding rank, and also received souvenirs and a catalog of the exhibition.

Visitors were treated to a fascinating journey through time, viewing rare postal items from the 18th and 19th centuries, unique stamps with only a few copies in existence, and thematic exhibits revealing the history of Kamenets and global postal history.

One of the most celebratory moments of the exhibition was the special cancellation of the commemorative postmarked envelope "Belarus. Kamenets," issued for the 750th anniversary of the city of Kamenets. The first impression of the commemorative postmark was affixed by Vladimir Senchuk, Chairman of the Kamenets District Executive Committee, Svetlana Yurkevich, General Director of the Republican Unitary Enterprise "Belpost", and Sergey Pilipovich, Chairman of the Board of the Byelorussian Union of Philatelists.

During the exhibition, the sale of a variety of philatelic products was organized. Belarusian postage stamps represent the history, traditions, nature, and culture of our country. Through stamps, Belarus communicates itself to the world, and they become ambassadors of our history far beyond the republic's borders.



Happy children with postal souvenirs

MACAO 2026

View the images
from MACAO 2026

Claudio Ernesto Mario Manzati writes:



1. The Event

Macau 2026 provided yet another opportunity – following Thailand 2018, Wuhan 2019 and Indonesia 2023 – to explore Asian philately in greater depth and, consequently, to draw comparisons. On this occasion too, I held the dual role of commissioner and judge; I believe this will be an inevitable trend for the future of philately, in order to keep organisational costs down.

First of all, it is worth noting that Macao, like Hong Kong, although part of China, is a free port; it is possible to enter without a visa and even bypass Hong Kong customs by travelling directly by bus (around 45 minutes) or by ferry to Macao International Airport, where customs checks are then carried out in Macao.

The chosen venue, the Ventian Hotel – directly connected to Le Parisian, the event's official hotel – is a splendid location with spacious areas, numerous restaurants, large casinos and the opportunity to shop across three floors housing the world's most prestigious fashion brands.

The areas dedicated to the event were also very spacious, whilst the commercial section was not particularly extensive, featuring only a few exhibitors, the leading international auction houses and numerous postal services. Compared with the 2019 event in Wuhan, organised to mark the 60th anniversary of the People's Republic of China, attendance was high but not as massive as in Wuhan, where hundreds of thousands of visitors were present; the reason is simple: in HONG KONG and MACAO, Chinese citizens find it difficult to obtain visas, and Chinese



The Macao Post stand

exhibitors face restrictions on the export of stamps, as well as controls on the inflow and outflow of currency.

In any case, participation by young people from schools was consistent and substantial, particularly on the last day before the public holiday in HONG KONG.

2. Exhibition Competition

The display was set up without assistance, as the organisers had instructed the helpers not to touch the philatelic material. There were at least three people present whose sole task was to supervise and record the start times for the set-up of each individual display panel.

The display cases did not allow sheets to be mounted between the two strips; the problem was therefore resolved (avoiding the need to cut the sheets) by inserting the sheets into the bottom edge and using a small piece of adhesive tape at the top of the back of the sheet to secure it in place.

The display cases were locked and a numbered seal was affixed to the lock; in the case of Pasquale Polo, who was exhibiting UQ, a sheet had been mounted incorrectly and opening the display case proved very complicated, requiring a signature and a countersignature in accordance with strict security procedures.

The exhibition spaces were spacious, housing over 1,500 display cases with good lighting.

3. Committees

I attended as an observer at the Philatelic Commission and the Literary Commission, where there were no candidates from Europe or Asia.

As regards the 'FORGERY' Commission, the European delegate from Luxembourg complained during the FIP Congress that no one was present; President Prakob replied that this was due to the chairman's health problems and that he would try to avoid the issue for the next Commission, to be held at the forthcoming Congress.

4. Jury

For European Postal History: the Team Leader was Ygal Nethaniel, whilst Alfred Schmid was the Team Leader for Traditional Philately.

The team worked well: for the Postal History section, in addition to the undersigned, Chris King and IGOR RYYS from the Russian Federation were present; as an apprentice, he proved to be very capable – alongside GP Magne (France) and Fernando Aranaz (Spain).

It is worth noting that feedback was provided to collectors – unusually – the day before the awards ceremony.



Young people's participation in the event



The packed hall at the FIP Congress



The cutting of the cake to mark the 100th anniversary of the FIP's foundation

5. Fip Congress

The most important point to highlight is the vote for the FIP presidency, as Prakob was the sole candidate for the presidency, as well as for the vice-presidency and the post of Director for Asia – he secured only two-thirds of the votes.

Nothing else of particular note to report, apart from the fact that the FIP has over 3.5 million Swiss francs in the bank, which could perhaps be used to promote philately more effectively.

6. Venue

A splendid 5-star luxury complex; although the cost of around €115 (plus any extra nights' accommodation to be paid by participants) was relatively modest, the restaurants were in the mid-to-high price range (€80–100 for a three-course meal).

The complex, situated about 30 minutes from Macau Airport, comprised three interconnected hotels: the Parisian (the official hotel), the Venetian (the exhibition venue) and the Londoner, all boasting an endless array of shops featuring the world's most prestigious brands.

7. The Awards Dinner

It was held at another luxury hotel, as was the FIP's welcome dinner for the commissioners and jurors; the speeches were relatively brief (no more than 5 minutes), similar to those at the exhibition's opening ceremony, which featured three speeches of 5 minutes each, with 16 minutes set aside for photographs and greetings.

View the images from
the awards ceremony



The Italians present at Palmares banquet hall: from left, Paolo Guglielminetti, Angelo Teruzzi, Claudio Manzati, Adriano Bergamini and Michele Martini



Alpe Adria Philately Exhibition Histria Phila 2026

Igor Pirc writes:

Alpe Adria Philately (AAP) is a working group that originally brought together philatelic organisations of the Alps Adriatic region (Austria –Burgenland, Kärnten, Oberösterreich, Steiermark; Germany – Bavaria, Italy – Lombardia, Trentino – Alto Adige, Veneto, Friuli Venezia – Giulia, Emilia Romagna; Switzerland – Ticino, Hungary – Baranya, Győr-Moson-Sopron, Somogy, Vas Zala; Slovenia and Croatia), from 1995 on.

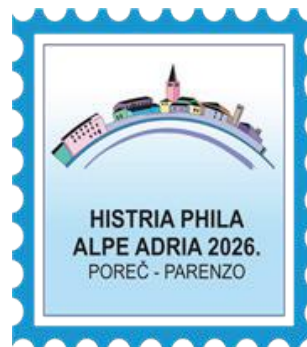
The 2026 AAP Exhibition took place from 9th to 12th April 2026 in the sports hall Žatika in the suburb of Poreč – Parenzo, a historic city on the Adriatic Sea on the west coast of Istria.

As has been the custom for some time, there were also special guests at this exhibition – this year it is the Portuguese Federation and its exhibitors. It is worth mentioning that Portugal was a guest at the AAP 2011 exhibition in Maribor, Slovenia, and all AAP members were invited to the northern Portuguese city of Viana do Castelo in 2019. So it is a long-standing friendly cooperation! Portugal's long-standing cooperation with the members and the entire Alpe-Adria Philately group dates back to the time when FEPA was led by Pedro Vaz Pereira (who is, for this reason, an honorary member of the Alpe-Adria Philately working group).

High-quality collections were displayed at the exhibition—a total of 90 in the competitive class and four in the honorary class.

At the AAP working group meeting, representatives of the member countries thanked the outgoing chairman, Bojan Bračič of Slovenia, for his leadership and, under the rotation system, elected Hungary's István Glatz for the next four-year term. Igor Pirc continues to serve as secretary.

The newly elected president announced that the next Alpe-Adria exhibition would be organised in Hungary in 2028.



Opening ceremony

The Echo of EGYPHILA 2026

Claudio Ernesto Mario Manzati writes:

Following the national exhibition held in Heliopolis in 2025, and the first exhibition held in Alexandria in 2024, the new presidency of the Egyptian Philatelic Federation, led by Hany Salam RDP, has revitalised the organisation of events and introduced guidelines and procedures to promote philatelic exhibitions in Egypt.

His leadership was immediately evident in this third competitive philatelic exhibition, which saw the participation of no fewer than 12 nations from North Africa, the Mediterranean basin and the Middle East, namely: Algeria, Croatia, Egypt, Jordan, Greece, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sudan and the UK as well as the presence of three collections from the USA.



Digital Innovative Center “Creativa; venue of the event

The event took place from 16 to 19 September at the Digital Innovative Centre “Creativa, a beautiful 19th-century building that was formerly home to a brewery (Stella brand) and was subsequently nationalised and converted by the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (MCIT) with the aim of transforming historic heritage sites and university spaces into cutting-edge technology centres to support start-ups, students and freelancers in the digital age.

Given the nature of the building, the exhibition was held across various levels, in spacious, well-lit rooms which allowed visitors to fully appreciate the collections of the earliest Egyptian stamps as well as the various postal routes, including the fascinating ones along the Nile.

Recent Exhibitions

The opening ceremony, presided over by Hany Salam (pictured on the right in Spalle's photograph), was attended by representatives of the Egyptian institutions, in the following order:

- Prince Mohamed Aly: Grandson of King Farouk of Egypt (at center),
- Ahmed Nazif: Ex-prime minister of Egypt (on the left),
- Ahmed Amawi: Head of The Customs Authority,
- Hisham Shawky: Governor of Rotary District,
- Gehan Zaky: Director of the Egypt Postal Museum,
- Sayed Toman: Vice President of the Egypt Postal Authority,
- Kamal Gaber: Head of Exhibits Management at the Customs Authorities

Unlike at traditional events, there were no ceremonial speeches; instead, after the ribbon-cutting, Hany guided the dignitaries through the three exhibition halls, presenting the most significant collections, comprising 356 frames, 111 exhibits and 10 literary works, representing 10 exhibition categories.

The Egyptian Post Office was present at the event and, on the day of the opening, issued a commemorative stamp to mark the centenary of the first Egyptian airmail stamp; pictured below is Hany Salam, President of the Egyptian Federation



In the image on the left is the Egyptian Post Office stand. In the middle Hany Salam and Mr Sayed Toman – Vice-President of the Egyptian Postal Authority – are showing the design of the stamp issued, cancelled with a commemorative postmark bearing the date of issue. The image on the right shows Marion Boyoumi, daughter of a renowned Egyptian philatelist, who, at philatelic events, volunteers at the Egyptian Federation's stand.

The event also featured a number of seminars; the first, by Bill Hedely on 'Venetian communications with Egypt in the late Middle Ages', was delivered by the author, as Bill's flight from London had to return in a hurry due to an engine failure – the flight was subsequently cancelled, making it impossible for him to attend the event. Consequently, the seminar was delivered by the author, who invited those present to attend the 'original' seminar at the RPSL on 8 October 2026.



In the picture participant at Oral Avci's seminar

The event also included a number of seminars; the first, by Bill Hedely on 'Venetian communications with Egypt in the late Middle Ages', was delivered by the author, as Bill's flight from London had to return in a hurry due to an engine failure; consequently, as the flight was cancelled, he was unable to attend the event. Consequently, the seminar was delivered by the author, who invited those present to attend the 'original' seminar at the RPSL on 8 October 2026.

The second seminar was given by Julij Maras on 'Rules and Regulations of Thematic Philatelic Exhibits', and the third was given by Oral Avci on his book, published by POST HORN magazine, entitled 'Mail and Might: The Struggle for Supremacy in Ottoman Jerusalem', which was entered into the competition and won a LargeGold Medal.)

The event concluded with the jury's feedback to the collectors in attendance and the awards dinner, which was held at the Diplomatic Club in Cairo, where the medals were presented; in keeping with tradition, the Grand Prix was awarded to Mr. Atef Saruan with the collection "EGYPT 1866-1867, The First Issue



The image shows the award consignment to Mr. Atef Saruan by Ahny Salam

Finally, it is worth noting that on the day before the event opened, once the counting had been completed, the officials and their companions were taken into the desert to visit a traditional village; below is a photograph of the group.



64 National Philatelic Exhibition: EXFILNA 2026

Rafael Acuña Castillo. Secretary General. FESOFI writes:



The 64th National Philatelic Exhibition – EXFILNA 2026 – Spanish Philatelic Championship, will be held in Mérida from September 23 to 27, 2026, at the city's Conference Center. It will be organized by the Spanish Federation of Philatelic Societies and the State Postal and Telegraph Company (Correos), with the collaboration of the Mérida City Council, the National Mint and Stamp Factory (FNMT-RCM), the Regional Government of Extremadura, the Provincial Council of Badajoz, ANFIL, EDIFIL, the Extremadura Philatelic Federation, and the Mérida Philatelic Group.

This year the Argentine Philatelic Federation (FAEF) has been invited to participate, with its president, Mr. Miguel Casielles, attending as a judge and commissioner, who is also the president of the Inter-American Philatelic Federation (FIAF).

According to the list of exhibitors and exhibits presented, the total number of collections is 86: Championships Class: 4 collections, Traditional Philately: 10 collections, Postal History B-1 (until 1875, pre-UPU): 16 collections, Postal History B-2 (1875-1945): 7 collections, Postal History B-3 (after 1945): 1 collection, Thematic Philately: 10 collections, Aerophilately: 1 collection, Maximaphily: 6 collections, Revenue: 8 collections, Open Class Philately: 3 collections, Literature K1 (Books, manuals, studies): 3, Literature K2 (Catalogues): 5, Literature K3 (Periodicals and articles): 3, Postcards: 1 collection, Other Collecting: 7 collections, Invited Youth Collection: 1 collection

School Competition A Stamp for Mérida

Convened for all public and private schools in Extremadura within the program of events of EXFILNA 2026 by the State Society Correos y Telégrafos in collaboration with FESOFI through the Youth Commission, it is estimated that it has had a participation of 1,500 students of Primary and Compulsory Secondary Education, establishing prizes in both categories.

The jury, made up of members of the Teaching Staff of the FESOFI Youth Commission, determined that Pablo Federico Benitez Cabecera from CEIP SUÁREZ SOMONTE in Mérida was the winner of the Children's Category (1st to 6th grade of Primary School), and Rodrigo Granja Gallardo from COLEGIO SANTISIMA TRINIDAD in Plasencia was the winner of the Youth Category (1st to 4th year of Secondary School). According to the competition rules, winners and finalists will see their drawings turned into personalized A-rate stamps, valid for national mail up to 20 grams, and will receive as a prize offered by Correos a sheet of 25 stamps and Correos products.

CONCURSO ESCOLAR UN SELLO PARA MÉRIDA



EDUCACIÓN PRIMARIA GANADOR



Pablo Federico Benitez Cabecera
3º Educación Primaria
CEIP Suárez Somonte
MÉRIDA

FINALISTAS

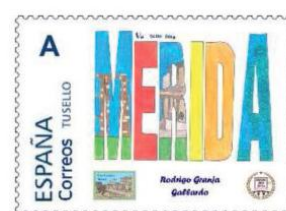


Kairel Alioska Díaz Cárdenas
6º Educación Primaria
CEIP Donoso Cortés
DON BENITO



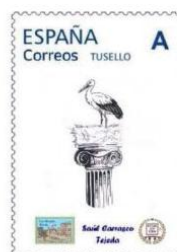
Mario Mera Valadés
6º Educación Primaria
CEIP Ntra. Sra. de la Asunción
LOBÓN

EDUCACIÓN SECUNDARIA GANADOR



Rodrigo Granja Gallardo
3º Educación Secundaria
Colegio Santísima Trinidad
PLASENCIA

FINALISTAS



Saúl Carrasco Tejeda
3º Educación Secundaria
IES SAN ROQUE
BADAJOZ



Alba de la Cruz Hornero
4º Educación Secundaria
COLEGIO FEC NTRA SRA DE
GUADALUPE
MÉRIDA

(Las imágenes de los TUSELLO son simulaciones a la espera de aprobación por Correos)

The Winners are:

Primary School: "The Fifty-Year-Old's Journey" and "A Dinosaur in Your Mailbox"

Secondary: Pen drive and mobile phone charger organizer with a stamp

Finalists

Primary School: "A Dinosaur in Your Mailbox"

Secondary: Star Wars USB drive and notepad

The winning and finalist schools will receive a Correos Annual Book with all the stamps issued in 2025 and a sheet of 25 stamps from the winning student at their school. The presentation of diplomas and prizes to winners and finalists will take place at an official event on Saturday, September 26th at a time to be determined at the Mérida Congress Palace, where all children and young people will also be able to collect free of charge "MY FIRST STAMP ALBUM" with issues dedicated to Extremadura, see the exhibition and participate in the activities of YOUTH DAY.

Most relevant and representative aspects of the **Program**, ensuring a comprehensive view of the key moments of EXFILNA 2026:

September 24, Thursday.

Official Opening of EXFILNA 2026

10:00 a.m.

Presentation of Commemorative Issues by Correos and FESOFI

12:00 p.m.

Temple of Diana

September 26, Saturday.

Award Ceremony and EXFILNA'26 Medals

9:00 p.m.

Hotel Illunion Merida Palace

Various days and times

Historical Mail Activities and Demonstrations

Mail by balloon, on foot, on horseback, by pigeon, and by bicycle

Conferences, Talks, and Round Tables on Philately

These include book presentations, talks on postal history, fiscal and modern philately, and debates on the future of philatelic literature. They are fundamental for knowledge exchange and the development of the philatelic community.

SRBIJAFILA XVI

Belgrade, 7–11 October 2026



We are delighted to announce that preparations for SRBIJAFILA XVI are entering their final stage. From 7 to 11 October, Belgrade will become a meeting place for philatelists from Serbia, the region and around the world.

Almost 400 frames with more than 100 exhibits from 11 countries

Exhibitors will come from Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Slovenia, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Romania, China, Israel, Denmark and the United Kingdom. The exhibits are arranged in 10 competitive and 5 honorary classes.

POST OF SERBIA is the General Sponsor of the exhibition.

Special Display – Alexander Boricic (1948–2026)

A special place in the Honorary Class is reserved for a display dedicated to Alexander Boricic (1948–2026), featuring nine of his outstanding exhibits.

One of Serbia's most distinguished philatelists and exhibitors, Boricic left a deep mark on Serbian philately. His interests were broad, ranging from postal history and postage due mail to wartime mail, aviation and airmail.

Through these nine exhibits, visitors will be able to explore more than two centuries of the postal history of Serbia, Montenegro and Yugoslavia, together with different areas of his research and collecting.

Thanks to the generosity of his family, this valuable display offers a unique opportunity to see a significant part of his decades-long work and dedication to philately in one place.

This is more than a selection of valuable material: it is a tribute to a man, his work and his passion for philately.



A Guarda Becomes the National Capital of Philately with the Arrival of FILATEM 2026

The town of A Guarda (Pontevedra) will host a new edition of the National Thematic Philately Exhibition from October 8 to 12. This unmissable event breaks participation records this year and features the highly anticipated debut of a youth section.

The world of collecting has a major date marked on the calendar. From **October 8 to 12**, the coastal town of A Guarda (Pontevedra) will transform into the epicenter of Spanish philately with the celebration of **FILATEM 2026**. Jointly organized by the Sociedade Filatélica e Numismática Guardesa and the Spanish Federation of Philatelic Societies (FESOFI), the exhibition is backed by the Deputación de Pontevedra, the Concello de A Guarda, the Galician Federation (FEGASOFI), and Correos (the Spanish postal service).



The grand official opening will take place on **Thursday, October 8, at 12:00 PM**, marking the start of a fascinating cultural journey through history, art, and science captured on tiny, perforated pieces of art.

High-Level Exhibits and New Generations

This edition of FILATEM stands out for gathering an impressive variety of themes competing at the highest level. In total, the exhibition will host 18 adult collections. Among them, the Official Class features José Ramón Rumoroso Rodríguez (Asturian Federation) with his display “From Wood to Steel. From Sail to Nuclear Propulsion: Navigation Since the 18th Century,” spanning a total of 8 display frames.

In the Competition Class, the jury and visitors will enjoy an astonishing thematic showcase: from the mysteries of cartography and the history of Habsburg Spain, to collections dedicated to wine, cinema, field hockey, the digital revolution, Antarctica, and the Camino de Santiago routes in Galicia.

However, the big news this year is the debut of the youth section, which enters the scene with 18 collections divided into three age groups. These promising young philatelists—many from the youth academy of the Sociedad Filatélica de Miño—will surprise the public with collections centered on dinosaurs, winter sports, the violin, firefighting, and the world of motorsports.

A Program Packed with Events and Renowned Authors

FILATEM 2026 goes far beyond the exhibition space. The organization has put together an intense schedule of events to bring the town to life over the five-day period:

- **Official Acts:** On Thursday the 8th, the official FILATEM stamp will be unveiled, while on Saturday the 10th, the commemorative postmark and the “Tu Sello” (custom stamp) dedicated to Celso García de la Riega will be presented.



