

EUROPA NEWS



BULLETIN OF THE EUROPA STUDY UNIT

<http://www.europastudyunit.org/>



Europa Philately in all of its aspects:
CEPT/PostEurop, EU Agencies, European Cooperation, NATO, Norden, sepac, EuroMed

The Best of 2020



Collectors Choice Award



Philatelic Jury Prize



PostEurop Public Prize

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Dues Season is upon us. Please use the insert to send in your dues now. Thanks!!

**New Issues
Europa 2020
Ancient Postal Routes**

GEORGIA 1v

Issue date 30 October 2020



The stamp depicts a postal rider on horseback, and the route taken from the towns of Kojori and Tbilisi. The distance between Tbilisi and Kojori is 11 km (6.8 mi), but the road distance is almost twice that at 21.5 km (13.4 mi). Tbilisi, the capital of Georgia, is its largest city and the home of the government. The entire region in north-west Georgia is known for its architectural treasures and picturesque landscapes and is part of the UNESCO World Heritage list.

KAZAKHSTAN ss

Issue date 30 December 2020



The design features a postrider traversing the country, with various landmarks. Kazpost provides only printing information.

... No word yet on Albania

The following comes from the [PostEurop Press Release](#):

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this year's judging of the EUROPA stamps by experts was held at a later date and in a new "hybrid" format.

This meant that experts gathered both physically and others connected virtually for the Jury competition. This year's European jury composed of eight philatelic experts from various backgrounds including artists, collectors, and bloggers:



(Photo montage courtesy of the Europa Blogspot)

- 1) Botond Szebeny, [PostEurop](#), Secretary General, Belgium (Chair of the Jury)
- 2) Guy Coutant, [Royal Belgian Academy of Philately](#), Belgium
- 3) Stefan Klein, [Klein und Neumann KommunikationsDesign](#), Germany
- 4) Olaf Neumann, [Klein und Neumann KommunikationsDesign](#), Germany
- 5) Jürgen Haepers, Blog "[europa-stamps](#)", Switzerland
- 6) Eric Contesse, Blog "[timbredujura](#)", France
- 7) Marjan Osvald, [Pošta Slovenije](#), PostEurop MAC Chair, Slovenia
- 8) Emile Espen, [Post Luxembourg](#), PostEurop SPWG Vice-Chair, Luxembourg
- 9) Jana Vlachová, [PostEurop](#) (not part of the jury)

**New Issues
Europa 2020
Ancient Postal Routes**

Each stamp was considered individually. The jury members were able to scrutinize the stamps, taking into consideration multiple design aspects, including the printing and engraving techniques presented to them. The jurors cast their closed ballots in two rounds of voting and selected the Poczta Polska stamp as this year's winner. This was Poland's first time to win the prize.

This was the 9th edition of this neutral and artistic prize.



The first place winner depicts the Vistula, the longest and largest river of Poland, which has been the main communication and cultural route of the country for centuries.

The Vistula was recently on a Europa-related stamp. See EN# 438-5. —ed.

The winning design from Poland, with its special proportions in vertical format, expressed the theme in a perfect manner – colors and technique of the artwork are really modern and perfect for a small stamp.



This also marked the first time in the history of the EUROPA competition, that we had three ties for the second prize. Faroe Islands, Switzerland and Ukraine. Germany finished third.

And now, quoting from the [Europa Blogspot](#):

In cooperation with the "[Blog timbré de ma philatélie](#)" the 3rd edition of the Best Europa stamps "The Collector's Choice" competition was held during 2 months, 4 qualification rounds and 1 Grand Final in order to vote for your favorite 2020 Europa stamps set. And we have a winner! Denmark wins this 3rd "Best Europa stamps – the collector's choice" contest with 11% of the votes! Turkey is 2nd and Sweden 3rd! :



The winner of the 1st edition was Moldova and Ukraine won the 2nd edition last year.

Thus we have the three major contests for best stamp. As to be expected, there was some overlap; e.g., Turkey was first choice in the PostEurop poll. My personal favorite has always been the Jury Prize, since it is based on artistic merit and not just a popularity contest.

Still, it's fun to vote. Did your stamp win?

Because there are now so many contests, we decided a couple of years back to suspend our own little poll. Was this a good move? Let us know your thoughts. ■

New Issues
Europa 2021
Endangered National Wildlife

So begins this year's panoply of stamp issues on the theme of Endangered Wildlife. Your humble editor also collects stamps issued for the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), so I'll be collecting some stamps, such as Finland's offering, twice. Finland has already issued two booklets similar to this one for the WWF.

For all of these write-ups, I'll refer often to the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), whose Red Book is the bible for endangered species classification. Unless noted otherwise, write-ups come from Wikipedia.

