

## Chairman's Message



Hello everyone and welcome to April! Spring or Fall, depending on your hemisphere, is always a welcome sight.

First things first. The IPDA Annual General Meeting was held recently and is noted

further in this issue. Incredibly, inexplicably, and in spite of all my clear and obvious shortcomings and lack of qualifications, I was elected as your new Chairman. Thankfully for me, I ran unopposed! I truly do look forward to serving you and the IPDA going forward (that word again!) and I appreciate all of your support so far. Thank you all!

A couple of recent events to note this month.

The American Philatelic Society Board of Directors met recently and approved the reconstitution of their Committee on the Philatelic Marketplace. Charles Epting of H.R. Harmer was appointed Chairman of this committee.

After several months of discussions with the APS regarding this pending plan, I would expect the IPDA to be represented on this committee. The fundamental premise of reviving what was in the past known as the APS Dealer Advisory Council is to address the new realities of the philatelic market in light of the fairly recent explosion of the online philatelic market.

I anticipate that the Committee will address issues like ethics in online selling, marketplace education and enforcement programs, selling and listing standards, among many other topics. In effect many of the very foundational issues that brought along formation of the IPDA some twenty-plus years ago. I will keep you all informed as developments occur with this new program.

We are still in the process of finalizing a new membership survey. A bit delayed though as while this has been one of the things I wanted to get done early on, other projects have taken a bit more attention. Look for this survey though to be complete and deployed within the next couple of weeks.

One of the highest priority projects has been the rebuilding and modernization of the IPDA website. I am excited to report to you that we have engaged with an experienced marketing and web designer and he has begun the initial phase of this important project. Our timeline for deployment of the new site is by the end of 2023 but if the project goes as smoothly as I hope it will, deployment could be accelerated a bit. I will, of course, keep you advised on the progress of this important and exciting project.

We have been for some time now seeking to fill the Advertising and Marketing Director role in IPDA. This is not a full-time job for anyone, rather it is an opportunity for someone with a little time to spend on promoting the IPDA brand in the various forms of media including social media platforms. Please put a little thought into volunteering for this position. This is a director level position (unpaid like all of them are) but it does provide for a "seat at the table" so to speak. I think you will find it to be a quite interesting and rewarding endeavor.

Finally, it is vitally important to me that I and the board of directors listen to you and hear you, our IPDA members. If you have an idea about something that might help improve the quality of the marketplace or improve the IPDA itself, do not hesitate to reach out. Likewise, if you have a gripe or concern, let us know. We are all in this thing together and your input can only serve to help the IPDA and the marketplace improve going forward.

**So . . . forward we go!!!**

All our best to you and yours!

Greg Doll Chairman, IPDA

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**Please Note: The articles are now hyperlinked.**

## On this Day..... in 1857, April 1st



A 6 pence value used to send a half ounce letter from Ceylon to England. Today's Trivia.. If SG is SG 1 why is Scott not Scott 1? Answers on a post card please to The Editor's Little Helper, Apt 401 Balai Condominium, San Nicolas, Ilocos Norte, 2901, Philippines. All correct answers will win a free pair of cddstamps tongs.

## IPDA DEALER

## SPOTLIGHT

*Jerwood Philatelics*

*Member 345*

My name is Dave Evans and I made my first attempts at selling stamps in 2008. I had collected as a kid, then like many of us my collection was put away & gathered dust while I went to university and began my career.

I dusted it off when I was about 35 & began adding to it. Over time, I began buying collections at auction. I would take out what I wanted for my own collection then sell the rest on eBay.

I soon realised that I was often selling the remainders for more than I had paid for the whole collection, so the items I kept were effectively free. I gradually began buying larger & more expensive collections & before I knew it, things had snowballed.

In 2010, I adopted the business name Jerwood Philatelics. My wife's maiden name was Jerwood and I thought it sounded better than Evans Philatelics! Originally, I was dealing on a part time basis whilst also holding down a full time job.

However, with the full support of my lovely wife, I left my job at the end of September 2012 to concentrate on Jerwood Philatelics full time. Until 2017, my office was based in one of our spare bedrooms, but I eventually outgrew that & moved into rented office space a short walk from home. I now have four part time staff & the amount of stock continues to grow and fill all available space!

