

# Journal

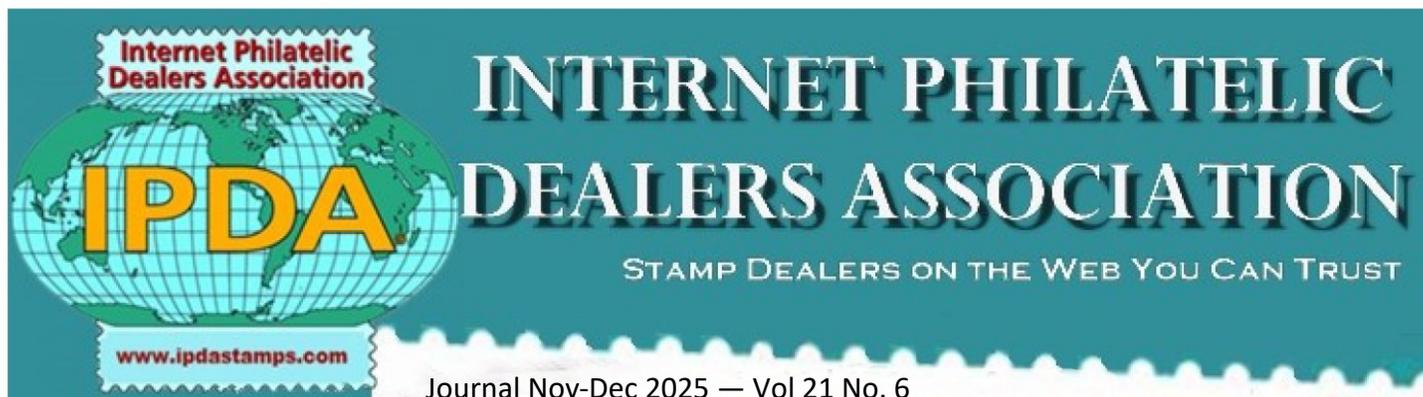


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FRANCE'S MASTER ENGRAVER

*Albert Decaris*



The IPDA Newsletter is published bi-monthly by the Internet Philatelic Dealers Association. Opinions expressed in any articles are strictly those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the official views of the IPDA or any of its officers. To submit an article, contact the editor, Ted Tyszka, [ted.talks.stamps@gmail.com](mailto:ted.talks.stamps@gmail.com).

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### IPDA Directors

**Chairman**—Greg Doll, [ipdachair@gmail.com](mailto:ipdachair@gmail.com)

**General Secretary**—Michael Dodd, [ipdasecretary1@gmail.com](mailto:ipdasecretary1@gmail.com)

**Membership Secretary & Treasurer**—Tony Tripi, [IPDAmembershipsec@gmail.com](mailto:IPDAmembershipsec@gmail.com)

**IPDA Director USA**—Sandy Weiss, [sandmannusa@verizon.net](mailto:sandmannusa@verizon.net)

**IPDA Director USA**—Jerry Derr, [jerryderrstamps@yahoo.com](mailto:jerryderrstamps@yahoo.com)

**IPDA Director USA**—Ken Sanford, [kaerophil@gmail.com](mailto:kaerophil@gmail.com)

**IPDA Director Europe**—Ted Tyszka, [ted.talks.stamps@gmail.com](mailto:ted.talks.stamps@gmail.com)

**IPDA Director UK/Europe**—Jon Griffiths, [jongriffiths33@hotmail.com](mailto:jongriffiths33@hotmail.com)

**Director of Marketing and Advertising**—YOUR NAME HERE

[www.ipdastamps.com](http://www.ipdastamps.com)

# Chairman's Message



Hello to everyone!

I hope everyone is happy, healthy, and busy with your philatelic endeavors.

Just a quick announcement of significance today. Through efforts initiated by our General Secretary, Michael Dodd, the firm Kelleher Auctions, LLC has joined the IPDA as a member. Join me in welcoming Mr. David Coogle and Mr. Larry Gibson, Co-Chairmen, and Mr. David Barber, Chief Operating Officer, and the entire Kelleher team as the newest member of the IPDA.

I am sure many of our members have likely done business with Kelleher over the years, as I have, and have found them to be very reputable and ethical in their business practices. Founded in 1885, Kelleher is America's oldest philatelic auction house. We look forward to a long and fruitful association with them.

I would like to thank Mr. Scott English, past Executive Director of the APS, for his unwavering support and advocacy on behalf of the IPDA. Best of luck in your newest endeavor Scott! Along with that, I would also like to welcome Mr. Kirk Gillis as the new Executive Director of the APS. The IPDA looks forward to continuing our relationship with the APS going forward and I look forward to meeting you soon.

Please consider putting your name in the hat to be highlighted in the coming months for our monthly Newsletter and website Dealer Spotlight. It is free advertising to you as an IPDA member as part of your membership benefits. Again, contact our newsletter editor Ted Tyszka (ted.talks.stamps@gmail.com) for more details.

We have recently added a page on the IPDA website called "Testimonials". This is a place where our members can share feedback from their customers which demonstrate why customers should do business with an IPDA member-dealer. A few examples are already posted and if you have any you would like to share, take a screenshot of it and send it to Michael Dodd and he will get it listed on the page.

I, along with my family and the IPDA Board of Directors wish you all the very best for the 2025 holiday season. As always, if you have any questions or comments, my "door" is always open at ipdachair@gmail.com.

Greg Doll

Chairman, IPDA

IPDACHAIR@GMAIL.COM

[VIEW IN BROWSER](#)

**UPA99 Unsolds Closing Date : 10am Monday 3rd November**

**There's only 7 days left...**

**FIRST TIME EVER**

**To make way for fabulous  
New stock for UPA100  
You can NOW get  
10% OFF  
All 'Unsold' Lots**

- **£1.3 million worth**
- **15k+ lots to choose from**
- **Also includes all Top-Up Twenty lots**

**Offer ends 10am Monday 3rd November** Discount automatically applied at checkout

The countdown to the closing date of UPA99 Unsold Lots has begun! We've had hundreds of orders from collectors who have already ordered a wealth of lots to add to their collection, but there's still plenty of wonderful lots left to explore!

### **Ready to order?**

Have a look through the auction catalogue first (link below for the online catalogue), then search the lot numbers on our Unsold Lots website to check availability.

**Browse the auction catalogue...**

**Catalogue PDF Download**

**Colour Supplement PDF Download**

**...then order your lots online...**

**Click here to buy Unsold Lots**



# New Members



[Kelleher Auctions, LLC](#) has joined the IPDA as a member. Please welcome Mr. David Coogle, Co-Chairman and Mr. David Barber, Chief Operating Officer and the entire Kelleher team as the newest member of the IPDA.

Founded in 1885, Kelleher is America's oldest philatelic auction house. We look forward to a long and fruitful association with them.