- Education and Outreach: Friday the 9th will be highlighted by local school visits, bringing this hobby closer to younger generations. On Sunday morning, October 11, the panel discussion “How to Improve Our Thematic Philately Collection Through the Score Sheet” will offer a golden opportunity for exhibitors.
- The Main Event: Sunday evening will bring one of the most emotional moments of the event with the presentation of the FEGASOFI Gold Medal for Philatelic Merit to José A. Gándara Rodríguez, leading up to the traditional Awards Dinner (Cena de Palmarés).

To top off this exceptional event, the exhibition will feature an official collector’s catalog backed by an Honorary Committee chaired by the King and Queen of Spain. The publication will include articles written by highly reputable cultural and philatelic figures such as Rafael Acuña and Paco Piniella.

A Guarda is ready to stamp its mark on a historic edition. The exhibition and its activities will offer the perfect plan for the October long weekend, blending culture, history, and the unmistakable charm of Galician heritage.



The Portuguese Philately Federation, in partnership with the Vale do Neiva Collectors Association, will hold the 30th National Philatelic Exhibition, “VIANNA 2026,” from October 13 to 18, 2026, at Viana do Castelo Cultural Centre.

This exhibition is open to all philatelic classes and is supported by CTT - Correios de Portugal SA, and Viana do Castelo City Council.

It will be the highlight of Portuguese philately this year, bringing together philatelists, exhibitors, and speakers, where several new literary works of great interest to philatelists will also be presented.

ITALIA 2026

CONTINUES TO LEAD THE WAY IN CULTURAL, DIGITAL ... AND CULINARY INNOVATION!

Bruno Crevato-Selvaggi RDP writes:



We have already looked at some of the key strengths of **Italia 2026**, the philatelic literature exhibition to be held in Rome from 15 to 18 October 2026.

For example, the strong focus on **digital innovation**. This doesn't mean 'download the PDF, print it, fill it in by hand, scan it and send it', but a proper online form. Go to italia2026.filatelia.info and select 'Application Form' to see for yourself.

Furthermore, the registration fee can be paid without even getting up from your chair, simply via PayPal. Don't have a PayPal account? No problem – you can pay with your credit card via PayPal. In short, anyone wishing to take part can simply sit comfortably at their desk, spend a few minutes on

the application, and then carry on writing their next book or uploading content to their website.

By the way: the entry fee is really low: €50, not the \$100–\$120 that some recent FIP exhibitions have charged...

Furthermore: in the '**Digital Media**' classes, we accept everything. Not just websites, but also YouTube channels, Instagram pages, podcasts, Wikipedia pages, blogs, and so on. In short, we are open to the whole vast world of digital innovation and in step with the times. We believe that philately, too, must adapt to these new tools; of course, we are still in the experimental phase, but we have always enjoyed experimenting, ever since the days of Italia 2018. So, if you have a new digital idea for your philatelic themes, now is the time.

And websites: those of collectors, scholars and associations, but also of professionals, experts and auction houses.

We're digital behind the scenes too: **the Jury doesn't just work in Rome** (that would be impossible, given the sheer number of entries) but has been working remotely for some time now. Many participants have sent PDFs of books and magazines (we guarantee the highest level of security, confidentiality and deletion after the exhibition) so that the jurors can review them at their leisure.

And finally, as you know, there is the major innovation of the **online catalogue** – a **very first** in the history of philatelic exhibitions.

All entries are added to the website's catalogue as and when they are received. Go to the link italia2026.filatelia.info; select «Exhibit» and then a class. For each entry, there is an image of the hard-copy cover or, for digital entries, of the homepage. Clicking on the title takes you to the details page: all the technical specifications, the prices and where to order the entry are listed. In this way, participants can effectively promote their work, and users can access a range of useful information about those entries that interest them most.

But it's not just about digital innovation: there's cultural innovation too. Italia 2026 will be an exhibition featuring a rich programme of cultural philatelic events: presentations, conferences and seminars. Here is the list.

16 October: **FEPA Seminars**, focused on Finnish Postal Museum and Prato Museum of Postal History

16-18 October: **Post Horn Display**. The international Magazine and Publisher specialising in postal history presents its publications.

17 October: Joint meeting between Accademia Italiana di Filatelia e di Storia Postale (the Italian Academy) and Académie de Philatélie (the French Academy). This is the programme (The lectures will be in French or Italian):

Dominique Hardy, Les cachets de cire de la poste française en Italie pendant la période napoléonienne

Vittorio Morani, Le relazioni postali tra la Francia e la Toscana 1836-1862

José Antonio Herraiz, La voie d'Oloron. Un itinéraire peu courant entre l'Espagne et l'Europe

Lorenzo Carra, I rapporti postali del Lombardo Veneto con la Francia 1851-1857

Carlos Malpica, Affranchissement mixte GB-PE des lettres de Lima à Gênes de l'archive Tommaso Valle (1875-1878)

Aniello Veneri, La ripresa dei collegamenti aerei dall'Italia dopo la fine della Seconda Guerra Mondiale.

17 October: **Federico Borromeo**, The Borromeo's Philatelic Library

17 October: **Jonas Hällström - Dieter Michelson**, Catalogue of Wolfgang Maassen's Philatelic Library.

17. October: POST HORN Books presentation

Oral Avci - Mail and Might: the struggle for supremacy in Ottoman Jerusalem 1872-1917

Guido Morolli - The Postal History of Romagna: 1859-1860

Federico Borromeo - Adhesive wafers: 1820-1860

Giorgio Battioni - The Sovereign Military Order of Malta: history, traditions...postal services

And that's not all. There's **culinary innovation** too. On Saturday evening, 17 October, there will be the Palmares dinner, also at the hotel, and the menu will feature traditional **Roman cuisine**. I'm setting it out here, but please bear in mind that some of the dish names are quite specific, and the translations only give a rough idea of what's on offer.

Aperitif. Bollicine del Lazio, supplì gourmet al telefono, mini maritozzo salato con mousse di mortadella e granella di pistacchio (Local sparkling wine and traditional appetisers).

Starter. Carciofo alla romana rivisitato, crema di pecorino romano, riduzione alla mentuccia e pane croccante (artichokes, traditional local cheese, mint, crusty bread).

First course. Risotto gran carnaroli alla carbonara, mantecato, guanciale croccante, cialda di pecorino e pepe nero (Carbonara risotto with roman bacon).

Main course. Suprema di pollo cotta a bassa temperatura, peperoni in tre consistenze (crema vellutata, falde arrostiti e polvere di peperone), patata fondente alle erbe mediterranee e fondo di cottura ristretto (Traditionally prepared chicken with potatoes, peppers and Mediterranean herbs).

Dessert. Semifreddo alla ricotta con cuore di visciole, croccante di mandorle e coulis ai frutti rossi (Ricotta semifreddo with a sour cherry centre, almond brittle and red berry coulis).

Wine, water.

Of course, there is also an alternative menu for those who have dietary requirements. There's still time to book rooms or the Palmares at: italia2026@filatelia.info. Anyway, **Italia 2026 continues to lead the way in cultural, digital and culinary innovation!**

TIMBRES PASSION National Competition

Timbres Passion 2026 in Hyères-les-Palmiers

<http://www.epy83400.fr/>

Pascal Bandry writes:

After Châlons-en-Champagne in 2024, Timbres-Passion is heading to the South of France. This biennial event will take place in Hyères-les-Palmiers, on the Var coast. It is a first for the organizing club, the *Entente Philatélique Hyéroise*, which is very proud to host the event with the support of the French Federation, the FFAP National Youth Council, and the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur-Corsica philatelic region.

From October 23th to 25th, 2026,

nearly a hundred exhibits will participate at the national level.

- **For young people:**
the French Youth Championship, the "Youth Discovery" category, the Pasteur Challenge, and the Da Vinci Trophy. Exhibitors from Spain will also participate.
- **Plus:**
the 3rd "Philamovie",
a national video competition themed around the hobby of philately and collecting.
- **French Championships for adults:**
Thematic Philately, Open Class, Postcards and Polar Philately.



TIMBRES PASSION



CHAMPIONNAT DE FRANCE DE PHILATELIE



LE TIMBRE CLASSIQUE



The Lebanese Association of Philately Organizes its First Competitive Exhibition

Bernardo Longo writes:

Following our debut philatelic exhibition in November 2025, the Lebanese Association of Philately (LAP) is launching its very first competitive event. Thanks to the vital leadership of our President, Bill Karam, and the operational support of Vice President Bernardo Longo together General Commissioner Badi Barcha, this exhibition is timed to celebrate Lebanon's Independence Day anniversary. To make the most of the venue, the event will focus exclusively on the One-Frame class, hosted at the Hotel Sofitel Le Gabriel in Beirut.

Around 30 philatelic dealers are expected to attend the event, which is primarily open to collectors from the Eastern Mediterranean region, specifically Egypt, Cyprus, Jordan, Greece, and Turkey. Italy and France have also received special invitations, though entries from other European and Middle Eastern nations are highly welcome as well.

The schedule kicks off on November 21st, with collection mounting starting at 9:00 AM, followed by the official opening ceremony by local authorities at 11:00 AM, before doors close at 7:00 PM.

The jury will begin their evaluation sessions during the first day and may continue into the morning of November 22nd. The official results will be posted by noon on the second day, with the exhibition closing at 7:00 PM, immediately followed by the Palmarès awards ceremony.

The exhibition categories are restricted to Traditional Philately, Postal History, and Thematic Philately, with entries limited to a single 16-page frame. Application forms must be submitted by September 30th. Additionally, exhibitors are required to provide a PDF copy of their collection by October 20th; this will be used for archiving purposes and to allow eventually remote judges to participate via videoconference.

We are incredibly proud of this second major milestone for our young federation. It truly reflects our deep passion and determination to grow within the international philatelic community. Finally, we would like to express our gratitude to Claudio Manzati, who attended our inaugural event last year as a FEPA representative, and give a special thanks to Bill Headly for his steadfast support in helping us launch this exciting new venture.



BEIRUT

2nd PHILATELIC EXHIBITION

and 1st "One Frame Challenge"

معرض بيروت الثاني للطوابع



21-22

NOVEMBER 2026

11:00 AM to 7:00 PM



Hotel Sofitel
Le Gabriel

Avenue de L'Indépendance,
Achrafieh, Beirut, Lebanon



Philabrig 26

Jean Louis Emmerger writes:

The « National Day of the Stamp » (Tag der Briefmarke, Journée du Timbre) 2026 in Switzerland will take place in Brig/Brigue (Wallis/Valais) from 19th to 21th November 2026. The philatelic exhibition will present numerous excellent collections in the competition level, historical pre-philately collections in the Court of Honor as well as collections shown without competition (just for fun). It is organized by the Philatelic Society of Brig with the support of the Swiss Federation of philatelic societies.



The Swiss National Post will have a commercial booth and will sell its « special souvenir-sheet », as done each year, using also a special postal cachet at the temporary post office in the hall. The Post of Liechtenstein will also be present and will sell special products (a special souvenir-sheet and a special cover) at this Exhibition. More than 10 dealers will propose their philatelic material to the visitors.

The Organistors are awaiting visitors from allover Switzerland, and also from France (via Geneva and Lausanne) and Italy (via the Simplon Railways Line).

The entrance is free and the exhibition catalog is given free to all visitors ! Children are welcome and will get free stamps as a starter !

The nice city of Brig can be reached easily by train from Lausanne, Berne, and from Italy (Simplon Railway Line), or by car via Sion. The exhibition will take place in the Simplonhalle, at a few minutes walk from the Main Railway Station.

Information: www.philabrig26.ch

7th Journée Philatélique Romande

During *Philabrig 26*, the collectors and philatelists from the french speaking part of Switzerland (the « Romandie ») will gather together on the 20 and 21 November for their *7th Journée Philatélique Romande*, with two conferences given by two specialized philatelists.



The program can be asked to Jean-Louis Emmenegger, Chief Editor of the philatelic magazine *Rhône Philatélie* and organisator of this Philatelic Journée : jl.emmenegger@gmail.com

Information: www.rhonephilatelie.ch

MonacoPhil 2026

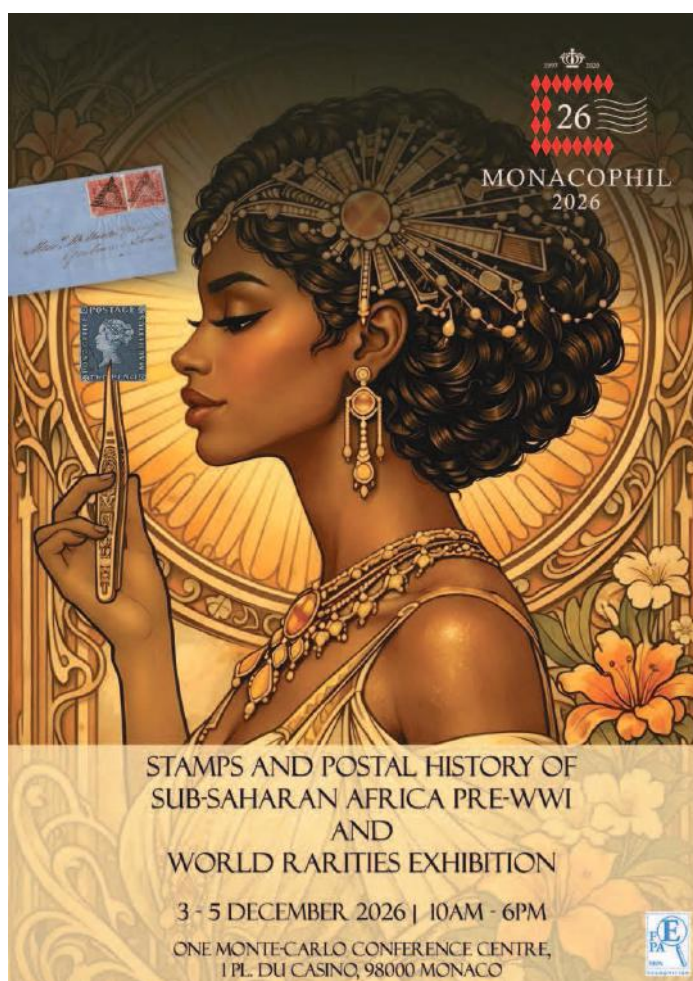
Axel Kendrick writes:

This year's edition of MonacoPhil (3-5 December) will once again be held at the state-of-the-art One Monte-Carlo Conference and Exhibition Centre on Casino Square, only minutes' walk from the Hotel Hermitage and Hotel de Paris and perfectly located in the heart of Monaco for one of the leading events in international philately.

Organised by the Club de Monte-Carlo in partnership with the Office des Emissions Timbres-Poste (OETP) and the Musée des Timbres at Monnaies, MonacoPhil 2026 will, for the first time, incorporate its leading trade show, along with exhibitions of the 100 World Rarities and this year's thematic exhibition, of the Stamps and Postal History of Sub-Saharan Africa up to the First World War, all under one roof. The 100 Rarities will be showcased in spectacular, custom-built A0 wooden frames provided by Prestige Philately Prague, and now generously 'adopted' by members of the Club de Monte-Carlo, to give some of the most outstanding stamps and postal history a fitting platform for this prestigious and exclusive exhibition. As ever, some of the most outstanding private and institutional collections will kindly contribute some of their finest philatelic pieces. As always, the Club de Monte-Carlo is hugely grateful and honoured to host the collections of His Serene Highness, Prince Albert II of Monaco, and His Majesty King Charles III, each of whom have once more provided some spectacular rarities for the exhibition that forms the core of the Club de Monte-Carlo and MonacoPhil and has done so since their foundation in 1997.

We have also expanded the area dedicated to the broader exhibition, moving to the Salle des Arts to accommodate nearly three hundred frames of the finest stamps, postal history and historical documents of Sub-Saharan Africa from the pre-philatelic era through to the beginning of the First World War. This fantastic exhibition, the largest of its kind ever formed, will host some of the most well-researched, all-encompassing and award-winning studies of the various issuing authorities from the region, along with some of the outstanding rarities from African philately.

The exhibition gives full attention to the geography of the continent, ranging from the Gold Coast, Gambia, and the Nigerias, through the Heart of Darkness and into Gabon, the Congo and Cameroon, right through Somaliland, Djibouti and Abyssinia to the Horn of Africa, and down through Angola, Mozambique and the KUT, to the Cape of Good Hope and extending to the Islands of Africa, with plenty of exhibits covering everywhere in between. We also have a comprehensive treatment of every major colonial power, including the British, Portuguese, French, German and Belgian administrations, along with some of the lesser-known colonial enterprises including the Danish and Dutch Gold Coast and the Norwegian Missionary Mail of Madagascar. Following on from 2024's success, we are also including a short but no less powerful overview of the Banknotes of the French Colonies, showcasing exceptional



designs from the same period and often the same printers, which we hope will intrigue and engage philatelists of the Sub-Sahara. Once more, we are especially grateful and thankful for the contribution of His Majesty King Charles III, who has provided a section covering the stamps of Northern and Southern Nigeria from the Royal Collection.

The exhibition will be accompanied, as always, by an exceptional catalogue showcasing the major highlights from each exhibitor and providing historical and philatelic context for the exhibits. Additionally, the catalogue shall open with a selection of longer-form articles, delving into overall philatelic developments of the Portuguese, British, Belgian and German philatelic administrations, authored by the exhibition commissioners Luis Frazao and Jan Berg, along with contributions from Vincent Schouberechts and Eric Coulton. We hope that this major exhibition

of Sub-Saharan postal material will be of great interest to both newcomers and seasoned philatelists alike, and that those of you who are unable to visit the principality to see the frames in person will be able to enjoy them from home through the catalogue. The catalogue will also feature some brief video introductions, accessible via QR code, from our exhibitors, giving a lively overview of the highlight pieces from their exhibits. We hope these 'video tours' will give readers a novel insight into the exhibits before visiting the frames, or as accompaniment to the catalogue write-ups if they are unable to attend in person.

President of the Club de Monte-Carlo, Olivier D. Stocker, said: "I am so thrilled by what our organising team has managed to line up for the Sub-Saharan Africa exhibition. our approach was quite radical. We collectively identified who had the best-in-class collection in each area we wanted to cover. We approached these collectors and to our delight almost all of them responded positively immediately. It will be the best exhibition of its type ever".

As ever, the exhibitions will take place alongside a thriving trade show, with the leading international dealers and auction houses once again being present at MonacoPhil, along with a selection of world post offices and international philatelic organisations. A special commemorative bloc and stamp will be available once again, courtesy of our colleagues and partners at the OETP, and will be available for purchase at the show, alongside the



The state-of-the-art One Monte-Carlo Conference and Exhibition Centre, venue for MonacoPhil 2024 and 2026



His Serene Highness Prince Albert II of Monaco and President of the Club de Monte-Carlo, Olivier D. Stocker, tour the A0 Rarities Frames at MonacoPhil 2026

exhibition catalogues of 100 Rarities and Sub-Saharan Africa. MonacoPhil's unrivalled social programme shall, once again, host as its centrepiece, a Gala Dinner held in the presence of His Serene Highness Prince Albert II of Monaco, in the wonderful Salle Empire of the Hotel de Paris, a truly magnificent venue for one of the major events in world philately. In addition, the Welcome Cocktail, generously hosted by the OETP, shall take place at the Troparium of the Rainier III Auditorium, and our Closing Dinner, accompanied with an exciting charity auction, will conclude the show in the Salle Eiffel of the Hotel Hermitage.

With all this packed in, we hope the prospect of a winter's philatelic celebration on the French Riviera appeals to you, and that you can join us from 3-5 December, where we shall be delighted to welcome you to the Principality.

For updates on the programme, please visit www.monacophil.com or contact Secretary General of the Club de Monte-Carlo, Axel Kendrick, at axel@monacophil.com

Praga, a Tradition that Continues (Part II)

Jiří Kraus writes:

In our previous issue, we explored the origins of Prague's exhibition tradition. This follow-up continues the story by exploring the events and milestones that have shaped Prague's exhibitions since 1938.

Praga 1988

The PRAGA 1988 World Stamp Exhibition, held under the patronage of the FIP and the auspices of President Gustáv Husák, took place from 26 August to 4 September 1988. President Husák also opened the exhibition. It was held at traditional venues. The exhibition's slogan was 'Postage Stamps and Philately

– A World of Knowledge and Peace'. A total of 928 exhibits were evaluated in the competition classes, the majority of which were in territorial philately (239). In the literature class, 177 titles were evaluated. The exhibition featured exhibits from 55 countries.

The Grand Prize of the exhibition, donated by the President of the Republic, was awarded to A. Fillinger (France) for his exhibit on the French army from the time of Louis XIV to Charles X, while the Grand International Prize went to Z. Mikulski (Switzerland). The legendary 'Mauritius' once again attracted particular attention from the general public. Attendance exceeded 200,000 people.

