

Balkanfila



Newsletter

No 2, February 2024

Editorial

Is 2024 the right time for more, Collective Philatelic Action ?

2024, the Year of the Dragon, seems to be a philatelically promising and a creative year for our region.

Several National Exhibitions are on the year calendar as well as three –up to now– international exhibitions have been scheduled in our Region : first of all is the F.I.P Patronage EFIRO2024 in April, followed by the specialized in Narrow–Theme exhibits EnjastoOkno Kranj at the end of August and then is Balkanfila XX in Thessaloniki in mid–November.

The key purpose of this Newsletter, I believe, is to improve communication among Philatelists and boost co–operation in philately–related topics and activities of our region from various perspectives. After all this is the next level, going from the pleasant hobby of stamp collecting to the intriguing study that philately does generously offer.

A call from Firat Akhan to share and further develop personal findings into a systematic and team approach of studying Balkan Union Postal Rates is an initiative definitely worth of our full support.

Organized Philately over the last years has become more aware that it cannot be placed at the margin of society. It is, beyond any doubt, necessary to open up to wider publics in order to grow both in persons as well as to be able to transmit the various fascinating messages of Philately by adopting and making use of modern communication methods.

The core nature of Philately is to look into the items of written communication but as the contemporary communication patterns have radically changed, our approach needs to be accordingly adjusted to current practices and there is just a single way to be taken that of moving forward with Openness and efficient Communication.

UPCOMING INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITIONS



The EFiRO2024 JURY consists of President Eliahu WEBBER as the President and Sammy G. CHIU, Turhan TURGUT and Abdulla KHOORY as Vice Presidents, Jury Secretary Bernard JIMENEZ, Assistant Jury Secretaries Kelly ONG and Denisa ROTARIU and a strong team of Jury from 21 countries.

JURY VICE PRESIDENT

TURKEY : Turhan TURGUT



The EFiRO2024, 31-person Jury of experienced and acclaimed philatelists was announced and the BALKANFILA representation is notable including : Turhan TURGUT as Vice President and Jury of Boncho BONEV, George THOMAREIS, Alexandru Dan BAROC, Emanoil SAVOIU, Francisc AMBRUS, Peter SUHADOLC, Igor PIRC, Mehmet AKHAN as well as Iulian CHERATA as a member of the Expert Group.

JURY

BULGARIA : Boncho BONEV



GREECE : George THOMAREIS



ROMANIA : Alexandru Dan BAROC



ROMANIA : Emanoil SAVOIU



ROMANIA : Francisc AMBRUS



SLOVENIA : Peter SUHADOLC



SLOVENIA : Igor PIRC



TURKEY : Mehmet AKHAN



EXPERT Group Iulian CHERATA ROMANIA



Honorary President of EFIRO2024 is the F.I.P President Prokob Chirakiti

Senior Consultant : Tay Peng Hian

F.I.P Consultant : Yigal Nathaniel



The Romanian Philatelic Federation in partnership with the Ministry of Culture, Romfilatelia SA, Romanian Post and the Museum of Romanian Records, invites you to **EFIRO 2024**, the International Philatelic Exhibition with FIP Patronage and FEPA Recognition.

BIBLIOTECA
NAȚIONALĂ
DAR
A ROMÂNIEI

- over 2000 frames for the exhibitors
- philatelic contests for youth
- stands for postal representatives, auction houses and philatelic merchants
- philatelic seminars and presentations
- study groups
- literature area
- memorable trips

efiro2024@gmail.com



EnajstoOkno KRANJ 2024



NARROW THEME PHILATELIC EXHIBITION

29.8. – 7.9.2024

Biennial Narrow theme Philatelic Exhibition, invites exhibitors to take part on that, already eleventh-in-the-row event. More on [Enajsto2024 – Filatelistična zveza Slovenije – FZS](#).

The venue of the exhibition EnajstoOkno Kranj shall be Gorenjski Muzej in Kranj, Glavni trg, Slovenia.

In the competitive part, the participation is open to all collectors who are members of Philatelic Societies affiliated to the Slovenian Philatelic Association and all other National federations members of FEPA. Exhibits must have obtained on national and related rank exhibitions at least 70 points, new exhibits must be properly justified by the respective National Commissioner.

The entry form can be found at the FZS website : www.fzs.si/enajsto2024.

Entry Forms must be received by either the Organizing Committee of the EnajstoOkno Kranj 2024 or the Commissioner General no later than June 15, 2024. Confirmation of acceptance will be sent out within July 15, 2024. Each collector can participate in the competitive classes with no more than two exhibits. Exhibitors can display their exhibits in physical form or in digital form.

BALKANFILA XX in THESSALONIKI

aims to be a **NOTEBLE CULTURAL EVENT**



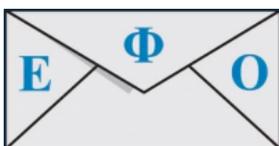
In November, Thessaloniki welcomes exhibitors and visitors to the International Philatelic Exhibition BALKANFILA XX with the participation of 12 Balkan and 3 invited countries, Cyprus, Italy and Israel at the premises of the International Thessaloniki Fair.

The aim of the Organizing Committee, in addition to organizing a high-level philatelic exhibition, is to highlight and present through collectible items (old maps, photographs, postcards, posters, etc.) the history of the Region. The relevant lectures during the Exhibition will offer the visitors a memorable cultural event in relation to the historical route and the communities of Thessaloniki that lived, created and left their indelible imprint on the modern metropolitan centre.

