

The Circuit

AFFILIATE OF: APS & COPO

The Official Journal of the International Society of Worldwide Stamp Collectors

Plebiscitary Stamps on Polish Territory by Jan Szyrka (#539), Regional Secretary



Figure 1: Stamps of Upper Silesia

I am sure that many of you have these stamps in your collection but are not aware of their Polish connection or their full story (Figure 1). Check your stamps closely, as you may even own a rarity.

For this initial article, I have chosen the story of plebiscitary stamps. After more than a century of foreign domination, Poland regained its independence in 1918. Three different sections of land divided from Poland earlier were reunited with

the motherland; a portion of Germany in the west, Austria in the south and Russia in the east. Peoples in these sectors also created a mixing of cultures, with Poles, Germans, Russians, Ukrainians, Czechs and Slovaks intermixed. The Inter-Allied Commissions of Government and Plebiscite was established to govern these regions.

There were four litigious territories in Poland. The Commission had seats in Kwidzyn (Marienwerder), Olsztyn (Allenstein) in the north bordering Germany (Prussia), and in Opole (Oppelin) and Cieszyn (Teschen) on the southern borders of Germany and Czechoslovakia (Figure 2).

The Inter-Allied Commission in Kwidzyn was active in 1920 from February 18 to August 16, with a plebiscite vote taking place on July 11. Stamps bearing "Marienwerder" saw circulation here up until September 13. The people had voted to become a part of Poland.

The Olsztyn Commission was established also in 1920, from February 11 through August 8. Here, too, the people voted to become a part of Poland on a vote on July 11. This was the territory of "Allenstein".

Stamps from "Upper Silesia" were used in the southern section of Poland between Germany and Czechoslovakia. The territorial seat was in the city of Opole (Oppeln), with these stamps seeing use from February 12, 1920 through July 9, 1922 (Figure 3).

The plebiscite took place on March 20, 1921, resulting in a land split among Germany, Poland and Czechoslovakia, which received a small sector. However this result was nullified after an ethnic Polish Silesian uprising later that year, with Poland receiving the major portion of land on October 20. The

Figure 3: Plebiscitary stamp cancelled in Opole (Oppeln) - seat of the inter-allied commission

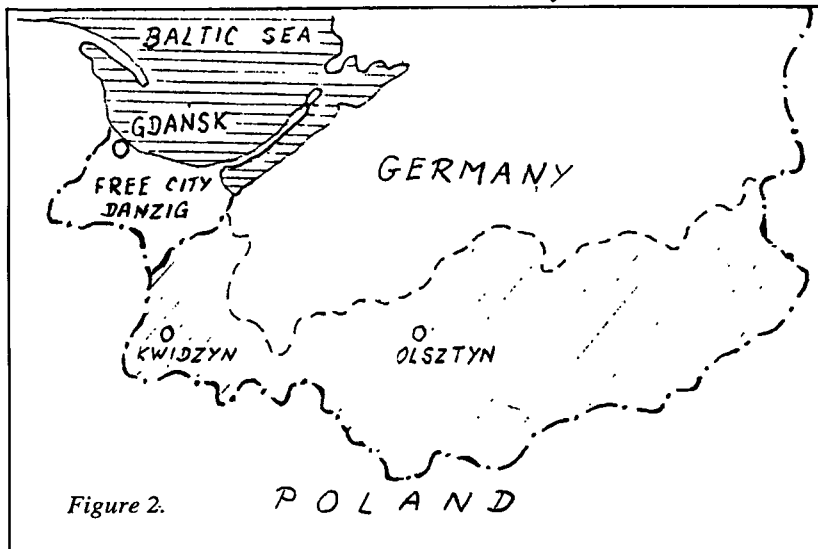


Figure 2.

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and the Elected Officers.

Plebiscitary Stamps (Continued from Page 1)

plebiscite stamps remained valid on Polish soil until June 17, 1922 and on the German annexed land until they were sold out. I currently live in Gliwice (Gleiwitz), which was originally given to Germany after the vote and reverted to Poland after the uprising (Figure 4). Only the Czech sector did not convert to Polish lands.