SWEDEN 1v

Issue date
 14 January 2021



The **European green toad** (*Bufo viridis*) is a species of toad found in steppes, mountainous areas, semi-deserts, urban areas and other habitats in mainland Europe. In other words, it's everywhere. IUCN Red List rating is *Least Concern*.

— from Wikipedia

ÅLAND 1v

Issue date 7 May 2021



The **Moor Frog** (*Rana arvalis*) is a slim, reddish-brown, semiaquatic amphibian native to Europe and Asia. It is a member of the family *Ranidae*, or true frogs. The species has an extensive distribution across Europe. IUCN Red List rating is *Least Concern*.

— from Wikipedia

FINLAND 3v self-adhesive

Issue date 28 April 2021



Common Kingfisher
 (*Alcedo atthis*)



Mountain Apollo
 (*Parnassius apollo*)



Siberian Flying Squirrel
 (*Pteromys volans*)

The Common Kingfisher, also known as the Eurasian kingfisher, is a small bird with seven subspecies recognized within its wide distribution across Eurasia and North Africa. It is resident in much of its range, but migrates from areas where rivers freeze in winter. IUCN Red List rating is *Least Concern*.

The Mountain Apollo is a butterfly of the family *Papilionidae*. The species is named in the classical tradition for the deity Apollo. IUCN Red List rating is *Vulnerable*. The Apollo butterfly has many subspecies around the world, and some European subspecies are showing an alarming decline in numbers,

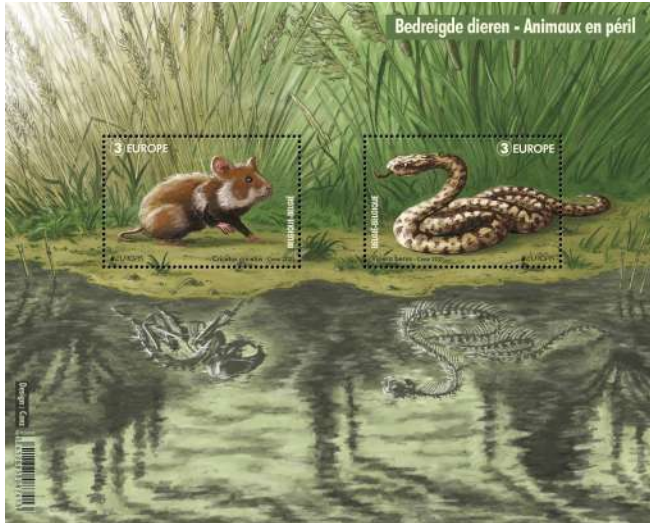
The Siberian Flying Squirrel is an Old World flying squirrel with a range from the Baltic Sea in the west to the Pacific Coast in the east. It is the only species of flying squirrel found in Europe. It is considered vulnerable within the European Union where it is now found only in Estonia, Finland and Latvia out of the 27 countries in the Union. IUCN Red List rating overall is *Least Concern*.

— from Wikipedia

New Issues
Europa 2021
Endangered National Wildlife

BELGIUM ss

Issue date 14 June 2021



The **European hamster** (*Cricetus cricetus*), also known as the Eurasian hamster is native to grassland and similar habitats in a large part of Eurasia, extending from Belgium to the Altai mountains and Yenisey River in Russia. Where abundant the animal is considered a farmland pest, and historically it has also been trapped for its fur. It has declined drastically in recent years and is listed as *critically endangered* in the IUCN Redbook.

The **Common European Adder** (*Vipera berus*), is a venomous snake that can be found throughout most of Western Europe and as far as East Asia. The species is also the only venomous snake native to Great Britain.

Known by a host of common names, adders have been the subject of much folklore in Britain and other European countries. They are not regarded as especially dangerous; the snake is not aggressive and usually bites only when really provoked, stepped on, or picked up. Bites can be very painful, but are seldom fatal. Listed as *Least Concern* by the IUCN.

The stamp design shows the creatures' skeletons reflected in the water.

RUSSIA 1v

Issue date
20 January 2021



The **Persian leopard** (*panthera pardus ciscaucasica*) is a leopard population distributed in the Caucasus from Southern Russia to Iran, Turkmenistan and Afghanistan. As of 2016, it has been listed as *Endangered* on the IUCN Red List, as fewer than 1,290 mature individuals were estimated to survive with a declining trend.

The political and social changes in the former Soviet Union in 1992 caused a severe economic crisis, and a weakening of formerly effective protection systems. Ranges of all wildlife were severely fragmented. The former leopard range declined enormously as leopards were persecuted and wild ungulates hunted.

— from Wikipedia

New Issues
Sepac 2021
Historical Maps

The SEPAC Theme for 2021 was apparently announced last year, and reported by the [Europa Blogspot](#). So far Aland and Jersey have announced issues, and will be reported fully in the next Europa News.