Contributors to this effort are internationally renowned collectors-scholars and academics with the aim of presenting to the general public documented historical knowledge as well as institutions who have so far embraced the exhibition, with the Municipality of Thessaloniki and F.E.P.A the most prominent ones.

We Welcome All to Thessaloniki in November !

Ioannis Refanidis, President of the BALKANFILA XX Organizing Committee



BALKANFILA XX : At a Glance



Name BALKANFILA XX
Organiser Hellenic Philatelic Federation and Hellenic Philatelic Society of Thessaloniki
Dates Wednesday 13 to Saturday 16 November 2024
Venue International Thessaloniki Fair, Building 6
Website <https://www.efo.gr/balkanfila-xx/>

Size 500 sixteen-page exhibition frames
Space 2.800 m²

Auspices City of Thessaloniki

Recognition F.E.P.A (Federation of European Philatelic Associations)

Participation open to

Exhibitors from Balkanfila Working Group members as well as Cyprus, Israel and Italy
Exhibitors from all world with exhibits related to Balkan and Eastern Mediterranean regions
All world with Philatelic Literature exhibits

Classes

All FIP and FEPA competitive Classes including Open, Modern and Picture Postcards plus "Court of Honour" for distinguished exhibits

Under the Auspices



CITY OF THESSALONIKI

Recognition



A Current Philatelic Exhibition in Istanbul

A specific exhibition at İstanbul Stamp Museum (General Post office of Ottoman Empire) by Turkish Philately Federation on 23rd February to middle of March, 2024.

Murat Hazinedaroğlu Vice President of Turkish Philately Federation, served as the co-ordinator and host of the Exhibition.

On the first day of the exhibition, the "LOKMA" dessert was distributed to 2500 people for philatelists and PTT employees who lost their lives due to COVID-19 and the earthquake.

'Hello to those who left us- 2'



Commemorating Sarajevo's Olympic Glory :

Philatelic Exhibition marks 40th Anniversary



After a successful four-year period The Society of Philatelists and Numismatics of the Canton of Sarajevo (Bosnia and Herzegovina) enthusiastically started the year with a new board and new events. To mark the 40th Anniversary of the 1984 Winter Olympics, the Society of Philatelists and Numismatics of the Canton of Sarajevo, in cooperation with the City of Sarajevo and the mayor Benjamina Karić, as well as the Bosnian Cultural Center, and Artis - Cultural society hosted a special exhibition showcasing stamps, first day covers, and commemorative coins celebrating the Games and their enduring legacy. The exhibition was part of a wider celebratory festivity organized by the city, featuring cultural and music events that resonated with the community. This broader program helped draw even more attention to the exhibition, fostering its standing and significance.



NATIONAL EXHIBITIONS : TURKIYE

Ankara 26 December – 3 January 2024

"Atatürk and the Republic" Stamp Exhibition was opened by the Ankara Philatelists Society on the occasion of the 100th Anniversary of the Republic and the 104th Anniversary of Atatürk's arrival in Ankara.



Tarsus 26 December – 3 January 2024



The "Ataturk and the Republic" Stamp exhibition was opened by the Adana Philatelists Society on the occasion of the 100th Anniversary of the Republic and the 102nd Anniversary of the Liberation of Tarsus from enemy occupation.



Konak
Filatelistler
Derneği



Cumhuriyetimizin 100. yılı kutlamaları kapsamında düzenlediğimiz "İzmirli Filatelistlerin Koleksiyonları" pul sergimize katılımınızdan onur duyarız.

Açılış Kokteyli
25 Aralık 2023
Saat: 17:30

25 Aralık 2023 - 05 Ocak 2024
İzmir Ticaret Odası
Hizmet Binası



EVENTS and PUBLICATIONS

“PHILOTELIA” receives a M/S as a Birthday Gift

The bimonthly journal of the Hellenic Philatelic Society has celebrated its 100th Anniversary of uninterrupted publication and the Hellenic Post marked this Anniversary by issuing a Miniature Sheet for «PHILOTELIA» Journal.

This artwork has achieved to integrate the most important moments of the Journal such as International Philatelic Awards, the Commendation of the Athens Academy, iconic stamps and cancellations as well as the two indispensable “tools” of philatelic study and article writing : a magnifying lens and a fountain pen having its upper dotted referring to the Journal’s contemporary digital status.

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Inside the space of the stamp's perforation, the world-famous Large Hermes Head is shown due to its international fame so the identity of the product overcomes the barrier of language.

Since the whole background composition is related to the historical path of PHILOTELIA, it is proposed that the contemporary trend of publishing be captured in a logo. Therefore, the concept of research and writing (fountain pen and magnifying lens) is condensed with new digital media (pixel on the top of the pen) with the notion of uninterrupted circulation (using the infinity symbol in place of the two zeros). The new trends of the magazine are proposed to be symbolically reflected by a modern printing method, i.e. blue foil.

The M/S was jointly presented by the Hellenic Post (EL.TA) and the Hellenic Philatelic Society (H.P.S) on February 21st 2024 at the War Museum. The speakers of this event referred both to the artistic aspect and the significant contribution of PHILOTELIA Journal for 100 uninterrupted years to the Greek philatelic community.

The NEW ISFILA catalogue is coming soon



İSFİLA 2024

The Turkish Stamps catalogue for 1863-2023 will be published in March.

The 12th. edition catalog has 608 pages and all stamp images are in color.

The catalog can be ordered from <https://www.isfila.com>.

Turkish Philatelic Academy's New Year's Eve dinner

was held at Grand Club - Cercle d'Orient on January 23rd.