On [my own website](#), I concentrate mainly on modern GB material, with an emphasis on specialised booklet listings. I do buy pretty much anything stamp related though & all my non-GB stock is generally sold through our [eBay store](#)



1960 Graphite Wildings 3s 8d Forerunner Pack. Opened, contents complete.

	<p align="center"><b>Internet Philatelic Dealers Association</b>  <b>2023 AGM March 18<sup>th</sup></b>  Commenced 17:00 USA EST  <b>AGM Minutes</b></p>
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The AGM was held as scheduled. A quorum was present with attendees and Proxy votes totalling 59 members, which was 46% of the paid up membership as of 17th March 2023. The Minutes were published to all members and if anyone has not seen them please email the General Secretary at [ipdasecretary1@gmail.com](mailto:ipdasecretary1@gmail.com) Since the minutes are available only to paid up members and this Newsletter will be available to a wider audience we are not reprinting the minutes in this Newsletter as we have done in past years.



### IPDA NEW MEMBER ANNOUNCEMENT

This month we welcome Travis Putney member 442 to the IPDA. Travis is from Kyle Texas and was referred to the IPDA by member Scott Payton.

Travis owns Putney Stamps for Collectors and sells on the Hipstamp marketplace at <https://www.hipstamp.com/store/putney-stamps-for-collectors> and he Specializes in US General Issues, US Airmail and US Special Delivery

He can be reached at [htputney@gmail.com](mailto:htputney@gmail.com) Welcome Travis.

### IPDA Website News

One of the AGM motions was for members to vote on spending some money redesigning and rebuilding the IPDA Website. The current version has served us well for many years now but it lacks some lets say modern look and feel, and some services that will be of value to members.

The Motion to spend your IPDA funds and commence a project was approved without objection and working with Jon Griffiths and Greg Doll we have found a rather talented web marketing and design individual. Discussions resulted in a draft proposal, and acceptance by the individual to a Services Agreement. Work has commenced and in future issues of this Newsletter we will keep you updated on progress.

### IPDA Membership News

Every year we lose a few members when renewal time comes around. Some, sadly, we do not know what has happened to. This year the same happened but nowhere near as many losses as in previous years. We see that as a promising sign for 2023.

With 3 months of the year already gone it is time to start thinking how can we grow membership again? If you have an idea please write to Greg or Tony. One thing we can all do, as many of us will be attending shows and exhibitions now such events are back up and running, is promote the IPDA to colleagues and ask them to think of joining and supporting what we all believe, and know, is needed in todays philatelic market place — dealers collectors can trust; dealers with the sort of relevant accreditation we believe the IPDA provides.



## BOOK REVIEW

### AIR CRASH MAIL OF THE WORLD, Edited by Ken Sanford

This mammoth work is a complete revision and update of "Recovered Mail" by Henri Nierinck, and the American Air Mail Catalogue (AAMC), Sixth Edition, Vol. 1, Interrupted Flights section. It covers all known air crashes from which mail has been recovered and is recorded in collectors' hands. Over 2,400 pages and 1600 illustrations of cachets, labels, post office memos, and crash markings, many in full color. Pricing has been brought up to date, to reflect the current market. Prices are based on US\$. Available on a flash drive which can be plugged into a USB port. It will be in both PDF & Word format.

This updates the Nierinck catalog and the AAMC has been in the works for the last few years. Many people have been involved in it, from typing in the original Nierinck text to providing cover & cachet illustrations. Many of the cachets are now shown on covers in color, whereas previously they were simply black & white illustrations of cachets. A great effort has been made to add crashes and cachets which were not previously listed by Nierinck or the AAMC.

It could be said that this project originated with the formation of the Wreck & Crash Mail Society back in 1994. Certainly, many of the members of that Society have contributed information and scans. The writer of this review has been constantly involved since 2015 and can attest to the superhuman effort invested by Ken Sanford in terms of energy, time, persistence and patience. The late Henri Nierinck would have been thrilled to have been the catalyst who inspired Ken to embark on and complete this phenomenal project.

The sheer size of this work precluded publication in book form. The advantage of the digital format is that it is easy to make amendments and additions. Assuming that enough of those collectors who purchase the flash drive send feedback to the Editor, it is intended to periodically make available a revised flash drive. Updates please to [kaerophil@gmail.com](mailto:kaerophil@gmail.com)

This will be the standard work on the subject, if not in perpetuity, certainly for decades.