The [SEPAC website](#) has become completely useless for SEPAC information, instead just reporting occasionally on new issues. The last stamp competition reported was 2019, so I guess there was no 2020 competition. They could've at least said so. One more thing to blame on the virus, I guess. ■

New Issues
Norden 2020
Local Mammals

SWEDEN 5v se-tenant in booklet

Issue date
 12 November 2020

Winter Animals

From the *postnord* website:

Our wild animals have different ways of coping with winter. Moose and deer eat fat in the autumn and build up their energy reserves. The squirrel, who is a good collector, sets up storage for the winter. The lynx has winter fur with extra thick underhole on the tails, much like soles, which protects against the cold when it is in the snow. The mountain fox, the forest hare and the ermine change to a warmer white winter coat, which also gives a good camouflage as long as the snow lies.



Assuming the postal administrations weren't lying, and there's no evidence to believe that they are, then this is the last Norden Countries issue that we'll see. The good news (the pony in the pile, perhaps) is that we now have the parameters for assembling a complete collection. And to the best of my knowledge, nothing is out of reach of a reasonable budget.

New Issues
Joint Issues

MALTA 2v se-tenant
SLOVAKIA

Issue date 24 October 2020

Wine Culture



The stamp designs from the two countries are identical. The Malta design (left stamp) features Ta'Betta Wine Estates Ltd, a boutique winery situated in Girgenti, limits of Simalta. The Slovak design (right hand stamp) features a bottle of Skalicky rubin 2019 from the Slovak National Collection of Wines produced by Tureèek Winery and Vintoperk Hill.

—from *Malta Post and POFIS (Slovak Post)*

RUSSIA 2v se-tenant
TURKEY

Issue date 3 November 2020

100th Anniversary of Establishment of Diplomatic Relations Between the Russian Federation and the Turkish Republic



The **Suleymaniye Mosque** is the second most important and the first largest in size mosque in Istanbul. It is located in the ancient part of the city, in the Vefa area.

The **Moscow Cathedral** is the major mosque in Moscow and one of the largest in Russia and Europe. The first building of the mosque was built in 1904, and a new mosque was opened in 2015.

— from *JSC 'Marka' (Russia Post)*

New Issues
European Anniversaries and Events

MONTENEGRO 1v

Issue date 5 October 2020

JOY of Europe
Children's Festival



SERBIA 1v issued in a sheetlet of 8v plus 7 labels, as shown below

Issue date 30 September 2020

JOY of Europe
Children's Festival



FRANCE 2v

Issue date 7 September 2020

Official
Stamps
for the
Council
of
Europe:



25th Anniversary of the Palace of Human Rights Building, and
70th Anniversary of the Human Rights Convention

Spanish ANDORRA 1v

Issue date
8 September 2020

Diplomatic Relations
with Liechtenstein
25th Anniversary



Vaduz Castle, the current official residence of Hans-Adam I, Prince of Liechtenstein, and his family.

GEORGIA ss

Issue date 22 April 2020

Bertha von Suttner



1905 Nobel
Peace Prize
Winner, also a
Europa advoc-
cate.

Ref. also EN# 274-10, 394-3, and 416-9

Dues Season is upon us.
Please use the insert to send in your dues now.
Deadline is 15 February to send in your dues
to avoid having your membership suspended.
Thanks!! and Happy New Year!

New Issues
European Anniversaries and Events

SLOVAKIA 1v

Issue date 18 September 2020

150th Anniversary of the Establishment of St. Adalbert's Society in Trnava



The Roper database of Europa stamps cryptically lists St. Adalbert of Prague as loosely connected to St. Benedict. The latter is considered to be a Europa forerunner by virtue of his confirmation by Pope Pius XII as the Father of Christian Europe.

Where St. Adalbert comes in I'm not sure. Wikipedia says that, together with a group of Italian Benedictine monks, he founded in 993 a monastery in Břevnov (now a part of Prague). That's loose alright.

A better argument can be made for his efforts to forge a common goal of Christianity across the Baltics. Adalbert has been declared the patron saint of the Czech Republic, Poland and the Duchy of Prussia. He is also the patron saint of the Archdiocese of Esztergom in Hungary.