20 founding members of the academy attended .



Call for a BALKANFILA Study Group



BALKAN POSTAL UNION

Dear Balkan Philatelists,

My name is Firat Akan, and I have received an education in International Relations. I am particularly interested in the research aspect of philately and its intersection with politics. One of the topics I have been working on is the Balkan Postal Union. I have examined the Balkan Postal Union within the archives of the Republic of Turkey. Not only do I have a displayed collection on this subject, but I also have published the article "Balkan Union Postal Rates of Turkey" in the Turkish Philatelic Academy Annual 2021 and XIX Balkanfila Exhibition Catalog covering the inter-state postal arrangements between Turkey, Greece, Romania, Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia, specifically special (reduced) Balkan postal rates in the period from 1931 to 1940. The information available in Turkish archives should also be present in archives of other Balkan countries. If there are individuals interested in collaborating on this topic, whether as philatelists or historians, let us expand our efforts together. If we can establish a working group, we can share our findings. An experienced philatelist could lead the group.

contact e-mail: fiat.akan@tum.de/ firfirakan@gmail.com

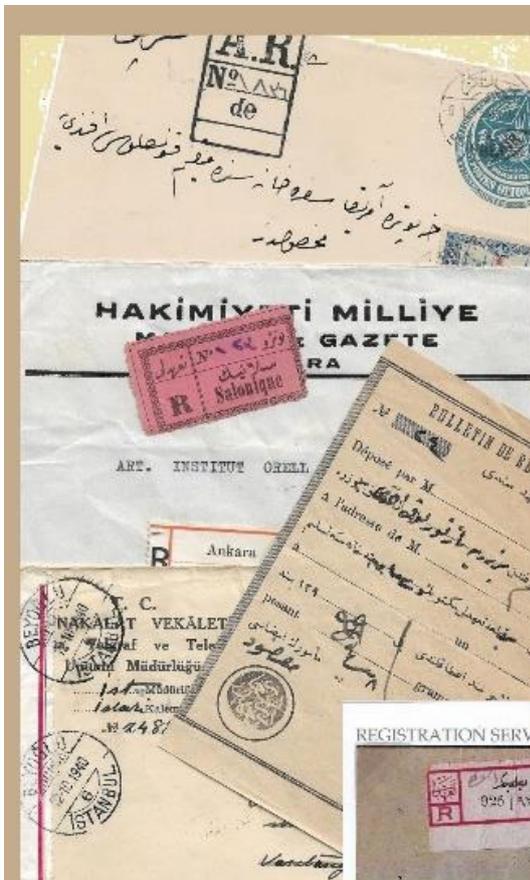
Photography and Picture Postcards in Ankara



One of the most important of the Ankara-themed publications has been published. The esteemed collector Erman Tamur's extraordinary work that lasted for years, 'Photography and Picture Post Cards in Ankara, from Antranik to photo Ridvan, from Mugamyantar to Gökçeataam' (1890-1960). Vekam published the book - Koç University Publications.

We especially recommend this 470-page work to postcard collector

"The Registered Mail of the Ottoman Empire" by Alan Mellaart



Dear Collectors,

I reflected about your kind offer to reach out regarding subjects that your members might be able to assist me with.

The book i am compiling is going to be titled something like " The registered mail of the Ottoman Empire 1840-1923 " It is likely to be four if not five volumes for the sake of convenience.

I am in paricular looking for more examples of registered covers and registration receipts from the so called lost territories of the Ottoman Empire in Europe and especially Albania, Serbia, Kosova, (ex Yugoslavia), Macedonia, Greece as well as from the Middle East and especially Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Libya. Despite owning one of the biggest Ottoman postal collections, there are still areas that i would like to strengthen, and the sending of any high resolution scans would be much appreciated, and will of course be acknowledged in the book. Your transmitting this message would be much appreciated. Date of publication is aimed for end 2024 or early 2025..

Any help would be much appreciated. Best regards,

alan mellaart, alan@mellaartint.com

“EPILOGOS” the Annual Art & Culture Year Book

meets the Hellenic Philatelic Society

The 32nd Edition of “Epilogos – Epilogue” Art and Culture Year Book was presented on December 5th, 2023 at the Athens Concert Hall and it was a tribute to Art and Culture through its essays by Academic and Art personalities.



The Hellenic Philatelic Society (H.P.S.) committed to communicating and promoting Philately to wider publics, has actively participated in this publication, as a significant part of the Book’s illustration was based on the depiction of Greek stamps that were recommended by H.P.S.

επιλογος



1983: Προσωπικότητες της Ελλάδος Β΄
(Ν. Καζαντζάκης 27δρ. - Μ. Καλομοίρης 32δρ. -
Γ. Παπανικολάου 40δρ. - Κ. Π. Καβάφης 20δρ.)

ONASSIS FOUNDATION

επιλογος



1958: Εμπορική Ναυτιλία
(Υπερβεβαρμένολοιο 0,50λ. - Νόβα του 1821 1,50λ. -
Βυζαντινό Χελάνδριο 2δρ. - Η μυθολογική Αργώ 5δρ.)

ΙΔΡΥΜΑ ΑΝΤΩΝΙΟΣ & ΙΩΑΝΝΗΣ ΑΓΓΕΛΙΚΟΥΣΗΣ

SEMINARS and LECTURES

2024 Seminar Program of the Turkish Philatelic Academy : 1st Half

February 2024	:	Preparing a collection for the exhibition
March 2024	:	Threats, risks, opportunities in philately
April 2024	:	What do we mean by ephemera?
May 2024	:	What is the stamp expertise? What does an expert do? What are the credentials?
June 2024	:	Narrow Themed exhibitions

At the National Exhibition : Thematic Philatelic Seminar

* The seminars for the second half of 2024 and the Dates for the Seminars will be further scheduled and announced.