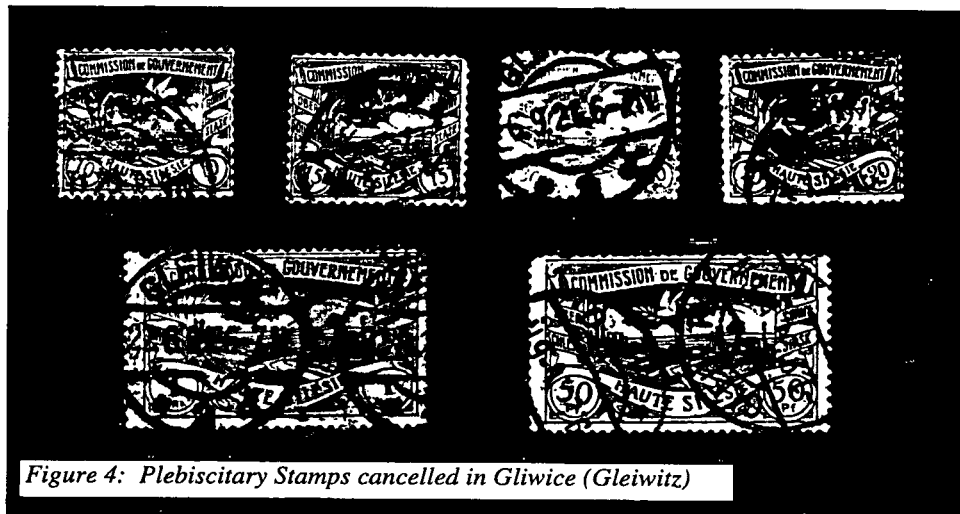


Figure 4: Plebiscitary Stamps cancelled in Gliwice (Gleiwitz)

The last plebiscite areas were in Eastern Silesia, Spisz and Orawa. See your catalog under Eastern Silesia for these stamps. Czechoslovakian and Polish stamps overprinted "S.O. 1920", for Silesie Orientale, were used later after a vote on July 28, 1920 divided the territory between the two countries along the Olza (Zaolzie) River.

In October 1938 Poland annexed by force the lands granted to Czechoslovakia under the 1920 arrangement. Germany also took advantage of Czech weakness as it, too, took control of lands it renamed "Bohemia and Moravia". The city of Orlowa produced a Polish local overprint bearing a "T" or "Tkc" in October 1938 which is not listed in most major catalogs. The "T" stands for the newly restored Polish Teschen area, the land ceded by Czechoslovakia. Poland celebrated the restoration of this territory on a stamp issued on November 11, 1938 (Scott #334, Gibbons #349).

Now the border between Poland and the Czech Republic is again the Olza River. The city of Cieszyn (Teschen) is half in Poland and half in the Czech Republic. Slovakia contains some of the lands once known as Orawa and Spisz in the 1920's (Figure 5). ••

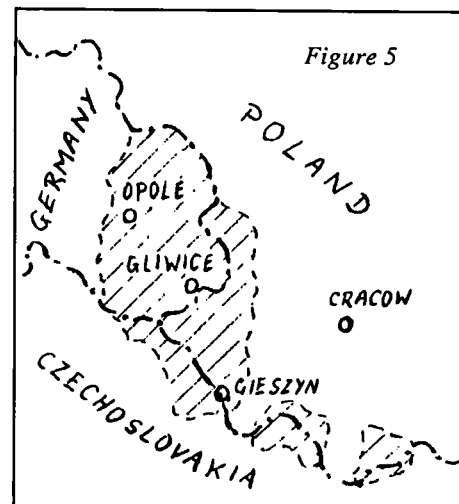


Figure 5

Deadline: Next Issue
June 20, 1994

Items received after deadline
will appear in another issue.