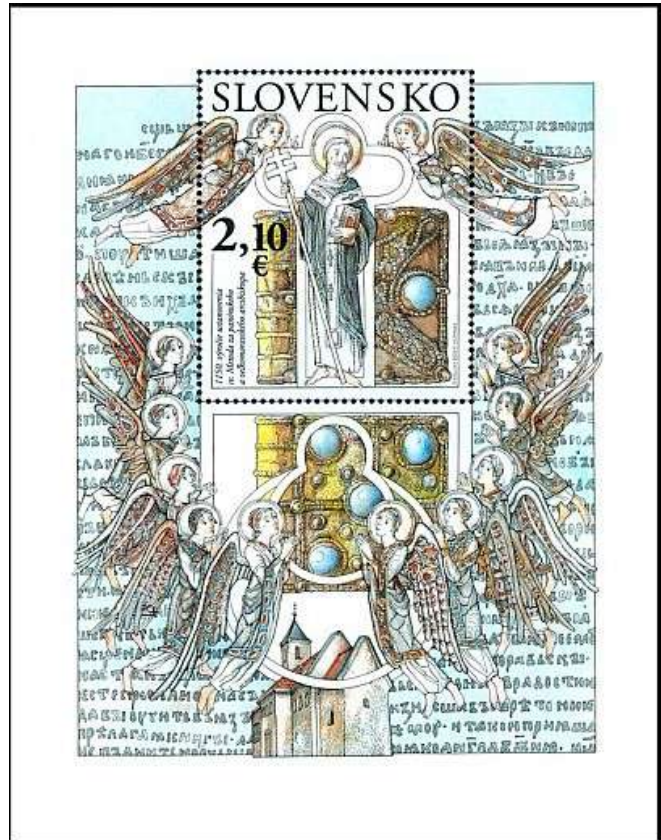
The one thousandth anniversary of Adalbert's martyrdom was on 23 April 1997. It was commemorated philatelically by Poland, Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, and Vatican City.

St. Adalbert's Society (SAS) is the largest and oldest association of Catholics in Slovakia.

SLOVAKIA ss

Issue date 4 July 2020

Consecration of St. Methodius, co-Patron Saint of Europe

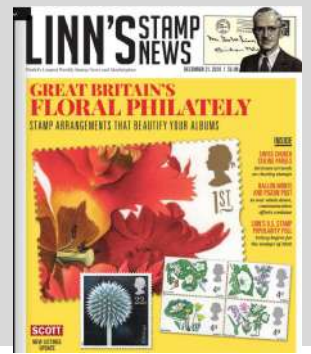


Saints Cyril and Methodius were 9th-century Byzantine Greek brothers who introduced Orthodox Christianity and writing into parts of Macedonia and elsewhere in the Balkans. They are credited with devising the Glagolitic alphabet (renamed the Cyrillic, after St. Cyril), the first alphabet used to transcribe Old Church Slavonic.

In 1880, Pope Leo XIII introduced their feast into the calendar of the Roman Catholic Church. In 1980, Pope John Paul II declared them co-patron saints of Europe, together with Benedict of Nursia.



New Issues
with **SCOTT** catalog numbers
From Linns' November-December Special Editions
— Don Smith



<u>COUNTRY</u>	<u>SCOTT #</u>	<u>DATE OF ISSUE</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>
Andorra (French)	820	11-May-20	Europa 2020
Armenia	1222	3-Jul-20	Europa 2020
Armenia	1223	10-Jul-20	Napoleon, ss
Belgium	2916	15-Jun-20	Europa 2020, se-tenant pair 2916 a-b
Bosnia (Croat)	408-9	5-Apr-20	Europa 2020, in sheets of 8 + label, 409a ss w/408-9
Croatia	1182	8-May-20	Europa 2020, se-tenant horiz. pair 1182 a-b
Czech Republic	3825	22-Apr-20	Europa 2020
Denmark	1851	11-May-20	Europa 2020, ss of 3 a-c
Estonia	924-5	14-May-20	Europa 2020
Georgia	569	22-Apr-20	Bertha von Suttner EN 561-7
Georgia	571	7-Jun-20	Lech Kaczinski, joint issue w/Poland
Greenland	842-3	18-May-20	Norden 2020 EN 458-18
Latvia	1048-9	8-May-20	Europa 2020
Liechtenstein	1811	2-Jun-20	Sepac 2020 EN 458D-21
Lithuania	1165-6	12-Jun-20	Europa 2020
Luxembourg	1542-3	9-Jun-20	Europa 2020
Montenegro	461	9-May-20	Europa 2020, in sheets of 8+label, 461a ss of 1
Norway	1877A	23-Aug-19	NORDIA 2019 Philatelic Exhibition EN 454-9
Norway	1895	17-Apr-20	Europa 2020
Norway	1896	17-Apr-20	Norden 2020 EN 458D-18
Portugal	4222-3	25-May-20	Europa 2020 (4223 a ss w/1 each 4222, 4223a)
Romania	6407-8	9-Apr-20	Europa 2020, in sheets 5 + label (6407a, 6408a), ss of 4 different positions (6408b-c)
Romania	6413	5-May-20	Diplomatic relations w/Vatican EN 459-12

Blame It On the Virus Dept.: Your directors have had bad luck with the December Linn's magazine with Scott catalog new issue updates. Don Smith got his right after Christmas, Alex got his a week after the new year, while I'm still waiting. Fortunately, there is an electronic edition, which we used to provide the listings shown above. Even so, we all find it much easier to work with paper. ■

Lost and Found Dept. Recently I performed an audit of our membership list against my distribution list and website users. I think everything is copacetic now, except for one member.