Costas Chazapis



Mehmet Akan



Atadan Tunaci

*exhibiting a collection 101
basic rules*

TURKISH PHILATELY ACADEMY SEMINAR NO:74

26 FEBRUARY 21:30 ZOOM MEETING



Ankara Philatelic Society Informative Seminars

Ankara Philatelic Society continues its educational and informative seminars, which it started online during the coronavirus pandemic, physically in the Society's facility. The events, in which an Association member's exhibition that has won awards in competitions is presented every month, attract great attention from collectors in Ankara.

ANKARA FİLATELİ DERNEĞİ
KOLEKSİYON TANITIM SÖYLEŞİLERİ 4
"HATAY POSTA TARİHİ"
Şükrü MELEK

Tarih : 08.02.2024 Perşembe
Saat : 18.30
Yer : Ziya Gökalp Caddesi No:72/1
Kolej - ANKARA

ANKARA FİLATELİ DERNEĞİ
KOLEKSİYON TANITIM SÖYLEŞİLERİ 3

Tarih : 10.01.2024
Saat : 18.30
Yer : Ziya Gökalp Caddesi No: 72 / 1 Kolej - Ankara

"Yehudi Menuhin Prize" for the Best Music Stamps

The international philatelic music study group "Motivgruppe Musik", founded in 1959, organizes every year a contest for the Best Music Stamp of the previous year.

For the Best Music Stamp Contest in 2023, participated 69 stamps issued in 2022 by 55 Postal Services worldwide.

The public voting awarded the 1st place for the "Yehudi Menuhin Prize" to Austria with a stamp depicting a Trombone on a Score, while Uruguay took the 2nd place with a stamp for ballerina Maria Noel Ricceto.



The Greek entry that won the 3rd place was designed by artist Dr. Myrsini Vardopoulou was a single stamp – from the four-stamp issue of "First Urban Refugee Settlements" – depicting the imposing figure of a refugee playing his string instrument at the foreground.



The famous violinist and conductor Sir Yehudi Menuhin was Patron of the Philatelic Music Circle for 30 years from 1969 until his death in 1999. After his death, the PMC members decided to award the price for the most popular music stamp in memory of Sir Yehudi Menuhin. The award is named after Lord Menuhin with the full agreement of his family.

Yehudi Menuhin was born in New York in 1916. Aged only nine he gave his first solo concert. As a famous violinist and conductor he traveled around the whole world. Besides of his career he always promoted young and talented musicians. Yehudi Menuhin died in Berlin in 1999.



For Motivgruppe Musik it is a great honor to continue the tradition of presenting the award in memory of Lord Yehudi Menuhin. The Yehudi-Menuhin-Trophy is annually awarded to the designer of the most popular music stamp issued in the previous year. The winners are chosen by all stamp collectors interested in music philately.

A Souvenir Sheet dedicated to the 130th Anniversary of Organized Philately in Bulgaria



On December 2nd, 2023, during the "Christmas Plovdiv" philatelic exhibition, a souvenir sheet with one postage stamp dedicated to the 130th anniversary of the organized philatelic movement in Bulgaria came into use. The wonderful graphic solution of the authors - the artists Tahsin Ahmed and Todor Angeliyev - present on the publication the images of some of the most prominent figures of the movement in the style of cartoon drawing. Some of the heroes of the block are also people who, in addition to having connected their lives with public philatelic activity, are also an inseparable segment of Bulgarian culture and art, such as the writer Elin Pelin, the master of circus art Lazar Dobrich and the remarkable artist Stefan Kanchev. It should be noted that of the philatelic figures shown, only two were awarded this honor during their lifetime - the honorary chairman of the Union of Bulgarian Philatelists His Majesty Tsar Simeon II, as well as probably the oldest active philatelist and philatelic author not only in Bulgaria, but also in the Balkans - Andrey Penchev, who on March 30th, 2024 celebrates his 100th anniversary. On the souvenir sheet you can see many more deserving philatelists, part of the history of Bulgarian philately such as Atanas Kirilov - the publisher of the first Bulgarian philatelic magazine "Timbrofil", the world-famous philatelic expert Petko Karaivanov, the long-time chairman of the Union of Bulgarian Philatelists Ivan Slavkov... Also depicted are some of the rarest Bulgarian stamps such as the "Inverted Cavalry", issues from the early Bulgarian classics...

The souvenir sheet "130 years of organized philatelic movement in Bulgaria" has a circulation of 1,800 sets, which include a perforated and non-perforated copy.

PATRIARCH of BULGARIAN and BALKAN PHILATELY

On March 30, the distinguished Bulgarian philatelist, exhibitor and philatelic researcher Andrey Penchev turns 100 years old! There are few who have reached this patriarchal age in strength and reason, and Andrei is one of them. He was born in 1924 in Gabrovo. There, as a primary school student, he first touched the beauty of the postage stamp. And the fascination with this magic remained with him throughout his life.

He is one of the most prominent Bulgarian exhibitors in the 1980s. His exhibits receive high awards at the most authoritative philatelic forums, the pinnacle being gold medals from FINLAND 88 and BULGARIA 89 in the Postal History class.