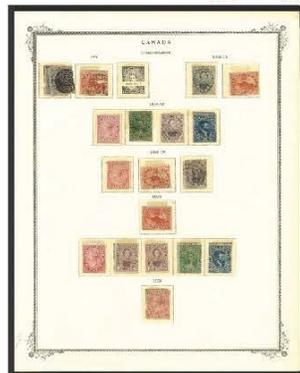
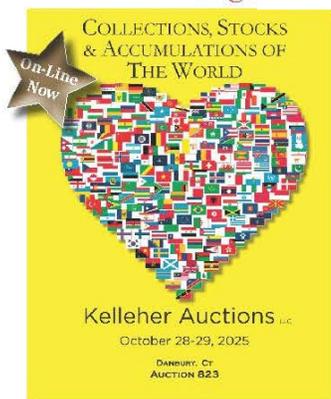
Click on the image below for a link to Kelleher's upcoming auction and the Stamp Auction Network.

## Sale 823

Tuesday Oct 28, 2025 10 AM - Wednesday Oct 29, 2025 - 10 AM

### COLLECTIONS, STOCKS & ACCUMULATIONS OF THE WORLD

#### Highlighted offerings:



LOT 3285



LOT 3652



LOT 3002



LOT 3242

As always collection sales are highly imaged online

Full Catalog available online @  
[www.kelleherauctions.com](http://www.kelleherauctions.com)

Need a printed copy? Request your copy for  
\$20 shipping and handling

via email: [info@kelleherauctions.com](mailto:info@kelleherauctions.com)  
or Call us at +1.203.830.2500 or Fax 1.203.297.6059

## IPDA Member News – Thomas Humfrey

Every now and again we get to hear about a member, news, events, activities, success stories, and sometime not so successful, so now I am starting this section and I welcome news from any members who might want to share, ask advice, or whatever you might have to say.

This first piece is to pass on the news that member Thomas Humfrey, who lives in France, has had a very difficult few years after a car accident and, while he is recovering slowly, he has suffered permanent damage to one eye. Thomas owns Boîte de Timbres (you may remember Thomas as Postal Pursuits when he lived in the UK before his move to France).

He has made changes to his daily life of course and had to review his stamp selling business ways of working. He has also had to adjust to not doing as much computer reading. So, for example, he has closed his Facebook account for a variety of reasons—I mention that in case anyone has tried to make contact or chat to him.

He is considering selling the majority of his stock wholesale and would be interested to hear from anyone who has advice about how to progress with such a move, or even if any member would be interested in pursuing this further with him.

The Directors, and I am sure other members, wish him well, and if anyone wants to make contact via me just send me an email at [ipdasecretary1@gmail.com](mailto:ipdasecretary1@gmail.com)

Michael Dodd – IPDA General Secretary

## Importation Tariff Issues Resolved

Boston 2026 press release

Until this year, stamps and covers could be imported into the United States under Harmonized Tariff Schedule (HTSUS) 9704 free of duty. However, several months ago, new country specific tariffs came into effect. This affected philatelic material, which in turn, resulted in the global philatelic community fearing that foreign participants at the upcoming Boston 2026 World Expo would experience unacceptably high costs.

After close consultation with US Customs and Border Protection (CBP) over the past several weeks, the Boston 2026 Organizing Committee is pleased to announce that stamps and covers are, once again, tariff free for entry into the US. Specifically, the initial ruling letter that resulted in philatelic tariffs has now been ruled void ab initio (i.e., null from the beginning) and voided. A new ruling letter holding that philatelic material covered by HTSUS 9704 is again tariff free will be issued by the CBP in the next few weeks.

To ensure the free and smooth entry of philatelic material for the show, the show organizers have hired a customs brokerage firm, Vantage Point Services. They will provide foreign parties (i.e., dealers, auction houses, postal administrations and commissioners) importing philatelic material with the appropriate instructions and documentation for entry into the US. The customs broker offers support at multiple ports of entry, including Boston, New York, Miami, San Francisco and Los Angeles.

Boston 2026 World Expo takes place May 23-30, 2026, at the Boston Convention & Exhibition Center. Full show details may be found at [Boston2026.org](http://Boston2026.org) and on Facebook, X and Instagram. Sign up to be added to the Boston 2026 email list and receive updates when available.

Thomas M. Fortunato  
 Boston 2026 Public Relations Chair  
 U.S. East Commissioner  
[Tom.Fortunato@Boston2026.org](mailto:Tom.Fortunato@Boston2026.org)



# Gibraltar Stamps

www.Gibraltar-Stamps.com

The Gibraltar Philatelic Bureau is pleased to unveil a new stamp issue commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Gibraltar Study Circle.

The Gibraltar Study Circle (GSC) was founded in 1975 to promote, research, and record Gibraltar's rich postal and philatelic heritage. The design serves not only as a tribute to the organisation's five decades of dedicated scholarship but also as a visual journey through some of the most evocative items in Gibraltar's postal history.

The miniature sheet reproduces an early Gibraltar picture postcard showing the Rock of Gibraltar in a detailed monochrome engraving on the £4 stamp, framed by a carefully curated collage of rare and historically significant philatelic items, all sourced from the private collections of GSC members.

The artistic vision behind this collection was brought to life by local graphic artist, Mr. Stephen Perera, in collaboration with the Gibraltar Study Circle.

The Celebration of Gibraltar's Philately collection is comprised of a miniature sheet of one stamp and accompanying First Day Covers and Presentation.

For philatelists the opportunity to purchase this collection is readily available on [www.gibraltarstamps.com](http://www.gibraltarstamps.com).

## Technical Specifications:

**Issue Date:** 16/09/2025

**Design:** Stephen Perera

**Process:** Offset Lithography

**Sizes:** Stamps – 40 x 25mm, Miniature Sheet – 122 x 74mm

**Values:** £4





# Gibraltar Stamps

[www.Gibraltar-Stamps.com](http://www.Gibraltar-Stamps.com)

The Gibraltar Philatelic Bureau is pleased to unveil a new stamp issue featuring some of the Rock's most iconic buildings.

SEPAC stamps are special stamps issued by Small European Postal Administrations and are highly collectible amongst philatelists, having been issued for over fifteen years. Each year a new theme is assigned by SEPAC, participating countries issue stamps reflecting their own interpretation of the theme. For 2025 the theme is 'Architecture' and our issue features six stamps and a miniature sheet, highlighting some of Gibraltar's main architectural landmarks.

The set of six stamps features a diverse selection of buildings in Gibraltar, each a testament to Gibraltar's rich and layered past forged from centuries of architectural influence.

The artistic vision behind this collection was brought to life by local graphic artist, Mr. Stephen Perera, and features a selection of paintings by renowned local artist Sebastian Rodriguez.

The Gibraltar Architecture collection is comprised of a set of six stamps, a miniature sheet, and accompanying First Day Covers and Presentation.