Maria Rodriguez, if you are reading this, please send me your email address. The one I have for you keeps coming back as undeliverable. I hope you have been getting the newsletters ok. ■

Feature

The Miscellaneous Box I — Tonny VanLoij

I recently purchased a cover to add to a collection I have not looked at for years. When I pulled out the book to add the item I found this in it. Since PostEurop is a separate postal union under the umbrella of the Universal Postal Union there is a lot of overlap in my collections.

The card commemorates the first Union of European Federalists Congress held in Montreux, Switzerland to discuss and debate ideas which would reduce the sovereignty of the various European nations in favor of a federation. Sixteen countries were represented along with about 40 activist groups.

After WWII many ideas were debated to avoid another devastating war in Europe. Europe had just recovered from the devastating war that ended 1918 when it was plunged into another major war, where devastation was so complete it took more than 10 years for Europe to recover.

The final policy adopted by the Congress called for the creating of a European Federal Government. Less than a year later the Hague Congress was held, taking another step towards a United Europe.



The D'Urso catalog lists this as number C5. The Rogers catalog lists it under Germany as number 5.

Article

Greek Island Europa Labels — Dana Roper

The “stamps” illustrated in the next column and purporting to be Europa, keep popping up in my own Miscellaneous Box from time to time. The latest instance was a present from Santa forwarded to me courtesy of Don Smith. So what are they?

The Europa News edition of March-April 1990 (EN# 276-12) has the following article on the subject:

BOGUS EUROPA

So read the headline of an article by Norman Williams which appeared in the Cinderella Corner column in the September 1989 issue of an unspecified philatelic publication which was accompanied by an illustration [such as that shown here].

Questions come up from time to time regarding so-called Europa issues. Mr. Williams’ article served to remind me that it might be a good time to feature the item at issue. The stamps on the illustration are representative of “stamps” issued by the islands of Arcoudi, Oxia and Dragonera, circa 1963. The Greek Ministry of Transport, Post Office Department, issued a statement immediately upon receiving notice of the hoax, to the effect that the stamps do not constitute an official issue of the Greek Post Office service. The stamps were labelled “private” and “unlawful.”

So ends the article, which establishes the labels as fakes, but sheds no other light on the subject. As of today, I’ve been unable to reach back 58 years to ascertain where they came from, how many different forms they take, and how many were produced.

I do know that they exist both perf and imperf, and on “first day covers” which are also bogus. The author of the piece showed what he thought was the back of a first day cover, but it looked different from what specimens I have. So I’m wondering whether miniature sheets exist. If so, I’ve yet to see one.



Besides saying Europa, the labels depict a Mercury capsule orbiting Earth. The designers were hoping to rope in space collectors as well.

One other “rarity” that I came across was the version shown below, overprinted in 1971 for the British Postal Strike. Strike labels are everywhere, it seems, but with this I think I’ve seen everything. ■





Feature
Europa Briefs

Don Smith was nice to send a card, with a thank you “for putting up with me.” Au contraire, Don, it goes the other way, with me always asking for another auction. And Don always complies. His envelope is worth sharing — for postage he used seven different Christmas stamps, which all told added up to the exact postage. This one’s a keeper!



Jim and Sue Dempsey of A&D Stamps always send a Christmas card each year with the same design. This year, however, Santa is sporting a facemask!



Jim reports that Sue had a rough year and can’t attend shows any more. Jim is still at it though. He said he added 36 red boxes this year, bringing their total to nearly 600.

That makes me wonder how many boxes Michael Ball (A to Z Stamps) has. His setup looks very similar and he boasts a “Great Wall of Stamps.” At a recent show their booths were side by side, and their combined presentation did indeed take up an entire wall! A&D Stamps will be at the next APS show, although he says “I’m coming up on 90 so I should slow down a bit.” Funny, I remember Richard Dick saying the same thing on his 99th birthday. There must be something about stamp collecting that helps us live longer.

Unfortunately, on that note I was saddened to learn that Shirley Heinzl passed away last year. Shirley did the UN Postal Administration booth for many years. Many Europa collectors also collect UN stamps (e.g., the Grenzenlos folks) and I always looked forward to doing dinner when we could meet up at a show. I hope the Virus hasn’t done away with stamp shows permanently. There is still no substitute for face to face get-togethers.