For almost six decades, Andrey Penchev wrote and published his remarkable studies in the philatelic press. His approach to certain historical facts and events may seem to some too free and self-willed, but it is certain that time – the best judge, long ago set a high mark on all that he wrote!

Cheers to the centenarian of Bulgarian philately! To live!



The Beginning of the Organized Philately in Bulgaria : 1893 – 1939

March 31st, 1893. On this date one hundred and thirty years ago, a few enthusiasts founded the first philatelic society in Bulgaria in Plovdiv. The beginning is set.

On October 15th, 1893, the society, which already had 50 members, published its printed organ "Voice of the Bulgarian Timbrophilic Society". This is the second philatelic magazine in Bulgaria after the monthly "Timbrofil", published in 1891 in Panagyurishte by the enlightened and patriotic Bulgarian Atanas Kirilov.

Again in Plovdiv in those years, Hristo G. Danov published the first Bulgarian "Album for stamps from around the world".

In 1893, at the world exhibition in Chicago, the Bulgarian merchant Samuel Blaustein displayed Bulgarian and foreign stamps at his booth, we learn this from Aleko Konstantinov's travelogue "To Chicago and Back".



Until 1921, no other philatelic societies were established, but in different cities of the country there were groups of collectors who corresponded with each other and exchanged postage stamps. On the other hand, a number of philatelic publications appeared: in 1909, the magazine "International Review" with publisher and editor Vasil Apostolov from Sofia; 1911 "La Bulgarie" magazine, edited by Simo P. Simov from Pleven, 1920 – "Complete guide to the collection, evaluation and preservation of postage stamps and catalog of Bulgarian postage stamps up to 1921."

After the First World War, interest in philately grew. In 1921, the philatelic society in Plovdiv was restored, and until 1927, 38 philatelic editions were published in different cities and with different durations: in Sofia 14, in Pleven 4, in Burgas, Plovdiv, Svishtov and Targovishte 3 each, in Varna and 2 each in Gorna Oryahovitsa, and one each in Lom, Panagyurishte, Ruse and Tarnovo.

In 1924, the first postal and philatelic book in Bulgaria was published – "History of the Post from the earliest times to the present day", author Kiro Petrov.

In 1926, the first issue of "Postal Stamp" magazine was published, originally as "Organ of Bulgarian Postage Stamp Collectors" with editor Dimitar Iv. Goshev, then as a body of the "First Bulgarian Philatelic Society in Sofia" and finally, in 1938, it became a body of the Union of Bulgarian Philatelic Societies with chief editor Stefan Simov.

On November 27th, 1925, a philatelic society was founded in Sofia with Boris Hadzhikalchov as its chairman. From June 1926, the society organized weekly stamp exchange meetings.

The first philatelic library was created in Sofia in 1927, when Borova Hadzhikalchov donated to the society about 200 volumes of Bulgarian and foreign philatelic literature.

In 1927, the first regulation on the exchange of postage stamps (No. 6/1927) was published in the magazine "Postal Stamp" and in 1928, the first youth section of the Sofia Philatelic Society was established.

The first philatelic exhibition in our country, organized in 1930, took place on the ground floor of the publishing house of Hristo G. Danov in Sofia. From 1937 to 1947, the magazine "Bulgarian Stamp" was published. Its editor and publisher is the philatelist and stamp dealer Simeon Charakchiev (1914–1993). The catalog for the Bulgarian postage stamps "Sima", published until 1958, is also his work.

On November 10, 1937, a new society named "Balkan Club" was founded in Sofia, and on November 25, 1937, a group of scientists and members of the public founded the Scientific Philatelic Club of Sofia, chaired by Prof. Rafail Popov, director of the National Archaeological Museum.

In 1937, philatelic societies were founded in Gorna Djumaya, Stara Zagora, Vidin, Pazardzhik, Kazanlak and Veliko Tarnovo. The same year, the prominent Sofia philatelist Dimitar Goshev published the catalog "DIGE".

On June 16 – 17, 1938, the Constituent Congress of the Union of Bulgarian Stamp Societies was held. Delegates from the three Sofia societies, as well as the societies in Veliko Tarnovo, Nova Zagora, Pazardzhik, Ruse, Stara Zagora, are participating in the congress.



At the same time, there were societies in Gabrovo, Varna, Kazanlak, Dupnitsa, but they did not send delegates.

The eight founding societies of the Union represented about 500 organized philatelists. Georgi Geshov was elected chairman.

In 1938, the companies in Pleven, Kyustendil and Topolovgrad were also founded.

Vaclav Stari, a member of the Sofia society, participated for the first time in the international exhibition "Bratislava 38", and won the 2nd Prize and a Silver Medal.

On July 16th, 1939, the First Regular Congress of the Union was held. Georgi Geshov was re-elected as chairman. In the same year, the newly formed companies in Byala, Botevgrad and Varna were accepted as members of the Union.

Written by George Dechev,

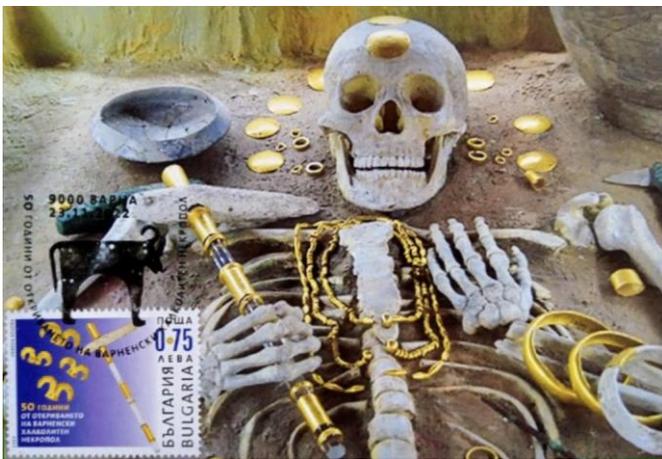
Translated by Boncho Bonev

2022 BEST MAXIMUM CARD WORLD COMPETITION

At the 2022 Best Maximum Card World Competition were 25 country entries from all over the World among these were from Four Balkanfila Federations.