HELP -- WE NEED A COPIER: Does anyone "out there" have a plain paper copy machine they would be willing to donate to ISWSC? Our small budget simply won't tolerate this expense and we need a copier for many reasons. Local copy prices are prohibitive (25 cents a page) and with the Leader to Leader Program and routine business needs, a copier is almost a necessity. We will be happy to reimburse you for the UPS charges! Needless to say, the machine should be in good working order. Please help your Society if you can. ••

Latest ISWSC Board of Directors Vote

The following actions have been approved by the ISWSC Board in a vote held in late March. These actions broaden the appeal of the Society and prepare us for the future.

1. The ISWSC hereby appoints Dave Creşon (#170) as its Retention Manager.

Dave has volunteered to work with the Secretary in tracking down delinquent members and follow up with members who have resigned to find out why and if they can be encouraged to rejoin.

2. A family membership is to be offered for \$15 per household, covering up to four (4) people.

Philately often is a "family affair" and this is meant to encourage such memberships. Only one copy of *The Circuit* will be sent to such members, who otherwise will be entitled to the full benefits of membership except for voting, when they will be able to cast only one vote.

3. A stamp club membership is to be offered at the regular member rate.

We have had numerous requests from clubs to join as an entity. This can be done if one member acts as the liaison and is held responsible for the group as a whole. They will be entitled to 1 vote during an election.

4. The ISWSC is to create an "association" classification for

interested stamp clubs.

Stamp clubs retaining a minimum of 5 ISWSC members can apply for association status. Such a club will receive a free issue of *The Circuit* for their club library and be eligible to receive sales circuits, swap circuits and Omni books. A current ISWSC member will act as a liaison between the society and the association. Associations will be offered at no charge. An association will be deemed inactivated if fewer than 5 current ISWSC members remain in the club. They will have no voting rights.

Direct any inquiries on these points to President Tom Fortunato. ••

The ISWSC wishes to acknowledge a generous gift from Joseph P. Fusto of Philadelphia, PA. A parcel was mailed to our AustralAsian secretary, Peter Scannell, containing a variety of stamp albums, catalogs and supplies. His only stipulation was that they be given to New Zealand youth stamp groups. Peter is running a contest, with the winners receiving the donated items. Many thanks!

The President's Column

by Tom Fortunato (# 379)

It's hard today not to hear of the information superhighway. Times ahead promise to be filled with the high tech gadgets only dreamed of in Dick Tracy comic strips. But does the FAX, E-mail, video shop at home, and pay by phone mean the death of the postal service as we know it? USPS business mail volume is already declining, traced to changing technology.

Though diminishing, there will always be a need for the post and "stamps" of one form or another. We collectors shouldn't shun other modes of communication, old or new, that can bring us closer together. Jean-Marc Fruit of Belgium (#1124) has written that he is an avid ham/shortwave radio enthusiast. Are there any others of you out there who have a similar interest? How many ISWSCers are interested in stamp collecting computer bulletin boards? Our VP Ken Costilow wrote a great article on the subject in the Jan/Feb *The Circuit*. Send me your thoughts on any of these points.

Make plans now to attend STaMpsHow '94 in Pittsburgh, PA, August 18-21, site of our next ISWSC US national meeting. If you are looking for budget accommodations, send me a SASE for details. Is there interest to hold a regional meeting in other countries where we have a large membership?

This issue of *The Circuit* features our first new issues stamp design competition. Review the entries and vote for your choices. Take a few extra minutes and send along any comments about the ISWSC, good or bad and share any ideas you have. Thanks go to all those who submitted entries.

Next issue of *The Circuit* will feature a new membership roster and a listing of the many volunteers who make this great society possible.

Happy stamping! ••

Join the Sales Circuit

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at bargain prices

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Beginner's Column *by Al and Mildred Feinberg (#361)*

A good idea for the beginner is to start some sort of a special collection in order to diversify from routine worldwide collecting. What it does is, it gives us a more in depth idea of what collecting stamps is all about. Some speciality collections consist of collecting airplanes, boats, trains, animals or themes, etc.