For philatelists and architecture enthusiasts alike the opportunity to purchase this collection is readily available on [www.gibraltar-stamps.com](http://www.gibraltar-stamps.com)

## Technical Specifications:

**Issue Date:** 16/09/2025

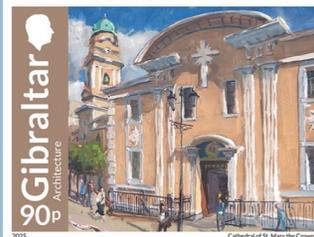
**Design:** Stephen Perera

**Illustration:** Sebastian Rodriguez

**Process:** Offset Lithography

**Sizes:** Stamps – 40 x 30mm, Miniature Sheet – 142 x 107mm

**Values:** 30p, 60p, 90p, £1, £1.15, £4





# Gibraltar Stamps

www.Gibraltar-Stamps.com

The Gibraltar Philatelic Bureau is pleased to unveil a new stamp issue commemorating the 80th anniversary of the end of the Second World War.

Eighty years after the end of the Second World War, this stamp issue pays tribute to the medals awarded for courage, endurance, and sacrifice. Gibraltar, with its unique strategic role, stood at the heart of Britain's wartime operations. These medals not only commemorate those who fought across land, sea, and air, but also recognize the vital contributions of Gibraltarians, both military and civilian, in one of history's defining conflicts.

The artistic vision behind this collection was brought to life by local graphic artist, Mr. Stephen Perera, combining six medals awarded to combatants of the Second World War and photographs of the various conflicts.

The Medals of Service collection is comprised of a set of six stamps, a miniature sheet and accompanying First Day Covers and Presentation Packs.

For philatelists and military enthusiasts alike the opportunity to purchase this collection is readily available on [www.gibraltar-stamps.com](http://www.gibraltar-stamps.com).

## Technical Specifications:

**Issue Date:** 18/09/2025

**Design:** Stephen Perera

**Process:** Offset Lithography

**Sizes:** Stamps – 40 x 25mm, Miniature Sheet – 103 x 98mm

**Values:** 30p, 60p, 90p, £1, £1.15, £4



## Boston 2026

### Art Contest Announced

The “Rebellion! International Mail Art Show” taking place during Boston 2026 will highlight “mail as art” produced by young and old from around the world.

Mail art has a long history and includes drawing, print-making, photography, collage and more, decorating mail pieces in a myriad of ways.

See examples at [zmagmailartistgroup.com](http://zmagmailartistgroup.com).

The premise is simple. Use an envelope (any size up to 9x12 inches or an A4 sheet) or post card as a canvas and create a design related to the theme of rebellion, celebrating the 250th anniversary of the founding of the United States. Any art medium may be used. Be creative and colorful! Additional design work on the reverse is allowed. When completed, address the envelope to the coordinators, add postage, use an optional cardboard stiffener and mail the envelope. Do not include a note or other enclosure.

Entries, after being curated for objectionable matters, will be displayed in the joint Youth/Beginner’s area on the exhibition show floor as well as online at <https://rebellion2026.blogspot.com/>, where there are examples across the site and full project details can be found.

For privacy concerns, entrants may consider writing their return address on the reverse rather than the front, which will not be shown.

Entries must be received by May 1 and cannot be returned. Send your mail art to:

Rebellion! mail art  
144 Moody St. Building 18  
Waltham, MA 02453  
USA

Boston 2026 World Expo takes place May 23-30, 2026, at the Boston Convention & Exhibition Center. Full show details may be found at [Boston2026.org](http://Boston2026.org) and on Twitter and Facebook. You can also sign up to be added to the Boston 2026 email list to receive updates.



## New King Charles III Definitive



Royal Mail has announced a definitive stamp for the new international postage rate for letters up to 100g.

Be among the first to secure the October 2025 Tariff Definitive Stamp, issued for the new international postage rate for letters up to 100g.

The new stamp, priced at £3.40, features His Majesty The King’s effigy in Dark Green, and is available in three collectible formats: First Day Cover, Presentation Pack, and Mint Stamp.

Pre-order now to ensure you don’t miss the First Day Cover, available only for a short time.

### *From the Editor’s Desk*



We want to hear from you! Tell us your stamp stories. What’s your favorite stamp? What’s your greatest stamp find? Tell us a stamp joke or a riddle. Send it to yours truly, Ted Tyszka, at:

[ted.talks.stamps@gmail.com](mailto:ted.talks.stamps@gmail.com)

and you will be rewarded with my undying gratitude.

# Royal Mail Celebrates 90 Years of “Monopoly”

Royal Mail Announcement

From Park Lane to Old Kent Road, Monopoly has been part of our lives for generations. Now, [Royal Mail is celebrating](#) the game’s 90th birthday with a playful and nostalgic collection you won’t want to miss.

**10 Iconic Stamps** – Featuring legendary London locations from the board.

**Limited-Edition Pillar Box Token** – Only 5,000 made! A charming tribute to the classic red postbox.

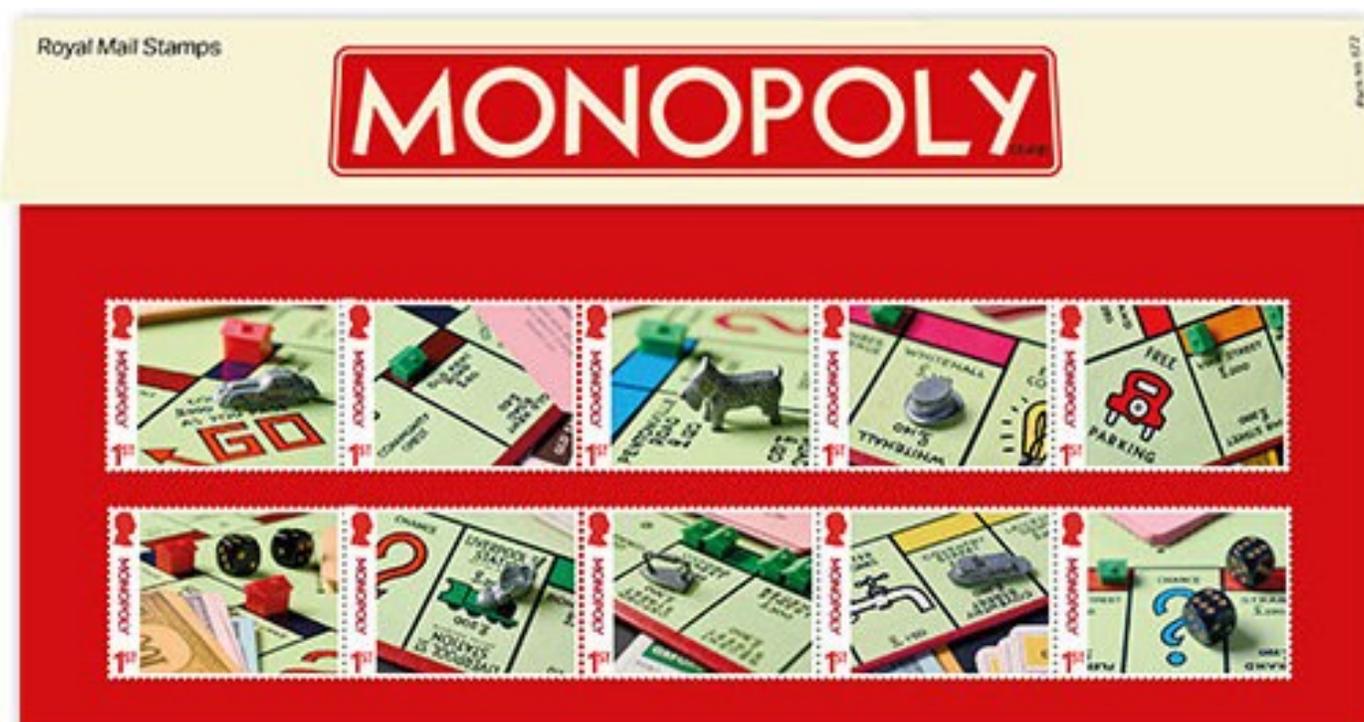
**Framed Collectors Pieces** – Ready to hang, admire, and show off.