Price of flash drive: To the USA - US\$32.00; To all other countries - US\$34.00 - UK£28.00 - Euro €31.50 (postage included)

Order from: Ken Sanford, 613 Championship Dr., Oxford, CT – USA 06478-3128.

Make checks payable to American Air Mail Society, or PayPal to kaerophil@gmail.com and add \$1.70, UK£1.45 or €1.60

Brian Peace FRPSL

## Air Crash Mail of the World



Incorporating "Recovered Mail" by Henri Nierinck  
and American Air Mail Catalogue, 6<sup>th</sup> Edition, vol. 1

ISBN: 0-939429-31-4

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## Dealer Question Time

*In the March Issue we introduced this feature - "Dealers Question Time". It was extremely well received and the following is one question we received.*

*But, as we said in the March issue, often there will not be a definitive answer to a question, there may be just too many variables to consider and often personal views and expectations may influence some answers. So with that in mind, here is this months question:*

**Should I spend time writing a detailed description about a stamp I am listing for sale when I also show images of the front and the reverse of the stamp?**

This is an interesting question and one members may have different views on. In fact if we take a random sample of listings from a random sample of sellers, from say eBay or Hipstamp we will not get a definitive answer.

We will see some sellers use exactly the same description for EVERY stamp they list, even to the extreme of referring to "this US stamp" when in fact the listing is a foreign stamp; some sellers do not write a description at all. Some write in the most abbreviated language that is meaningless to anyone except a person who reads shorthand, and some sellers write so much it becomes boring to read and is often not even relevant to the listing. And more, some sellers write a few lines then repeat the same text, to what purpose only they will know. No doubt you have seen other examples?

But IPDA sellers seem to write concise and relevant information about the quality and features of the stamp up for sale, even when they show images of both the front and the reverse of the stamp. After all, perhaps, a stamp as a spacefiller has a 1mm perf edge tear. Most likely that won't be seen from a scan. So yes, describe that quality condition in full.

As you can no doubt appreciate, that one perf tear example opens up all sorts of quality conditions to mention but we won't go there, we will just say; a description should be concise, meaningful, accurate, relevant and polite.



You are looking confused, why add polite?

Well because many sellers write as if the potential buyer, the collector, is a moron.

Does "Buy with Confidence" fit as a description to this QEII 1<sup>st</sup> class Machin?

Or, this £3 Machin - "all stamps are sound - satisfaction guaranteed"



Don't do that, treat all your potential customers with respect and remember there is perhaps, I say perhaps, a probability they do not have your level of expertise.

Comments to the Editor are welcomed especially where there is further advice we can pass on to other members in future issues of the Newsletter, or simply send your question to the Editor and he will do what he does best!

## Franklin-Washington's – Taming the Beast – Part VII – Fake Identification ( Part 2)

### The Perforations and Design Alterations

#### A guide to Franklin-Washington Identification and Fake Detection

By Scott Payton – Classic Philatelist

This is the final installment of Taming the Beast. I do thank you for reading through this entire series. For a final chapter and a tutorial on using our Franklin-Washington Identification Matrix please email us at [scottvpayton@hotmail.com](mailto:scottvpayton@hotmail.com) and we'll send the matrix, and the tutorial on how to use it.

#### **Franklin-Washington Fakes**

##### **The Perforations**

As I've previously mentioned, the existence of imperf coils in the flat plate printings make it very tempting (and easy) for fraudsters to make very convincing fake coils.

A strong sign of a fraudulently perforated stamps are those that don't match precisely the perforation gauge. This is a list of Gauge by SCOTT #, as applied to the Bureau perforation gauge:

Bureau Gauge	Issues by SCOTT #
12 ½ – 63	536
12 – 66	331 – 342, 348 – 366, 374 – 382, 385 – 389, 405 – 407, 414 – 423
12 – 66 x 10 – 79	423A – 423C
10 – 79 x 12 – 66	423D – 423E
11 – 72	461, 498 – 519, 525 – 530, 545 – 546
11 – 72 x 10 – 80	538 – 541
11 – 72 or 11 – 73 at top or bottom or both x 11 -72	544
11 – 72 x 10 – 80 (Left Side Only)	546a
10 – 79	424 – 447, 460, 462 – 478
10 – 80	448 – 458, 486 – 497, 543
10 – 80 x 11 – 73	542
8.5 – 95	410 – 413

To understand how to identify fake perfs is to understand how perforations are applied.

