

THE SRSC NEWSLETTER

*The Santa Rosa Stamp Club: Promoting the study,
knowledge, and enjoyment of stamp collecting.
APS Chapter 1584*



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Editor's Note

Dennis Buss

This first newsletter of the year once again addresses the history behind stamp issues. Steve Brett tells us about the unusual stamp collecting habits of King Farouk of Egypt and Paul von Gottfried concludes his history of the Universal Postal Union by making a case for why we ought to take a second look at UPU themed stamps in our collections. Phil A. Tellick appears once again with his stunning insights into the backwaters of philately.

Do you have a favorite stamp or stamp set? Why does it appeal to you? I would like to encourage members to suggest their favorite stamp(s) with a brief description of its background and why it attracts or interests you. A paragraph will do. The stamp might depict an interesting historical character or event, it might be particularly attractive in design; it might reflect other interests you have such as sports, art, music, ecology, science, literature, etc. Your write-up should include the date of issue, catalogue number and value. No need to scan the stamps, I can download the images from an on-line catalogue. Send your paragraph by email or regular mail to me. I would like to make this a regular feature in future newsletters.

Amazing Stamp Stories #6: Farouk Who?

Stephen Brett

I am looking at Page 193 of a new photo essay book I bought recently: *Historic Photographs of Franklin D. Roosevelt*. Like many stamp collectors, I enjoy studying history and a photograph intrigued me because it was so unlikely. Its caption: "FDR with King Farouk . . . an embodiment of exotic Orientalism to the visiting Americans." FDR was anchored in the Suez Canal following the Yalta Conference. The date was February 13, 1945.



But, what were they talking about? Was it American post war coup in 1952? Rights and access to the strategic canal? Or, FDR seeking King Farouk's cooperation with the concept of establishing a homeland for Jews in Palestine? Read on, if you are also intrigued with an Amazing Stamp Story!

King Farouk (February 11, 1920 – March 18, 1965) occupied the throne of Egypt from 1936 until he was deposed by a military coup in 1952. He was a man of large appetites and one of those appetites was for stamp collecting. FDR shared this love of

collecting with the King of Egypt. What do we know about Farouk's stamp collection? In 1954 Harmers held a three-day auction of Farouk's collection on behalf of the Egyptian government. Do you recall Jim Farley and his "follies" for FDR? Like Farley, Farouk commanded the Egyptian postal authorities to produce bizarrely misperforated stamps for his collection. Much of the misperforated material was later purchased by Canadian stamp dealer Kasimir Bileski who sold it to his customers. The stamps went from nearly worthless to being in high demand with increased value. Definitives that had sold for only \$20 to \$40 for a misperforated block now sell for \$75 to \$100. From March 29 to April 10, 1954



the Gimbel's department store branch in Milwaukee held a King Farouk stamp collection sale consisting of a group of items taken from a large portion of his collection. Items were advertised at \$ 1.00 to \$50.00 with each stamp bearing a guarantee on the reverse side.

Misperforated commemoratives are especially in demand as usually only 100 of each variety exist. Complete commemorative sets of 2 to 4 misperforated stamps sell for \$100 to \$150 per stamp. A good example is the set of three 75th anniversary Universal Postal Union stamps (Scott 281-283) that recently sold for \$600. It is suspected that these intentionally misperforated Egypt stamps are lurking in old collections. Keep your eyes open.

So, for example, what is the current value of a 1938 King Farouk stamp? A pair of 1938 King Farouk Birthday LE 1 stamps was sold by David Feldman in June 2017. The estimate for the pair was established at 6,000 Euros, the lot sold for 43,200 Euros (48,784 USD). The corner block of 4 in V.F. condition managed to fetch 48,800 Euros (55,108 USD) at Feldman's auction.



Farouk, by the way, in keeping with his extravagant lifestyle collected many things including literature and gold coins. With stamps he was particularly fond of misprints.

Farouk sometimes sounds more like a hoarder than a collector, somewhat like FDR who also had standby orders at the State Department to forward him all the incoming mail covers with stamps on them.

While Farouk continued to enjoy ordering the printers to make all kinds of misperforated singles, pairs and blocks he also collected some very desirable proofs and essays that went unseen until his dethroning. During his reign, Farouk created the Egyptian Royal Stamp collection with the assistance of Albert Eid, the first stamp dealer in the Arab world.