Praga
88



Two of the many sheets issued to commemorate PRAGA 1988



PRAGA 1988 became part of the life of Prague, even appearing in shop windows across the city.



The Industrial Palace, one of the principal venues

The exhibits were evaluated by an international jury consisting of 53 members and 13 apprentices from 36 FIP member countries. The jury president was Ladislav Dvořáček. The evaluation was carried out in accordance with the general and special regulations of the FIP, which were newly binding at the time. Following the exhibition, the 57th FIP Congress took place in Prague from 5 to 7 September 1988.



The ticket granted access to all exhibition venues and featured a motif from the Prague Fountains sheet.

Praga 1998

The PRAGA 1998 International Stamp Exhibition took place from 10 to 13 September 1998. It was held under the patronage of FEPA and recognised by FIP. It was held in the renovated Trade Fair Palace, with the literature class taking place in the Postal Museum.

A total of 369 exhibits were evaluated in the competition classes. Although it was a European exhibition, exhibits from 30 countries, including Canada and the United States, were on display.

Knud Mohr (Denmark) won the Grand International Prize for his exhibit "Copenhagen", while Johan L. Klein (Netherlands) won the Grand National Prize for Czechoslovakia 1918–38. Eight exhibits were displayed in the Court of Honour, three of which were dedicated to Czechoslovak stamps.



The exhibition was opened in a ceremonial opening



A combined ticket for both exhibition venues: the Trade Fair Palace and the Postal Museum



Children's Post

These were evaluated by an international jury of 24 members and four apprentices, with Ladislav Dvořáček serving as honorary president and Alan K. Huggins as president of the jury. The exhibition took place in a different socioeconomic environment to PRAGA 1988, as reflected in its scope and length. Nevertheless, it attracted approximately 45,000 visitors over the course of four days.

Praga 2008

The eighth Prague World Exhibition PRAGA 2008 took place from 12 to 14 September 2008 at the Industrial Palace on the Exhibition Grounds and at the Postal Museum. The exhibition was organised to celebrate the 90th anniversary of the issue of the first Czechoslovak stamps, the establishment of the Postal Museum, and the 15th anniversary of the establishment of the Czech Republic. The event also included a philatelic fair.



The Industrial Palace: Exhibition Frames and Hall of Fame

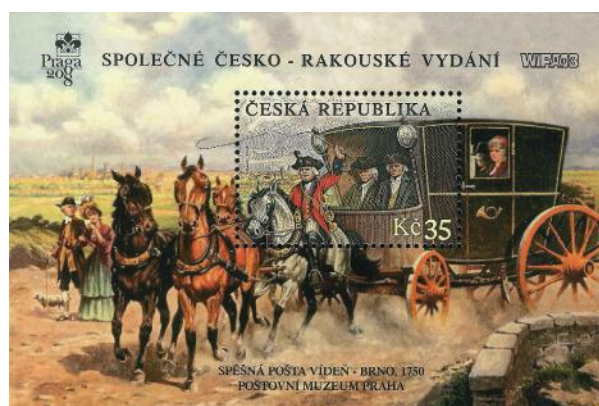
It was held under the patronage of the FIP and the President of the Czech Republic, Václav Klaus. Competition exhibits were brought from 60 countries. A total of 512 exhibits were on display, including traditional philately (155 exhibits), postal history (158 exhibits), literature (156 exhibits), one-frame exhibits (43 exhibits), and other exhibits outside the competition. The exhibition's high standard was evidenced by the awarding of 22 large gold medals and 90 gold medals. Three exhibits scored 97 points each:

- **Hugo Goeggel** (Colombia) – “Classic Ecuador, the First Stamp Issue. 1865–1872”;
- **Harvey Mirsky** (USA) – “The U.S. 1847 Issue: Stamps that changed the System”; and
- **Knut Heister** (Germany) – “Venezuela: Classical Postal History (1790–1880)” (which also won the main prize of the exhibition).

The most successful Czech exhibitor was Otto Grosz with 91 points for Czechoslovakia 1918–1939, closely followed by Miloš Červinka with 90 points for his exhibit “Poštovní historie Děčínska/History of Postal Services in the Děčín Region”. The Court of Honour displayed extraordinary rarities from Queen Elizabeth II of The Royal Philatelic Collection, including the Blue Mauritius and a ten-block sheet of the world's first stamp, used on the day of its issue. Access was restricted by strict security measures, with waiting times of up to four hours.

The exhibits were evaluated by an international jury of 34 members from 28 countries, led by Joseph Wolff (Honorary President of the FIP) and Lumír Brendl. The exhibition offered a rich programme of events, including balloon and stagecoach mail, children's mail and social events. Despite lasting only three days, the exhibition was visited by around 45,000 people and received positive reviews from the trade press.

www.praga2008.cz



A joint Czech-Austrian issue commemorating the PRAGA 2008 and WIPA 2008 exhibitions

Praga 2018

The ninth PRAGA 2018 World Exhibition took place from 15 to 18 August 2018 at the Clarion Congress Hotel in Prague. For the first time ever, the exhibition and hotel sections were held in the same building. Held to mark the 100th anniversary of the establishment of the Czechoslovak Republic, the exhibition took place under the patronage of the FIP and the President of the Republic.

Competition exhibits came from 69 countries. A total of 389 exhibits were displayed on approximately 1,500 frames. The majority of these were in postal history (113), traditional philately (89) and literature (116). Thirty-eight large gold medals and 64 gold medals were awarded, confirming the exhibition's high professional standard.

Joseph Hackmey was awarded the Grand Prix International for his exhibit, "Classic Switzerland" and Vít Vaníček was awarded the Grand Prix National for his exhibit, "Postal

WORLD STAMP EXHIBITION



PRAGA
2018



Gala dinner (ceremonial opening)



Palmares

History of Czech Lands (from the Beginning until 1867)". The jury comprised 37 members from 24 countries, chaired by Eliahu Weber (Israel).

The Court of Honour featured an extraordinary collection of Mauritius "Post Office" stamps – a total of four items, including the Bombay Cover. Around 30,000 people visited the exhibition over the four-day period. Despite initial concerns about holding a world exhibition in a hotel, it was very well reviewed, mainly thanks to the quality of the exhibits, the Court of Honour, and the successful guided tour concept.

www.praga2018.cz

Praga 2028



The PRAGA exhibitions are a unique phenomenon in the world of philately. Since 1938, they have reflected the history of their time, changes in philately and the development of exhibition standards. However, they have always shared a common goal: to offer collectors, experts and the general public the very best in terms of top-quality exhibits, extraordinary collections and opportunities for international meetings.



Industrial Palace - the venue for PRAGA 2028



The beautifully restored interior

This extraordinary tradition will continue with the tenth PRAGA exhibition, to be held from 22 to 26 March 2028 at the Industrial Palace in Prague. Key chapters in the history of world philately were written here – world exhibitions under the patronage of the FIP were held in 1962, 1968, 1978, 1988 and 2008. Returning to this iconic location therefore has significant symbolic and prestigious value.

The exhibition is expected to cover most exhibition classes and will feature approximately 2,500 frames. A notable additional feature will be the modernised exhibition area, which combines historical architecture with contemporary exhibition standards. A separate space will also be reserved for dealers, who will find ideal conditions for presenting material to collectors from around the world.

PRAGA 2028 aims to be a worthy continuation of the famous series of world exhibitions and a lively forum for contemporary philately, offering inspiration, professional exchange, discovery and business opportunities. It thus continues a story that began in 1938 and remains alive even after nine decades.

Join us in Prague and become part of the next chapter in the proud tradition of PRAGA.

We look forward to welcoming you to Prague in March 2028.

www.praga2028.cz

PRATO, The 4th International Conference on Postal History

Deborah Cecchi, 'Aldo Cecchi' Institute of Postal Historical Studies, Vice Director writes:

It was very hot last June in Prato, Tuscany, Italy. Not just in Prato, of course, but across much of the world, as we have all experienced. Fortunately, in Prato, the participants at the 4th International Conference on Postal History between Multidisciplinary and Diachronic Perspectives, held from 18 to 23 June and organised by the 'Aldo Cecchi' Institute of Postal Historical Studies, did not suffer too much: their interest in the topics discussed proved stronger.



Istituto di studi
storici postali
"Aldo Cecchi"

The conference had already been featured in the previous issue of FEPANews (see pp. 96-97), which also included a presentation by Bill Hedley on the Manifesto for the Statute of Postal History as a Field of Studies (see pp. 92-95).

We can now see that 35 specialists have arrived from 13 countries across Europe, the Americas and Asia, delivering presentations in Italian, French, English and Spanish, followed by question-and-answer sessions and in-depth discussions.

The Institute's director, Bruno Crevato-Selvaggi, stated: "Once again, the Institute has established itself as a global centre of excellence for the academic study of postal history, as demonstrated by the high level of academic participation from Europe, Asia and the Americas. We now have two objectives: to continue our work in the field of scientific research, and to further internationalise the Institute."

Indeed, research is ongoing, with monographs and the continuous publication of new documents on the website, and internationalisation is becoming increasingly widespread, with the scientific committee taking on an even more international character. But let's turn to the conference. In the last issue, we presented the abstract of the paper by Bill Hedley (FEPA) and Juraj Kittler (St Lawrence University, USA). Now, I shall present a few more abstracts, which reflect the variety of presentations, selecting in particular (though not exclusively) those that dealt with more philatelic topics.



Katerina Konstantinidou, *National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Greece*

A Singular Postal Experiment in the Kingdom of Morea

A modern postal organisation started very early in Italy and Germany, from the second half of the 15th century. These organisations could be public or left to private enterprise. A private organisation operated in Venice, the *Compagnia dei Corrieri*: it worked on the internal routes in the *Stato da terra* (land territories) and on long-distance journeys to Western Europe. In the *Stato da mar* (sea territories), however, the situation was different. At the end of the 17th century the conquest of the Kingdom of Morea, as Venice would ambitiously call its new possession, was accompanied by the Republic's determination to introduce new practices of governance and organisation of the peninsula. Among these innovations we also find the proposal by Colonel Alvise Rovelli to organise, at his own expense, and manage a postal service for the transport of letters, goods and passengers. It included cities in the Peloponnese such as Naples of Romania, Corinth and Patras, and was equipped with inns and stations to change horses. This is a unique example in the history of the Venetian *Stato da mar*, whilst the story of the project and its conclusion clearly illustrate the gap between the ambitions of the *Serenissima* and the limits of its capabilities.

Mohammad Abu Al Hasan, *German Maritime Museum - Leibniz Institute for Maritime History, Germany*

German Antarctic-Themed Postage Stamps: Visualizing National Presence, Science Diplomacy and Antarctic Engagement

German Antarctic-themed postage stamps, issued by East Germany, West Germany and post-reunification Germany between 1957 and 2025, serve as instruments of visual diplomacy and symbolic presence under the Antarctic Treaty System (ATS). Without territorial claims, Germany has used nationally issued stamps to project narratives of scientific legitimacy, geopolitical engagement and environmental responsibility within the continent's demilitarized and non-sovereign framework. This study analyses stamp designs- depicting research station, polar ships, explorers, wildlife and Treaty milestones as visual assertions of national presence and alignment with ATS norms. Emphasizing their role as state-sanctioned artefacts, the paper interprets these issues through the lenses of soft power, science diplomacy and visual geopolitics, arguing that stamps function as portable heritage narratives that legitimize Germany's Antarctic involvement. The evolution from Cold War symbolism to post-1990 environmental messaging reflects broader shifts in Antarctic politics. Based on philatelic evidence, institutional sources and treaty documentation, the study demonstrates how postage stamps, often overlooked in scholarly discourse, contribute to the cultural construction of Antarctic engagement. By foregrounding Germany's visual philatelic strategy, the article develops a new model for understanding how non-claimant states assert relevance and continuity in internationally governed spaces through symbolic media.

Michel Trentadue, *Université Paris Nanterre, France*

The 'Eyes of the Blockade' – The Postal Service in the Allied Embargo during the Great War

Postal censorship at the start of the Great War is aimed at preventing the disclosure of military secrets. It is not until 1915 that the French and British expand the use of this measure for economic purposes to monitor information useful to the embargo from enemy and neutral correspondence. The system envisaged by the Allies is based on the dominance of postal and telegraphic services that the British had developed in the 19th century. Conversely, the notions of monitoring, or even seizing, postal items contravene international law, which is developing at the same time. It is not until early 1916 that the War Office and the French General Staff impose their views through a fully-fledged military-administrative system of control. Control adapts to the events of 1917 and 1918, develops in the final two years of the conflict, and comes to an end with the signing of the peace treaties in 1919. The comparative study of the monitoring system addresses numerous issues: economic, legal, diplomatic, etc. Above all, it is a chapter in the history of the postal service. It constitutes military interference in the delivery of mail. This interference is nevertheless accepted by the postal services, which support the military apparatus in both countries. The imperatives of the conflict take precedence over the usual conduct of postal operations.



David Chilosì, *King's College London, UK*

A Tale of Two Revolutions. Postal Services in Italy from Renaissance to Unification

How did the development of postal networks compare between Italian regions from Renaissance to unification? We measure density of the postal network (postal stops and roads) and the speed and price of letters, drawing a broad range of primary sources (postal manuals, postal maps, administrative documents) analysed with GIS techniques, as well as thousands of observations from secondary literature on postal history, analysed econometrically. We find that the centre-north initially benefited more than the south from infrastructural developments spurred by the “postal revolution” of the Renaissance, but then the south caught up, at first quickly and then gradually, as network density in central-northern regions stagnated. Divergence resumed during the Risorgimento because the northwestern regions forged ahead with the onset of a second “communication revolution”.

Diane DeBlois & Robert Dalton Harris, *Independent Researchers, USA*

The Way Bill:

Key to a Model Bureaucracy for the New Nation

Benjamin Franklin, postmaster of Philadelphia in 1738, pioneered “way bills” in the colonies of British North America. He envisioned that such a fundamental element would accompany each mail, becoming the foundation for accounting and inspecting. The way bill was at the head of a systematic distribution of postal revenues for the commissions and contingent expenses of the official post offices as well as for remuneration of the private carriers. In 1794, the United States Post Office Department was fully fledged with the Franklin methods: a design for postages to balance expenses with net revenues for systematic growth of the mails and the nation. In the 1850s when prepayment of postages became mandatory, way bills, that were no longer necessary for the protection and collection of the revenues, were crucially retained for securing the transit of registered mail. But systematically ubiquitous way bills were systematically destroyed so that appreciating their power has lagged behind other considerations of United States postal history. A document for verifying the content of a shipment is as old as the Sumerians, but to use it competently for the management of a system required a bureaucracy of clerks.

Emory Earl Toops, *Independent Researcher, USA*

The 1961 Trucial States Issue:

Postal History and the Nexus of Politics, Business and Commerce

Unlike the glittering tourist destination of today's United Arab Emirates, the sheikdoms of the Trucial Coast in the early 1960s had a subsistence economy based on pearls, date palms, camels, fishing and smuggling. Literacy rates were low and tourism was not allowed. But Dubai was the commercial centre on the Trucial Coast and most mail was commercial. From 1948 to 1961, Dubai (which had the only post office for all the Trucial Coast sheikdoms), used surcharged British stamps without any indication of the name of the state. But faced with rising Arab nationalism, British postal officials prepared a new issue for general use throughout all the Trucial States that replaced the British monarch with designs representative of the area—the Palm Trees and Dhow issue of 1961, used only in Dubai from 7 January 1961 to 14 June 1963, although Trucial States stamps remained valid in independent Dubai until 30 September 1963. In most cases, the trading companies of that era still exist, and a study of Dubai's postal history for the period 1961–63 provides detailed information on the nature of trade. Thus, postal history also provides key social, cultural and economic context to statistical trade tables.

John Scott, *University of Reading, UK*

A Comparative Study of British and European Topographical Writing Paper 1830 to 1870

The thesis explores the development of topographical writing paper from its first appearance in Europe in the early 1830s until the advent of the postcard in the 1870s. The study concentrates on Great Britain and Ireland. When the Napoleonic Wars brought a temporary end to the Grand Tour in Europe, travellers were forced to explore the more distant parts of the United Kingdom. Their tours stimulated the publication of engraved guide books. It was such engravings which formed the first examples of topographical writing paper in Great Britain. Until the postal reforms of 1840, the format of writing paper was dictated by postal regulations. With the advent of the first machine-made gummed envelopes in the 1850s, writing paper became smaller, and so did the space for images. With the advent of uniform penny postage, and the development of a national railway network which enabled workers to travel to holiday resorts, the elaborate engravings had to give way to more modest illustrations which foreshadowed the picture postcards of the Edwardian era. The surviving examples may be the only still available visual record of buildings, places and people with their histories, but there are few institutional archives of such material. The research seeks to throw light on this neglected resource.

Seraphim Kirjuhin, *Universität Heidelberg, Germany*

History in Miniature: Commemorative Postage Stamps as Sites of Indo-Soviet Cold War Relations

This paper contends that commemorative postage stamps issued by India and the Soviet Union from the 1960s to the 1980s served as conveyors of messages of friendship and cooperation between the two states, while their visual language was embedded in historiographical-political narratives. Specifically, the ties between the two countries were framed in terms of a shared past and a stable alliance, centred around détente and disarmament amid Cold War tensions. The paper demonstrates that the projected narratives of an unbreakable Indo-Soviet bond both mirrored and simplified the complexities of the relationship's geopolitical realities. Commemorative postage stamps in the context of Indo-Soviet Cold War relations stand out because they were issued with both Indian and Soviet collectors in mind, thus engaging collectors in spreading state narratives. The interactions between Indian and Soviet philatelic societies further demonstrate that these historiographical-political messages circulated beyond official diplomatic channels. By treating commemorative postage stamps as a multisensory medium with agency, which not only conveyed state-approved messages but also shaped contemporaries' perceptions of Indo-Soviet relations, this paper argues that they remain a valuable resource for current scholars analysing the history of international relations.

Katarzyna Jarosz, *Uniwersytet Vizja w Wrocław, Poland*

Soviet Antarctica on Stamps and Postcards

Antarctica became an arena of Soviet activity during the Cold War, when the USSR established a network of permanent and seasonal research stations. Ant- arctic research occupied a visible place within Soviet state priorities, where polar science, logistics, and communication intersected with global rivalry and long- term interests in strategic knowledge under the Antarctic Treaty system. This paper examines Soviet Antarctic postcards and postage stamps from 1950s to the 1980s, treating them as elements of everyday postal communication through which Ant- arctic presence was made visible and politically legible. The analysed material documents specific “first” and founding events of Soviet Antarctic activity, as well as the penetration of the continental interior. These images emphasise extreme conditions, and distance from the coast, documenting the fact of reaching and sustaining a station in one of the most inaccessible environments on Earth. Stamps and postcards featuring long-range aircraft document the opening and maintenance of air connections between the Soviet Union and Antarctic stations. A number of Antarctic-themed stamp issues are linked to the state commemorative calendar. Antarctic exploration is thus inserted into official state chronology. The stamps document not only polar research but its incorporation into broader narratives promoted by the Soviet state.

Monica Farkas, *Universidad de Buenos Aires, Argentina – Universidad de la República, Uruguay*

Between ‘Gauchos’ and ‘State Artisans’: the Gauchitos Stamp as a Postal Emblem, Caught between Equestrian Iconography and Administrative Reform in Buenos Aires (1857)³²

In 1857, as part of the reorganization of the postal service following its separation from the Confederation, the province of Buenos Aires ordered the printing of a series of adhesive stamps known in philatelic circles as the “Gauchitos,” featuring a postman on horseback. Designed by the lithographer Rodolfo Kratzenstein, with values of 4, 6, 8, and 10 reales and in various colours, these stamps never circulated due to a change in postal rates and are therefore considered “unissued.” Nevertheless, in philatelic culture they are considered as the first example of Argentine postal iconography. This paper proposes to integrate this unfinished project with an iconographic analysis of the gaucho motif, relating it to an early construction of symbols of sovereignty and modern administration. It examines, on the one hand, the debates on prepaid postage, taxation, and mail control that led from the lithographed “caballito” to the engraved “barquito”; on the other hand, the paradoxical trajectory of the name “Gauchitos,” applied retroactively to an image that the State of Buenos Aires, in 1857, would hardly have conceived as an exaltation of the gaucho. From a multidisciplinary perspective, spanning postal history, material culture, and political iconography, the stamp is analysed as a tool of the State, a graphic symbol, and an artifact that mediates the relationship between the public and private spheres in the circulation of letters in the mid-19th century.

As with every Conference, the complete volume of the Proceedings will be published in 2028.