**Coin Covers** – A collector’s twist on Monopoly money!

Discover the fascinating stories behind the stamps – including how Monopoly played a surprising role in helping Allied soldiers escape German prison camps during WWII, and the history behind the game’s famous playing tokens. Whether you’re a lifelong fan or just love a good collectible, this set is your chance to own a slice of Monopoly history.



“Monopoly” 10-stamp set (above) and Presentation Pack (below).



## Rick Wakeman Honored On New

### Isle of Man Set

By Ted Tyszka

brating local historical landmarks—1993’s, “The Heritage Suite.”

Dean’s paintings depict surreal fantasy landscapes. On each of the stamps in the set, a separate design ele-



The albums represented on the sheetlet:

£1.00: Yessonata, £1.90: Myths and Legends of King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table, £2.00: Journey to the Center of the Earth (2014 reissue), £2.15: Yes: Fragile, £2.26: Return to the Centre of the Earth, £3.50: I’m unable to determine. Anyone?

Nine years after issuing a set of 6 stamps featuring the artwork of Roger Dean—whose works are remembered for their use on the covers of vinyl record albums released by the progressive rock group Yes, Uriah Heep, and many others—the Isle of Man has followed up with a set of 6 stamps honoring legendary Yes keyboardist Rick Wakeman. This set also features Roger Dean artwork, this time pieces that were created for, and used on, Wakeman’s solo and group albums.

Rick Wakeman was a resident of the Isle of Man for over a decade, starting in 1987 and had a home recording studio there. He recorded several albums on the island, including one in collaboration with the Manx National Heritage cele-

ment has been included showing a tiny Rick Wakeman figure looking out over the landscape.

Wakeman has released over 100 solo albums since his emergence into the rock spotlight with the band Yes, on their classic breakout album, “Fragile.” It was during the recording of “Fragile,” in 1971, that Wakeman and

Dean first met, igniting a friendship that continues to this day. It was only fitting, then, that when Isle of Man decided to issue a set of stamps for Rick Wakeman that Dean’s art would be featured. Wakeman and Dean worked together to design the stamps.

At 76, and suffering from arthritis in his hands and feet, Wakeman continues to tour



The iconic cover of the 1971 Yes album, “Fragile.”

and perform, though his health issues make travelling difficult to bear. But he has not let his arthritis stop him from playing. He no longer performs one-man shows, though, always having his son or his band with him to take the spotlight while he takes a respite during a performance. He also continues to produce new albums; his latest, "Melancholia," was released Oct. 15, 2025.

vers, of course; postcards; and a limited edition of 50 uncut press sheets of 6 panes – one of each design.



The album art for the 2014 reissue of, "Journey to the Center of the Earth."



From the 1999 solo album, "Return to the Center of the Earth."



Released in November, 2024, "Yessonata," features classical piano-styled arrangements of songs by Yes.



From Rick Wakeman's solo album, "King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table"



This one eludes me. Does anyone know from which album this comes?

# Jamaican Obliterators

by Michael Dodd

Every now and again I come across a piece I think worth sharing. Here is one I found. I was studying some early QV Jamaica and thought I would find out more about the early postmarks I was seeing along with place names and any useful trivia or history.

I came across this article—credit and acknowledgement to the late L. C. C. NICHOLSON (Footnote 1)—whose name is on the article: [Jamaican Obliteration Numbers](#)

The article is from a remarkable body of work called the Encyclopaedia of Jamaican Philately.

The website <http://jamaicaphilately.info/> states, “This web site is designed to complement the series of books entitled the Encyclopaedia of Jamaican Philately (EJP) which seeks to document everything known about the postal history and adhesive stamps of the island. The project has been running since the 1990s and the sheer volume of information to be collected and collated will probably take another 25 years! This site is not for profit and has been assembled as a labour of love from many sources”

My additional comment is I could find no further reference to current updates and since far more than 25 years have passed since 1990 I can only imagine the site is no longer updated. I welcome further knowledge of course. Footnote 1 also gives a potted biography to L C C Nicolson.

A website to bookmark for future use if or when you are studying early Jamaican QV issues or in fact anything to do with Jamaican Philately. I say this because to me it is not enough to scan a stamp and list it and say, “Used,” or, “unused with gum,” — there are hundreds of sellers doing that — no value add in my book. What makes a difference, especially to serious collectors, is to tell them something of, let me say, the provenance of the stamp, and especially when it has an interesting postmark or obliteration.

By example, I have found if I add such detail to a listing it gives the collector something that goes toward convincing them to buy from my store, rather than any old stamp from elsewhere. After all, many sellers these days are just getting rid of some old stamps, aren't they? So why not add value to your listing if there is value to be added. You know what I am saying, I am sure.

So, here are a few images. Look at the website and enjoy reading more; there is plenty to read and learn.

## JAMAICAN OBLITERATION NUMBERS

BY L. C. C. NICHOLSON, 1949

The most interesting of all Jamaican postmarks are the Obliterators.