Now we must return to the original question! So, what were FDR and King Farouk talking about in 1945 in this Amazing Stamp Story? As Paul Harvey would say, "Here's the rest of the story." The King knew of FDR's deep desire to add some of the valuable Farouk "funnies" to his collection. Farouk had a proposal that was under discussion in the cited photograph: FDR knew of Farouk's passionate desire to meet Rita Hayworth. A deal was struck: FDR would provide a letter of introduction to Miss Hayworth in return for a mint

collection of the 1938 Birthday series. There is archival footage taken in 1950 at Deauville with Rita and her new husband Aga Aly Khan (married May 27, 1949) who took up where King Farouk left off. And, when you have some spare time, check the reverse side of your King Farouk era stamps for those Gimbels guarantees.

Ask Phil

Stephen Brett and Paul von Gottfried

Dear Phil:

The U.S.P.S. I am told doesn't issue stamps featuring living people. In fact, I think it's their policy to wait at least ten years until a deceased person can be commemorated on a stamp design. That said, Santa was portrayed on a number of stamps this past Christmas, not to mention past holiday seasons. Are our postal officials telling us that Santa is dead or, worse, not a real person?

Virginia

Dear Virginia:

In my opinion, the U.S.P.S. has had it in for Santa for years. Why? Because he can globally deliver to billions of people in one day, from one location with roughly 100 non-union employees. Even Amazon can't do that.

Phil (AKA Steve Brett)

Dear Phil:

We in Parliament want you to know how important it is to represent the monarchy with kindness and reality, which can be challenging at times. Parliament just passed an edict that any future images of Prince Phillip in postage stamps issued by Great Britain will be in black and white.

Sincerely,

Boris Badanoff Johnson

Dear Boris,

We thought they already were.

Phil (AKA Paul von Gottfried)

Dear Phil:

I have dedicated myself to keeping my stamp albums up-to-date and have been purchasing the H.E. Harris Master Supplements for years and years. With so much time on my hands during the pandemic I have been digging into the less traditional (may I say serious?) country areas like Bulgaria, Burundi, Burkina Faso, Cambodia and the like. Where I have accumulations of Mystic, Kenmore and other dealer's approvals. I never realized how many cat, dinosaur and cartoon sets I owned.! Now here's the rub. I buy these supplements but there are practically no spaces or illustrations for much of what I have been buying from the approval companies. What's that all about? Is H.E. Harris at fault?

Yours: Polly Anna Glimpt

Dear Polly:

It is indeed H.E Harris's objective to provide worldwide collectors with the means to display and enjoy new stamp issues. On the other hand, the Harris organization has no obligation to accommodate wallpaper swatches.

Phil (AKA Steve Brett)



Dear Phil:

Last night Sean Hannity had a break for a commercial and it was not the usual Mike Lindell spiel talking up his MY PILLOW. I was surprised and frankly excited by his claim to selling Giza Sheets. I have recently read an erudite article in the SRSC Newsletter about the King Farouk Collection and wish to expand my own Egyptian collection. Do you think Lindell's sheets are authentic?

Sincerely, Jules Morphine

Dear Jules:

I too saw the commercial. It is an outstanding deal. By one, get one free and it comes with a 24-month money back guarantee. Go ahead Jules. You can rest easy on this one.

Phil (AKA Steve Brett)

Dear Phil:

I am a student of postal history and I thought I heard of most everything but a friend of mine who is an ardent French philatelist referred to Boule de Moulins (Moulin Balls). I did not wish to appear ignorant or place myself under undue suspicion so I turn to you for an explanation. What does this term mean?

Fondly: Lee Switcher

Dear Lee:

There are few methods of transferring a letter from one place to another that have not been tried. If you are familiar with the old "message in a bottle" trick, then you have an idea of the principle behind the Boule. During the 1870-1871 siege of Paris by the Prussians, the French found that the only method that had a chance to succeed in getting letters out of the city was by stuffing a zinc ball with mail, placing it in the Seine and letting it float downstream. The besieged residents would supposedly catch it in nets strung across the river. In total 40,000 such letters were sent. Unfortunately, none of the letters were known to have arrived. The most recently discovered letter was dredged up at Rouen in 1968, downstream from Paris. Finders get to keep the letters according to French courts. Look for a 1979 1.7 Franc commemorative of this postal episode.