A Hybrid Exhibition for the 101st Anniversary of the Hellenic Philatelic Society

Costas Chazapis writes:

The Hellenic Philatelic Society celebrated its 101st anniversary by organising the **National Philatelic Exhibition 101** (hps.gr/2026) held in Athens from 2 to 7 June 2026. The exhibition introduced in Greece the concept of combining a traditional physical exhibition with a permanent virtual exhibition, creating a hybrid event that appealed to both visitors and exhibitors.

The physical exhibition, hosted at the Arts Centre in Parko Eleftherias, was designed primarily for the general public. In keeping with the exhibition's title, 101 exhibits were presented in 101 exhibition frames. Regardless of its original size, each exhibit was represented by a single frame of 16 pages selected by the exhibitor. This format enabled visitors to experience philately in a limited space, enjoying the diversity of stories that can be narrated through stamps, covers, postcards, and related material.

The virtual exhibition was a first time for Greece. It will remain accessible online long after the physical exhibition closed. Every exhibit was available in its entirety as a PDF, allowing collectors and the public to study the complete displays in detail. QR codes placed on each physical frame linked directly to the corresponding online exhibit,



MP Pevlos Geroulanos, former Minister of Culture (left), and Daniel Benardout, President of Hellenic Post.

seamlessly connecting the physical and virtual worlds. The online exhibition also provided exhibitors, jurors and organisers with valuable practical experience in virtual exhibiting and judging, reflecting the growing importance of digital platforms in international philately.

Another innovative aspect of the exhibition was the flexibility offered to participants. Exhibitors could choose to participate physically, virtually or in both formats. They could also decide whether to compete or exhibit non-competitively. Those entering the non-competitive class had the additional freedom either to follow traditional exhibition regulations or simply to “follow their heart”, encouraging more creative and personal presentations while making the exhibition accessible to collectors of all experience levels.

Although reluctant at first, the philatelic community gladly participated. A total of 134 exhibits, comprising 507 frames, were entered together with 11 literature exhibits. The organisers expressed their sincere appreciation to all exhibitors for their enthusiastic support. Particular thanks were extended to the strong Italian delegation, all the other international participants, and the eight distinguished exhibitors who contributed eleven outstanding exhibits to the Court of Honour.

By successfully combining physical and virtual exhibiting with an innovative and inclusive approach, **Exhibition 101** celebrated not only the Hellenic Philatelic Society's 101-year history but also demonstrated a forward-looking vision for the future of philatelic exhibitions.

The banner title is translated into English as '101 Beautiful Stories'.

101 υπέροχες ιστορίες...



ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ
ΦΙΛΟΤΕΛΙΚΗ
ΕΤΑΙΡΕΙΑ



Κέντρο Τεχνών Δήμου Αθηναίων
2-7 Ιουνίου 2026

Καθημερινές: 11:00-19:00
Σαββατοκύριακο: 10:00-15:00

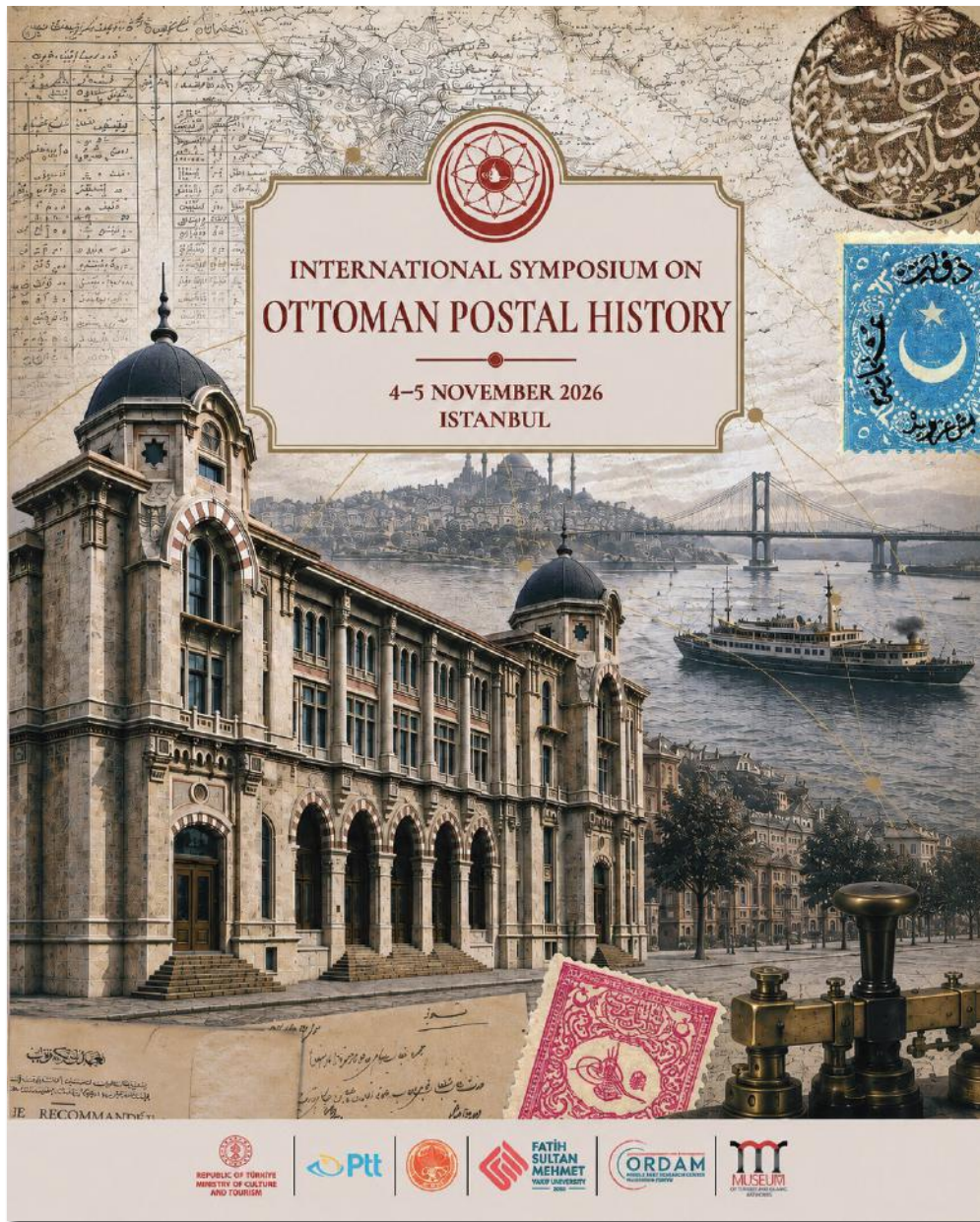
Ελεύθερη είσοδος



INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON OTTOMAN POSTAL HISTORY

Oral Avcı writes:

On 4–5 November 2026, the International Symposium on Ottoman Postal History will be held in Istanbul, hosted by Fatih Sultan Mehmet Vakıf University, in cooperation with the Ottoman Postal History Research Association and the University's Middle East Research Center (ORDAM).



This is the **first** international academic symposium dedicated solely to Ottoman Postal History. Interest has been strong; we anticipated 25–30 submissions but received 54 proposals. The Scientific Committee selected 36 papers for presentation.

The symposium will bring together scholars and researchers from **Türkiye, Romania, Greece, Albania, Kosovo and Italy**, representing a broad range of disciplines including postal history, Ottoman history, diplomacy, economic history, communications, and historical geography.

We are also honoured to receive the support of the **Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the Republic of Türkiye, PTT (Turkish Post), the Museum of Romanian Records (Romanian Philately Museum)**, together with several other cultural and academic institutions.

Following the symposium, all accepted papers will be published in a fully illustrated **Proceedings Volume** and in addition, will be prepared a digital PDF edition freely available to researchers, collectors, libraries, and institutions worldwide, with the aim of encouraging further studies in Ottoman and Middle Eastern postal history and strengthening international academic cooperation.



INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON OTTOMAN POSTAL HISTORY



British Mail in the Levant: The Beirut Postal Hub (1836–1914)

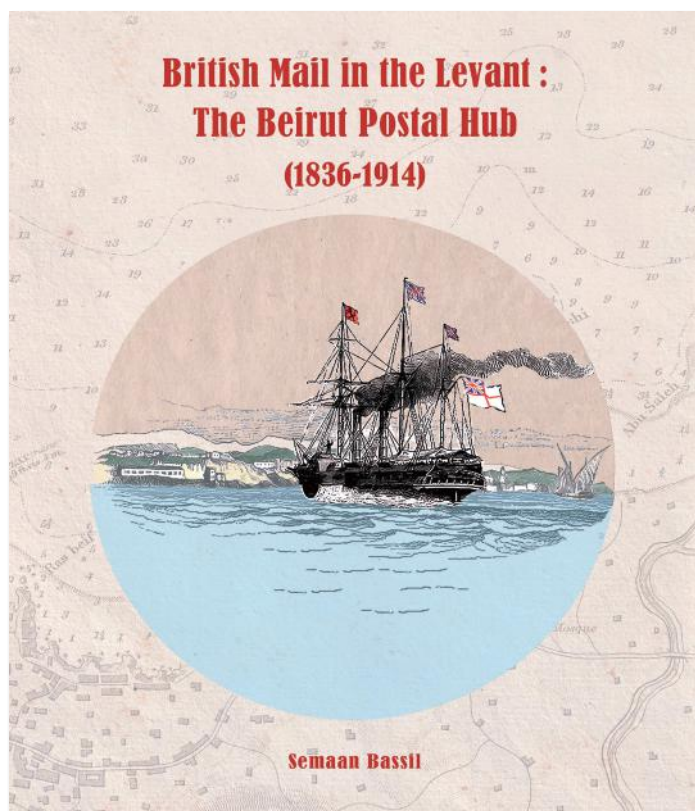
Claudio Ernesto Mario Manzati writes:

This is not simply a book about stamps and postal documents (envelopes), but rather an academic and richly illustrated journey into one of the most complex intertwining of postal history and geopolitics in Beirut Postal Hub (1836–1914), dives into intensive research on British postal history in the region.

Using primary and secondary sources extensively, it contextualises and analyses postal artefacts while offering rich, detail-oriented historical information, focusing on the influence of geopolitics and the positioning of Beirut for British postal communication over 75 years.

It starts in 1836 with the conveyance of British mail to and from India by the British Admiralty via Beirut, then recounts the British packet agency in that city, handing mail for Syria, Mesopotamia, and Persia from 1840. It goes on to describe how the General Post Office in London strategically decided to subcontract different liners in 1872 to speed communication with Beirut, before converting its packet agency in 1873 into a post office, in parallel with the erosion of Britain's world economic preeminence. It ends with the start of the First World War in 1914, when all foreign post offices closed.

Woven throughout the book are numerous examples of pre- and post-UPU analysed British mail and, notably, the study dedicates a full chapter to listing and analysing British mixed-franked postage mail used only in Beirut (1873–1876) for expediting overseas mail via Alexandria. The publication ends with a list of postage stamps used at the British Post Office in Beirut, of which several are unrecorded in any publication, including catalogues.



Author SEMAAN BASSIL. Hardcover, written in English, 292 pages with more 300 illustrations, documents and photographs, are present all catalogued British stamps used at the British office in Beirut. Self-published in 2025. ISBN 978-9953-0-6802-2 Price \$ 75.00 plus Postage, can be ordered by email at bassil.semaan@gmail.com

ROMAGNE 1859-1860: The Postal History

Claudio Ernesto Mario Manzati writes:

From the introduction of this volume we learn that it is “from the fraternal friendship of the two authors, both romagnoli and passionate about postal history, and therefore a sincere tribute to this industrious land and rich in a past harbinger of genuine patriotism.” The book recounts with patriotic fervour the postal affairs of the Provisional Government of Romagna born from the political-military events generated by the second war of independence in 1859. This volume is the result of thirty years of passionate research and dedication, a work that offers a deep dive into the homeland history of postal communications of this fascinating period of great patriotism of the Italian Risorgimento. The authors have tried to give an extraordinary testimony of how the postal history can reveal secrets, stories and valuable details about everyday life, communications and the evolution of society.

Romagna corroborated by a meticulous research, emanated from archives, libraries, Italian and international auctions, private collections that have allowed an extensive database that embraces 3200 color images and unpublished documents. This wealth of knowledge represents a wide variety of letters, envelopes, posters and various postal items, many of which have never been made public before. One of the most fascinating features of these painstaking researches is its ability to shed light on the daily lives of people and historical figures through their postal communications that to this end, they have released a rich selection of images and postal documents that give the reader a visual overview of the story.

The authors have tried to give an extraordinary testimony of how the postal history can reveal secrets, stories and valuable details about everyday life, communications and the evolution of society in Romagna with meticulous research, consulting archives, libraries, auctions and private collections. Having analyzed the subject with scientific method and treated it in every historical-postal aspect makes great honor to the authors of this work that, I am sure, will represent today as in the future the cornerstone of this fascinating testimony of the history of Italy. This wealth of knowledge represents a wide variety of letters, envelopes, posters and other postal items, many of which have never been made public before. In parts of the Piedmontese areas, our patriots rose as well as in the various Romagna cities and set up governments of citizens; The Po river was quite a deterrent and the papal army retreated along the Via Emilia and finally in the Marche and in the following days, all other cities (last in order of time were Pontelagoscuro.

In concluding this precious volume the famous philatelic expertiser Giacomo Bottacchi and Secretary of AIEP (Association of International Philatelic Expert) commented that “Thanks to the advent of computer technology Guido and Roberto in many years of careful and assiduous work have been able to scientifically examine thousands of covers and stamps which, although scattered in the most beautiful collections, represent to them the word, indeed... the pen.” The publisher has pointed out that, compared with the previous edition of “The Postal History of Tuscany”, the authors have included all the items that have appeared on the philatelic market over the years, specifying in the description either the owner or the auction at which they were sold.

This book constitutes a comprehensive catalogue of the postal history of the former State of Romagna.



394 pages, 27 chapters and an extensive bibliography, plus more than 400 color illustrations with detailed and accurate descriptions. Written in both Italian-English, Printed with a hardback cover and featuring a silk bookmark. ISBN 976-88-945287-9-4. Publisher POST HORN for orders by e-mail to board@posthornmagazine.com or via the website www.posthornmagazine.com or via philasearch space dedicated to POST HORN magazine. Price 100,00 €-

Denmark and the Napoleonic Wars

Chris King RDP FRPSL writes:

At the beginning of the Napoleonic Wars Denmark was a complicated northern European mercantile state. It included Norway, in personal union with Denmark since 1380, the Duchies of Schleswig and Holstein, 'Forever Indivisible' since the Treaty of Ribe in 1460, as well as having political and mercantile relationships with the Hanseatic cities of Lübeck and Hamburg.

The Faroe Islands, Iceland and Greenland were part of the state, which also had colonies in the Danish West Indies, now the US Virgin Islands, Danish West Africa, now part of Ghana, Tranquebar and Serampore on the east coast of India, and the Nicobar Islands.

It was an absolute monarchy, with more in common in political structure with the Habsburg Monarchy than the British Empire. The former was united under a common head of state, while the latter was a colonial enterprise.

Following the Great Northern War 1700-1721, Denmark had a general policy of neutrality, preferring to protect trade rather than engage in territorial conflict. She wished to keep out of the Napoleonic Wars, preferring trade to conflict, with the former leading to profit, and the latter to limitless expense.

Circumstances made this increasingly difficult. Denmark joined the League of Armed Neutrality, Denmark-Norway, Prussia, Sweden, and Russia, in 1801 as a defence against the British navy's policy of stopping and searching neutral shipping for contraband and goods which might aid the French Republic.

This more aggressive form of neutrality led to the British sending a fleet into the Baltic under Admiral Sir Hyde Parker (1739-1807) and Vice-Admiral Horatio Nelson (1758-1805). The first Battle of Copenhagen followed after which Denmark was forced to withdraw from the League.



Figure 1:

Eyewitness account of the Battle of Copenhagen 2 April 1801. 6 August 1801, HMS Raisonnable - off Gores (Island of Goree, Holland) to London via Yarmouth and locally redirected.

Postage: manuscript 8[d] and hand struck '2' for redirection from Two Penny Post 206 Strand, Wilcocks and Jay hand stamp type 499.

Lieutenant Thomas Bond writes to his brother, "Had there been a corps or reserve of several ships to windward, the Commander in Chief, would not have been frightened as he showed himself to be, In hoisting No 39 - to discontinue the action - which signal will d..n him forever; and had it been obey'd by those of the line that could have quitted the field, England would never have survived so severe a stroke. No Ld Nelson disdained the summons, but still saw the immediate necessity of some great plan, as those ships were hard and fast aground; wrote with a pencil in the heat of the firing, on a scrap only of paper to the Danish Commander, that his wish was to spare the brave Danes, in the floating batteries: It had the desired effect, and the firing ceased. No language can do justice to the Generalship of Ld Nelson / His courage I speak not of. as the world too well knows his abilities on that score / and how much he merits from his Country. In the moment I may say when everything seemed lost, he retrieved all by a thought."

From *The Life of Horatio Lord Nelson* - Robert Southey (1896): To his captain, Nelson elaborated: "You know, Foley, I have only one eye, I have a right to be blind sometimes: "He then put his spying glass to his blind eye and continued: "I really do not see the signal!", and then, "Damn the signal! Keep mine for closer battle flying! That's the way I answer signals! Nail mine to the mast!"

HMS Raisonnable was launched 10 December 1768 and broken up in 1815. She was Nelson's first ship.

From 1801 to 1807 Denmark was relatively successful in maintaining neutrality, although the army had to be increased, especially in the southern Duchies, and an optical telegraph system was installed partly to provide warnings of enemy shipping. Gradually the effects of the war increased. Trade across the North Sea was more dangerous, the postal services were disrupted as French influence and control reached as far as Hanover and Hamburg, on the Danish borders, and into the Baltic on the Prussian coastline.

Neutrality was threatened after the Battle of Trafalgar on 21 October 1805. The British destroyed 22 of the opposing 33 Franco-Spanish ships, leaving Napoleon weakened at sea.

Napoleon issued Berlin Decree on 21 November, 1806 which banned all trade with Great Britain. This declaration of economic warfare made control of the continental coastline imperative. Consequences included the French occupation of the Hanseatic cities of Lübeck (6 November 1806) and Hamburg (19 November 1806), helping to enforce the blockade, and putting pressure on Denmark to join the continental embargo.

In support of this policy, and to reinforce the French navy, Napoleon planned to seize the neutral Danish fleet. Fearing this, Britain launched a pre-emptive strike at the Second Battle of Copenhagen in 1807, capturing or destroying the entire Danish-Norwegian navy, and burning a large part of the city.



Figure 2:
15 September 1807, Entire letter from Ostode near Copenhagen to Canonby, near Langholm with YARMOUTH 124 (Norfolk) mileage stamp. Letter probably landed by naval vessel and charged 1/1d, the General Post rate for 401-500 miles (Yarmouth-Langholm).

'... Probably before this reaches you, you will have heard of the successful event of the expedition & of the surrender of Copenhagen & the whole of the Danish fleet to the British Army & Navy - we landed in this island of Zeland in Denmark on the 16th ultimo & met with no opposition in marching towards Copenhagen - the Enemy retiring within their walls at the end of ten days during which time batteries fortifications etc were erected on both sides - the war commenced with most tremendous cannonading from their works which were answered by own Artillery - a considerable number were killed on both sides ... having been sent back within 4 miles of Copenhagen I had a good opportunity of seeing the siege - the cannonading continued- without much effect on the town - it being of immense strength and surrounded by 3 walls - at last red hot Shot - Shells bombs etc were thrown in by our Artillery which set it on fire - never in my life did a witness a scene so awfully grand - the City burnt with most tremendous fury for 3 days and nights - a great part of it must be consumed - all their Churches & public buildings levelled by our shot & an immense number of lives were lost - at last a flag of truce was sent out & they have surrendered their City, fleet etc.

18 Sail of the line with a great number of frigates & Merchant men - Thus the Campaign is concluded & it is said we are to leave the Island in six weeks'

Eventually, on 30 October 1807, Denmark formally signed an alliance with France and joined the anti-British Continental System. This was a blockade of British goods denying commerce with mainland Europe.

In 1807, Charles IV, King of Spain (Carlos IV) sent an expeditionary force from the regular Spanish Army to Northern Europe, to serve with the French Grande Armée. The force was commanded by Marquis de la Romana, and after the siege of the fortress of Stralsund in Swedish Pomerania in the summer of 1807, the army was broken up and stationed in different parts of Denmark, Schleswig, and Holstein.



Figure 3: Map of the North Sea, Denmark, and the Baltic coastline, from the New General Atlas, John Thomson & Co., Edinburgh 1816.