Spain took the First place, a tie in the Second place between Italy and U.S.A and a third place France and Chinese Taipei.

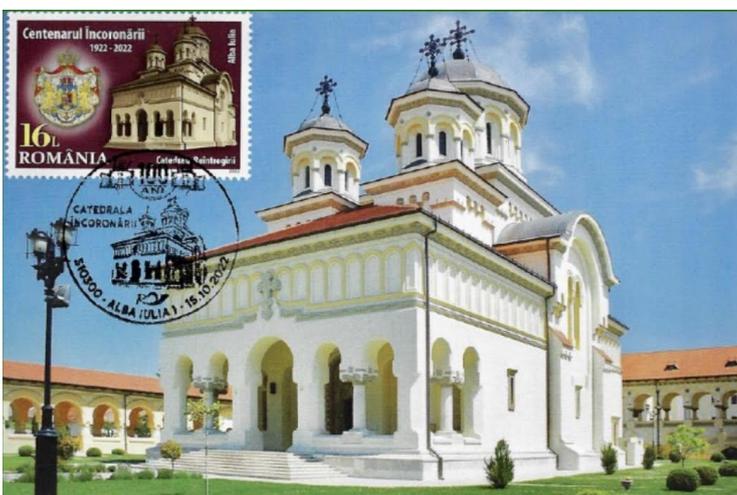
BULGARIA



GREECE



ROMANIA



SLOVENIA



STAMPS issues

Croatian Post Mostar issues

The New Annual Collection of Postage Stamps 2023 with topics on History, Culture and Natural Beauty in one place.

There are 22 postage stamps on which various world and national themes and motifs are presented.



and a Commemorative stamp of **Marco Polo** for his 700th death anniversary



Stamps and accompanying materials
can also be purchased online at

www.epostshop.ba

According to a 15th century document the family of Marco Polo was originally from Dalmatia. In 1271 Marco Polo joined his father and uncle, who were merchants, on their second journey to China and he returned to Venice in 1295. Later while in captivity, he narrated his travel experiences to his friend Rustichello from Pisa, who recorded them in the work "Book of the Marvels of the World", for centuries geographical maps of the Far East were made based on his travelogue. (Željka Šaravanja).

32nd EVENT of building **KING MATJAŽ'S CASTLES 2024**

and **POST OFFICE 2023 ČRNA NA KOROŠKEM**

King Matjaž (also Matiaš, Hungarian Mátyás, German Matthias, Czech Matyáš) is the central hero of the folk tales of Central Europe and the legend says that under the mountain Peca above Črna in Carinthia in the Mežiška valley "King Matjaž sleeps with his army", who will help everyone, who will be asked for help.

In memory of the mythical King every year on the last weekend in January, since 1992, a snow castle-building competition is held. The organizers prepare a sufficient supply of snow, and teams of builders build various sculptures according to pre-prepared plans throughout Saturday from sunrise onwards, which are then illuminated by countless torches and numerous campfires after sunset. Magical!

Watching these constructions is an event. How palaces, figures, and other sculptures are created from snow bricks. Over thirty years of the event, almost fifteen hundred "castles" were created!

On Sunday, there are various social events, especially the arrival of the mythical king Matjaž and the search for his treasure. (This year it was a chest of sweets, which were then distributed to all the children present).



For almost 75 years, the Carinthian Philatelic Society (Koroško filatelistično društvo, recipient of the FEPA award 2018) has been dutifully commemorating events in its immediate and wider environment with philatelic sets, cooperating with individuals as well as associations and municipalities. The philatelic commemoration of the construction of King Matjaž's castles is taking place this year for the twelfth time in a row.

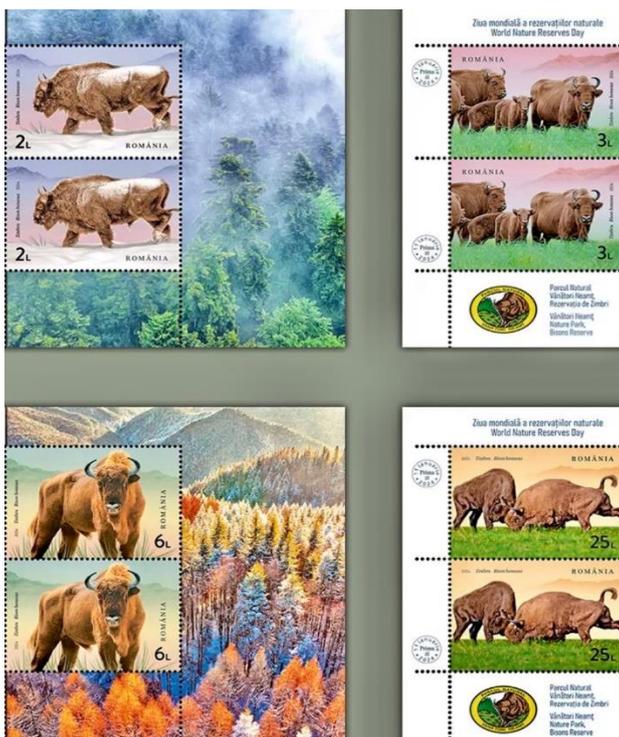
In 2013, on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the event, a new logo was created for the event – a stylized wall with crows above and below with an entrance in the form of a five-leaf crown, which was also used for the first philatelic set, consisting of a commemorative postage stamp, a commemorative envelope, a personal postage stamp and a maximum of the card. At the same time, all other graphic products (flyers, posters, online notifications,...) summarized the basic design concept of philatelic products and thus became part of open philately. A personal postage stamp is also made every year.