Today I want to talk about another type of special collection. Great Britain Scott # 33 is a stamp in particular that I will use as a subject. In the upper left and right corner of this stamp is an alphabetical letter. By properly arranging these letters it is possible to create a complete sheet of stamps with each stamp in its proper place.

#1-"A" stamp with "A" in the left corner and "A" in the right corner would mean first row, first stamp.

#2-"A" left, "B" right would

indicate first row, second stamp.

#3-"A" left, "C" right, first row, third stamp, etc.

#4-"B" left, "A" right would be second row, first stamp.

#5-"B" left, "B" right would be second row, second stamp.

#6-"C" left, "D" right would be third row, fourth stamp, etc.

The Scott # 33 is an inexpensive stamp in most cases. Used copies can sometimes be bought for pennies. Condition of the stamp really doesn't matter. At times it's possible to buy this stamps in quantity but poor quality at a reasonable price.

When you first start your sheet it will be easy but as the sheet fills up, trying to find those you still need is the challenge. Completing the sheet gives great pleasure and satisfaction.

Lots of luck and have fun. ••

LeaderTo Leader Report *by Al and Mildred Feinberg (#361)*

As coordinator of the Leader to Leader Program, I'm getting great enjoyment out of corresponding with the nicest and most talented people willing to take time to get children interested in our hobby. It's quite a challenge for these leaders to hold the interest of their members. Our L2L Program tries to help them any way we can by offering them printed material including starter albums, special subjects, puzzles, etc., that can be copied.

The members of ISWSC are also very enthused about this program. I am getting offers to help out with photocopies; members are sending me stamps for giveaways to children and one member has even donated some money to help me out with my expenses. Although I do appreciate this I am not in anyway soliciting funds. If a member wishes to contribute U.S. postage, I would rather that instead of money.

ISWSC does reimburse me for my expenses but the members who have offered their help have kept my expenses to a minimum. Therefore I only ask for a reimbursement from ISWSC when it becomes necessary.

I want to thank all those that have helped our and look forward to any assistance offered. Special thanks to Peter Scannell in Australia for his help and suggestions. Peter is a very energetic man that I admire very much. His ambition to spread our hobby with children is hard to match. Good luck, Peter. ••

General to complain!!

Marv and Barb Warner (248) dropped by for a quick visit in April. Lovely folks and a joy to meet! I've met quite a few ISWSCers at various shows, but few know where Caddo Mills is located. If you are ever in the vicinity east of Dallas, give me a call and I'll provide directions. ••

Secretary-Treasurer Report *(Continued from page 4)*

your efforts (most often far less than you spend to send the letters) you will be in BIG trouble with USPS. It is a Federal offense to use the mail fraudulently, and this scam qualifies. The second chain letter is one where stamps are sent, instead of money. While this chain is also illegal, it has been going for several years. When I was newly returned to stamp collecting and unaware this kind of letter was also considered a chain letter I sent out the required stamps and mailed out 10 letters. I'm still waiting for the first stamps to arrive! Since it appears someone is using the ISWSC mailing list, you may receive one of the first type of chain letter. Please turn it over to the postal authorities, or ask your Postmaster to do so. If you want to take your chances with the stamp chain, do so at your own risk, but remember it, too, is illegal.

The low priority of bulk mailings has flooded this office with requests for "lost" newsletters. The usual mailing schedule has each issue at the Post Office near the first of the second month on the masthead. Thus, the May-June issue will be mailed between first and 15th of May. Delivery dates are extremely erratic - ranging from one week to as long as 8 weeks. While an 8-week delay is unusual; it seems to happen to a few members (often in different parts of the US each mailing) every issue. It is not unusual for members in Great Britain to get their newsletter before US members. When a US member receives a letter from a European member mentioning receipt of *The Circuit* before their own arrives, it seems that most members assume that their copy must have gone astray - when, in fact, it may be sitting in the back of some Post Office waiting for a slow delivery day. *(Editor's Note: Bulk rate rules allow it to sit up to three days at each stop, but is supposed to be delivered at the earliest available date. So if you are continually having problems with late mail, complain to your Postmaster. He may not be aware that your carrier is not fulfilling duties in a timely manner. When all else fails, write to the Postmaster*

I Married Stamp Business or How I Became a Philatelist

by Lynda Bray (# 938)

I had never been interested in stamp collecting. However, since my wedding ten years ago there have been some changes. My husband wanted to revive his mail order stamp business that he had operated while in high school. He had an opportunity to purchase a collection of British Commonwealth stamps and after making this purchase we were on our way.