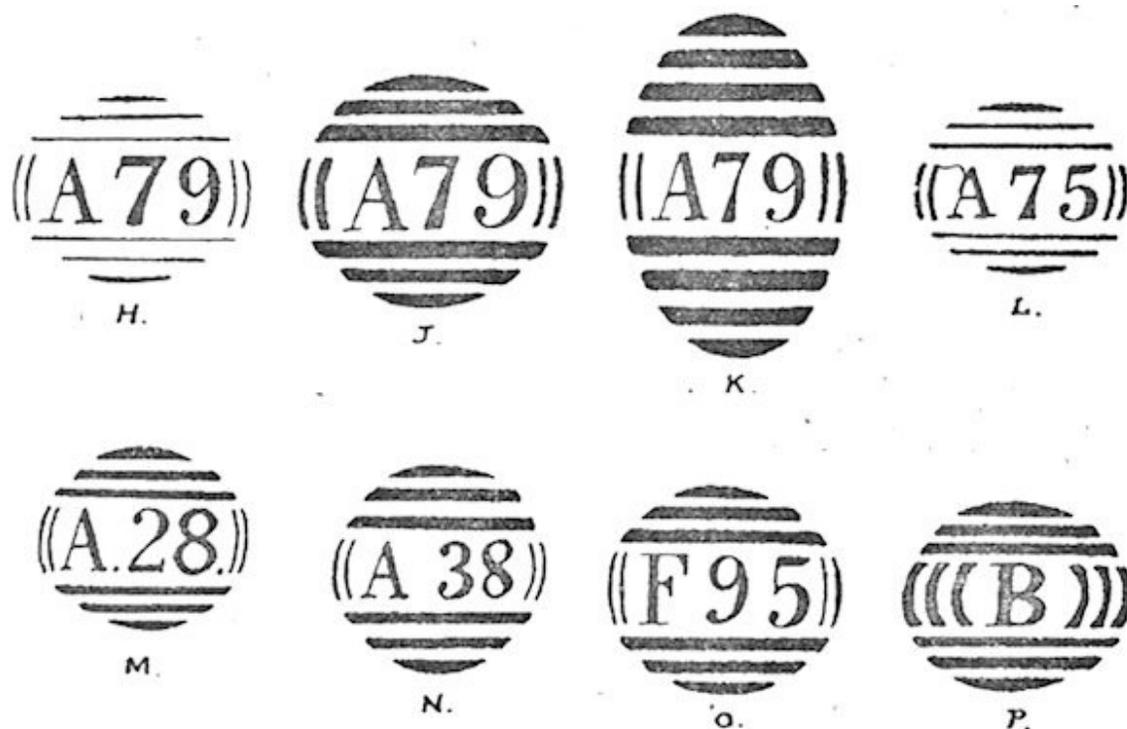
An ‘Obliterator’ is a mark used only to deface postage stamps, and may consist of a plain design or else numbers and letters, singly or combined, which indicate to the postal authorities the office of origin.

‘Town Names’ and ‘Date-Stamps’ may be found anywhere upon a postal packet, but obliterations are always on the postage stamps themselves—hence the word.

Fig 1 – a few words from the Introduction.

*(Continued on page 15)*

(Continued from page 14)



TYPES OF OBLITERATORS.

Fig 2 – a sample of obliterations

JAMAICAN OBLITERATION NUMBERS  
BY L. C. C. NICHOLSON, 1949

POST TOWNS

\* To all the references to the year 1862 can be added "about 1 November," when the numbers were rearranged. Similarly the year 1859 always refers to 1 March.

The references to scarcity or otherwise do not refer to British stamps, which are all more or less scarce.

NO.	TYPE	POST TOWN	PERIOD OF USE	NOTES
A27	Normal Type H.	Alexandria	June 1859 (P.O. reopened) to early nineties.	This number is usually quite clear, but not common, as the office was small.
A28	do.	Annotto Bay	1 March, 1859, to about 1876 (infra).	
A28	Type M.	do.	About 1876 to early in 1885.	A28 is only scarce on CAs.
	There are two other obliterations of this type A60 and A82. The 'A' is narrow and has very short feet, and there are periods after the 'A' and after the number. All three were sent out about 1875.			
A29	Normal Type H	Bath	1 March, 1859 to about 1891.	Not a common number.

At a first glance each old Jamaican stamp appears to have a different number, and the task of sorting them seems endless. However, careful study shows that only eighty-eight obliterations were used during a period of over thirty years.

The type of some of the obliterations was changed, and Kingston had seven types of 'A01', similarly eleven post towns had their numbers renewed once, and one (A79) had the number renewed twice, thereby giving a grand total of 107 different obliterations, including all type varieties.

Fig 3 - a sample of a tabulated listing of the obliterations

Fig 4 - some text to put the number of obliterations into context

## FRANCE'S MASTER ENGRAVER

### Albert Decaris

by Ted Tyszka

Engraved stamps—and their attendant beauty—have been, perhaps as much as any other reason, a top draw in attracting new collectors to philately. With their shimmering beauty, finely etched details, and the visual and tactile enhancement provided by the raised ridges produced by the intaglio printing method, engraved stamps hold a special place in the hearts of many collectors.

Stamp engravers are the rock stars of the philatelic world and each draws their own fan following. Collectors of French stamps are particularly enamored of the stamps of Pierre Gaston and Albert Decaris, though they are by no means France's only distinguished stamp engravers. In this post I will take a brief look at the work of Albert Decaris (b. 1901 – d. 1988).



Young Albert, from an early age, displayed an aptitude for art, and at the age of 14 he entered the *École Estienne*, a school of graphic arts, printing, and typography, in Paris. At the age of 18, he was awarded the prestigious Prix de Rome—an art prize established in 1663 and which ran



An engraved self-portrait of Decaris

until it was abolished in 1968—for his engraving, “Eve, Before Sin,” (or, alternatively, “Eve Before the Fall”). He was the youngest student ever to win this honor which awarded him a scholarship that provided a fully-funded residency of 3 to 5 years at the *Académie de France* in Rome (Villa Medici), covering living expenses, travel, and study costs.

His residency was interrupted early on when, after visiting the southern Italian city of Paestum, he contracted Malaria and was deathly ill for a year. After overcoming his illness, he then had to fulfill a 2 year military commitment. His “3-5 year residency” in Italy thus lasted from 1920 to 1927.

Decaris went on to win many honors and awards, over the course of his life, including:

- Being elected to the *Académie des Beaux-Arts* in 1943
- Winning the 1948 gold medal for engraving, in the now discontinued Olympic art competitions
- Being named, in 1962, *Peintre de la Marine*, the official painter of the French Navy
- Named an Officer of the Legion of Honor

In 1933, France's postal authorities recognized his talent and invited Decaris to become part of their team of



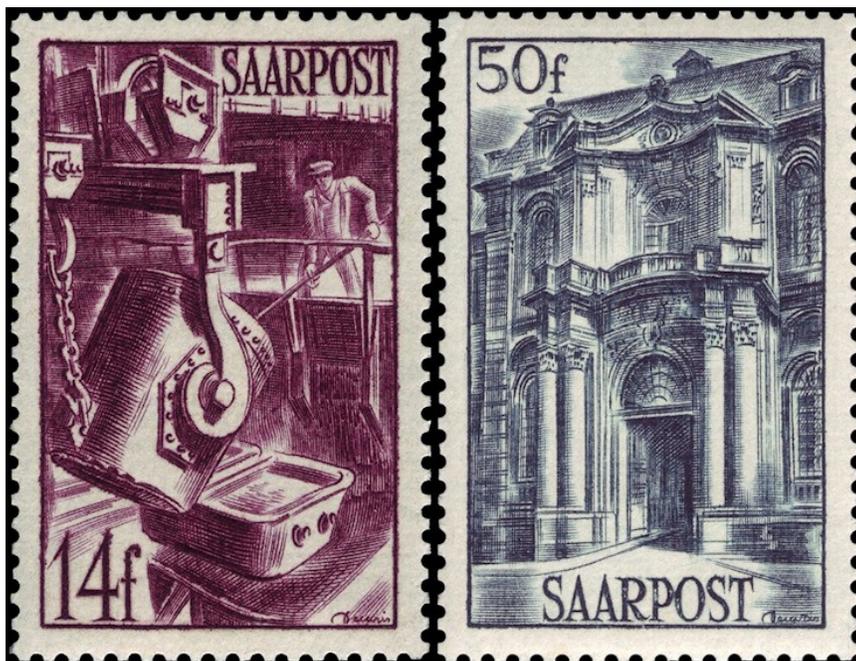
His first stamp, Scott Nr 302,  
SG 527, Mi 298, YT 302 (1935)

artists. His first major stamp engraving commission, in 1935, was to depict the Cloisters of Saint-Trophime d'Arle.