Perforations on coil stamps were still passed through the same type of perforation machine as sheet stamps. In fact, the coil sides (as mentioned in the "Flat Sides" article) were cut apart in the same machines that perforate, by replacing the perforation wheels with cutting wheels.



The image left is an example of a perforation machine.

Note that the wheel has a pin, and the cylinder has a corresponding perforation hole. The pin presses down on the paper and punches the perforation through the hole, tearing it away at the point of the rotational movement of the wheel. This is what causes the elongation and the perforation fibers left within the perf hole. You may find that sometimes the perf holes for one or two holes on the stamp do not align or are missing (blind perfs). This is the result of a bent pin (or pin missing entirely in the case of a blind perf). It's not specifically an indication of fraudulently applied perforation.





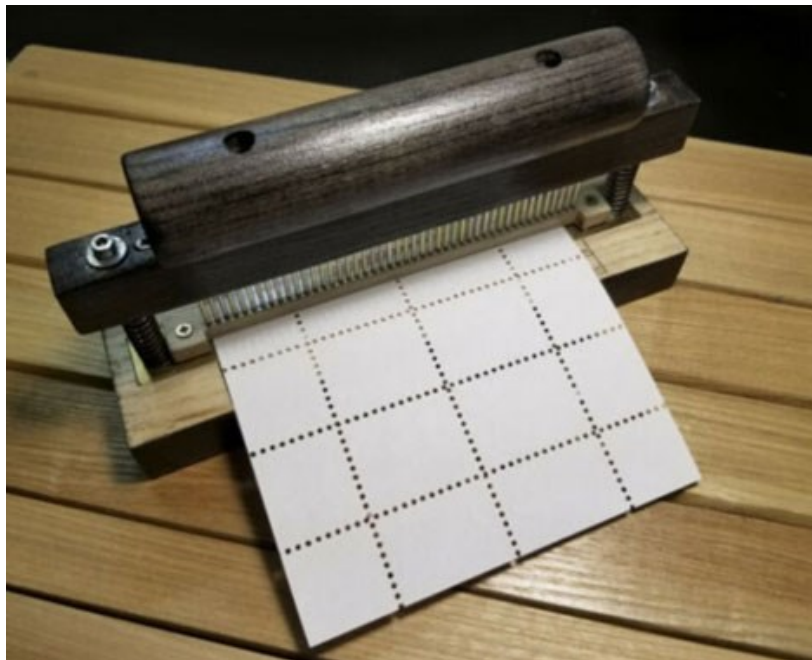
The image left illustrates elongated perforation holes, with torn fibers the left side of the hole, where the perforation pins make impact with the page before it is sent through the coil stripper.

The arrows in the image above point out the fibers from where the perforation wheel puts pressure on the paper while it is turning.

Note that the jagged perforations on the ends of this pair are not a poor attempt at reperforation, rather they are the result of either very jagged separation, as the 8½ perforation lends itself to because of the large gap between holes, or from being cut from a role using a desktop type stamp dispenser, similar to this:



By contrast, fraudulent perforations do not have the same pattern of motion that perforations applied by perf machines have. And to understand that better, here is an example of the type of device used to add fraudulent perforations:



Note that these types of devices apply pressure to the paper equally/evenly. As a result, there is no visibility of motion within the perforation.



Looking at the perfs of this pair (Left) (Fake 349 made from a 344V), notice how perfectly rounded the perforation holes are. This is not possible from a perforation machine.

In addition, in some more crude attempts to reperforate, sewing machines have been used. These will almost always result in an uneven alignment of perforation holes and will not gauge accurately.

These examples are "easier" to see this effect in. Working with singles is much tougher, and the best way to detect them is to work with as many examples as you can find.

Study any examples you have whether coil, imperforate or sheet stamps, as this will provide a deeper understanding of what good perforations and edges should look like.

### **The Alterations (Adding and Removing Designs)**

There are other ways to fake FW issues, and this can apply not only to coil stamps, but also to others. The examples I'm showing in this section aren't meant to be exhaustive alterations of FWs, rather to point out how alterations can be made to the image design and other areas.