* * *

On a happier note, Don Smith reports that the auctions are getting a lot of interest. The illustrated items, especially, are all getting bids. Which brings me to lot #15. Don didn’t illustrate it, because I said I’d run an article on the subject. Look at the top of page 18 for a picture of what’s being offered. A nice addition to any collection! ■

Article

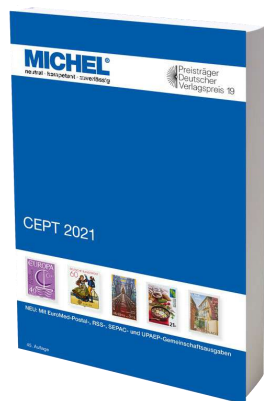
Europa and UPAEP — Will Keleher, Dana Roper

From the [Europa Blog-spot](#) comes word that the new Michel Europa Catalog is out. The catalog has always included Council of Europe, NATO and Nordic issues. It is reported that now the catalog includes SEPAC and America-UPAEP. That last one is a surprise —

I would have expected EuroMed before UPAEP. So, what is UPAEP?

* * *

UPAEP stands for **The Postal Union of the Americas, Spain and Portugal**. It is a regional association of the postal authorities in Latin America, the Caribbean, the United States, Canada, Spain, and Portugal, headquartered in Montevideo. It was founded in 1911 as a restricted union of the Universal Postal Union. Their website is upaep.int.



Spain 2020 UPAEP stamp

The only European members are Spain and Portugal. The remaining members, save for the USA and Canada, are all in Central and South America. As a Europa-related spin-off, this would seem to be going rather far afield. It could also get expensive (as if SEPAC and EuroMed weren't enough). USA offerings for UPAEP have been limited to expensive air-mail issues.

This raises the question of whether the ESU should now widen its net to include these. Do any of our members collect UPAEP?

I submitted this query to our online members, and so far four people have answered in the affirmative. Of these, ESU member Will Keleher gave us some detailed info, which is excerpted here:

Dana, I collect UPAEP from a Europa standpoint because Spain and Portugal are members. However, I only acquire the issues by way of first day covers and when the group selects a theme on a subject that I am interested in. For instance, this year the subject was architecture, which is a topic I collect. Spain issued a booklet on the subject with a large FDC. I haven't seen anything from Portugal.

Gastronomy was the selected UPAEP subject in 2019, another topic I collect. Portugal didn't issue a stamp specifically for UPAEP that year but did issue a set on Sweets of Portugal, a part of a series on that subject.

I think it would be good to include the Spanish and Portuguese UPAEP issues on a Europa Unit checklist but I don't have the resources to compile such a list. Also, when searching the internet for "UPAEP" issues, there is a university in Puebla, Mexico, with the same acronym which, this year, is reflected on a Mexican stamp about satellite communications. The stamp has a UPAEP logo on it for the university but not the philatelic related one.

The organization itself was founded in 1911 and is headquartered in Montevideo, Uruguay. Researching the internet, it looks like the themed stamp issues started in 1989. From a Europa standpoint, Spain has issued UPAEP stamps every year since the themes started. Portugal has been intermittent from 1993-2003 but nothing since then. There is a website which is also linked to from the Blogspot upaep.filatelia.free.fr/america_upaep.html that lists all the themes and has pictures of all the stamps by country and year which would help in compiling a checklist.

Editor's Note: I tried using the site and found it difficult to navigate. Does anyone have a list they can share? Or perhaps volunteer to compile one? ■

Article
Nordia Philatelic Exhibition — Dana Roper

I've had the cover below on my want list for some time. I've had the stamp for years, but the way my collection is organized, the stamp would have occupied a page by itself. Can't have that, so I recently decided to do something about it and visited the delcampe auction site. By golly, there was more than one up for grabs, and reasonably priced.

To the best of my knowledge, the stamp is the first to publicize the Nordia Philatelic Expo, this one in 1966. Was this the first one? When I received the cover it contained a ticket to the Expo, which I duly mounted. The cachet is the show logo, showing the flags of the Nordic countries. It's not that much different from the current logo, shown here.



Souvenirs (stamp, admission ticket, cover) of the NORDIA 1966 Philatelic Exhibition in Helsinki



Many Europa collectors also collect the Nordic Countries issues. They are included in the Michel Europa catalog, and are listed on the Europa Blogspot.. Just like Europa proper, it's fun to go beyond just the common issues, and look for other examples of Nordic cooperation. The Nordia Expos are a perfect example.

I was surprised to find that many members are just discovering the Nordic issues, SEPAC and others. To address this, the next EN will begin a series of reprints of earlier articles that address these topics. Stay tuned.



Article

Spanish Andorra Souvenir Sheets — Dana Roper

Now and then I get queries about a funny looking souvenir sheet from Spanish Andorra but without any postage, emblazoned with "Europa" and the year. Briefly, they are privately issued souvenir sheets, but very well done and apropos in any Europa collection. Herewith, a compendium of the Europa sheets, which were issued between 1979 and 1992.