Phil (AKA Steve Brett)

Dear Phil:

Our stamp club is now holding virtual meetings using ZOOM. I read an article in the London Times that there's a new cottage industry cropping up that creates backdrops designed to impress clients and work colleagues by customizing the visible space from your home worksite. What would you suggest as an impressive backdrop for me?

Yours, HRH Queen Elizabeth II

Your Majesty:

May I express our gratitude for visiting our website. In answer to your excellent question, I believe it is sufficient to have Prince Phillip seated beside you. And, may I be so bold as to recommend your visiting Jerry Campbell's basement in Healdsburg. We are certain you will find some items that you can add to the Royal Collection.

Phil (AKA Steve Brett)



Part II: The History of the Universal Postal Union (UPU)

Paul von Gottfried

The UPU became a part of the United Nations in 1948. It makes sense that a universal service agency became part of the universal union of nations, to promote and benefit all nations of the world. The 1874 treaty provided for the originating country to keep all of the postage revenue, without compensating the destination country for delivery. The rationale was that each letter would generate a reply, so that the postal flows would be in balance. Other classes of mail had imbalanced flows. In 1906, the Italian postal service was delivering 325,000 periodicals mailed from other countries to Italy, while Italian publishers were not mailing any periodicals to other countries. The system also encouraged other countries to re-mail through another country, forcing the intermediate postal service to bear the costs of transport to the final destination.



Re-mailing was banner in 1924, but the UPU took no action on imbalanced flows until 1969. The problem of imbalanced flows became acute after decolonization, as dozens of former European colonies entered the UPU as independent states. The developing countries received more mail than they sent, so they wanted to be paid for delivery.

In 1969, the UPU introduced a system of terminal dues. When two countries had imbalanced mail flows, the country that sent more mail would have to pay a fee to the country that received more mail. Once terminal dues had been established, they became a topic of discussion at every future Postal Union Congress. The 1974 Congress tripled the dues (based on weight) and the 1979 Congress tripled them again. The 1984 Congress raised them by 45%. Developing countries were low-cost recipients, but so were developed countries like the United Kingdom and the United States. The dues were based on weight, so periodicals would be assessed much higher terminal dues than letters.



The continued fiscal imbalances required repeated changes to the system of terminal dues. In 1988, a per-item charge was included in terminal dues to drive up the cost of re-mailing, an old scourge that had returned. To resolve the problem with periodicals, the UPU adopted a “threshold” system in 1991 that set separate letter and periodical rates for countries that receive at least 150 tons of mail annually. The 1999 Congress established “country specific” terminal dues for industrialized countries, offering a lower rate for developing countries. In 2010, the United States was a net sender because it was mailing goods to other countries. That year the USPS made a \$275 million surplus on international mail.

The UPU system was only available to state-run postal services. Low terminal rates gave the USPS an advantage over private postal services such as FedEx and DHL. This backfired on the US due to shifts in mail flow and with the growth of e-commerce. The deficit for the US increased to \$80 million in 2017.

The UPU established a new remuneration system in 2016, a move the United States Department of State said would “dramatically improve USPS coverage for the delivery of ...packets from China and developing countries.” However, the Chairman of the Postal Regulatory Commission disagreed.

With the outbreak of the 2018 China-United States trade war, the issue of terminal dues became paramount. At the time, the UPU Postal Development Indicator scale was used to classify countries into four groups from richest to poorest. The US was a Group I country, while China was a Group III, a holdover from 1949 and was classified alongside countries like Mexico and Turkey. As a result, China paid lower terminal dues than the US. The United States complained bitterly and the Administration threatened to withdraw from



the UPU. The UPU responded in May 2019, calling for only the third time in its history, an Extraordinary Congress in September 2019. In 1947, on the eve of the UPU becoming part of the United Nations, there was also an Extraordinary Congress. The UPU unanimously passed a Franco-German compromise to allow self-declared terminal dues up to 70% of the domestic postage rate and increase terminal dues by 119-164%, phasing in both changes from 2021-2025. In addition, countries receiving more than 75,000 tons (68,038,855.5 kilograms or 150,000,000 pounds) of mail could opt in to self-declared terminal dues on July 1, 2020 in return for a \$40 million “contribution” to the UPU. The United States is the only country that receives more than 75,000 tons of mail. UPU Director Siva Somasundram hailed the agreement as “a landmark decision for multilateralism and the Union.”