We've already discussed the perforation alterations (adding/removing), these additional alterations involve altering the design itself.

This process generally takes a lot more skill, and for some issues, in order to detect alterations, a much higher degree of magnification is required.

There are numerous FWs with high values (Values over \$1,000 in either used or unused condition). In some cases, used examples are worth more than their Never-Hinged OG examples. Generally speaking, any FW with a value over \$100 should be carefully examined to ensure it is authentic. Even the cheapest, most common coils are still worth more than the base materials that exist to create fakes and should always be suspect. (I've seen faked 390's which have a value around \$12 Used or Unused, faked from 408, or 408H (about \$2-\$3). My suspicion is someone is working with "cheap" material to improve their skill before moving on to more expensive base materials.

The 389 (12V 3c Coil) is valued at \$240,000 for MNH single, where a 376 (perf 12) has a value of \$20, it's easy to see how the fraudster is motivated to trim the top and bottom perfs off as skillfully as possible, in the hope of getting even the fraction of the value for a 389, the cost multiplier being 12,000x greater, even if they sell the fake for a few thousand dollars, they have paid only \$20 to get there. The moral of this story is, ALWAYS be suspicious of FWs valued over \$100.

### Design Additions

In some cases, adding features to a stamp is used to increase the perceived value of a cheaper base item. One of the most common added "design" alteration found in the FW issues are addition of lines between pairs, known as "Line Pairs". With flat plate issues, these were made from the same sheet stamps, cut into strips. So the vertical and horizontal center lines may appear as a pair between issues. This gives the ability to identify where in relation to the line, the pairs come from, and fewer line pairs exist than regular pairs.

With the rotary press, this was caused by a different issue. With rotary press issues had their lines created by a seam in the cylinder that hold the dies. As it turned, that gap would accumulate ink.



Rotary press lines are often messy, with wider and narrower blobs and lines, which was produced by the turning and smearing along with uneven ink accumulation in the drum.

### ***Line Pairs***

Addition of a line into a line pair seems a fairly easy alteration. All you really need is a good straight edge and an ink that looks close enough in color to the base stamp as possible. Therein lay one of the most obvious elements for detection. Look very carefully at the center line, and determine if the color of the line is an exact match to the color of the coil. I've seen some crude attempts especially with 2c Washington issues, of simply taking a red ballpoint pen, and drawing a line across the perforation.

However, if you examine genuine coils, it doesn't take long before you discover that the line is almost never exactly vertical through the perforations. (It may be right down the center, but the line will be at a very slight angle to the perforations.) When you see this characteristic, that is a red flag. It's not definitive, but the balance of the time (95% or greater) with "straight" line to perf position, are fakes.

There are two examples that follow. Let's take a look at them and determine if they are genuine line pairs, or if they have alterations.



Looking at the example above, there are some things that might lead us to believe that it's not a genuine 387. The top margin is into the design. But note the bottom margin. It's large, and if we take a vertical measurement, it is 25mm high. Parallel lines check also passes. Perforations are genuine, it is a genuine 387.

BUT look closely at the center line. There are two key clues that tell us this line is fake. First, it falls exactly vertical on the edge of the perforation (all perforations are the same distance from the bottom of the perf to where the line is drawn). Also, note at the bottom, the line stops, and isn't complete through the pair.

It may be difficult to see from this image, but if you look closely at the ink, it too is the wrong color (not enough blue, much lighter) than the 387. Why would someone do this? Well, the 387 pair has a value of \$475 for OG and \$1,050 for MNH, while the 387 Line Pair has a value of \$1,250 for OG and \$2,500 for a Line Pair MNH. It's a simple matter of greed.

When considering the cost of the base material, and the ease of the application of the fake line, it's an easy addition for even an unskilled fraudster to make.

And now, the value of the pair is heavily damaged by the alteration. (It might still be possible to find a buyer who will pay \$100 - \$400 since the stamp at right, when separated will still be a 387 single, unmodified, while the left one will be a modified single. (Since we don't know if this is OG or MNH.)



Another pair (above) which has nothing genuine about it. Note the fraudulently applied 8.5 perforation, and like the example before, the center line is drawn in by hand. If you look closely at the space between the perfs, it is possible to see how the line goes from thin, to thick, to thin again as the pen is drawn across the perforations.