Decaris is often praised for exploiting the capacity of steel engraving to deliver razor-sharp clarity, shimmering parallel lines, and subtle tonal gradations even at very small scale. Working within the size constraints of a postage stamp demands both economy and precision; every line must count. Decaris' skill was to retain visual richness and depth in a tiny frame. His engravings often show crisp detail even in background textures, foliage, masonry, and architectural ornamentation.



2 stamps, of 12, Decaris engraved  
depicting scenes from French history.



Saar, Scott Nr 198, 200; SG 246; Mi 249; YT 241

Over decades, his stamp designs maintained a consistent aesthetic—a blend of classical restraint and refined ornamentation. This led to some criticism that he did not continue to grow or evolve (haters gonna hate). His sensitivity to how the printed result would look at small scale—how ink behaves, how halftones might emerge from hatching—demonstrates a deep technical mastery of the medium and led to a continuous stream of stamp commissions over the next 50 years, creating over 600 postage stamps, in all, for France, French colonies, and other European countries such as Andorra, Monaco, and Saar. I was unable to learn the precise count. Most were designed and engraved by him, while others were either designed by him and engraved by someone else, or designed by another artist and engraved by him.

While postage stamps (as well as banknotes) are engraved on steel dies as a matter of course, due to the durability of the plates over large print runs, Decaris used steel plates exclusively for all of his artwork throughout his life, in con-

trast to the usual copper plates used by other artists. Steel plates, due to their hardness, require a much surer hand and more precision while working. However, he preferred the finer lines and details that steel plates provided over copper.

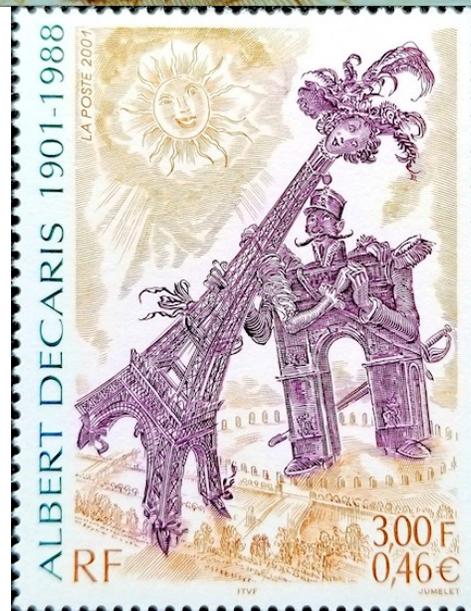
Decaris engraved his final stamp in 1985, for France's Memorial Day. He continued to work up until his death on 1 January, 1988. During that time, leading up to the 1989 centenary of the Eiffel Tower, Decaris created a series of 100 engravings featuring an anthropomorphic Eiffel Tower in humorous and playful depictions.



Two of the 100 engravings from Decaris' "Eifel" series.

Decaris's stamps are popular with collectors not just for their subjects or because they are rare (which they are decidedly not), but for their sheer craftsmanship; they are often considered among the finest engraved stamps of 20th-century France, if not the world.

In 2001, France issued a commemorative stamp in his honor, designed and engraved by Claude Jumelet. Patterned after Decaris' own style, it stands as testament to his enduring importance in French philatelic and artistic culture.



# Stamp of the Month

by Nisarg Sutaria

## China (PRC)

Unissued 1964

Beijing Opera Theatrical Masks



Among the People's Republic of China's rarities are a number of stamps that were created but never published for various reasons and now exist in extremely small quantities. In 1964, a set of eight Theatrical Masks of the Beijing Opera was printed. The unissued Theatrical Masks of Peking Opera stamp sold for \$121,009 at the InterAsia auction in December 2012. In April 2017, the same auction house offered an untouched specimen of this rarity with vivid colors and minor overall soiling for \$177,790. Another unused specimen of the stamp with a sheet margin at the top (seen in the article) was sold at an InterAsia auction in June 2018.

The lot was priced at \$251,869.

Reference :<https://findyourstampsvalue.com/rarest-stamps/most-valuable-chinese-stamps>

## Portugal 1894

### Prince Henry the Navigator

By Ted Tyszka



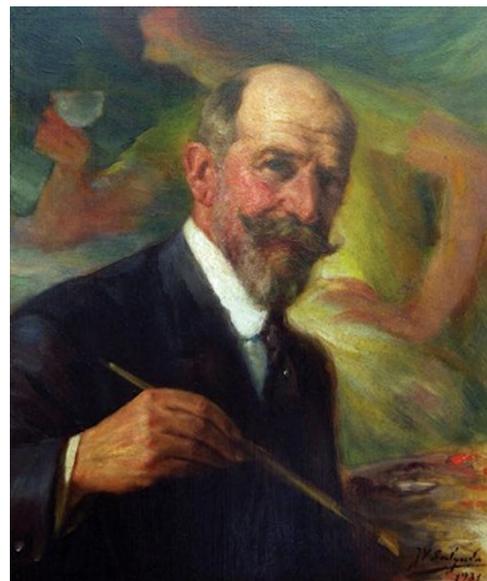
Prince Henry the Navigator  
(4 Mar 1394 – 13 Nov 1460)

In 1893, the United States issued its first set of commemorative stamps, the 1893 Columbians, commemorating the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Columbus's landing in America. Portugal, having a similar historic anniversary coming up the following year, took notice and prepared a set to commemorate the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Prince Henry of Portugal, Duke of Viseu—best known as Prince Henry the Navigator.

Prince Henry was the central figure in Portugal's early maritime exploration, leading to the rise of the Portuguese Empire, and initiating the *Age of Discovery* across the European continent. And while there is no direct evidence linking the US's Columbus set as the inspiration for Portugal, the parallels are certainly strong enough to suggest it: they are both long sets—the Columbians comprising 16 stamps, the Prince Henry set 13; the stamp format—oversized, horizontal orientation—was a departure from the previous small definitive stamps; and just as the Columbians had outrageously high top denominations for their time, so too did the Prince Henry set. The top values were 500 and 1000 reis, which, while not unprecedented for a Portuguese stamp, were nevertheless significantly higher than the more usual 300 reis top value for a set.

While the complete set comprised 13 stamps, they only utilized 3 different designs. The artist was one of the great painters of the second generation of Portuguese naturalism of the late 18<sup>th</sup> to early 19<sup>th</sup> century, José Maria Veloso Salgado (1864-1945).