Croatia Post on November 27th, 2023 issued a stamp of the Croatian Fine Arts series to celebrate the artistic achievements of Vanja Radauš who is considered as one of the most important and greatest Croatian sculptors of the 20th century. Radauš created artworks in all sculptural branches, from medals, sculptures in terracotta, plaster, stone, wax and bronze to important public monuments and in addition he also excelled at painting, printmaking, poetry and photography.



ROMANIA

"World Nature Reserves and National Parks Day"



Romfilatelia issued on January 11th a set of 4 postage stamps showing in their images the Wisent. The herbivorous Wisent that belongs to the species *Bison bonasus*, is the largest land mammal in Europe, once present throughout the continent except for Spain, Italy and northern Scandinavia.

i Love **COFFEE**

i Love **TEA**



Coffee or Tea ?

Every morning, about 2 billion people drink a cup of tea. It is the second most popular drink in the world, right after water. People around the world drink about 2.25 billion cups of coffee every day. Enjoying both Tea and Coffee is an important part of the cultural and social identity of many nations and regions, where drinking tea or coffee is an opportunity for socializing and relaxation. Are you also a fan of Tea or Coffee ?

Even if you're not, check out this video on YouTube : <https://youtu.be/YK7Gkx1JbJA>,
or read this QR code with your mobile.



Slovenian author
Ivan Cankar
wrote a short story:
A Cup of Coffee



On February 8th, 2024. Romfilatelia introduces into circulation a traditional philatelic issue, the **Chinese Zodiac. Year of the Wood Dragon**, composed of a postage stamp with the value of Lei 25 and a First Day Cover. Unlike the European Zodiac, the Chinese Zodiac corresponds to a period of approximately one year. The signs begin with the Chinese New Year, on the second New Moon after the winter solstice, so it is not always celebrated on the same date. It is divided into 12 sections, but each of them belongs to an animal: tiger, rabbit, dragon, snake, horse, goat, monkey, rooster, dog, pig, rat, and ox. A cycle of the Chinese Zodiac lasts 60 years. During this time, all signs pass, in turn, through each of the following five elements: metal, water, wood, fire and earth.

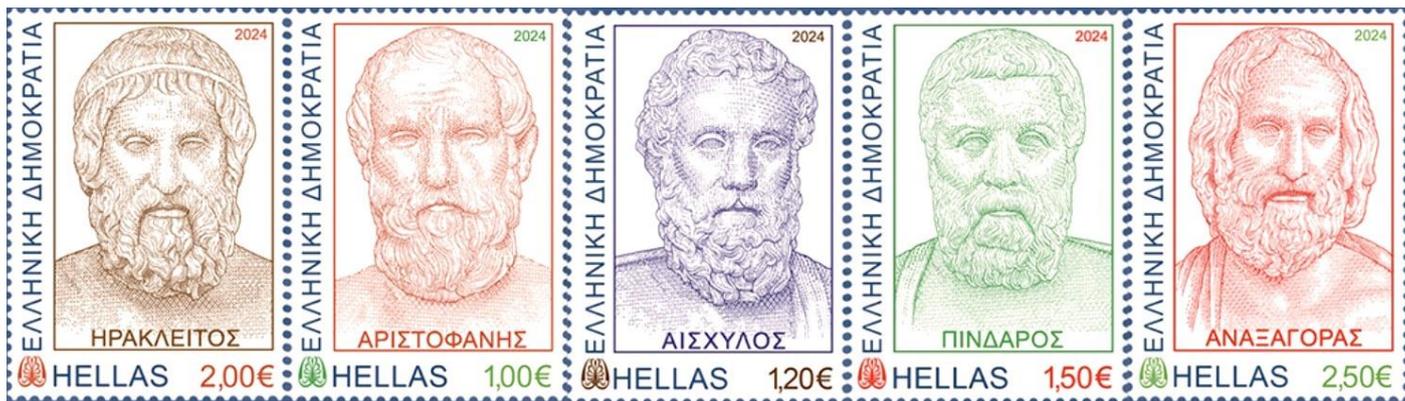


The 2024 Chinese New Year begins on February 10th, 2024 and ends on January 28th, 2025. It is the Year of the Wood Dragon.

The Dragon, a mythological creature, is endowed with extraordinary powers and it is perceived in the Chinese tradition as a symbol of the imperial power and of the male principle, Yang, associated with stability and reliability. As a consequence, a year of noticeable progress is announced, in which the nurturing and supportive Earth element will stimulate growth and development.

GREECE

“Ancient Greek Literature II”



On January 17th was issued the second part of Ancient Greek Literature series by the Hellenic Post. The five significant ancient thinkers – masterfully depicted by Athens School of Fine Arts Professor Yiannis Gourzis – were the comic playwright Aristophanes, the drama playwright Aeschylus, the poet Pindar as well as the philosophers Heraclitus and Anaxagoras.