### ***Design Elements***

The 534B is a primary candidate, as this can be faked in multiple ways. It can be faked by trimming the perfs away from a Shermack Type III (high value base, but still value multiplier of 2x), or trimming perfs from a 528B (cheap, but harder to make a reasonably looking fake, because perfs have to be cut from 4 sides, and then the size just isn't big enough, even without measurement, if you're used to looking at these, it is easy to spot).

However, the regular 534 (Type Va) can have some elements painted in, (adding 2 dots to the nose, adding some dots in the hair line, strengthening the lower left two). This is desirable, and frequent in pairs, because the 534 is already an imperforate issue, and adds to the credibility of its authenticity.



The image above is a fake of a 534B made by such an alteration. Note that it too is a pair, to increase the perception that it is authentic. (We know it's not a fake made from trimmed perfs). Like the line pairs, high magnification is needed to compare the actual color and shape of the dots that make up the issue. But this one is very convincing, even with an image this size.

### **Design Removal**

One way that a stamp can be altered is through design removal. This may seem extreme, or even "why would you do it"? Well, the simple answer there is, look at the 491 and 492. The 491 is a Type II, while 493 is Type III, and the only differentiator between them really is the double line in Type III ribbon versus single line in Type II Ribbon. But the value of a 492 MNH Line Pair is \$115, while the value of 491 MNH Line Pair is \$26,000.





So, could you tell the difference?

Let's take a closer look at this example.

This is our candidate line pair for 491.

Let's check the basics:

Perforation Perf 10 Vertical - Check

Parallel Lines (Top and Bottom) - Check

Minimum 25mm height - Check (taller than 25mm)

Watermark None - Check

Wow, we've got a 491 Line Pair worth \$24,000!

Oh wait... what about Type? To be a 491, it must be a Type II.

Look at the prior image again. A little small, but it looks like the ribbons have only a single line at left and right. Let's magnify that.



This is a magnification of around 15x of the stamp at right of the previous pair. Everything still looks fine, we're well on our way to our \$24,000 LP!

**PRO TIP:** There is a clue as to the true nature of this stamp in the image above. Can you spot it?

Hint: It was discussed in another Pro Tip for IDs.



Now let's look at this at 75x magnification. First the left side (below)



Now the right side.



Now we start to see the real story. Notice how there are “bright white” sections to the left of both of the design indicator (2 lines or 1 line in the ribbon). Someone has very skillfully and carefully removed the design, but it’s not possible to do so without leaving a scar behind. At the usual "recommended" magnifications, this type of alteration is very difficult to impossible to identify. When faced with a \$24,000 stamp, taking the steps to look at what could have been used to create a fake, and then examine those traits.

### For More Information and Further Study

1. First and foremost, the SCOTT US Specialized Catalog of United States Stamps. This has so much more information than just the regular SCOTT catalog in the alphabetic world listing.
2. The Experts Guide by Paul Schmidt. It was published in 1990, and there has been a lot uncovered/discovered about the FWs since then, but it is an incredible source for information, particularly on detection.
3. The Hipstamp forums - hey, just ask questions! Have discussions.
4. Siegel Auction Galleries - Power Search (<http://siegelauctions.com/> then select "Power Search") Use power search to search for examples by SCOTT #, to give an idea of what a real stamp may look like.
5. Philatelic Foundation - (<https://www.philatelicfoundation.org/>) Search for examples here as well, of certified examples.

### German Occupation of Albania 1943-44



In anticipation of such invasion, the Wehrmacht drew up a series of military plans for action against Italian holdings in the Balkans code-named *Konstantin*. And for a more direct nature, units of German Military Intelligence (Abwehr) section II were sent to Mitrovica (present day Kosovo) in April 1943 in an attempt to gain some influence among the growing number of Albanians disaffected with the Italians. In July and August 1943, the German army occupied Albanian airports and ports, ostensibly to protect Italian Albania from the possibility of an Allied invasion. By mid-August there were some six thousand German troops in Albania. The first political move made by the Foreign Ministry prior to the invasion was the appointment of Hermann Neubacher, a former mayor of Vienna, as Ribbentrop's special representative for south-eastern Europe. Neubacher, already active in the Balkans as Hitler's representative for economic concerns, would become the key German figure in the Balkans during the second half of the war.