Born in Spain, he came to Lisbon under the care of his uncle, who owned a lithography studio. At the studio, he learned lithographic drawing and developed a complete dedication to art. At the age of 14 he enrolled at Lisbon's Academy of Fine Arts (*Escola da Academia de Belas Artes de Lisboa*), attending from 1878 to 1887. Such was his artistic prowess and reputation that he was not yet 30 years old when he was selected as the designer for the Prince Henry set.



Self-portrait of  
José Maria Veloso Salgado (1931).

*Vasco da Gama before the Zamorin of Calicut*  
by José Maria Veloso Salgado (1898)

(Continued on page 21)

(Continued from page 20)

Looking at the individual designs:



The design of Scott Nr 97-100, SG 314-317, *Prince Henry On His Ship*

The 5, 10, 15, and 20r values (Scott Nr 97-100, SG 314-317) depict Prince Henry standing on the deck of a ship, holding a nautical chart, surrounded by allegorical figures representing the winds and seas. At the bottom is inscribed Prince Henry's motto *Talent de Bien Faire*, Talent to Do Well.

The ship is a two-masted *caravela redonda* (a round caravel or square-rigged caravel), an improved version of the caravel developed by the Portuguese around 1439. The caravel was a crucial development in ship design that was instrumental in Portugal's taking the lead over other European countries during the Age of Discoveries (roughly 1418-1620). Its distinguishing feature was the rigging of a lateen sail, introduced to the Iberian Peninsula by the Arabs. Rigged so that the plane of the sail is in line with the lengthwise axis of the ship, when the sail was aligned within 20-30

degrees of the direction of a headwind, it allowed for tacking in a zig-zag manner into the wind.

While early caravels were often fully lateen-rigged for coastal maneuvering along Africa, the design evolved quickly. The *caravela redonda* used in Prince Henry's fleet was an improvement over earlier designs and paired the lateen sail with a large square sail on the foremast for better speeds on the open ocean. This ship became the standard on long voyages.

The 25, 50, 75, 80, and 100r values (Scott Nr 101-105, SG 318-322) depict Prince Henry directing the maneuvers of his fleet. On either side can be seen two figures, the goddess Ceres holding a cornucopia, symbolic of the wealth and resources brought back through exploration, and Mercury, the Roman god of trade, travel, and communication, representing discovery and navigation. Also shown are 2 elephants, symbolic of Portugal's far-reaching exploration and imperial ambitions in Africa and Asia. At the bottom is the inscription 1419 Primeira Expedição, referring to the first expedition directed by Prince Henry, with João Gonçalves Zarco leading the fleet.



The design of Scott Nr 101-105, SG 318-322

*Prince Henry directing fleet maneuvers*

**Note:** Without getting too deeply into the weeds, Portugal's first expedition was actually in 1418, when Zarco was tasked with exploring the oceans west of Africa. On the return trip, a storm blew him off course and he took shelter on an uninhabited island now known as Porto Santo (a part of the Madeira archipelago). He then returned to Portugal and the next year, 1419, was sent back to claim the island of Porto Santo for Portugal and, while there, discovered the island of Madeira in the distance. Madeira was also bereft of virtually any animal life, save for birds, bats, insects, and lizards, and it too was claimed for Portugal. (Contrary to one reference I found, Madeira was not "captured" by Portugal, as there was nobody to capture it from.) Because of the abundance of forested area, the island was named for the Portuguese word *madeira*, meaning "wood."

The 150, 300, 500, and 1000r values (Scott Nr 106-109, SG 323-326) show a seated Prince Henry surrounded by iconography sym-

(Continued on page 22)

(Continued from page 21)

bolic of his navigation studies. Under his left hand is a globe of the earth. His right hand sits atop an armillary sphere, a navigational and astronomical tool representing the celestial sphere. Two semi-nude female figures are shown on each side, each holding a date shield and a palm frond, representing . . . well, semi-nude figures holding date shields and palm fronds. A lion lies prominently at the bottom center of the stamp, representing strength, courage, nobility, royalty . . . stuff like that. And finally, the inscription *Sagres* is the name of the city where Prince Henry allegedly established a navigational research center, though that is now a discredited assertion.

The stamps were produced by the German firm of Giesecke & Devrient, of Leipzig. The lower 9 values were all printed by offset lithography, while the high values got the *intaglio* treatment, with G & D creating the engraving off of Veloso Salgado's design. The top 5 stamps (including the 100r value of the middle 5, were also printed on colored paper, each value with its own tint.

The stamps have an official issue date of 4 March, 1894. However, that date was a Sunday and it's possible that some may have gotten out the previous day. They were on sale for only a short time, being withdrawn on March 13<sup>th</sup>, with the remainder being destroyed. The vast majority of used stamps are CTOs bearing the commemorative cancel, a circular postmark with the text 1394/Centenario/1894 on three lines.

Considering the short sales period, the stamps are relatively inexpensive, indicating they must have experienced brisk sales during the issue period. Looking at retail values on HipStamp, Unused examples of the lowest value can be found for as low as \$2.25, with the high value, Scott #109 being found for as low as \$300. For Used copies, prices ranged from 32c for #97 (on Delcame) up to \$35 for #109 (on HipStamp). Used copies on cover catalogue at significant premiums to off-cover singles, but I was unable to find examples for sale.

Poor centering is a given for these stamps, as well as damaged perfs, stains, toning, tears, and creases. There are many complete Used sets listed for sale, but you will have to contend with "mixed condition." If you want to compile a complete set of decent quality, you will be best served by finding the stamps individually. It will end up costing more than a ready-made mixed-condition set, but, hey, you get the thrill of the hunt and you wind up with a set you can be proud to show off on your favorite stamp discussion board.



The design of Scott Nr 106-109, SG 323-326  
Prince Henry surrounded by symbols of his studies.



A Used (CTO) stamp bearing a commemorative cancel.



## Stories Behind the Stamps

by Lawrence Fisher

The following articles first appeared on the [Stories Behind the Stamps](#) blog, Mar 19, 2025, and is reprinted here with permission from the author.

### Espionage—Innovation—Survival The Secret Behind Israel's Kfir Fighter

The year was 1968, and Israel was facing an urgent crisis. The victory in the Six-Day War had come at a cost; France, once a key arms supplier, had turned its back on Israel. President Charles de Gaulle, condemning Israel's preemptive strike, imposed a strict arms embargo, cutting off access to the powerful Dassault Mirage 5 fighters that Israel had already paid for.

Israel needed a solution.

Somewhere in Switzerland, in the quiet offices of Sulzer, a company licensed to produce components for the Mirage III's SNECMA Atar 9C engine, an unassuming Swiss engineer named Alfred Frauenknecht went about his work. He was not a spy, nor a man with strong political beliefs—just an engineer in need of money. And money, as it turned out, was something Israel was willing to provide. An operation was put in motion to acquire the Mirage blueprints by any means necessary.