CROATIA

150th Anniversary of the Croatian Medical Association



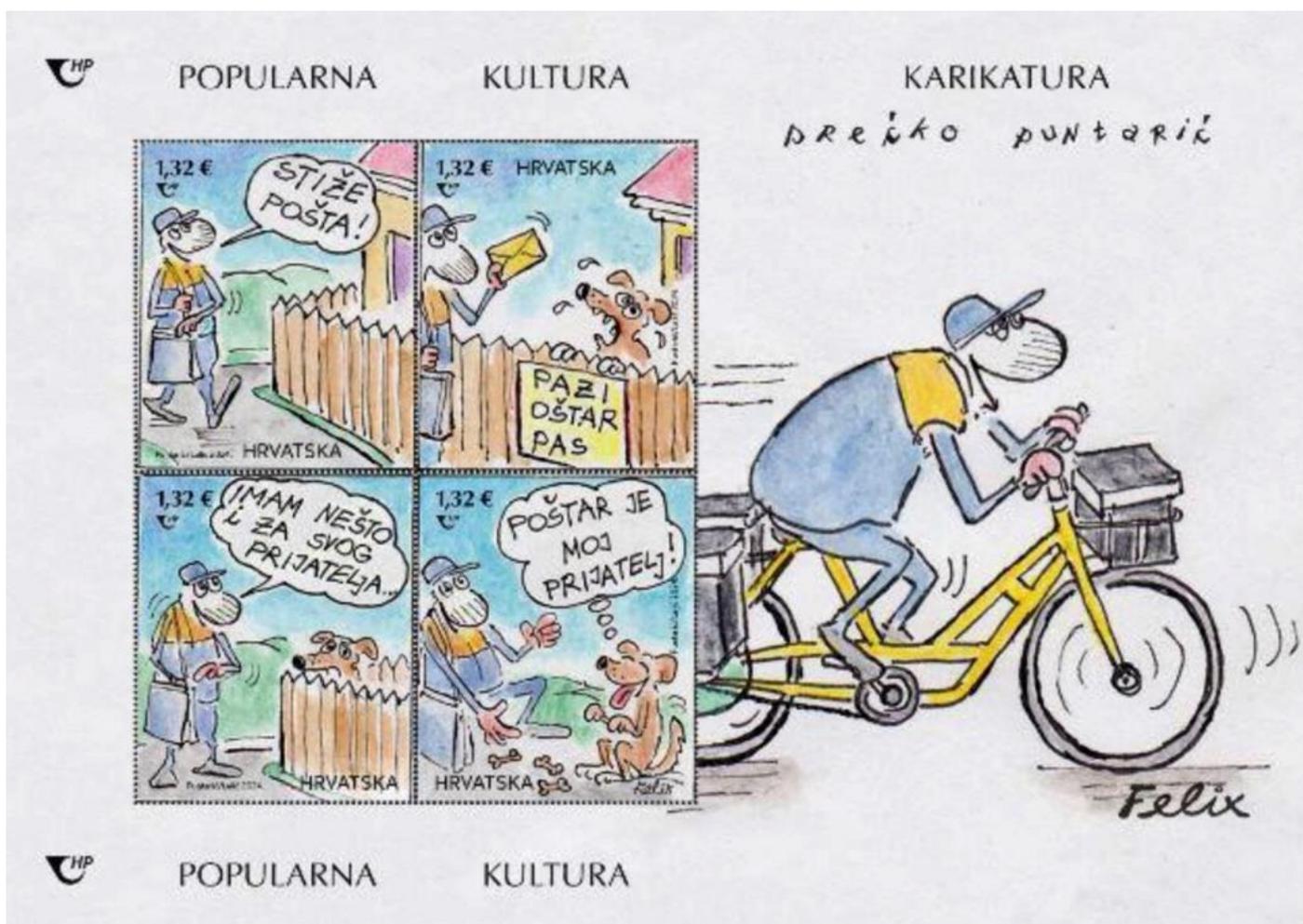
The Croatian Medical Association is a voluntary association of Medical Doctors and Dentists, established on the distant date of 26 February 1874. It operates independently and continuously for 150 years.

The Croatian Medical Association was established at a time when there were only 7 national medical associations in Europe, a fact that was highly regarded by other similar European and World Medical Associations



On February 21st, Croatian Post introduced a Souvenir Sheet showing a Caricature of an encounter of a Postman and a dog, under its Popular Culture postage stamp series.

The creator of this Caricature, Srećko Puntarić (Felix) was born in 1952 in Zagreb. Throughout his prolific career, he published caricatures in Vjesnik (1987–1995) as well as in numerous domestic magazines (SN Revija, Sprint, Žalac, Radost). He was also a contributor to European humor magazines (Nebelspalter and Eulenspiegel).



An Unfortunate Encounter of a Postman with a Dog

Mărțișor - March Amulet

On March 1st, Romfilatelia introduced March Amulet (Mărțișor) Day postage stamps issue, consisting of 4 stamps, a First Day Cover and a special product in limited edition, unique philatelic March amulets.



As a symbol of spring, the March Amulet (Mărțișor) appears as a sign of the return to life of nature with its entire universe. It is offered every year on March 1st, as a talisman of appreciation, luck and prosperity. Men give it to ladies and young ladies as a sign of admiration and respect.

Mărțișor was included in the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2017, as “cultural events associated with the celebration of March 1st”, the proposal being made in a collective file by Bulgaria, North Macedonia, Moldavia and Romania.



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