In an unprecedented and unilateral decision, Pakistan stopped the exchange of postal mails with India on August 27, 2019. This decision was taken without prior notice and in direct contravention of international norms. It is quite rare because it interfered with the normal delivery of mails between member nations because of political reasons, namely a long-running dispute over the territory of Jammu and Kashmir. Mail service was resumed by Pakistan on November 19, 2019. The UN Security Council is trying to resolve the ongoing peacefully. The UPU took an active role in helping to resolve the flow of mails and goods between the two countries.

The 27th Universal Postal Congress was scheduled to take place in Abidjan, Cote d’Ivoire from August 10-28, 2020. Due to COVID-19, the UPU Congress will now be held from August 9-27, 2021 in Abidjan, Cote d’Ivoire.

The Universal Postal Union has remained a brilliantly functional service to the entire world its inception in 1874. The UPU becoming a part of the United Nations was a logical step. The UPU has remained remarkably free of politics for the most part. On the very rare and quite recent occasions that politics has entered into the realm of mail and goods delivery, rational solutions and compromise has been taken by the Universal Postal Union Postal Operations Council and Consultative Committee to ensure the smooth and apolitical delivery of mail and goods throughout the world. The UPU, in my opinion, has served the international community with few problems for over 146 years. Its importance to the world is only exceeded by its functional capabilities. One can be assured that mail and goods mailed internationally will arrive safely and timely. This would not be the case without the UPU.

Part III: The History of the Universal Postal Union (UPU): Philatelic Aspects

Paul von Gottfried

One cannot ignore the philatelic aspects of the UPU. Member nations have issued stamps to honor the UPU, starting a few years after its inception of 1874. Many of the member delegates advocate for the stamps issued by their respective countries. This block from Brazil, #649, was issued in 1946.

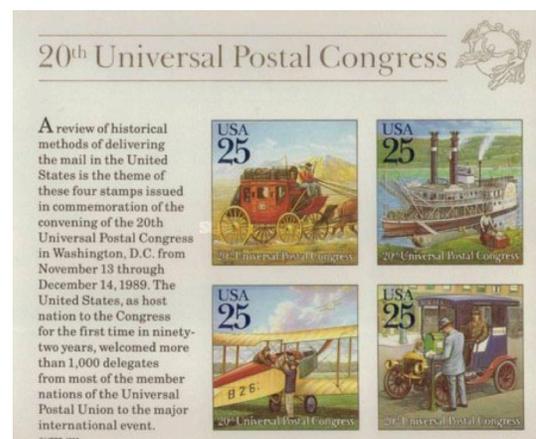


The British Commonwealth issued an omnibus (common design) set of 4 stamps from 66 colonies, as well as issues of different designs for 13 other nations in the British Commonwealth, for a total of 309 stamps with a 2020 catalog value of \$444.20. Many other nations issued stamps for the UPU in 1949.



In 1974, almost every member nation in the world issued stamps and special issues in honor of the 100th anniversary of the UPU.

Many countries continue to issue stamps in honor of the UPU, most recently in 1999 for the 125th anniversary of the UPU. It remains a prolific topical for stamp issuing countries throughout the world.





In 1947, there was an Extraordinary Congress of the UPU, held in Paris. Its purpose was twofold. First, it ratified the agreement for the UPU to become part of the United Nations. Second, many countries issued stamps honoring the UPU, including some in special collectible folders made available to member delegates, some of whom were philatelists. Member countries, knowing this was the end of an era, developed special folders just before the Congress. They are quite attractive and contain stamps of the issuing country.

In another example, the South Africa folder contained stamps from South West Africa, including Scott #120, the 20 shilling blue green and maroon pair showing Okuwahakan Falls stamp, which is one of my favorite stamps. These souvenir folders, many with limited printing, remain a popular collectible for those developing a UPU topical collection.



The stamps honoring the UPU remain a prolific topical subject. Stamp issuing countries will continue to release stamps that depict the UPU. I expect that in 2024, most, if not all, member countries will issue stamps honoring the 150th anniversary of the UPU.

SRSC

Until Covid-19 restrictions are removed, the Santa Rosa Stamp Club holds virtual on-line meetings open to members only on the first Tuesday of the month at 7:00 pm. For further information about the club visit our website at <http://www.santarosastampclub.org/home.html>

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