Figure 4: An Officer from the Guadalajara Regiment and another from the Cavalry in their Old Uniforms

During the years 1807-1808 many of the Spanish troops were stationed in, or passed through Hamburg, resulting in an illustrated book by Christoph and Cornelius Suhr, *Sammlung verschiedener Spanischer National-Trachten und Uniformen der Division des Marquis de la Romana 1807 und 1808 in Hamburg in Garnison*, which shows the uniforms of officers and the ordinary soldiers with their wives and families.

The Danish Foreign Ministry notes that in March 1808, 26,924 foreign troops entered Denmark under the overall command of Marshal Jean-Baptiste Bernadotte. Hans Peter Theodor Mumme (1801-1885) lists the individual elements of the army arriving at Rendsburg on the Danish-Schleswig border. His combined total of French, Spanish, and Dutch troops is 32,930.

Over half were Spanish troops under the Marquis de la Romana, although the initial deployment included many French units since



Figure 5: A soldier from the Catalan Regiment with his Wife

Napoleon's intention was to attack Sweden through Denmark. This never transpired, and the French were largely withdrawn to the Duchy of Schleswig and further south.

The Spanish troops were still in Denmark in the summer of 1808, when news of events in Spain arrived. There are a very small number of Napoleonic Grand-Armée postmarks known used in Denmark, particularly on the Island of Funen, one incoming is known directed to Randers, and all are from 1808.

Figure 6:

5 May 1808, N° 75 GRANDE ARMÉE, recorded from Odense only on this date, used by Premier Division Espagnole - La Romana, Corps d'Observation des Côtes de la Baltique. Partial letter sent from Odense on the Island of Funen in Denmark. Carried via Hamburg, N° 94 GRANDE ARMÉE, and forwarded to Berlin with N° 94 DÉB GRANDE ARMÉE. Both recorded in 1807-1808.



A further letter exists, dated Odense, sent via N° 94 GRANDE ARMÉE in Hamburg from a chasseur in the 5th Light Infantry Regiment which passed through Rendsburg on 7 March 1808 as part of a larger force commanded by General Pierre Louis Dupas who served with the Prince of Ponte Corvo in Denmark. The only other item known from the Island of Funen is postmarked N° 91 GRANDE ARMÉE dated 21 September 1808 from Middelfart, and this has not been seen by the author. No others appear in the literature consulted.



Figure 7. Spanske og Franske Tropper paa Fyen Aar 1808, Andreas Ørnstrup, Kongelig Bibliotek, København. Spanish and French Troops on Funen in 1808, Andreas Ørnstrup, Royal Library, Copenhagen.

Perhaps taking the opportunity presented by the absence of a large Spanish army, Charles IV had been forced to abdicate, and Napoleon proclaimed his brother, Joseph Bonaparte, as King of Spain on 6 June 1808. The crowning of Joseph Bonaparte as King of Spain was considered by many in the Spanish expeditionary force as disgraceful.

Capitalising on this, the Scottish born British agent and monk, Dom James Robertson OSB (1758-1820), disguised as a cigar merchant, contacted de la Romana, and offered transport to Spain by British ships. Romana accepted, and on 11 August 1808 the Spanish seized the Danish fortress and port of Nyborg. About two-thirds of the Spanish army, 9,000 men, sailed to La Coruña, leaving over 3,500 Spanish troops to become prisoners of war.

Denmark remained firmly in the French camp, but after the French march on Moscow in 1812, and its subsequent failure, Denmark-Norway unsuccessfully attempted to declare neutrality at the beginning of 1813. The country became bankrupt on 5 January 1813, and needed peace to restore its economy and national finances.

The French army remained in Schleswig and Holstein until an allied coalition, including Swedish, Prussian, and Russian forces, invaded in late 1813, leading to the Battle of Sehested on 10 December 1813, and Denmark signing the Treaty of Kiel on 14 January 1814. Norway was ceded to the King of Sweden, while the North Atlantic dependencies of Greenland, Iceland, and the Faroe Islands remained in Danish hands. With this treaty, Denmark joined the allied forces against Napoleon Bonaparte.

Lübeck was liberated on 5 December 1813, while French forces under Marshal Davout held the Hanseatic city of Hamburg under siege until May 1814. The Spanish army under de la Romana was largely unsuccessful in Spain, and the Marquis died on 23 January 1811 in Cartama, near Málaga, Spain.

For Denmark, the end of neutrality had resulted in seven years of French domination, war with Sweden and Russia, the loss of Norway overturning centuries of common cause, hyperinflation, and national bankruptcy.

Following the defeat of Napoleon at Waterloo in 1815, a multi-national coalition force was created comprising troops from Great Britain, Prussia, Austria, and Russia, each with 30,000 men, Bavaria which contributed 10,000 men, while Denmark, Saxony, Hanover, and Württemberg each sent 5,000. This force, commanded by the Duke of Wellington and largely paid for by France, occupied North Eastern France - from Calais to Switzerland. The five year occupation, agreed under the terms of the Second Treaty of Paris, signed on 20 November 1815, was to be reviewed after three.

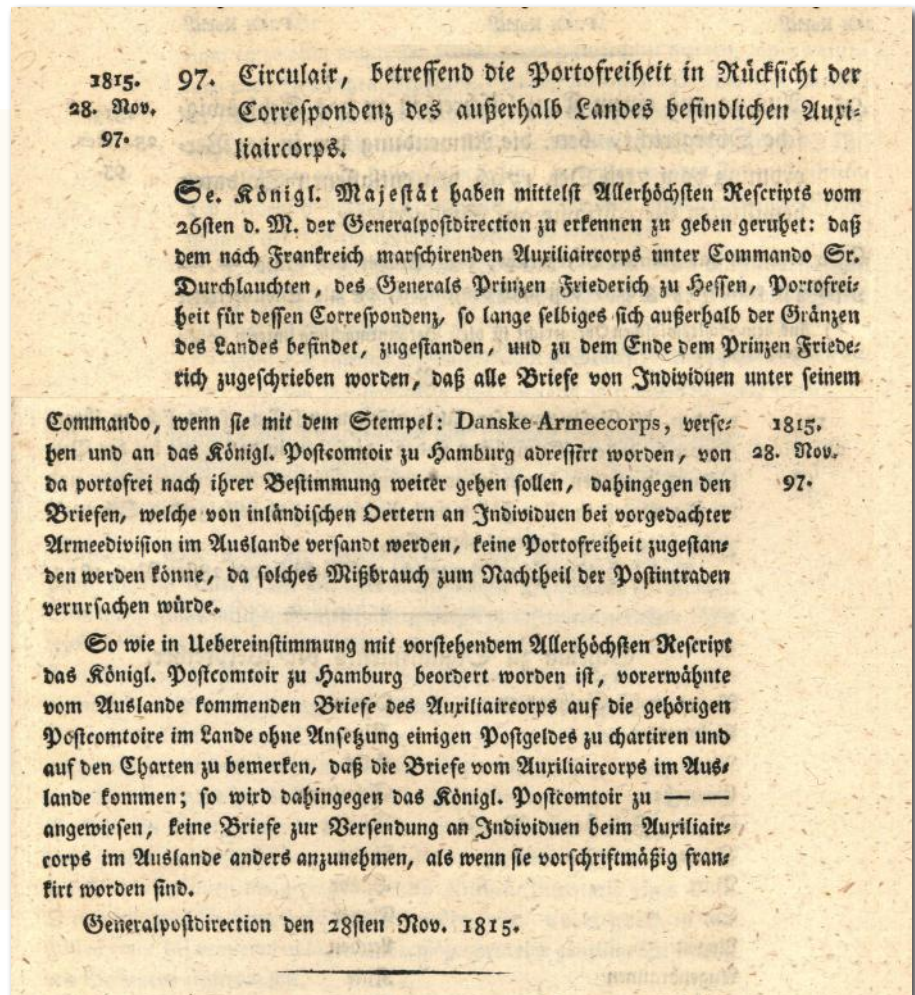


Figure 8: Map of the occupation zones of the foreign "Occupation of Guarantee" in North Eastern France from 1815 to 1818. Map © with kind permission of Dr. Christine Haynes.

In November 1815, a Danish army contingent was created as part of this 150,000 strong allied army of occupation in northern France. At the end of January 1816 Danish troops arrived in France and from then until its return home in November 1818, the corps was stationed in Bouchain, Vitry, Arleux, Lens, Mondin, and Henin Corvin, and had its headquarters in Levarde (Lewarde). It was an independent unit, under the overall command of General Wellington.

Figure 9:

28 November 1815. *Circular, betreffend die Portofreiheit in Rücksicht der Correspondenz des außerhalb Landes befindlichen Auxiliaircorps.* (Circular, concerning the postage exemption for correspondence of the auxiliary corps located outside the country.)



Domestic postage for correspondence with the Auxiliary Corps was regulated by a postal circular dated 28 November 1815.

"His Royal Majesty, by means of a Most High Decree dated the 26th of this month, has deigned to instruct the General Post Office that: namely, the Auxiliary Corps marching to France under the command of His Serene Highness, General Prince Friedrich of Hesse, be granted exemption from postage for his correspondence for as long as it remains outside the country's borders; and to that end, it has been communicated to Prince Friedrich that all letters from individuals under his command, provided they bear the handstamp: 'Danske Armeecorps' and are addressed to the Royal Post Office in Hamburg, are to be forwarded from there postage-free to their destination; whereas letters sent from domestic locations to individuals serving with the aforementioned army division abroad cannot be granted postage exemption, as such an abuse would be detrimental to postal revenue.

In accordance with the aforementioned Royal Decree, the Royal Post Office in Hamburg has been instructed to forward the aforementioned letters from the Auxiliary Corps arriving from abroad to the relevant post offices within the country without charging any postage, and to note on the waybills that the letters originate from the Auxiliary Corps abroad; conversely, the Royal Post Office in . . . is instructed not to accept any letters for dispatch to individuals in the Auxiliary Corps abroad unless they have been franked in accordance with regulations. General Post Office, 28 November 1815."



Figure 10:

10 April 1818, Entire free frank letter (no 9) from the Infantry Brigade of the Danish Contingent of the Occupation Armée of France at the Brigade Quarter Marchiennes, Dept. du Nord to Die Königliche Süderdithmarsische Landvogtei (Landvogtei) zu Meldorf. (Royal Bailiwick of Süderdithmarschen at Meldorf.) Handstamp danske Armeecorps.

There is no published register of these marks. Those known to the author are:

Date	From	To	Charge	Reference
26 December 1815	Bremen	Antwerp	Free	NFT 5/1977-p8 PHT 3/1978-p4
25 February 1817	Lens	Oldesloe	4 Schilling Courant	
10 April 1818	Marchiennes	Meldorf	Free	NFT 1/1965-p2
Undated envelope	Königliches Dänisches Contingent	Copenhagen	Free	
Undated wrapper	Den Danske Armeé Ordonnateur	Bremen	20	

The Allied Army of Occupation, or “Occupation of Guarantee”, was an early example of an international peacekeeping force with a multinational command, joint political oversight, strict rules of engagement, and cooperation with local French administrative authorities to resolve disputes. It was in France until the late autumn of 1818, when the Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle, 1 October - 15 November 1818 ended the occupation. The troops returned home, including the Danish contingent, and the withdrawal was complete by the end of the month. The Danish Armeecorps was dissolved on 14 December 1818.



Figure 11:

Wrapper (no content) sent to Amtschreiber (District Clerk) Wehner with the Königlich Grossbritannisch Hannoverischen Marsch Commissair in Bremen. Marked militairbrief and DEN DANSKE ARMEE ORDONNATEUR SEGL. Handstamps C.F.3 R. (Correspondence Française du troisième Rayon) recorded only in 1818, danske Armeecorps, 57 BOUCHAIN indicating Département du Nord 1804-1815, and postage paid 20.

After the Danish contingent had left France, a field hospital remained in Bouchain. Notwithstanding the arrangements for free postage, this item bears the handstamp *danske Armeecorps*, and is charged on delivery in Bremen.

Not all mail involving the Danish forces received the handstamp *danske Armeecorps*, some mail was sent through the ordinary French or Thurn and Taxis postal systems, and are identifiable only by their contents, address, by wax seals, or administrative handstamps.



Figure 12:

17 November 1816, entire letter from **Ludewig Lühr** of the **6th Batterie Gerstenberg** in **Lens** in **France** to **Justizrath von Decker** in **Oldesloe** in **Holstein**. Sent unpaid via **Düsseldorf** to **Hamburg** under the provisions of the Arrangement provisoire entre Tour et Taxis et la France of **30 April 1814**: **12 Décimes** to be paid to France, in **Hamburg 16 schilling courant** were noted (12 decimes equal to 12 Hamburg Shilling courant plus 4 to Oldesloe). On reverse waybill number **8** and **51 Rigsbankskilling** due. Handstamp **61 LENS** in the **Département Pas-de-Calais**, renumbered after the **Bourbon restoration** and the **Treaty of Paris** of **20 November 1815**.

The key indicator here is the 6th Batterie Gerstenberg which was a field artillery unit which accompanied the various iterations of the Danish Auxiliary Corps, including the Danish Armeecorps in France 1816-1818. Contemporary mail bearing postmarks from Bouchain, Douai, Lens, Lille, and others, may be associated with the Danish forces. In the absence of any other distinguishing features, only examination of the contents will confirm this.



Figure 13:
Wax Seal
DEN DANSKE
ARMEE
ORDONNATEUR
SEGL from
an undated
wrapper.



Figure 14:
Wax Seal
DES
DAENISCHEN
CONTINGENTS
FELD HOSPITAL
cut out from a
folded letter.



Figure 15:
Wax Seal
KÖNIGLICH
DÄNISCHES
CONTINGENT
from a folded
letter dated **25**
February 1817.

Collecting has its fashions which vary with time. Unstamped mail, so called pre-philatelic mail was very popular, especially in the latter years of the last century. Very high prices were paid for rare postmarks, such as these *danske Armeecorps* folded letters and wrappers.

Today the preference is for stamped covers to exotic destinations, in exceptional condition. Collectors who prefer franked covers to rare destinations are missing the opportunities for research offered by folded letters in particular, and even today, many dealers and auction houses don't have the time to read and research what they are selling.

It seems a little strange to be concerned with routes, rates, and destinations when the primary purpose of much of the surviving philatelic material was to facilitate communication between the sender and the recipient. Almost invariably neither is referred to in a competitive exhibition, although displays at clubs and societies often include information about the people involved in the correspondence. To ignore these seems a little like a song performed without words, instrumentally satisfactory, but lacking something fundamental.

This gives an opportunity for collectors with some patience and a lot of time, since there has never been so much information available to ordinary individuals who now have relatively easy access to books, articles, and original documentary sources at their fingertips. Many collectors are custodians of voices from the past, voices which may be the primary source of the historical narrative. Of course, many are dull with legal or commercial content of little interest, and others are difficult to read, especially when they are written in gothic handwriting, or an early ecclesiastical hand.

Just remember to be sceptical, and suspicious of easy answers, especially from AI functions such as ChatGPT. It's still best to reach for the books and primary sources to confirm any conclusions.

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A Focus on Greenland's Stamps (Part II)

Holger Zahnow writes:

An analysis of a special kind

“

We don't want to be Americans,
we don't want to be Danes,
we want to be Greenlanders.
Greenland's future must be
determined by the Greenlanders.

”

This is the gist of a joint statement issued on 9 January 2026 by the leaders of the five parties represented in the Greenlandic Regional Parliament.¹

It is not just since US President Trump brought up his ambitions to annex or purchase Canada and Greenland that Greenlandic postage stamps have become a familiar sight among cosmopolitan stamp collectors. The aim of this article is to present Greenland, including its historical, cultural and social context as well as its philatelic and artistic achievements, in order to highlight the distinctive features of this collecting field.

Tour d'horizon historique

In the 3rd millennium BC, several indigenous groups (the Inuit) began migrating to Greenland from northern Canada. They spread various Inuit cultures throughout the country. Towards the end of the 10th century, there are reports of an influx of Vikings led by Erik Thorvaldsson (c. 950-1003), known as Erik the Red (Fig. 2). He is said to have given the country the name »Greenland« (Old Norse: Grœnland) when he reached the south-west coast of the island, in order to attract more settlers (Fig. 3). The first wave of Christianisation began under his son, Leif Eriksson (c. 975-1020). In 1380, Denmark and Norway were united in a personal union.

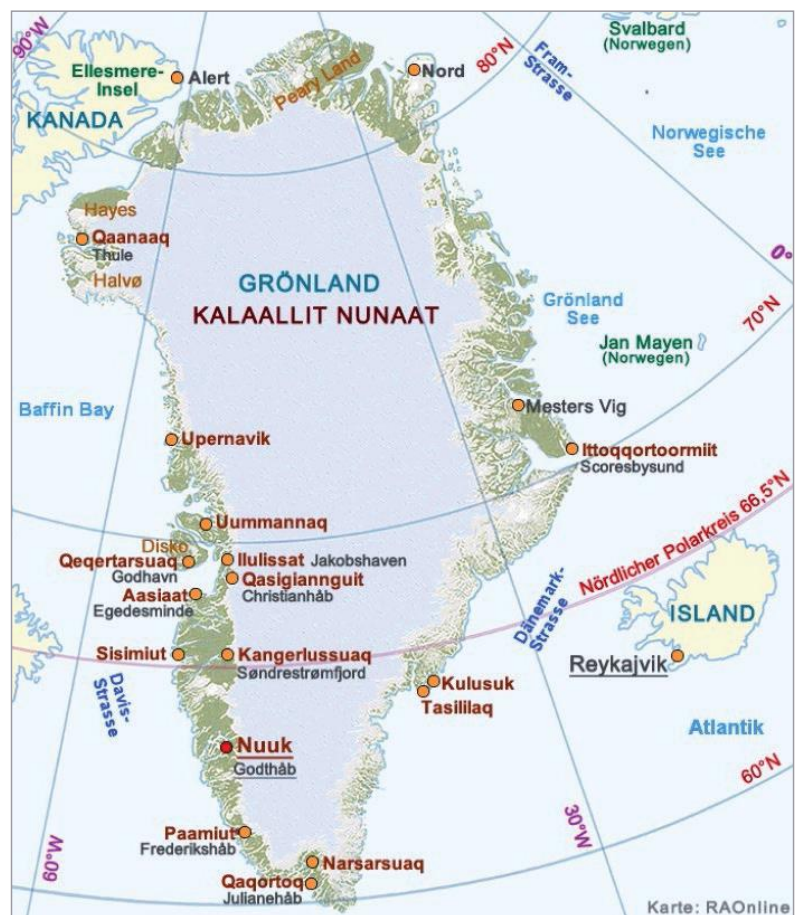


Fig. 1: Map of Greenland
© RAOnline Bildungsportal, Switzerland

¹ newsORF.at: Greenland reacts strongly to Trump's threat, Austrian Broadcasting Corporation (ORF), Vienna, Austria, 10 January 2026, URL: <https://orf.at/stories/3416721/>, accessed on 1 May 2026

Fig. 2: 1999 Arctic Vikings (I), Explorers and Settlers - Scan Jansen
4,50 kr. Viking ship (9th-10th c.)
4,75 kr. A man sitting on driftwood
5,75 kr. An arrowhead from the Newfoundland First Nations, a Norwegian coin found in Maine
8,00 kr. The church of Tjodhilde, wife of Erik the Red, in Brattalid (11th c.)



Fig. 3: 2009 SEPAC Coastal landscape - Scan Jansen



It came to an end in 1814 following the Napoleonic Wars (Treaty of Kiel). It is believed that the approximately 2,000 Germanic settlers (Grænlendingar) died out between the 15th and 16th centuries. It is thought that there is a causal link between the »Little Ice Age« and overhunting, for example for walrus ivory.

The year 1721 saw the arrival in Greenland of the Norwegian Hans Egede (1686-1758), his wife Gertrud Rask (1673-1735) and 40 settlers (Fig. 5). Egede began his missionary work among the indigenous population (reintroduction of Christianity). (Fig. 6) In the years that followed, the Moravian Church (Herrnhuter Brüdergemeinde) also carried out missionary work.