First, some background. The following is excerpted from a short article by the late David Lamb in the April 1994 bulletin of the Andorran Philatelic Study Circle, titled [*Adéu, Vegueria Episcopal!*](#):

Few postage stamps are issued today without consideration of their likely appeal to stamp collectors. Many are issued with barely a thought as to their possible postal usage. The "Servei d'Emissions" of the "Vegueria Episcopal", (*Emissions Service of the Episcopal Princely Vicariate -ed*) however, has claimed no pretension to legitimate usage since it first began selling its wares in 1978, even though many of its issues have the superfluous inscription "Franquicia Interior". From their beginning, whether souvenir sheets, postcards or aerogrammes, they have only been regarded as optional items for Andorran collectors to collect or not as they wish.

The first souvenir sheet was released on 1 November 1978 ... followed in 1979 by the first "Europa" sheet, showing the 1848 postmarks of Seu d'Urgel and Ax-les-Thermes.



Subsequent issues, of varying degrees of artistic merit and philatelic interest, have covered historic events, Olympic Games, Andorran architecture, Christopher Columbus and so on - often reflecting the postal issues of the French and Spanish post offices.

Political and constitutional changes in Andorra reduced the once-powerful Co-Princes to the modern conception of constitutional monarchs and the Veguers are no more. Their offices in Andorra have become the Embassies of France and Spain, and the establishment of a single Andorran postal service will soon be upon us.

So, after some fifteen years of existence, we say farewell to the curious productions of the Vegueria Episcopal .

Davis concluded his article by saying that the various items "cost very little and are probably worth even less." Perhaps then, but as time goes by they tend to become scarce, and with scarcity comes increased interest and sometimes value.

The second Europa issue from the Emissions Service of the Episcopal Princely Vicariate, was for Europa 1980, shown below. It shows a reproduction of two existing medallions to the Episcopal d'Andorra with the effigies of the Bisbe-Princep Francesca de Tonic and the Pruhok Andreu dales (XV century).



Article
Spanish Andorra Souvenir Sheets — cont'd

The 1981 Europa sheet celebrates the Nativity. The following is a (very) rough translation of the Catalan inscription on the sheet:



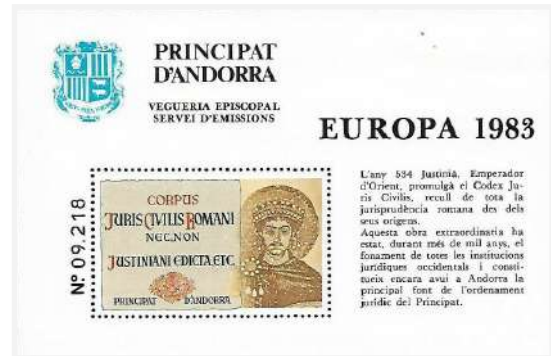
“The gathering of the orphans of Meritxeli, which coincides with the miraculous finding the image of the Holy Mother (tenth-eleventh century). The illustration represents for centuries the annual meeting point of all Andorrans on the day dedicated to the Nativity of Mary. What began as one spontaneous manifestation of devotion, it has slowly become a National Holiday for the whole population of Les Valls.”

For whatever reason, as of 1982, the sheets were printed in a smaller size, but similar in format to their predecessors. The 1982 theme was European History. The inscription translates as:



“Original fragment of the bull of Marti IV (7 October 1282), establishing the Parish of Andorra”

The Europa issue of 1983 caught the eye of the late Ev Foster, ESU member and stamp dealer. He wrote in EN #239-2 that these issues appear regularly and are of interest to Europa collectors. He helpfully translated the inscription, for this year’s “Great Works” theme:



“In the year 534 A.D. Justinian, the Emperor of the East, promulgated the ‘Codex Justis Civilis’, a collection of all Roman jurisprudence from its origin. This extraordinary work has been in use for more than a thousand years and is the base of all western judicial institutions. Even today in Andorra, this Codex is the first source of judicial order in the Principality.”

The 1984 issue is inscribed as follows:



“Margineda Bridge, beautiful architectural work product of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, whose slender figure is built over the waters of the river Valira, near the capital of the Principality. One of the most famous passages of the old road that, crossing the whole Vall d'Andorra, connected the Principality with the neighboring counties of Spain and France.”

Article
Spanish Andorra Souvenir Sheets — cont'd

The 1985 issue inexplicably omitted the year designator. Most likely this was just a simple error. The theme for 1985 was European Music Year, and the inscription reads:



“The Valls d'Andorra, its landscapes and their customs, have often been the subject of musical compositions, whether by scholars or just the populace. In the course of the nineteenth century several operettas of Andorran themes appeared which had international diffusion. Franca M. Saint Georges wrote «Le Val d'Andorre », with music by F. Halevy. In Spain, Luis Olona made a new version entitled «El Valle de Andorra», which the master Joaquin Gaztambi conducted for the first time on 5 November 1852.”

Europa 1986 jettisoned the common format that had been used up to now.



Instead, 1986 used a 2-digit year in a large vertical format. The theme for this year was European Nature Protection, and so went this souvenir sheet, depicting indigenous fauna and flora.