The Germans planned to construct an independent neutral Albania controlled by a government friendly to the Germans. After the Mukje Agreement was broken by the Albanian Partisans, war broke out between the Albanian Partisans (who were backed by the Yugoslav Partisans, who in turn were backed by the Allies and the Balli Kombëtar. After the capitulation of Italian forces on 8 September 1943, German troops swiftly occupied Albania with two divisions. The Germans formed a 'neutral government' in Tirana with the Balli Kombëtar

The Germans were intent on setting up an autonomous administration and endeavoured to persuade Albanian leaders to form a government to take over the administration of the country themselves. Many hesitated when rumours spread that British forces were preparing to invade Albania. Kosovo Albanian leaders however, realizing that a German defeat would mean a return to Yugoslav rule, were more willing to cooperate.

On 14 September 1943, an Albanian government was then set up under Ibrahim Biçaku of Elbasan, Cafo Beg Ulqini, Bedri Pejani and Xhafer Deva of Kosovo. The national assembly, composed of 243 members, began to function on 16 October 1943, electing a four-member High Regency Council (Këshilli i Lartë i Regjencës) to govern the country.

German promises to preserve the 1941 borders of Albania, assurances of "non-interference" with the new Albanian administration and a general Pro-German outlook of most Albanians (dating from the years before and during the First World War where Austro-Hungarian foreign policies were supportive of an independent Albanian state), ensured that the new government initially enjoyed a large amount of support from the people. The new government, which promised to remain neutral in the war, succeeded in restoring a good deal of stability. The administration and justice systems functioned once again Albanian schools were re-opened throughout northern and central Albanian Steps were also taken to implement a land reform

The Germans made a genuine effort, often to their own disadvantage, to leave the Albanian people the impression that they possessed at least some level of autonomy.

There was no effort to forcibly recruit labour from Albania for the Reich, as it was incompatible with the notion of Albanian independence. The regent Frashëri also came to an agreement with Germans in February 1944 which stipulated that Albanian prisoners would not be transported out of the country. In line with Neubacher's policies towards Albania, reprisals on the civilian population for attacks on the German army were uncommon and certainly not as brutal as in other occupied territories.

Frashëri negotiated for as much independence as he could extract from the Germans and was able to convince Neubacher to recognise Albania's "relative" neutrality and "relative" sovereignty. Albania had a status similar to that of Croatia and Slovakia, having relative sovereignty under Nazi Germany.

### **Partisan Resistance & Civil War**

The new government and the Germans had to contend with the increasingly Communist dominated NLM and were subsequently able to coerce much of the nationalist resistance into its camp. The Germans launched a series of offensives against the Partisans, who were primarily concentrated in Southern Albania and to a lesser extent in Central Albania.

The first offensive, operation "505", started in early November 1943 to clear Partisan units from the Pezë region and remove the threat to the Durrës-Tirana road. Within eight days the Germans declared the campaign a success having killed some 100 "bandits" and having taken over 1,650 prisoners, all of whom were, by earlier agreement turned over to the Albanian civil authorities.

The Balli Kombëtar was also involved in fighting the Partisans during the Winter offensive and by late winter the NLM found itself in considerable difficulty



The NLM came perilously close to being destroyed by the German and Nationalist forces, with the units that managed to escape encirclement suffering from lack of food, clothing and ammunition (as the allies were unable to re-supply them from the air).

German figures put the number of partisan casualties at 2,239 by the end of January, 401 dead in February and 236 in March.

By then all prefectures of the new state, except Gjirokstra in the south, remained in the hands of the Albanian government.

Enver Hoxha himself acknowledged that “the situation is difficult”

### End of World War Two

The success of the Winter campaign proved to be short lived, and the Partisans proved to be much more resilient than the Germans, British and many Albanians had anticipated.

With the Grand Alliance established, the Germans began losing the war. With the current situation favouring the communists, the partisans began a full-scale attack on the Germans and Balli Kombëtar. British Liaison officers in Albania noted that the Communists were using the arms they received to fight fellow Albanians far more than to harass the Germans. The west noted that the Communists could not have won without the supplies and armaments from the British, America and Yugoslavia, and that the LNC were not afraid of murdering their countrymen – a Communist takeover (once WW2 came to an end) was now inevitable.