Fig. 4: Table »Country Profile Greenland« © HZ

Greenland regional data	
I. Basic data	
Official designation	Kalaallit Nunaat (Greenlandic, »Land of the Greenlanders«) - Grønland (Danish)
Form of government	Parliamentary democracy within a constitutional monarchy; self-governing region within the Kingdom of Denmark; King Frederik X of Denmark has also been the formal head of state of Greenland since 2024
Surface area	2,166,086 km ² (the world's largest island), of which 410,449 km ² (19%) is ice-free; dimensions: north-south: 2,670 km, east-west: 1,050 km, coastline: 44,087 km; geographically, it belongs to North America; politically, it belongs to Denmark
Population	56,740 (Jan. 2026); 4.5% are non-Greenlandic/Danish; largest immigrant groups: Filipinos, Thais, Sri Lankans; in 2024, 17,287 people born in Greenland were living in Denmark
Population density	0.14 people per km ² on ice-free land in January 2021; the lowest population density in the world
Ethnic groups	born in Greenland: 88%, outside Greenland: 12% (January 2025)
Religions	Almost the entire population is of the Evangelical Lutheran faith.
Capital city	Nuuk (formerly known in Danish as Godthåb), population 19,905 (Jan. 2025)
Second-largest city	Sisimiut (formerly known in Danish as Holsteinsborg), population 5,485 (Jan. 2025)
Official languages	Greenlandic (Kalaallisut, from the Eskimo-Aleut language family); West Greenlandic: the official language in written form; lingua franca: Danish 1)
Currency	Danish krone (DKK), 1 Danish krone (kr.) = 100 øre (ø); plural: kroner 2)
Danish Block Grant (Bloktiskud)	since 1979, the Danish Block Grant (Bloktiskud) has accounted for approximately 50% of Greenland's government revenue as an annual financial contribution; 2023: DKK 4,142 million / approx. EUR 554 million (provisional figure); additional funding: provided by the EU under the OCT Statute for education, development and strategic objectives; as well as Denmark's supplementary programmes, worth billions DKK. 3)
II. Economic data (selection)	
Largest companies	Public limited companies (A/S), all wholly state-owned: Royal Greenland (fishing industry), KNI (trade and oil sales), Royal Arctic Line (shipping), Air Greenland (air transport) and Tusass (postal and telecommunications services)
Largest economic sector	Around a third of total value added comes from fisheries and the associated industry and trade.
Trading partners	2024: Exports: mainly Denmark and Iceland; Imports: Denmark and Sweden; the fishing industry accounts for over 90% of Greenland's exports.
Trade balance	Trade balance according to SITC 2024 (exports minus imports): DKK -1,580 million (approx. EUR -211 million) 4)

1) The term »Eskimo-Aleut language family« continues to be used as a rule, despite the fact that the term »Eskimo« is sometimes viewed critically.

2) Exchange rate: DKK 1.00 = EUR 0.1338 on 17 May 2026

3) OCT status = Overseas Countries and Territories with which the EU maintains special relations

4) SITC = Standard International Trade Classification: Import and export values according to the International Commodity Classification for Foreign Trade

Sources: Statistics Greenland/Kleemann, Naduk (ed.): Greenland in Figures 2025, 22nd edition, Nuuk May 2025, <https://stat.gl/pub/en/gfr/2025/pdf/Greenland%20in%20Figures%202025.pdf>, the author's own synopsis.



Fig. 5: 1971 250th anniversary of the arrival of the first modern European settlers, with Hans Egede and Gertrud Rask aboard the »Håbet - Hope« - Scan Jansen



Fig. 6: 1864 Parcel letter from Copenhagen, 12 April 1864, to the colony of Egedesminde, Greenland - Scan Postiljonen

Den Kongelige Grønlandske Handel (KGH)

Fig. 7: 1974 200 Years of KGH - Scans Jansen



**1,00 kr. Trawler fishing
2,00 kr. Strandgade, Copenhagen**



Fig. 8: 2004 Greenlandic Shipping (III) - Scans FB-NET.DK
6,50 kr. The brig »Constance«, a KGH vessel in 1857
8,75 kr. The passenger steamship »Disko«, a KGH vessel in 1927
14,00 kr. The polar ship »Julius Thomsen«, a KGH vessel in 1927
21,75 kr. The »Misigssu't«, a 1955 vessel belonging to the Ministry of Greenland, used as a mobile clinic for tuberculosis screening

In May 1774, a royal decree was issued by the United Kingdom of Denmark and Norway establishing The Royal Greenland Trading Department (Figs. 7 and 8). From its position of monopoly, the company not only controlled all economic activities on the island and all trade flows to and from Europe, but also played a central role in the colonialization and civilisation policy, carrying out wide-ranging administrative tasks in accordance with Danish principles. The trade monopoly did not end until 1950. On the one hand, Greenland owes the KGH a debt of gratitude for establishing numerous trading posts across the country, which overtime developed into settlements. On the other hand, the company brought about serious social upheaval and lasting social disruption, and hindered economic competition, the creation of incentives and the functioning of market regulatory mechanisms. He acted as a buyer of local produce such as hides, fish oil, fermented foods (fish and meat) and handicrafts, and was responsible for supplying the population with the necessary goods and provisions.

From the 1950s onwards, the KGH became increasingly involved in fishing and fish processing, which further strengthened

its position as a major employer. It was also during this period that the fishing company Nordafar (a multinational enterprise) was founded in Kangerluatsoruseq (Færøerhavn, Fig. 9). Since the mid-1980s, the conversion or spin-off of several business divisions has led to major restructuring within the group's organisational structure and, ultimately, to the dissolution of KGH. The state-owned logistics, retail and services group Kalaallit Niuerniat (KNI A/S) was established. It plays a dominant role in providing services to the population and is wholly owned by the Greenlandic self-government. For a long time, the Greenlandic Post was part of KGH or KNI; see the chapter »The postal service in Greenland«.

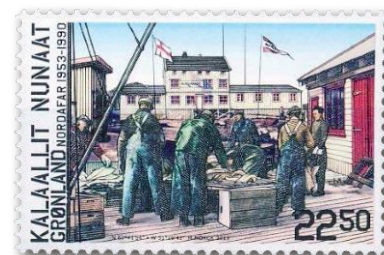


Fig. 9: 2013 60th anniversary of the founding of the fishing company Nordafar (a multinational enterprise) in Kangerluatsoruseq (Færøerhavn) - Scan Jansen

Developments since the 19th century

Under the Treaty of Kiel between Denmark and Sweden/the United Kingdom, signed in 1814 following the end of the Napoleonic Wars, Greenland, Iceland and the Faroe Islands were awarded to the Danish Empire, however, north-east Greenland was considered »No Man's Land«, and Denmark ceded Norway to Sweden. From the late 19th to the mid-20th century, Greenland was the destination of numerous expeditions aimed at exploring and mapping the island, including those led by Ludvig Mylius-Erichsen (1872-1907), Johan Peter Koch (1870-1928), Ejnar Mikkelsen (1880-1971), Fridtjof Nansen (1861-1930), Robert Peary (1856-1920), Knud Rasmussen (1879-1933), James Simpson (1911-2002) and Alfred Wegener (1880-1930) (Fig. 10). And let us not forget the Greenlander Hans Hendrik - Greenlandic: Suersaq - (1832-1889), who took part in several US-American and European polar expeditions (Fig. 11).

Between 1931 and 1933, Norway occupied parts of north-eastern Greenland (Eirik Raude's Land, named after the Viking Eirik Raude - Erik the Red) and south-eastern Greenland (Fridtjof Nansen's Land). In 1933, the Permanent Court of International Justice in The Hague ruled in favour of Danish sovereignty over East Greenland. In 1940, the German Wehrmacht invaded Denmark and Norway, cutting off Greenland's trade and communications with Denmark. From then on, the USA and Canada provided relief aid. The following year, the USA was granted permission to establish radio and weather stations, military bases and airfields for Allied fighter aircraft across the island.

In 1949, Denmark - which, together with Greenland and the Faroe Islands, forms the Realm (Rigsfællesskabet) - was one of the founding members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO). Following the activities of the first sled patrol between 1941 and 1945, the Danish military's »Resolut« sled patrol was established in north-east Greenland in 1950. It was given the name »Sirius-Patrol« in 1953 (Fig. 12). The new Danish Constitution of 1953 incorporated Greenland as part of the Kingdom (decolonisation), made it an administrative district and electoral constituency of Denmark, and granted Greenlanders Danish citizenship. In 1973, Denmark, including Greenland, joined the European Economic Community (EEC), the predecessor organisation of the European Union (EU).

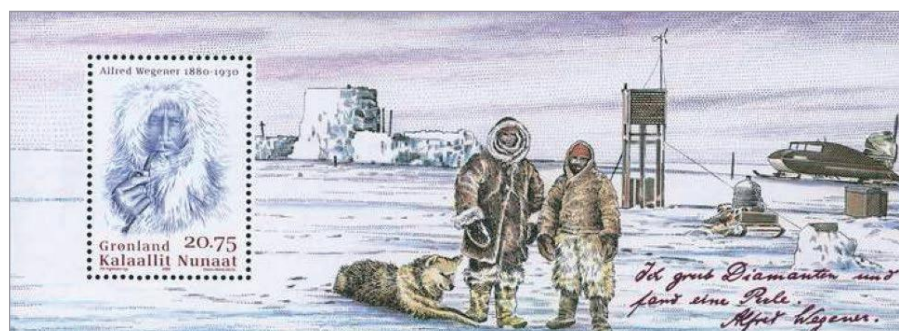


Fig. 10: 2006 Expeditions to Greenland (IV), Alfred Wegener, German geophysicist and meteorologist - Scan Jansen



Fig. 11: 2012 Expeditions in Greenland (X), Hans Hendrik, b. Suersaq (1834-1889), Greenlandic Arctic explorer - Scan FB-NET.DK



Fig. 12: 2000 50 Years of the Sled Patrol »Sirius« - Scan Jansen

Greenland's path to self-determination

In 1979, Greenland was granted internal self-government (Hjemmestyre, Home Rule) by Denmark (Fig. 13). In 1985, Greenland (not Denmark) left the EEC following a referendum in 1982 (53.0% voted in favour of withdrawal).

In 2009, the Self-Government Act (Selvstyregezetzes) came into force following a successful referendum (over 75% in favour) in 2008. It opens up the vague prospect of full state independence for Greenland. However, Denmark remains responsible for monetary and fiscal policy, the highest judicial authority, citizenship, foreign policy, and security and defence policy.

Thule / Qaanaaq

The Danish name Thule (Greenlandic: Qaanaaq) is associated with three concepts. Firstly: The Greek Pytheas of Massalia (c. 370-310 BC) reported on a voyage to the far north of the then-known world. He coined the name Thule for the most remote region he claimed to have encountered on that journey. Secondly: The Greenlandic polar explorer Knud Rasmussen adopted the name when he founded a private mission and trading post in north-west Greenland in 1910. And thirdly, archaeologists adopted the name for a culture that excavations near the trading post had brought to light. It can be regarded as a precursor period (dating from around 1000-1800 AD) to today's Inuit culture, which has been subject to lasting European influences.

Knud Rasmussen took part in the so-called Danish Literary Expedition (1902-1904) under the leadership of Ludvig Mylius-Erichsen (1872-1907). It led to the Inughuit, the smallest group of the Greenland Inuit. Rasmussen was no stranger to the local language and managed to build a good relationship with them. He became increasingly convinced that he needed to establish a presence in the Cape York district through a mission and trading post. Since North Greenland (Fig. 14) was regarded as terra nullius (»No Man's Land«) due to typical European ignorance and arrogance, he was unable to secure the Danish state's support, but at least he obtained permission to act in a private capacity. Denmark also did not wish to provoke any disputes with other powers that laid claim to parts of Greenland.



Fig. 13: 1989 10 Years of Internal Self-Government - Greenland's Flag and Coat of Arms -

Scan FB-NET.DK



Fig. 14: 2012 EUROPA Northern Lights (Aurora borealis) -

Scan Jansen

Rasmussen was not alone in his plans; missionary work had already begun in the region some time before. But in 1910 the time had finally come, and his trading, scientific and missionary station was established under the name »Kap York Station Thule«. In 1937, the Grønlands Styrelse (Greenland Administration) took over responsibility for the station. Rasmussen, who died in 1933 at the age of 54, did not live to see the issue in 1935-36 of five specially designed, officially approved stamps to mark the 25th anniversary of the founding of the Thule settlement (Fig. 15). These private-label stamps were used for postage in the postal service between Thule and Copenhagen.

As part of the expansion of military installations into US air bases that began in the early 1950s, the residents of Thule experienced a life-changing event in 1953 when they were forcibly relocated. Due to the construction of the US Thule Air Base (renamed Pituffik Space Base in 2023), they were forced to move to the newly established settlement of Qaanaaq, some 100 km away, where around 600 people currently live. The original Thule now survives only as a deserted place.



Fig. 15: 1935-1936 25th anniversary of the founding of the Thule settlement - Scan FB-NET.DK

10 øre Knud Rasmussen (1879-1933), Founder of the settlement

15 øre Danish flag in front of Mount Thule

25 øre Church of Thule

30 øre Walrus (*Odobenus rosmarus*)

45 øre Kap York

The American (New York) edition

During the Second World War, Greenland's ties with Denmark were increasingly severed. There was also a shortage of stamps. An inquiry was sent to the American Bank Note Company in New York to find out if they could supply postage stamps. From 1 February 1945, the stamps produced in the USA were available in Greenland and at the Danish Consulate in New York (Fig. 16).

Fig. 16: 1945 Definitive stamps »American issue« - Scan FB-NET.DK

1/5/7 øre Harbour seal (*Phoca groenlandica*)
10/15 øre King Christian X (1870-1947)
30 øre Dog sled
1,00 kr. Polar bear (*Ursus maritimus*)
2,00 kr. Inuit in a kayak
5,00 kr. Eider (*Somateria mollissima*)



Following Denmark's liberation from Nazi Germany, the stamps bearing the three-line overprint »DANMARK / BEFRIET / 5. MAJ 1945« reappeared (Fig. 17). It is rumoured that the Danish ambassador to the USA had the original designs from the Commercial Stationery Company printed with red or blue lettering. There is some uncertainty regarding variants with reversed colours and upside-down prints. Are they genuine varieties, deliberately produced printing errors, or even forgeries? After all, they are traded and collected.

Fig. 17: 1945 Definitive stamp »DANMARK BEFRIET 5. MAJ 1945« - Scan FB-NET.DK



Social issues depicted on Postage Stamps

A close analysis of the reasons for spending reveals that certain topics recur time and again. Alongside many positive aspects, there are also social problems.

From the 17th century until the early 20th century, Denmark held possessions - in some cases only sporadically - in the form of ports, bases and plantations in Danish Guinea/West Africa (1658-1850), Danish West Indies/Caribbean (1666-1917) and in Danish East Indies (1620-1868). The Danish West Indies even issued stamps between 1856 and 1917. In Europe, the Faroe Islands and Iceland were once part of the Danish colonial empire. And Greenland, which is the focus here.

Through systematic violence, oppression, the deprivation of rights and the exploitation of the indigenous population, the transfer of resources, local slavery and the transatlantic slave trade, Denmark joined the ranks of the colonial powers. Although their own soldiers did not massacre entire population groups, as others did, the example of Greenland reveals other insidious methods that continue to this day and have a lasting impact on the lives of many Greenlanders.

It is to the great credit of Tusass and the editors of the customer magazine »Greenland Collector« that social issues such as alcoholism, unemployment, poverty, depression, drug abuse, violence, homelessness and suicide are not, as is often the case elsewhere, swept under the carpet, but have been and continue to be featured on commemorative stamps and in the magazine. Several stamps on advisory services and support have been published.

Focus: Advisory services and support services	Year
People with disabilities/Support for them (surcharge stamp)	1983
Regional Association for People with Intellectual and Physical Disabilities in Greenland (surcharge stamp)	1996
Support for the homeless in Greenland: Café Kialaarfik and the NoINI Association (surcharge stamp)	2014
Kofoeds-School for the unemployed and people in precarious social circumstances, Nuuk (surcharge stamp and souvenir folder/booklet)	2017
The Salvation Army in Greenland (surcharge stamp and souvenir folder/booklet)	2019
Greenlandic houses in Denmark (Aalborg, Aarhus, Odense, Copenhagen) (surcharge stamp and souvenir folder/booklet)	2021
Greenlandic Patient Home in Copenhagen (surcharge stamp and souvenir folder/booklet)	2023
Greenlandic Council for Gender Equality (NALI) (surcharge stamp and souvenir folder/booklet)	2025

Sources: Data source for the analyses: Michel Editorial Team: Michel Europa, Vol. 10: Skandinavien 2025/2026 (E 10), Issue 110, 834 pages, Munich, 2025, hardcover, Schwaneberger Verlag GmbH, language: German; POST Greenland/Tusass Greenland (ed.): Greenland Collector, Tasilaq, Greenland, or Otterup, Denmark, years 5–30, 2000-2025, language: English; the author's own synopsis.

The issue of discrimination was highlighted on a stamp in 2022, when the Greenlandic woman Nanna Knudsen (b. 1947) was awarded the KAFKAT, the honorary prize of the Danish Association for Legal Policy (RPF) (Fig. 19). As a teacher and interpreter, she dedicated decades of her life to fostering understanding between the people of Greenland and Denmark. In her not insignificant opinion, Greenlanders still find themselves at the very bottom of the sad hierarchy when it comes to racism.

Fig. 18: Table »Focus on Advisory Services and Support« © HZ

The lives of disadvantaged children

Fig. 19: 2024 Everyday Heroes (II), Nanna Knudsen © Tusass



Fig. 20: 2004 80th anniversary of the Greenlandic Children's Association (FGB) - Scan Jansen



Fig. 21: 2005 50 years of the »Save the Children« association - Scan FB-NET.DK



Fig. 22: 2012 Support for the rights of children and young people by UNICEF and the Government of Greenland (NAKUUSA) - Scan Jansen

The lives of disadvantaged children, in particular, feature prominently in the Greenland Post's issuing policy (three examples: Figs. 20-22). The magazine wrote bluntly: »Most children in Greenland are fine and are growing up in social and economic security. But for far too large a group of children in Greenland life looks quite different. They are growing up with alcoholic parents, their homes are characterised by violence and the parents' lacking ability to provide the most basic care, like food, clothes, safety and security. Far too many children in Greenland are marked by neglect, including sexual abuse. Many children and juveniles have untreated traumas from grief and loss, which nobody in the family is concerned about.«²

This is not the place to go into detail about the often precarious social position of Greenlanders within Danish society. Anyone wishing to find out more should look up the following keywords relating to Greenland: proselytisation, colonialism, forced resettlement, cultural dominance and measures of forced assimilation against Inuit culture, institutional and structural discrimination, child removal (the 1951 »Little Danes« experiment involving the forced re-education of Greenlandic children in Denmark and dogmatic assessments of parental competence in the present day), as well as forced contraception (the IUD scandal of the 1960s and 1970s).

There is a lack of stamps that convey the message of improved relations between Greenlanders and Danes to the world. Is it not available, or

is it something that is currently missing from the Tusass catalogue? Would it perhaps not only be necessary for Greenlandic artists to design stamps on given themes, but for a Greenlandic man or woman to be responsible for the issue policy at the actual control centers? Tusass has a post for a Philatelic Manager. Since the philatelic division was transferred from Denmark to Greenland in 1989, only Lars Cortzen, a native of Greenland, has held this post, from 1990 to 1993. All the other six were native Danes, one was a native of South Korea, one was Finnish, and there has never been a woman in the role.

According to the current manager, Allan Pertti Frandsen (Fig. 24), his responsibilities include product development, drafting contracts with artists and security printers, a limited role in marketing, and attending trade fairs and exhibitions. In his own words, he is responsible for putting together the full annual programme of Greenlandic stamps. The Tusass Executive Board finally approves the finalised stamp programme for the relevant planning year. Mr Frandsen comments on a number of issues later in the article.

2 Jakobsen, Mimi: The »Save the Children Fund« in Greenland, in: *Greenland Collector*, Vol. 10, No. 1, January 2005, p. 6; the Danish woman Mimi Jakobsen (b. 1948) served as a politician, minister and secretary-general of the Danish section of the »International Save the Children Alliance«.

Hunting in Greenland

When the first waves of migration to Greenland began more than 4,000 years ago and, over the course of millennia, gave rise to several cultures (Saqqaq, Tunit-Dorset, Thule, Vikings, and others), there was simply no alternative but to make use of all the natural resources available from the local flora and fauna in order to survive (Figs. 25-26). People developed a system of utilisation that made full use of the entire hunted animal, thereby making their way of life self-sufficient. This holistic approach involved making full use of the animal's body for food and fodder, clothing, everyday items, medicinal and other purposes. The products obtained were used for bartering and, later, for sale and to generate income. Then as now, it is a widely held belief among the Inuit that, although they make their living by killing animals, they do not kill for the sake of killing. The animals they hunt provide for their livelihood. What a contrast to tourists who go hunting purely for the thrill of killing, so they can show off their trophies back home.