1987 retained the vertical format, but came back to the smaller size to which we'd become accustomed.



The theme for 1987 was Modern Architecture. The inscription on the bottom of the sheet reads:

“Sanctuary of Meritxell, Inner Courtyard”

1988 saw a return to horizontal format. The 1988 theme was Transport & Communication. The description on the sheet reads:

“Regular bus from Andorra to La Seu d'Urgell (a town located in the Catalan Pyrenees in Spain) at the beginning of the century.”



Article
Spanish Andorra Souvenir Sheets — cont'd

The issue for 1989 settled on the size used previously, but offered a more visually striking design. This year's theme was "Children's Games" and that is precisely what the inscription translates as.



The theme for 1990 was Post Offices. The inscription on the issue for 1990 reads "Mail at the beginning of the century."



Visually striking is the obvious description for the 1991 issue. The common theme was simply "Space". The inscription reads "Air and Space".



This leaves open the question of what exactly is being depicted. Is it a night scene with a blue moon overhead? Possibly, since the view in the mountains is certainly much more striking than at sea level with pollution and obstructions around. Then again, is it earth seconds before an asteroid strike that will erase most all life on the planet? Then again, maybe it's just an eye-catching design meant to shout "buy me!" when seen in a dealer's bargain box. If anyone knows the definitive answer, please drop me a line.

Europa 1992 turned out being the final offering of this series of souvenir sheets. It is a complete departure from the size and design of previous sheets. The 1992 theme was the 5th centennial of Columbus' discovery of America. It shows an old map and a drawing of Columbus setting off on his quest.



As Mr. Lamb reported in his article, no more sheets were produced, although he cynically supposed that more, probably inferior, labels might be in the offing. Fortunately, that did not happen. On 2 February 1993 the new Constitution of Andorra was adopted; it was given assent by the Andorran people in a referendum on 14 March 1993.

Finding some these sheets can be quite challenging, but the thrill of the hunt is rewarded by adding a nice little curiosity to your Europa collection. ■

New Issues



Airbus A380 15th Anniversary

Concorde

NIGER 3v+4ss

NE-20222,a,c

Issue date
10 June 2020



And two more like the above

SAO TOME E PRINCIPE

2ss

ST-20304a,b

Issue date
10 April 2020



SIERRA LEONE 7ss

SL-20311a,c,d

Issue date
27 March 2020



And two more like the above



And again two more like the above. Wow.

NIGER ss

NE-20105a

Speed
Trains

Issue date
25 March 2020



Eurostar is in the lower left

TOGO 2ss

TG-20210a,b

Issue date
29 May 2020



GUINEA-BISSAU 2ss

GB-20309a,b

Issue date
27 April 2020

Great Britain Flight
Crew



SIERRA LEONE 2ss

SL-20412a,b

Issue date
12 June 2020



CHAD 2ss

CH-20418a,b

Issue date
20 August 2020



Feature

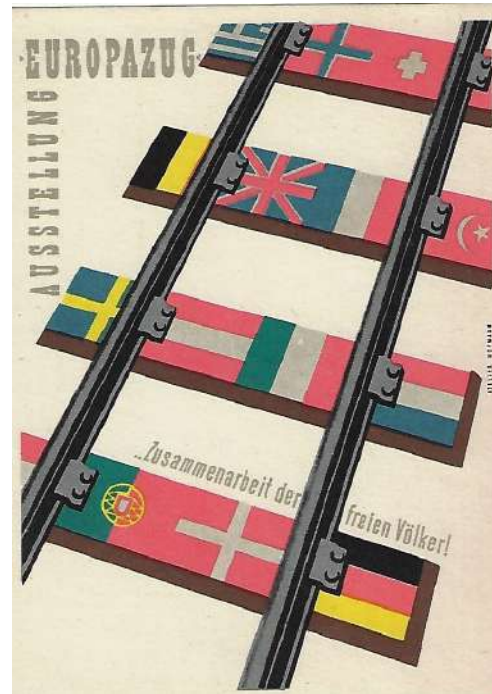
The Miscellaneous Box II — Dana Roper

I was digging in the bottom of my European Recovery Program (ERP, aka the Marshall Plan) box when I came across these two items. The first is a pair of propaganda labels with the inscription (in German): *Europe does not want a wall!*

That refers to the Berlin Wall and the picture shows the Brandenburg Gate against a map of Europe. The wall, which isolated Berlin, led to the famous Berlin Airlift, which I consider to be a part of any collection about the Marshall Plan. I have no idea where I came across these labels, but they are a fascinating bit of history.



The second item is a post card (no stamp indicia on the reverse) showing railroad tracks with the flags of various European countries. Again in German, the inscription references a Europe Train Exhibition. These trains ran through Western Europe bringing Marshall



Plan aid to impoverished countries after WW II.

It's things like this that add interest to a collection, and I look forward to working them into my album. ■

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