*With thanks to member and Director Jon Griffiths .*

### Long Stamp



Kyrgyzstan, a landlocked Central Asian country bordering Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and China, has issued what it billed as the “longest stamp in the world.” Despite its massive size and “longest stamp” billing, the new Kyrgyz issue is slightly smaller than Mongolia’s 2004 “Peace Mandala” stamp, which measures 185mm across.

The stamp features the Chaar-Tash ridge, the Toguz-Toro Tract and the underlying village of Kazarman. The issue marks the International Year of Sustainable Mountain Development.

Kyrgyzstan is predominantly a mountainous country and almost 90 per cent of the country’s territory sits at more than 1,500 meters above sea level. For reference, Canada’s largest stamp – the 2010 \$10 blue whale issue (Scott #2405) – measures 128mm across, and a GB QE II Machin measures 21mm across. - shown to scale.



## Stories Behind the Stamps

### Irish Christmas stamps invoke anger

by Mr. Enthusiastic on Sunday, December 05, 2021 in Design error, Spotlight

December 25th, Christmas Day, a time for rejoicing for the entire Christian / Catholic world (some celebrate a week or so later, like in Georgia). Despite being Jewish and not celebrating Christmas, it is nice to see the spirit of Christmas and the many pretty stamps that are issued all over the world.

Ireland innocently brought out a set of stamps, or adhesive labels for Christmas 2021. The set includes four stamps for local postage with the words "Peace and Joy", "Naughty or Nice?", "Ho Ho Ho" and "Sending Hugs" and two stamps for international postage for "Nollaig Shona" (which means Merry Christmas in Gaelic Irish) "Love". It was the local stamps that invoked the ire of the public. Who would have thought that these stamps would have invoked such feelings?

The outrage began with a call to a popular program named Liveline where someone emailed them to vent his frustration at the choice, saying that the stamps used for Irish addresses were secular and didn't include scenes from Jesus' birth, such as the Nativity scene or anything that wasn't to his liking.



He made a claim that instead of the Nativity scene, local stamps had phrases such as 'naughty or nice', and 'ho ho ho'. This was actually a part of the problem.

Other callers felt that the phrase 'naughty or nice' implies sex and another said that she didn't want to send a Christmas card to her local priest with a naughty or nice stamp. The phrase 'ho ho ho' stamp together with the sexual implication of the naughty stamp concerned people about the possible innuendo.



"The national Christmas stamp range, which supposedly celebrates a major and very ancient Christian festival on December 25, is, as one caller said to Joe Duffy, effectively discriminatory, because if you want a religious stamp you have to pay extra."





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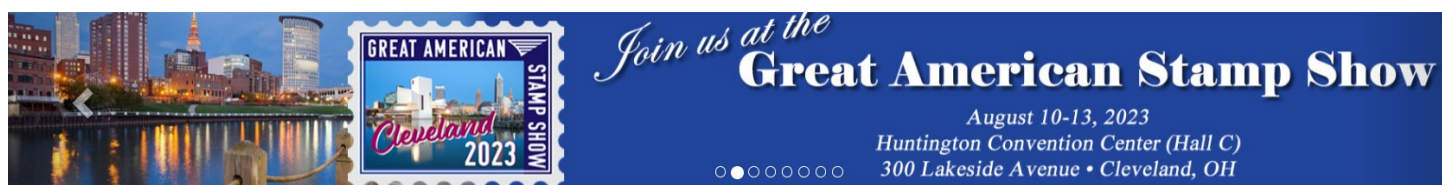
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## The Back Page



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### First Royal Mail King Charles III Commemorative issue



Royal Mail's stamps celebrating flowers are the first to feature the silhouette of King Charles III, the first change of silhouette since 1968. The creation of the new King Charles III silhouette was a collaboration Andrew Davidson, Head of Design at Royal Mail, and Marcus James, and Ian Chilvers, from design agency, Atelier Works.

The project began with Andrew Davidson creating a likeness that would work at stamp size. The second stage of development was the digitising and fine-tuning of the detail in the silhouette. This was conducted by both Royal Mail and Atelier Works with visual adjustments that were tested at actual size to ensure the silhouette would work at the diminutive dimensions required.

### Surely, with apology to Czesław Ślania and others.....



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