In addition to the issue of mere survival, the psychological aspects of indigenous cultures must not be overlooked. The mental well-being of these people is rooted in spirituality, traditions, mutual appreciation and respect, and a deep connection with nature and the environment. The Inuit do not regard themselves as the owners of the land, but merely as the custodians of these

Focus: Disadvantaged children	Year
Greenlandic Children's Aid (surcharge stamp)	1968
International Year of the Child	1979
International Youth Year	1985
The Charitable Initiative »Children Are People, Too« by PAARISA - the Public Health Authority of the Greenland Home Rule Administration (surcharge stamp and miniature sheet)	2002
80 years »Foreningen af grønlandske Børn« (FGB) - The Society of Greenlandic Children (surcharge stamp and miniature sheet)	2004
50 years of the »Save the Children Fund« (surcharge stamp and miniature sheet)	2005
»Children in Greenland« - Crown Princess Mary and Crown Prince Frederik (surcharge stamp and miniature sheet)	2006
Amnesty Kalaallit Nunaats (KN Greenland) - Support for the United Nations Children's Convention in Greenland (stamp and miniature sheet)	2007
NAKUUSA (»Let's be strong«) - A children's rights project between UNICEF Denmark and Naalakkersuisut (the Government of Greenland) (surcharge stamp and miniature sheet)	2012
»Meeqqat Inuunerissut Bedre Børneliv« (MIBB - »Better Child life«) - Children's rights organisation in Greenland (surcharge stamp and miniature sheet)	2013
»Meeqqat Inuusuttullu Oqaloqatigiinnittarfiat« (MIO - Counselling Centre for Children and Young People) (surcharge stamp, miniature sheet and souvenir folder/booklet)	2016
Watercolours by Queen Margrethe II of Denmark (surcharge stamp and souvenir folder/booklet in favour of the »Association for Greenlandic Children«)	2018
Crown Princess Mary 50th Birthday (surcharge stamp, miniature sheet and souvenir folder/booklet in favour of the »Mælkebøtte/Dandelion Centre for children and young people« in Nuuk)	2022
Tusaannga Counselling Service (»Hear me«) for children and young people (surcharge stamp, miniature sheet and souvenir folder/booklet)	2024

The same source references apply as for the overview »Focus on Advisory Services and Support«; the author's own synopsis.



Fig. 23: Table »Focus on Disadvantaged Children«
© HZ

Fig. 24: Allan Pertti Frandsen, Philatelic Manager at Tusass since 2007 © Frandsen



Fig. 25: 2014-2015 Life as a Hunter (I, II) Hunting and Fishing © Tusass

0,50 kr. Hunters and prey animals in North Greenland
11,00 kr. Hunters and prey animals in West Greenland
19,00 kr. Hunters and prey animals in East Greenland
45,00 kr. Hunters and prey animals in South Greenland

communal resources. The NoINI slogan, »No one owns our Arctic land, we share it«, encapsulates their conviction. No private ownership rights can be established in respect of the land; in other words, you only have the right to use the site on which your house stands.

The welfare and survival of animals must be taken into account. A cautionary example is the bowhead whale (*Balaena mysticetus*), whose population was almost wiped out as early as the 1930s. Hunting is now subject to restrictions and quotas, including for the Inuit, and these vary by region. In fact, there are now only a few communities that rely exclusively on hunting for their livelihood, particularly in northern and eastern Greenland, where economic alternatives are scarce. In 2023, approximately 2,000 hunting licences were issued to professional hunters and approximately 4,500 to recreational hunters (Greenland in Figures 2025, p. 24).



Fig. 26: 1984 Polar bear kills seal hunter - drawing by Kårale Andreassen (1890-1934) - Scan FB-NET.DK

Media and NGOs

Three species of animal have come under particular scrutiny, especially in the media: seals, walruses and whales. Whilst seal hunting has a long tradition and seal meat continues to play a central role in the diet of hunting families and in feeding sled dogs, traditional hunting methods have also led to objections being raised by numerous animal welfare organisations. It is now believed that shooting is the main method of killing the animals.

Despite all the slander, however, the NGOs (Greenpeace, WWF, PETA, the IWC (International Whaling Commission) and others) do have one thing in common: they do not condemn the Inuit's subsistence hunting to meet their own needs, provided that there is no risk of the extinction of individual species or the destruction of ecosystems, and provided that hunting quotas are adhered to. Purely commercial, profit-driven killing - such as the slaughter of seal pups solely for their fur - is, however, condemned just as strongly as trophy hunting and the hunting of endangered species. Greenlandic stamps feature a wide variety of depictions of the local wildlife; here are five examples of animals (Fig. 27) and six examples of marine fauna (Fig. 28).



Fig. 27: 1969-1976 Greenland's wildlife - Scans Jansen

- 1 kr. Bowhead whale (*Balaena mysticetus*)**
- 2 kr. Narwhal (*Monodon monoceros*)**
- 5 kr. Polar bear (*Ursus maritimus*) with cubs**
- 10 kr. Walrus (*Odobenus rosmarus*)**
- 25 kr. Musk ox (*Ovibos moschatus*)**



Fig. 28: 1981-1986 Marine fauna - Scans FB-NET.DK

- 10,00 kr. Northern shrimp (*Pandalus borealis*)**
- 10,00 kr. Spotted wolffish (*Anarhichas minor*)**
- 10,00 kr. Greenland halibut (*Reinhardtius hippoglossoides*)**
- 10,00 kr. Capelin (*Mallotus villosus*)**
- 10,00 kr. Atlantic cod (*Gadus morrhua*)**
- 10,00 kr. Atlantic salmon (*Salmo salar*)**

The sled dogs

Another aspect is inextricably linked to hunting in Greenland: sled dogs. Just as horses were once used everywhere as working, draught and farm animals in agriculture and forestry, sled dogs serve primarily as working animals, not as pets or family members (Fig. 29). In times of extreme hardship, Greenland dogs were even regarded as a last resort for food. Tourists are always warned about the animals, as they are semi-wild and must be kept on a lead in accordance with the law once they reach the age of six months. Nor do they need pity for having to live outdoors in the cold, as they have a particularly thick undercoat and are very hardy and resilient (Fig. 30). A characteristic feature is its howling, like that of a wolf. If they are no longer of use due to their age, exhaustion, injury or illness, they are often killed if keeping and feeding them any longer places an economically unsustainable burden on the hunting family. Nowadays, alternatives such as rehoming and care support are increasingly being offered. Technical innovations (snowmobiles), the decline in the number of hunters and climate change (Fig. 31) have drastically reduced the number of sled dogs in recent decades. According to various sources, there are currently between 12,000 and 15,000 Greenland dogs, though their numbers are declining.



Fig. 29: 2007 Dog sled, painting by Jens Rosing (1925-2008) - Scan FB-NET.DK

Anyone with a soft spot for animals might, after reading these lines, condemn the Inuit who practise the hunting methods described and treat their sled dogs so mercilessly. But those who live in glass houses shouldn't throw stones; instead, they should reflect on the harsh realities of livestock farming, factory farming and the massive consumption of meat in their own country, and support measures to improve the situation.

To be continued (Part 2 of 2)



Fig. 31 2010 A polar bear hunting seals in 1990 and 2010, a comic by Robert Holmene (b. 1969) - Scan FB-NET.DK



Fig. 30: 2003 The Greenland Dog (Kalaallit Qimmiat) - Scans FB-NET.DK

**4,50 kr. Puppies playing
4,75 kr. Adult animal
6,00 kr. Sled dog in a harness**

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The First Stamps of The Spanish Post Office in Andorra

Boštjan Petauer FRPSL writes:

Andorra (Spanish: Andorra, French: Andorre) is located in a high mountain valley in the Pyrenees, on the border between France and Spain. More than a third of the country lies above the forest line. The highest mountain is Coma Pedrose, which is 2,946 meters high. Andorra is one of the Catalan regions and the only one that is not part of another country. The country's area is 468 square km, and it has a population of approximately 80,000.

The capital is Andorra la Vella in Catalan, Andorra la Vieja in Spanish (Castilian), and Andorre la Vieille in French, all of which mean City of Andorra and not old Andorra as it is often wrongly translated, Andorra. The currency is the euro, and the country does not have its own army.

Due to its location, Andorra has a relatively cold mountain climate. In January, average temperatures are -7 °C, while in summer the temperature rises to 26 °C.

The majority of the population speaks Spanish (58%), Catalan is spoken by 35% of the population, the remaining 7% speak French, and the predominant religion is Roman Catholic.

Andorra has been independent since the time of Charlemagne (born 747, reigned 768 to 814, when he died), who, according to legend, founded it in 778 in gratitude for the participation of its inhabitants in his battles with the Moors. The word Andorra comes from the Arabic word „Aldarra „, meaning a densely forested place.

In 1278, a principality without a prince was established, the supreme power being divided (the so-called condominium) between the Bishop of Urgell (Spain) and the Count of Foix (now the legal successor is President of France). On January 25, 1981, the Supreme Council of the Valleys (parliament) adopted the first constitution after 703 years of independence, which legalized the establishment of a government and administrative reform.

Until 1993, Andorra had no separation of legislative, executive and judicial powers. It was not until the 1993 constitution that Andorra was established as a sovereign state with a democratic parliamentary system. The two princes remained supreme heads of state (represented by a representative). Executive power was transferred to the Prime Minister, who was responsible to the parliament. Only a part of the population has the right to vote. Citizenship can only be obtained after 25 years of residence in Andorra.

Andorra is divided into seven parròquies (literally parish, but actually municipality):

- Andorra la Vella
- Canillo
- Encamp
- Escaldes-Engordany
- La Massana
- Ordino
- Sant Julia de Loria



Map of Andorra on the stamp

Andorra has practically no natural resources, except for water. In the past, Andorra, despite its mountainous location, was an agricultural country (known for example for its tobacco), but now it is mainly engaged in livestock farming. Smuggling was once an important, if not the main, activity, but today, despite the country's duty-free status, it has largely died out.

The country has a highly developed tourism industry, especially winter tourism. There are approximately 400 hotels and sports and entertainment centers.

Andorra is not a member of the European Union. Until 2002, the only official currencies were the French franc and the Spanish peseta, which, like in France and Spain, were replaced by the euro.

As it is not part of the European Union, Andorra is known as a tax haven. Many companies that only have a post office box here benefit from low taxes, while ordinary tourists can enjoy low prices for alcohol, tobacco and other goods. cosmetics, petroleum products, as well as technical goods.

Postal system in Andorra

Andorra does not have its own post office, which does not mean that postal traffic is not taken care of in it. On the contrary: it is even very well taken care of, as it is taken care of by both the Spanish and French postal administrations, which is a unique case in the world in modern times. It should also be noted that in most places there are offices of both, otherwise completely separate postal systems. And in another way, Andorra is a world postal specialty: the transfer of ordinary letters within the country was until recently exempt from postage by both postal administrations. This fact was also tested by the author of this article, who spent a week in Andorra in August 1995 and still keeps some letters from that time, which I sent from various offices of both postal administrations to my then address in Pas-de-la Casa, which is located right on the border with France at an altitude of just over two thousand meters.

Spanish Post Office in Andorra

Although official postal connections between Spain and Andorra began in 1837 (a similar observation applies to postal connections between Andorra and France), the first Spanish post office (and its agencies) were only opened on 1 January 1928. The main post office was in Andorra-la-Vela, and agencies were initially located in Encamp, Canillo, La Massana, Les Escaldes, Ordino and San Julian de Loria. Agencies in Soldeu and Santa Coloma were opened somewhat later. Agency is the right term: because postal traffic was very small at the time (more on this in the chapter on letters) and the costs for an independent postal employee would be too high, postal service was carried out in addition to their regular work in premises where other activities were mainly carried out. Those who carried out this activity (and/or their possible employees) also carried out postal tasks in addition to their own. And this continued later. Let me give you a few examples: a bakery, a tailor's workshop and a souvenir shop. Even during my aforementioned visit to Andorra in 1995, the Spanish Post Office in San Julian de Loria (near the Spanish border) was located in a space that would best be described as a newsagent's.

Since Andorran stamps did not yet exist at the time of the opening of the post office, the then regular Spanish postage stamps with the image of King Alfonso XIII from 1922/32 and the express mail stamp from 1925 were used in circulation.

It should be noted here that the stamps issued by the Spanish Post Office both in Spain and in its possessions and colonies could be used wherever this post office operated; that is, Spanish stamps in the colonies and Andorra and vice versa. This practice continued well after the first Andorran stamps were issued. Moreover, some Spanish stamps were even regularly sold at Andorran post offices for a long time; this was especially true for stamps of such denominations in which Andorran stamps were not available.

However, letters and other postal items from the period between the opening of the post office and the issuance of the first Andorran stamps are very rare.

It was different with the French post office. Only stamps issued for Andorra could be used to pay postage there, French stamps could not. This was and still is the case today.

First stamps

On March 28, 1928, the first stamps of the Spanish Post Office in Andorra were issued. They were overprinted Spanish stamps (overprint Correos Andorra) of the then current Spanish definitive series with a portrait of the King Alfonso XIII and one express stamp.

The series of stamps issued consists of 12 denominations from 2 cents (c) to 10 pesetas (pta), with the 1, 4 and 10 pesetas depicting the king in profile, while the other denominations depict him head-on. The 2c, 10c, 15c, 20c, 30c, 40c and 1 pta denominations are overprinted in red, the others in black.

The first four stamps (2c, 5c, 10c, and 15c) were overprinted twice, the others only once. The probable reason for this is that they apparently made a big mistake when planning the first overprint and overprinted significantly too few stamps. As an example, let me give the values for 5c, 10c, and 15c, where only 5,000 stamps were first overprinted, and then 60,000 each. Otherwise, the circulations are much smaller than mentioned, and even fewer stamps were sold. The fewest overprinted stamps were for 10 ptas, of which only 5,700 were sold.



Complete set of overprinted definitive stamps and both express stamps

All stamps, except the 2c and the 25c express stamps, have a six-digit control number on the back, which always begins with A 000,XXX for Andorran stamps. The purpose of these numbers is twofold: to prevent counterfeiting and to make it easier to track the sale of potentially stolen stamps. As will be seen in the chapter on forgeries, this goal has not always been achieved.

After about seven months (in the autumn of 1928), a second express stamp was printed instead of the previous one, which was identical in appearance to the first, but had a control number on the back.

The stamps of this issue exist in three perforations: comb 12x 11 ½ and 13x 12 ½ and line 14; stamps in this perforation are generally the rarest. Not all stamps exist in all perforations, some of them are very rare in the aforementioned perforation 14. Why these stamps exist in three perforations with a relatively small circulation is a question to which it is impossible to give a reliable answer.



Check numbers for definitive and express stamps



Set of sample stamps in various perforations from 5c to 10 Ptas

The perforation of the issue in question is generally poor to catastrophic, which is also visible in Figure 1 for some values, making neatly centered stamps rare. According to literature, only about 20 percent of stamps are neatly centered.

An interesting feature is the control number A 000,000. This number on the back of the stamp means that it was a sample and corresponds to what is usually overprinted in other countries with the words Specimen, Muster, Muestra and similar. These stamps, whose colors differ slightly from those on regularly issued values, were intended for sending to the UPU (Universal Postal Union) for distribution to members and as gifts to participants in various congresses and are quite rare.

The literature first reported that such overprints existed for 18 stamps (in various perforations), then only for 13; the rest were supposedly recognized as fakes. However, I believe that it is not always easy to make a final assessment of what is genuine and what is fake. For more on this, see the chapter on fakes.

Special features of the first edition

In this chapter, I discuss the specifics of basic stamps and the specifics of overprints.

Special features on basic stamps

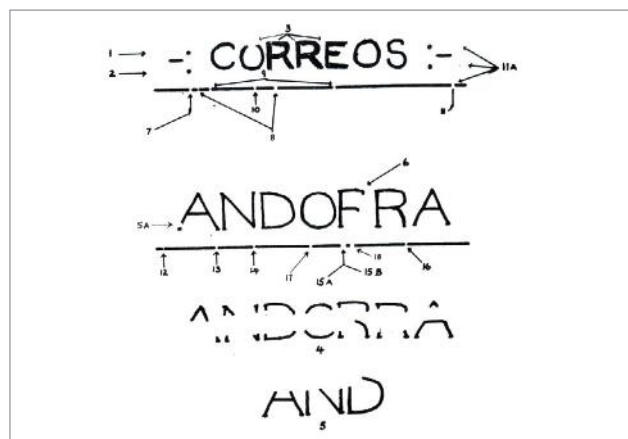
Among the special features of the basic stamps, it is worth mentioning the beautiful range of colors and shades in most values under 1 peseta, with the most beautiful ones being 5c, 10c, 15c and 20c.



Three colors of the brand for 5c

Special features of overprints

The overprints were obviously made very quickly, which is why they are full of minor errors. Since they are not visible on the stamps themselves, they are shown in schematic form. It should be added that not all the special features are always in the same place for all values.



Overprinting Specifics Scheme – From the book by W. A Jacques Andorra -Andorre

Forgeries

There are several types of forgeries of both the overprint (two) and the control numbers on the back - there are eight of them. Three are known so far with the number A000,000, i.e. the sample.

The forgeries of the overprint differ from the genuine one mainly in the dimensions of the individual elements (the length of the lines and the word «ANDORRA») and the type of letters used. It is worth noting that some of the forgeries were produced in the same printing house where the «real» stamps were also printed (according to the literature, there was no real control in the printing house), so it is sometimes difficult to determine what is a genuine stamp and what was made to serve someone.

There is also a forged double overprint of the value for 10 ptas ; the original double overprint of this value, as well as any other, is unknown. There are also forged stamps (ordinary round and rectangular for registered mail) with the name of the main post office in Andorra la Vella.



One of the counterfeit control numbers A000,000 (sample) - in pairs - compared to the original control number

Letters

The issue in question was in circulation for a total of 20 months, after which it was replaced by a new definitive set with provincial motifs. The previous set still retained its franking validity, although few letters were franked with it later.

In general, cancelled stamps of the first issue are rarer than uncanceled ones, and letters, including those inspired by philately, are even rarer. The reasons for this are not difficult to find: the small population of the country (a total of 4 to 5 thousand at the time of the issue of the first series of stamps, not all of whom could read and write) as well as the aforementioned short period of issue are undoubtedly the two main ones. In addition, tourism in Andorra was not as developed at that time as it is today.

Quite a few letters are (allegedly) philatelic-inspired and/or incorrectly franked (mostly over rated. In philately, letters that are overrated by more than 10% (this criterion is used, for example, by the Michel catalogue) are generally considered philatelic. I would hardly dare to follow this rule in all cases for letters franked with the issue in question. Especially in the agencies, the employees (as we have already said, they were not postal employees!) clearly had a poorer knowledge of postal rates. Perhaps they did not always have all the values at their disposal, as the frankings on some of the letters and postcards shown in this article suggest.

We have already mentioned the possibility of franking postal items with Spanish and/or Andorran stamps. Given the above, mixed frankings are also possible, one of which is shown in the picture.



Registered letter from Andorra la Vella to Madrid, correctly franked 55c (25c domestic postage and 30c registered postage) with Andorran and Spanish stamps. Madrid arrival stamp on the back

Most often, postal items are cancelled with the stamp of the main office in Andorra la Vella, while letters with agency stamps are much rarer. Here we should only mention the postmark of the town of Soldeu, where the postal agency operated for only about five years (1928-1933), which is why the postmark of this town is the rarest of all Andorran stamps. The following pictures show some interesting letters and postcards with various stamps.



Registered letter from Andorra la Vella to Great Britain, franked for a total of 1.50 Pta, overfranked (correct franking 40c for a letter up to 20g, registered postage 40c), Barcelona transit stamp (for registered letters) on the back



Registered letter from Andorra la Vella to the USA, franked with a 1 Pta stamp overfranked (correct total franking 55c). Probable philatelic influence, the addressee was a well-known stamp collector (and dealer?). Barcelona transit stamp (for registered letters) and 3 American incoming stamps on the back



Postcard sent from Las Escaldas to London, franked 30c (5c overfranked – probably due to a shortage of 5c stamps)

As is customary in countries, Andorra also has tariffs for domestic mail and items destined for abroad. It is worth noting that domestic mail included, in addition to those destined for Spain, those sent to Spanish colonies (there were still quite a few at the time of the first Andorran stamps) and the countries of the Iberian Union. These are countries with which Spain had (and to a considerable extent still has) closer economic, political, historical and cultural ties, especially in Latin America. For reasons that are unknown, the USA was also treated in this way until 1960, which answers the question of why the domestic tariff was used for mail destined for this country until then. However, be careful: this only applied to mail sent via Spanish (but not French) mail. Some such letters - the USA was apparently a frequent destination for Andorran mail - are shown in the following pictures



A letter from Soldeu, USA, correctly franked at a reduced rate, the same as for domestic mail. The postmark from this place is the rarest Spanish postmark in Andorra

Conclusion

In my article, I have tried to present, in pictures with examples from my own collection as well as in words, the interesting features of the first issue of stamps of the Spanish Post Office in Andorra and perhaps inspire some reader to start collecting them. However, be careful: beware of fakes. These also appear on eBay (although not as often as with the first issue of stamps of the French Post Office in Andorra), where probably many of our readers at least occasionally buy philatelic material for their collections.