We started advertising in stamp publications and sending out approvals. I was doing the typing and filing but did not do any work with stamps. My husband worked in a small room next to the laundry room but he needed more room so our stamp company office has taken over the recreation room and we have purchased a computer and printer. Although we have the office, my husband likes working on the dining room table and I am often moving stamp catalogues and stamps to make room to set the table for dinner.

As I began to learn more about stamps, I began to take over the care of the "topical" side of our business and have fourteen or so stockbooks of topicals to manage. I still correspond with customers as well as keep the books and assist my husband in valuing and cataloging our stamp stock.

We began to attend stamp shows to sell our stamps and do at least ten a year. I was very nervous at the first show we did and did not want to be left alone in case someone asked a question I could not answer. I have become more confident since then and really enjoy these shows as we meet so many nice people and it is fun to help them find the stamps they need.

Along the way I found myself buying a Canadian Stamp Album and now enjoy the thrill of looking through a mixture of stamps and

Regional Secretary Reports AustralAsia Report

by Peter Scannell (# 453)

The major public relations effort for 1994 in the AustralAsian region will center around a "Design-A-Stamp Competition" involving children/junior clubs from Australia, New Zealand, Malaysia and the Philippines. This will expand to include other regional countries depending on what co-operation we get from overseas stamp magazines, clubs, etc. The theme will be "Caring for the Environment." At the moment I'm in the very early stages of contacting philatelic companies, dealers, Australia post, etc., seeking donations of worthwhile prizes such as stamp packs, catalogues and albums. I'm also contacting the Australian Philatelic Federation and the overseas equivalent, local and overseas philatelic magazines, clubs, schools, radio stations, etc., with help in promoting the event. The main aim of course is to get a great deal of promotion and exposure for the club and the services we offer. With this aim in mind, once I have the prizes, promotion will be over a 3-4 month period in an effort to squeeze as much PR from the competition as possible. Although in the early stages, if successful I'd like this competition to be an annual regional event.

Perhaps in the future the club could consider organizing an

finding a stamp I need for my own collection. We still do some mail order business as well as customers visit our home. As we work outside the home as well as run the stamp business we are never bored as there is always something to do with the stamps.

Stamp collecting is an educational and interesting hobby and I enjoy it very much. I also think ISWSC is a great way to make "pen" friends and to trade stamps. ••

"international" Design-A-Stamp Competition involving children/junior clubs from the United States and from each area were have a regional secretary. A great deal of promotion can be achieved from such events.

In my recent article I mentioned an ISWSC Sales Circuit had been started for Australian and New Zealand members. This has been enlarged into an AustralAsian Sales Circuit, including members from Australia, New Zealand, Japan, Malaysia, Taiwan, Macau, and South Korea. Stamps are selling well and I'm sure the local sales circuit will prove to be a popular service and an excellent recruitment tool.

The AustralAsia Youth Program at the moment is under great strain due to the demand upon it particularly by overseas countries. The Philippines for instance is experiencing rapid growth in children wanting to collect stamps, but need help getting started. If any member could help out with used stamp donations if certainly would be appreciated both from myself and the children concerned.

In closing I'd like to thank Joseph P. Fusto for his parcel of stamps, catalogues and albums for New Zealand children/junior stamp clubs. I'm sure the kids will enjoy them. ••

**Come to STaMpsHow '94
in Pittsburgh, PA
from August 18-21.**

**It is hoped that our meeting will
bescheduled for Saturday,
August 20, but it won't be known
until late July.**

**Join ISWSC President Tom Fortunato
& others planning to attend. For
updated details, write or phone Tom.**