Israeli intelligence, known for its daring operations, identified Frauenknecht's financial troubles and made an offer: a large sum of money in exchange for technical documents. Frauenknecht hesitated, but the lure of wealth proved too strong. Slowly, methodically, he began to collect thousands of classified blueprints—detailed schematics of the Mirage's airframe, avionics, and most importantly, the Atar 9C engine.

For the next few years (1968-1969), Frauenknecht smuggled out documents in secret, passing them into the hands of Israeli intelligence. Once in Israeli possession, the blueprints were studied by engineers at Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI). With these stolen plans, Israel reverse-engineered the Mirage 5, producing an almost identical aircraft—the IAI Neshar.

But Israel didn't stop there. Armed with this knowledge, their engineers went further, replacing the Atar 9C engine with the more powerful General Electric J79, the same engine used in

the American F-4 Phantom II. This modification required significant engineering changes, including structural reinforcements to handle the increased thrust and upgraded avionics to integrate both Israeli and American weaponry.

And then came one of the biggest aerodynamic improvements, the addition of canards, small forward wings placed near the cockpit. These were introduced in the Kfir C2 and later models, drastically improving:

- ◆ Maneuverability – The aircraft could turn tighter, making it deadlier in dogfights.
- ◆ Takeoff and landing performance – Shorter takeoff distances and better control at low speeds.
- ◆ Stability – Compensating for the heavier engine and increasing overall control.
- ◆ The result? A new aircraft—the IAI Kfir—a fighter even deadlier than the Mirage it was based on.

Meanwhile, Frauenknecht's activities did not go unnoticed. By 1971, Swiss authorities uncovered the breach. Frauenknecht was arrested, charged with espionage, and sentenced to four and a half years in prison. The case caused an international scandal, but by then, the damage was done. Israel had what it needed.

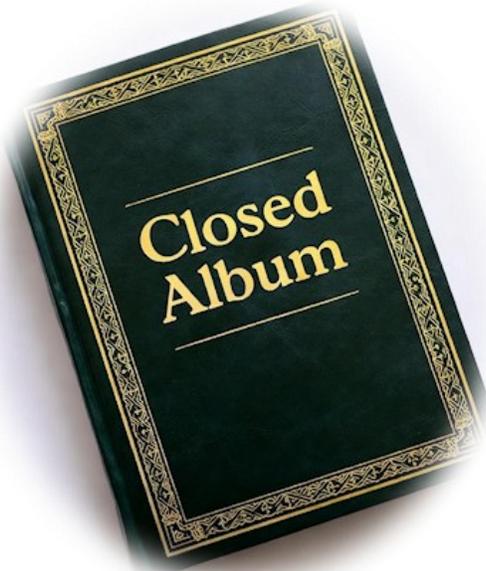


Israel, Scott Nr 852, SG 913, Mi 947 (1983)

By 1975, the first IAI Kfirs rolled off the production line and entered service with the Israeli Air Force. Later, the fighter was exported to Colombia, Ecuador, Sri Lanka, and even the United States (as the F-21, for training).

The Mirage had been born in France. But its Israeli descendant, the Kfir, was something entirely different—the product of necessity, espionage, and engineering ingenuity, proving once again that Israel could not be outmatched, even by an arms embargo.





### **In Memoriam: Alan Devine**

IPDA Founding Member and Past Chairman, Sydney, Australia

It is with sadness that I tell you that Alan Devine recently passed away . Alan was a founding member of the IPDA and past Chairman who many of us knew very well. He made a significant contribution to the IPDA over more than 20 years and that contribution will certainly live on.

He was a guiding force in the establishment of the IPDA and generous with his time and knowledge, both business and philatelic, and he certainly helped build the IPDA into the respected Association it is today.

I met Alan on a few occasions when I lived in Australia and I saw how his passion for philately was matched only by his kindness toward fellow collectors and dealers. Whether mentoring newcomers or simply sharing stories over tea, which we did on a few occasions and with another Sydney based IPDA member, he made everyone feel welcome and valued.

Rest in peace, Alan. You will be deeply missed.

Michael Dodd, IPDA General Secretary.

### **In Memoriam: Mark O'Neill**

IPDA Member, UK

It is with sadness that I tell you that Mark O'Neill recently passed away . Mark had been an IPDA member for 5 years. He owned and ran Philatelic Supplies in the UK, a business he had been devoted to for 57 years.

Mark and I had many good conversations by email and I am happy to say I was able to help him in a small way with his more recent interest and business venture of Birds on stamps.

I last heard from Mark just over a year ago when he celebrated his 70<sup>th</sup> birthday in Greece so it came as a big shock to me, and I am sure others who knew him, of his sudden passing.

My, and our IPDA condolences to his family.

Michael Dodd, IPDA General Secretary.

# This Month's Contributors



**Michael Dodd:** Michael Dodd is the owner/operator/chief cook and bottle washer of [cddstamps](http://cddstamps.com) — “commemorative definitive decimal stamps.” He has been selling since 2000 and has [a store on the Hipstamp marketplace](#) where he has 43,00 listings and 82,000 feedbacks. His online presence is through his website at [cddstamps.com](http://cddstamps.com), his blogs, notably his aircraft on stamps blog at [cddstamps.wordpress.com](http://cddstamps.wordpress.com) and various other social media feeds.



**Lawrence Fisher:** Lawrence Fisher is an award-winning philatelic exhibitor, and the author of the non-philatelic non-fiction book, “Kill Me Now!” He publishes the blog, “Stories Behind the Stamps,” from where this month’s article first appeared, as well as the YouTube channel of the same name. His “Stories Behind the Stamps” article first appeared on his blog of the same name and is reprinted here by permission. He also has a “Stories Behind the Stamps” YouTube channel. Visit his blog, here: [Stories Behind the Stamps](#) and see his YouTube channel here: [Stories Behind the Stamps](#)

YOUR NAME HERE

Contact the editor: [ted.talks.stamps@gmail.com](mailto:ted.talks.stamps@gmail.com)



**Nisarg Sutaria:** Nisarg Sutaria hails from Ahmedabad, India. He has a BE in Mechanical Engineering from Nirma Institute of Technology, India (1999), and an MS in Manufacturing Engineering from Western Michigan University, USA (2001). Philately is one of his hobbies, while horology (the study of the measurement of time) is another of his passions. You can contact him via email: [nisargsutaria78@gmail.com](mailto:nisargsutaria78@gmail.com). Mobile and WhatsApp Phone Number: +91-9924248850



**Ted Tyszka:** Ted Tyszka started collecting in 1974 and after moving to Portugal in 2024 has narrowed his collecting focus to Germany and area, and Portugal and area. He also has a few topical interests: Literature and Fiction Writers; Classical Music; and Stamp Design Errors. He has [a Hip-Stamp store](#) which you can find by a store search for the name TATyszka or his user name “youpiao.” He also has a [YouTube channel](#) and a [Substack newsletter](#), both also under the name, “Ted Talks Stamps.”

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**Ian Lasok-Smith (Philatelist)**

6 Hough Green, Chester, CH4 8JG