Letter from Encamp to the USA, franked at domestic rates. Andorra la Vella transit stamp on the reverse

Literature and sources

Among the literature, I do not cite catalogs where only basic information about the edition in question can be obtained (Michel, Yvert, Gibbons and Scott), but only those that discuss this edition in more detail.

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Philately in 2035

An Initiative by Collaboration Crew

Markand Dave FRPSL writes:

Outside, a gentle rain fell over Boston on a Monday morning, while inside the Boston Convention Center a different kind of energy was gathering. By 9 a.m., the room hosting the Collaboration Crew's "Philately in 2035" panel discussion was filled to capacity. Every seat was occupied, and many attendees remained standing, unable to find a chair yet unwilling to miss the conversation. The sight was a powerful reminder that, despite frequent discussions about the challenges facing our hobby, the passion, enthusiasm and enduring love for philately remain very much alive.

One of the most engaging and thought-provoking events held during the Boston 2026 World Expo was the Collaboration Crew's panel discussion entitled "Philately in 2035" on 25th May, 2026. Attracting an audience of more than one hundred philatelists from around the world, the session sought to explore two important questions: what philately will and should look like in 2035, and what it will take to get there?

The panel brought together a distinguished group of philatelists representing different sectors of the hobby. The discussion featured Mark Banchik, President of the American Philatelic Society, who spoke about the future of organised philately; Markand Dave FRPSL, who examined the opportunities and challenges presented by Artificial Intelligence; Jonas Hällström RDP FRPSL, Managing Director of Corinphila, who discussed leadership; Alex Haimann RDP FRPSL, VP of Cherrystone, who explored strategies for attracting new collectors; and Jean Wang FRPSC, VP of the Philatelic Specialists Society of Canada, who addressed the promotion of the hobby to wider audiences.

The session was moderated by Suzanne Rae FRPSL, Harold Krische and Paul Sobon, whose thoughtful questions and skillful guidance ensured a lively and engaging exchange of ideas throughout the discussion.



The Future of Organised Philately

Opening the discussion, Mark Banchik considered the future direction of philately and the role that organised societies will play in the decades ahead. While acknowledging the demographic challenges facing many philatelic organisations, he expressed optimism regarding the long-term future of the hobby. Philately, he argued, is not dying but evolving: much of today's collecting simply takes forms the hobby has not traditionally measured, as anyone outbid by dozens of rival bidders on eBay will appreciate.

Banchik argued that the central challenge facing the hobby is one of relevance: how organisations remain relevant, and how they meet, or even exceed, the expectations of collectors. He pointed to the pandemic as an inflection point that compelled societies to experiment. Virtual programming, once viewed with scepticism, has proved a striking success, regularly drawing far larger audiences than traditional in-person meetings and reaching many enthusiasts who had never previously taken part.

He stressed the value of a willingness to try, to measure and to adapt, building clear metrics into initiatives such as the American Philatelic Society's strategic plan, so that successful ideas can be expanded and weaker ones reconsidered. Above all, he urged organisations to reach the many 'unaffiliated' collectors who build their collections at home yet have never joined a club or attended a show, and to strengthen the connections between societies both nationally and internationally.

His remarks set the tone for a discussion that focused not on decline, but on opportunity.

Leadership in a Changing Environment

Jonas Hällström approached the topic from a leadership perspective. Drawing upon his extensive experience in both organised philately and the international auction world, he highlighted the importance of strong leadership at every level of the hobby.

Successful organisations, he argued, must balance tradition with innovation. Whilst preserving the standards, ethics and scholarship that define philately, leaders must also be willing to embrace change and encourage new ideas.

Hällström spoke about leadership with conviction and expressed strong optimism for the future of the hobby. He emphasised the value of clear and committed leadership, of leaders who set a direction and deliver on it, and encouraged the major philatelic societies and the trade to work more closely together in carrying the hobby forward.

Attracting New Collectors

Alex Haimann addressed one of the most frequently discussed topics within philately: attracting new participants to the hobby. Rather than focusing on age, Haimann encouraged philatelists to think in terms of peer groups: people who share a profession, a body of knowledge or a particular interest. Age, he argued, is often irrelevant; what brings people together is shared expertise and curiosity. A collector's professional colleagues, for example, form a natural peer group in which the common ground is the subject itself, not the generation.

Philately possesses countless fascinating stories waiting to be discovered and shared. But Haimann was equally clear that sparking someone's interest is only the first step; the connection must then be completed. "You need to be able to have the wonderment moment," he said, meaning the moment a newcomer holds a stamp in their own hand and feels its fascination. A film or an online display

can capture attention, yet without that tangible, welcoming experience the connection is never finished. By presenting the hobby as a means of exploration and discovery rather than simply accumulation,

societies and collectors can appeal to a much broader audience. His observations resonated strongly with many attendees, particularly those involved in exhibiting and education.

Promoting the Hobby

Jean Wang focused on the importance of promotion and public engagement. She discussed the need for philatelists to communicate beyond the existing philatelic community and to share the stories behind their stamps and covers more widely.

The hobby possesses an extraordinary wealth of knowledge and expertise, but much of it remains hidden within specialist literature, exhibitions and society publications. Wang argued that philatelists must become more effective at sharing their stories with wider audiences. Many neighbouring communities share philately's interests but lack access to its material: historical, genealogical and military-history societies, and audiences such as her own medical colleagues. By reaching out to them, collectors can share knowledge, win new friends and show what the hobby has to offer.

Jean shared information about "Freestyle Philately", a recent initiative of the Royal Philatelic Society of Canada (RPSC) to promote the sharing of philatelic items in a non-competitive setting. Freestyle Philately made its successful debut June 12 at ROYAL*2026*ROYALE, the 98th Convention and Exhibition of the RPSC.



Artificial Intelligence and Philately

My own presentation examined the potential impact of Artificial Intelligence (AI) on the future of philately. Artificial Intelligence has rapidly emerged as one of the most significant technological developments of our time. While its

influence is already being felt across numerous professions and industries, its implications for philately are only beginning to be explored.

Rather than viewing AI as a threat, I suggested that philatelists should regard it as a powerful assistant in research, exhibiting, literature and education. One principle, however, must guide its use: AI should be the assistant, and the philatelist must always remain the master.

The opportunities are considerable.

AI can assist researchers by analysing vast quantities of philatelic literature, auction catalogues, journals and archival records in a fraction of the time required by traditional methods. Information that may previously have taken months to locate could potentially be identified within minutes.

For exhibitors, AI may become an invaluable research assistant. It can help organise information, identify references, suggest avenues for further investigation and assist in presenting complex material more effectively.

Similarly, literature authors may benefit from AI-assisted indexing, translation, summarisation and document analysis. Philatelic libraries and archives could also employ AI technologies to digitise, organise and preserve valuable historical resources, making them more accessible to future generations.

However, I also emphasised the limitations of current AI systems. At this stage, for instance, AI cannot truly see an item the way an experienced philatelist can: it may not recognise a forged overprint, a repaired stamp or a faked marking that an expert would catch at a glance, and it interprets the storyline we give it rather than understanding the material itself. Artificial Intelligence can generate errors, misunderstand context and occasionally produce entirely incorrect conclusions. Verification, source checking and independent judgement therefore remain essential. AI should never replace philatelic knowledge and expertise; rather, it should complement and enhance them.

Ultimately, the responsibility for accuracy will always rest with the philatelist.

Although the panel was discussing philately in 2035, significant change may take far less than a decade. The next five years alone could witness developments that fundamentally alter how philatelists research, write, exhibit and share knowledge.

I concluded my remarks with the observation:

"Artificial Intelligence will not decide the future of philately. The future of philately will be decided by philatelists, and by how intelligently we choose to use AI."

This statement appeared to capture an important theme running throughout the discussion. Technology itself is neither good nor bad. Its value depends entirely upon how individuals and organisations choose to use it.

Looking Towards 2035

One of the most encouraging aspects of the session was the optimism expressed by all panellists. Whilst challenges undoubtedly exist, there was broad agreement that philately possesses remarkable strengths upon which to build its future.

The hobby continues to attract passionate researchers, dedicated exhibitors, talented writers, committed volunteers and enthusiastic collectors. New technologies, including Artificial Intelligence, provide opportunities to preserve knowledge, expand access to information and engage future generations in ways that were previously unimaginable.



The discussion also demonstrated that the future of philately cannot be shaped by any single organisation, technology or individual. Its success will depend upon collaboration between collectors, societies, exhibitors, dealers, auction houses, libraries, museums and researchers across the world.

The enthusiastic audience participation and lively question-and-answer session confirmed that these issues are of considerable interest throughout the philatelic community.

Summing up at the close, the discussion returned to a few themes that had run through the morning. The first was relevance: the organisations that are flourishing are those that have made themselves relevant, while those that have not are quietly fading, so that relevance has become perhaps the clearest test of an organisation's health. The second was the journey itself, the task of guiding each newcomer along their own path through the hobby and keeping the joy of philately at its heart, so that everyone arrives not at the destination we might choose for them, but at the one that is right for them.

The Collaboration Crew is continuing this important conversation through future events. A meeting is being scheduled, held via Zoom, related to the evolving archival and library directions; and the second panel discussion on "Philately in 2035" is set for Stampex in London, October 28-31. The Boston 2026 session will undoubtedly be remembered as an important contribution to thinking about the future direction of our hobby.

The Boston 2026 panel discussion is available on YouTube at:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BG-lhHfWdZY>

If the energy, enthusiasm and optimism displayed by both the panelists and audience are any indication, philately in 2035 may prove to be more innovative, more accessible and more interconnected than ever before. The "collaboration" of key philatelic entities will be essential.



QR Code for YouTube video link

International Philatelic Librarian Panel Discussion



"A library is not a luxury, but one of the necessities of life." Henry Ward Beecher (1862)

Well over 150 years have elapsed since that poignant statement was pronounced. Societies' rapid technological innovation and quest for efficient access to knowledge, documentation and research, help to underscore the realities of Beechers' statement for today's world. With respect to Philately, it can easily be argued that philatelic libraries are the foundational cornerstone of the hobby and its continued development. The faster our world changes, the more essential solid foundations become! Challenges of preserving philatelic knowledge and creating efficient access to information requires a proactive visionary mission that must involve collaboration and requires comprehensive supports.

Such reflection was the basis for the Collaboration Crew opening the new Fall season of philately with a panel discussion around the directions of philatelic libraries. The question put before panel members for consideration was: "What does the ideal evolution for archival and digitalization directions for philately look like and, what will it take to get us there".

The panel brought together three key leaders of international philatelic libraries and one person from outside the philatelic domain with expertise on AI as it relates to archival initiatives and analysis. Marian Mills, head librarian and director of information services at the American Philatelic Society (APS), opened the discussion by highlighting the need to review past digitalization practices so that we can learn from their successes and challenges. Marian stressed the importance of improving metadata and collaborating with international libraries to digitize and preserve resources that are currently difficult to access. Efforts to ensure metadata standardization across libraries was cited as being instrumental in facilitating the kind of collaboration that is essential. Marian shared APS efforts to improve search functionality, especially for PDF items within the library. She highlighted efforts to implement AI solutions improvements with Optical Character Recognition (OCR) to enhance text and image searchability.

Several common threads of focus quickly became apparent with the presentation of Baasil Wilder, librarian of the Smithsonian Postal Museum. Basil focused on three types of digitalization. The importance of 'digital description' that ensures visibility and the capacity to recognize location and availability. Basil went on to emphasize the need for attention to 'digital preservation', noting that many audio-visual materials are deteriorating rapidly and require ongoing maintenance considerations. He shared numerous directions that the Smithsonian has taken in these areas including technology upgrades. Basil continued with emphasis upon the importance of 'digital enrichment' with quality metadata to ensure that searchability can be maximized. He underscored the importance of collaborative efforts across libraries to ensure quality digitization efforts continue to evolve.

The library manager for the Harry Sutherland Philatelic Library working with the Vincent Graves Greene Philatelic Research Foundation in Toronto was the next speaker. Natalie Mitchell discussed the institution's approach to digitizing archival resources and out-of-print journals to improve access for researchers across Canada. Emphasis was placed upon the importance of using existing platforms like Internet Archive and contributing to resources like the Global Philatelic Library such that wider audiences, including those outside of philately, can be reached. Natalie discussed the ongoing maintenance required for digital collections and shared examples of successful collaboration efforts to preserve digital and physical materials. This included the preservation of significant private philatelic websites and

hosting them in a static manner. It quickly became apparent that such efforts benefit from the ability of a philatelic library to nurture and maintain relationships with the owners of key collections and websites.

The fourth panelist, Edgar Barroso, is the founder of Horizons Architecture, an advanced research and AI development company that supports institutions tackling complex challenges. He presented a prototype developed during the 2026 UPU's Innovation Challenge that explored how AI could transform the use of the Universal Postal Union's archives. The prototype demonstrated how AI agents could analyze decision-making patterns across congresses and create visual narratives from historical documents. Barroso described an approach that gives individual documents "agency", enabling them to connect and communicate with one another and with human users through ontologies of semantic proximity and other computational techniques.

A vibrant open discussion ensued with some questions and comments from those joining the session. Comments underscored the value of collaboration among libraries and philatelic organizations to efficiently manage resources and support researchers and philatelists with their quest to access information. The panel addressed the role of libraries in navigating misinformation in the digital age and the importance of establishing relationships with collectors and societies to ensure the practical stewardship of valuable resources including philatelic exhibits. The group deliberated efforts to avoid duplication of work across different libraries and organizations, with suggestions for regular meetings and enhanced communication to share initiatives, resources and tools.

Our philatelic librarians have a vital role in the positive evolution of philately, and we are fortunate that many of them fully recognize the possibilities that exist and can contribute to the vision required to attain such potential. Within days of the September 2026 panel discussion, efforts were undertaken amongst the librarians for further planning related to digitization matters. These directions warrant the full support of our philatelic community.

Federation of European Philatelic Associations

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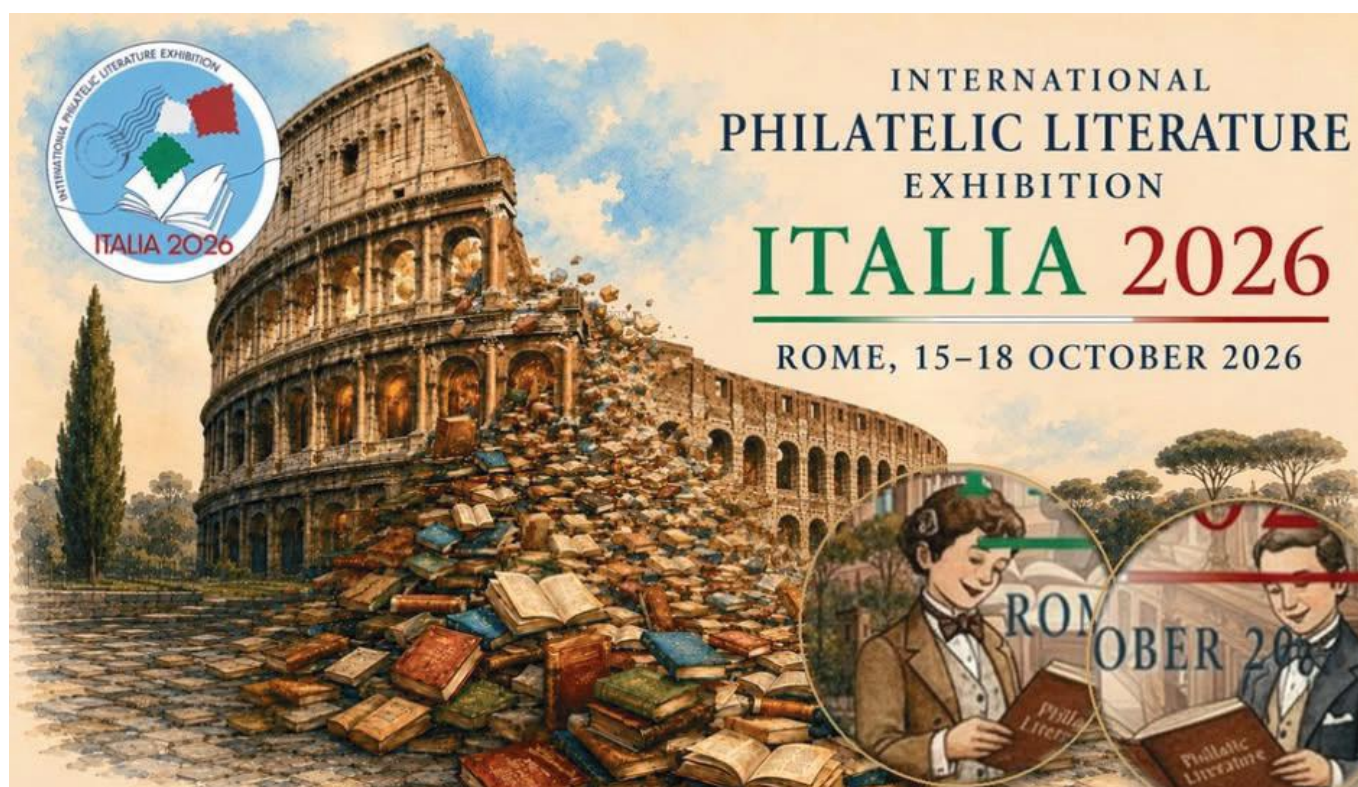
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Events Calendar

2026

7–11 October	SRBIJAFILA XVI, Belgrade, Serbia	National Exhibition with international participation, FEPA Recognition https://srbijafila.org/en
8–12 October	FILATEM 2026, A Guarda, Spain	National Thematic Exhibition
15–18 October	ITALIA 2026, Rome	European Literature Exhibition, FEPA Patronage https://italia2026.filatelia.info
18 October	FEPA Congress 2026, Rome	FEPA Annual Congress
22–24 October	International Stamp Fair, Ulm, Germany	International Stamp Fair https://briefmarken-messe.de
28–31 October	STAMPEX 2026, London, UK	International Stamp Fair https://www.stampexinternational.com
29–31 October	ÖVEBRIA 2026, St Pölten, Austria	National Exhibition http://www.bsvstpoelten.at/impressum/oevebria-2026
20–25 November	PHILATAIPEI 2026, Chinese Taipei	Specialised World Exhibition, WSC, FIP Patronage https://taipei2026.post.gov.tw/taipei2026/en/Default.jsp
21–22 November	BEIRUT 2026, Lebanon	Multinational One Frame Exhibition, FEPA Recognition
3–5 December	MONACOPHIL 2026, Monte Carlo, Monaco	International Exhibition, FEPA Recognition https://monacophil.com
15 December 2026 15 January 2027	APATIN 2026 (online)	Virtual Exhibition with international participation https://udruzenjefilatelistapaatin.org.rs

2027

14–21 February	AMSIPEX 2027 (online)	Virtual Exhibition with international participation https://www.amsipex.com
12–14 March	STAMPEX 2027 (online)	Virtual Stamp Fair https://www.stampexinternational.com
15–17 April	ECTP 2027, Bulle, Switzerland	European Championship of Thematic Philately, FEPA Patronage https://www.thema-briefmarken.ch/ectp_bulle_2027
23–25 April	HyReX 2027, Hyvinkää, Finland	National Exhibition https://www.hyfila.fi/hyrex2027
13–16 May	BALKANFILA 2027, Bucharest, Romania	Multinational Exhibition, FEPA Recognition http://balkanfila.eu
30 June – 4 July	SLOVFILEX 2027, Bratislava, Slovakia	Specialised World Exhibition, FIP Patronage, FEPA Recognition https://www.slovphilex2027.sk/en/home
4 July	FEPA Congress 2027, Bratislava, Slovakia	FEPA Annual Congress
10–12 September	NORDIA 2027, Herning, Denmark	Multinational Exhibition, FEPA Recognition https://nordia2027.dk/en
28–30 October	MULTILATERALE 2027, Ulm, Germany	Multinational Exhibition, FEPA Recognition https://multilaterale.eu
19–21 November	TimFilEx 2027, Timisoara, Romania	National Exhibition with international participation, FEPA Recognition

2028

26–27 February	CENTEX28, Helsinki, Finland	National Exhibition celebrating the centenary of Finnish exhibitions https://centex28.fi
22–26 March	PRAGA 2028	Specialised World Exhibition, FIP Patronage, FEPA Recognition https://praga2028.cz/en/home
9–10 June	IPHLA 2028, Frankfurt, Germany	International Philatelic Literature Exhibition, FEPA Patronage https://www.iphla-2028.org
8–10 September	MARE BALTICUM 2028, Hämeenlinna, Finland	Multinational Exhibition, FEPA Recognition
26–29 October	IBRA 2028, Ulm, Germany	General World Exhibition, FIP Patronage, FEPA Recognition https://www.ibra2028.com

Check the Events Calendar regularly at <https://fepanews.com/events> for the latest updates, including any last-minute changes made by the organisers.